

**Questioning the Relevance of Well-being in a Chinese Context:
An Archaeological and Anthropological Examination**

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Abstract

Well-being is made critical to business management (Shizgal, 1999; Warr, 2011). Nevertheless, is well-being significant to the Chinese? In response to this inquiry, a problem of essentialism is suspected – Well-being could be universally misappropriated in a Chinese context under a positivist or functionalist epistemology. If so, an indigenous subject is being deprived of its voice in the discourse. For that reason, this thesis seeks to diagnose and overcome essentialism in the discourse. Two research questions are formulated respectively:

1. *How does the discourse of well-being emerge and transform in a Chinese context?*
2. *Do members of family business in Hong Kong draw upon the discourse of well-being in their daily practices? If not, what expressions do they use in a given period of time?*

This thesis positions itself within the critical management studies. Both archaeology and anthropology are deployed as the methodology. The first question is answered by way of an archaeological examination in which a close reference to Foucault's (1972) archaeology is drawn; while the second question is handled by way of an anthropological examination and upholding ethics in research. In particular, Geertz's (1973) 'thick description' is used to explore an indigenous voice.

The findings indicate that well-being is not a culturally universal concept. In the archaeological examination, essentialism is diagnosed when well-being is transformed into a Chinese context. In the anthropological examination, the research subject – members of family business in Hong Kong, did not draw upon the discourse of well-being. They used multiple Chinese expressions, including *jia ting* (family), *peng you* (friends), *kai xin gong zuo* (happy work) and *xin zhong fu you* (being rich at heart-mind). These local expressions are further contextualised based on two Chinese notions: *xing fu* (living well) and *xin* (heart-mind).

This thesis contributes to debates related to questioning well-being in cross-cultural management. Well-being is found to be insignificant in a Chinese context. The framework of well-being has limitations in explaining a Chinese subject. Hence, the assumed universality of well-being is challenged. Misappropriating well-being in a Chinese context could imply a subtle colonisation of management ideologies and practices. In order to recover an indigenous voice, a discursive space is opened where a Chinese perspective is brought into the centre of discussion. In addition to the framework of well-being, the findings are re-interpreted from Chinese sources (mainly its language and philosophies). In this way, this study shed some light on the conditions of possibility for a Chinese theory. Hence, making a methodological contribution related to epistemology. At last, this thesis calls for diversity and reflexivity in management and research practices.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Well-being is a prevalent concern in numerous fields, such as healthcare, psychology and business management (Shizgal, 1999; Ceja, 2009; Page and Vella-Brodick, 2009; Warr, 2011). “*Improving Health and Well-being in Society: How Can Organizations Help?*” is the theme of the 78th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management in 2018, in which organisational roles for improving well-being is highlighted (AOM, 2017). In particular, well-being is an important management issue because employee well-being is considered as a long term outcome of human resources management practices (Beer, Spector, Lawrence, Mills and Walton, 1984; Noon, 1992). Family business scholars also pay attention to well-being because it affects human, social and financial aspects of family business (Ceja, 2009; Rothausen, 2009; Dodd, 2011). That is why well-being is brought to the Chinese family business, such as in the studies of Foo (2009); Lee, Wong, Foo and Leung (2011); Liang, Wang and Cui (2014); and Welsh, Kaciak, Memili and Zhou (2017). Given the popularity of well-being, its significance is assumed to be universal.

As business becomes increasingly global, it is common for multinational corporations (MNCs) to generally adopt a set of ‘best practices’ across countries. Instruments and initiatives of measuring and improving employee well-being (such as employee satisfaction surveys, family-friendly policies and employee assistance programs) are used as typical ‘best practices’ in international human resources management (IHRM) (Jacques, 1996; Wright et al., 1997; Ballard and Grawitch, 2017; Burke, 2017; Warr and Nielsen, 2018). However, inter-country differences in terms of sociocultural and institutional factors create challenges to globalise HRM practices (Ariss and Sidani, 2016). Many MNCs encounter difficulties in managing Chinese employees (The EU SME Centre, 2015; Cheung, 2010), especially when Chinese employees are not attracted by the concept of work-life balance (Xiao and Cooke, 2012). If MNCs would like to attract and retain talents in China, they are encouraged to take a contextualised approach (Xiao and Cooke, 2012; Cooke et al., 2014; Ariss and Sidani, 2016). Therefore, this thesis contextualises well-being in a Chinese context.

Despite the important contributions of the mainstream research, it has predominately adopted a positivist or functionalist approach that treats well-being as a context-free concept. The assumption that underlies the notion of well-being is individualism (Christopher, 1999). In that sense, well-being is conceivably less applicable to a Chinese who regards family as part of self. If well-being is assumed to be universally applicable, *objectification* and *essentialism* could represent weaknesses in the literature. Foucault (1982) describes *objectification* as a discursive practice that “transforms human beings into (objectified) subjects” (p.777); while Westwood (2001) regards *essentialism* as “a reductive strategy” (p.258), in which *the Other* (the non-western) is being misappropriated as a “counter-point”

(p.250) to the west. For illustration, a Chinese term – *xing fu* 幸福 is often considered as an equivalent to well-being (Davis, 2005; Lu, 2001; 2010), even though the two concepts are culturally distinctive. Hence, the thesis argues that a Chinese subject could have been essentialised as an object of knowledge (Goody, 1996; Westwood, 2001; Xu, 2008) in the well-being discourse.

1.1 Research Questions

In order to counter a possible essentialist construction in the well-being discourse, this thesis attempts to examine the significance of well-being in a Chinese context. Two research questions are formulated:

1. *How does the discourse of well-being emerge and transform in a Chinese context?*
2. *Do members of family business in Hong Kong draw upon the discourse of well-being in their daily practices? If not, what expressions do they use in a given period of time?*

The first question diagnoses essentialism by examining the conditions that could make the discourse of well-being possible in a Chinese context; while the second question tries to overcome essentialism by exploring the conditions that could make a Chinese voice possible in management discourse.

Chinese family business (CFB) provides a context in which well-being is scrutinised. The business practices of CFB in Hong Kong could be relevant to MNCs. Given majority of Chinese employees have worked in CFBs before (Tsang, 2002; Zheng, 2002), their work expectations in MNCs are likely to be derived from their previous employment in CFB. If MNCs would like to understand Chinese employees, practices of CFB can be treated as a reference.

Given most of the CFBs is situated in South East Asia, such as Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan (Kao, 1993) and Hong Kong is the home country of the researcher, Hong Kong is therefore chosen to be the site. On 1 July 1997, Hong Kong is returned to the Mainland China. The Handover is an important political move that brings changes to local daily lives. Hence, the thesis examines the lived experience of the research subject – members of family business in Hong Kong since 1997. In particular, their expressions (in terms of language and living practices) are explored.

1.2 An Archaeological and Anthropological Examination

The research questions will be answered via both archaeology and anthropology. In the first part of the investigation, an archaeological examination is conducted to analyse the discursive (trans) formation of well-being (Research question 1). In this examination, well-being is treated as a discursive concept. Drawing from Foucault's (1972) *Archaeology of Knowledge*, the conditions, rules and changes that

shape the discourse of well-being are revealed. Foucault's archaeology provides a tool to examine the discursive practices that produce the knowledge of well-being in a Chinese context.

In the second part of the investigation, an anthropological study is carried out to explore the significance of well-being in a Chinese context and uncover some indigenous expressions (Research question 2). These social expressions are scrutinised through 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973), including their richness of intentions, thoughts and meanings. Then, the data are interpreted from both western and Chinese perspectives. For western perspective, it is drawn from the framework of well-being. For Chinese perspective, it is taken based on the Chinese language and Chinese philosophies (i.e. Confucian and Daoist frameworks). Lastly, a possible dialogue between the perspectives is formulated to derive a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

The fieldwork began on 1st March 2012 and finished on 31 December 2015. Four field sites are chosen and all of them are small family businesses. The data are obtained mainly through a combination of methods, including participant observation, informal conversation, documentary and photographs, interpretive field notes and diary and semi-structured interviews. The interviewees are ranged from the owners, family workers, family members and employees in family businesses, as well as local Human Resource professionals in multinational corporations.

1.3 Significance of the Thesis

This thesis could make contributions to knowledge, methodology and practice. Firstly, the thesis contributes to the literature of well-being by offering a cultural perspective of the notion. The assumed universality of well-being in a mainstream positivist-functionalist approach is challenged. The analysis highlights well-being is a culturally distinctive concept, which is emerged from western hedonistic and eudamonic philosophies with an individualistic focus on happiness. The framework of well-being has its inherent theoretical limitation in terms of generating an in-depth understanding of how a Chinese thinks and behaves. Therefore, well-being is less applicable in a Chinese context. Misappropriation of well-being to a Chinese subject would lead to *objectification* and *essentialism*. That is why globalisation of well-being in a Chinese context is an example of a subtle colonisation and marginalisation of the mind. To emancipate the marginalised, the thesis opens a discursive space where Chinese expressions could be revealed and examined. Furthermore, a cross-cultural analysis among these expressions is made possible. Hence, the thesis widens the scope of knowledge by bringing in a Chinese perspective into the centre of the discursive space.

Secondly, the thesis offers insights to research methodology. The thesis illustrates how Foucault's archaeology can be a way of diagnosing a possibility of *essentialism* in the discourse; while

anthropology can be a provisional solution to overcome *essentialism*. More importantly, ethics is crucial if an indigenous subject's voice is to be recognised in management discourse; whereas reflexivity is a condition for exercising ethics in research. Nevertheless, a mainstream positivist-functional approach pays little attention to the epistemological issues – it tends to be unreflexive about its ontology, epistemology and representation. Regarding to this weakness in the mainstream approach, this thesis takes a critical perspective – Not only it challenges well-being, but also explores an indigenous voice through a 'thick description'. Within the 'thick description', the local expressions are further interpreted by putting both western and Chinese perspectives in a dialogue. This kind of dialogue could be considered as a possible extension of 'thick description' and therefore could enhance understanding of a Chinese subject. If only a western perspective is relied on, such kind of understanding of a Chinese subject would be ignored and a Chinese theory could never be possible. Hence, the thesis makes contribution to epistemological domain by offering insights to the conditions of the possibility of founding a theory for a Chinese subject.

Lastly, the thesis draws implications to IHRM practices. This thesis provides more understanding of CFB practices and a Chinese subject. Such an understanding enables business practitioners in MNCs and academic researchers to critically review the relevancy of global IHRM practices in a Chinese context. Rather than relying on a set of 'best practices', a diverse approach that accounts for multiple cultural perspectives is suggested.

1.4 The Structure

This thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the study, setting out the research questions, methodology, contribution and structure of the thesis.

The next two chapters review the relevant literature. Chapter 2 introduces the notion of well-being from three perspectives: philological, philosophical and psychological. The chapter consists of two parts. The first part scrutinises well-being from a mainstream framework, including Hedonism and Eudaimonia. Then, the orthodox approach of well-being research is interrogated. The second part tries to contextualise well-being in terms of Chinese language and its philosophical traditions, namely Confucian and Daoist teachings. At the end of this chapter, a conceptual framework which consists of both western and Chinese perspectives is constructed.

Chapter 3 critically reviews the management discourse related to CFB. CFB in Hong Kong is the context in which well-being is examined. Hence, this part serves to provide an understanding of the context. The problems of *objectification* and *essentialism* are highlighted in the literature. Considering the problems, this chapter proposes to adopt Foucault's archaeology to account for change in discourse

Chapter 4 justifies the choice of methodology – An archaeological and anthropological examination. The chapter first clarifies the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the study. A critical perspective is taken. Then, Foucault's (1979) archaeology of knowledge and Geertz's (1973) 'thick description' are considered. Next, a brief account of the research design is provided, including site selection, access, sampling, data collection methods and reflexivity. Lastly, the tasks after fieldwork are listed out, which involves transcribing interview scripts, consolidating data and analysing data.

Chapter 5 is an archaeological examination of well-being in a Chinese context. This part demystifies the discursive (trans)formation of the two concepts: well-being and *xing fu*. The examination uncovers how well-being and *xing fu* are emerged and changed in the discourses. Significantly, the problems of *objectification* and *essentialism* are diagnosed. At the end of this chapter, a discursive space is opened. Within this space, an indigenous subject (such as a Chinese subject) is allowed to speak in its own expressions.

Chapter 6 is an anthropological examination – A 'thick description'. The chapter begins by highlighting views of the local Human Resource (HR) professionals regarding the notion of well-being. Their understanding of well-being is aligned with the archaeological examination, which highlights well-being is a familiar language of HR professionals. Nevertheless, well-being is perceived not to be the same as *xing fu*. The archaeological and anthropological examination shows that treating *xing fu* as an equivalent of well-being would be problematic. Therefore, instead of applying well-being to the site, this ethnography explores expressions of the research subject based on its everyday lives. Four local expressions are revealed and contextualised, naming *jia ting* (family), *peng you* (friends), *kai xin gong zuo* (happy work) and *xin zhong fu you* (being rich at heart-mind). Towards the end of the chapter, four major practices of the CFBs are presented, which include familial culture, absence of or resistance to strategy and management, striving to survive and moving on as life unfolds. These four practices represent an embodiment of the local expressions.

Chapter 7 is a possible extension of 'thick description'. This chapter begins with a theoretical discussion of two Chinese notions: *xing fu* and *xin*. These two concepts are derived from the four local expressions found in the previous chapter. To move further, a dialogue is formulated. This is a dialogue between Hedonism, Eudaimonia, Confucian and Daoist perspectives. Such a dialogue helps to identify the similarities and differences among these perspectives.

Chapter 8 is the Conclusion. Theoretical, methodological and practical implications of the study are drawn. For theoretical implications, the assumed universality of well-being is challenged given the thesis reveals *essentialism* in the well-being discourse. Hence, the insignificance of well-being in a

Chinese context is implied. On the contrary, the benefits of exploring local expressions are spelled out. At the end, a cross-cultural analysis among different expressions is made possible. Regarding methodology, the thesis shows how both archaeology and anthropology can be deployed to diagnose and overcome *essentialism* respectively. The importance of ethics and reflexivity in research are also highlighted. ‘Thick description’ can be extended by a way of dialogue. As for work practices, some plausible suggestions concerning IHRM and management research are offered. Business practitioners and researcher are encouraged to critically examine any global management concepts, theories, models, tools and even practices before applying them to a Chinese context. Diversity in management is advocated. After discussing implications, potential contributions are outlined. Lastly, limitations of the study are identified and directions for future research are suggested.

Chapter 2 The Notion of Well-being

This chapter examines the concept of well-being. Well-being is important to business because the notion affects workers, management and organisations (Beer et al., 1984; Noon, 1992; Ceja, 2009; Warr, 2011). In a mainstream well-being research, positivism and neo-positivism are the dominant epistemologies, in which they treat well-being as if it is context-free and static. However, is well-being universally equivalent across cultures? What if the notion is culturally specific and transformative? The thesis argues that well-being is culturally specific and therefore the notion has to be contextualised. This chapter suspects that well-being is emerged specifically from a western culture and the notion might have changed over time. If this is the case, is well-being relevant to a Chinese subject? Is well-being significant to Chinese family business (CFB)? If not, misappropriation of well-being to a Chinese context could be a possible weakness in the literature.

The chapter begins with a mainstream framework of well-being. Well-being is explained from philological, philosophical and psychological perspectives. The Greek meaning of 'being' is considered, followed by the Hedonism and Eudaimonia. Then, dominant methodologies to study well-being are examined and their drawbacks are highlighted. Next, this chapter examines *xing fu*, which is a typical Chinese translation of well-being. The meaning of *xing fu* is studied based on Chinese philology. Afterwards, *xing fu* is scrutinised from two key Chinese philosophies, including the Confucian and Daoist traditions. The psychological literature on Chinese well-being is also reviewed. By contextualising *xing fu*, this thesis reveals another layer of understanding about a Chinese perspective. This layer has often been neglected in the well-being literature when *xing fu* was made as an equivalent to well-being. To recover such a layer of understanding about a Chinese subject, this thesis proposes a conceptual framework that includes both western and Chinese perspectives of well-being and *xing fu* respectively.

2.1 The Mainstream Framework

Dictionaries, such as Cambridge dictionary, Oxford dictionary and Longman dictionary of contemporary English, define 'well-being' as the state of feeling comfortable, healthy, or happy. The World Health Organization (WHO) (1948) describes health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (p.100). The concept of well-being has been popularised since WHO has used it to define health. Implicitly, health does not simply mean an absence of illnesses, but also a positive attribute in life (Fleuret and Atkinson, 2007). Well-being is closely related to human flourishing and linked with daily life, opportunities for personal development and caring communities (WHO, 1986). Hence, well-being can be part of health (Wilcock, Arend, Darling, Scholz, Siddall, Snigg and Stephen, 1998). Nevertheless, from the perspectives of medical and physical sciences, the inclusion of well-being as part of health is challenging, because it is

difficult to measure and explicate well-being (Wilcock et al., 1998). For instance, Pybus and Thomson (1979) conducted research with a sample of 444 New Zealanders and found that their notions of ‘being well’ include varieties of meanings, such as being full of life, feeling alive and vital, having energy and interest, as well as being able to do what one wants and enjoys. Blaxter (1990) conducted a survey with a sample of 9000 adults in the United Kingdom. Her findings highlight that the view of people in the context of health include the experiences of well-being, but their interpretations of well-being differ across one’s life span and between genders. Hence, she regards well-being as a multidimensional concept. In order to examine the specific nature of well-being, the next section considers Greek meaning of ‘being’

2.1.1 Philological Perspective

The term ‘to be’ originates from Greek word, *einai*. It can be expressed as ‘is’ or ‘it is’ (*esti*), ‘what is’ or ‘being’ (*on, to on*). The philologists, Angus Charles Graham (1965) and Charles H. Kahn (1966) analyse the concept of ‘being’ from the Greek ontology. Both philologists insist that the concept of *einai* in Greek serves as an indicator of existence (There is X) as well as essence (what X is per se). According to them, *einai*, represents not merely what exists, but also the essential properties of the subject being described.

Kahn explains that *einai* bears three features, namely, veridical, durative and locative. First, in Greek, any predication in the indicative normally implies an assertion, a claim to truth. Specifically, in Parmenides’ doctrine, *einai* is perceived as the path to truth, conviction and knowledge, which is the same as the path to ‘what is’ or ‘that it is’ (*hos esti*). *Eintai* is normally expressed by absolute construction, with no distinctiveness from essence and predication. However, in English, the verb ‘to be’ in the predicative construction may simply serve as a pure grammatical device that links the predicate with the subject. Such usage of the verb ‘to be’ is generally devoid of the meaning of essence. In fact, *einai* originally represents a strong sense of verity. Second, *einai* signifies duration. Unlike English wherein the verb ‘to be’ can be changed into ‘was’ or ‘were’ in the past tense, all tenses of Greek verb *einai* (present, imperfect and future) are formed from the single, present and durative stem. This implies that *einai* has the durative-present aspect which is intrinsically stable and enduring. Lastly, *einai* has a locative connotation. The Greek idea of existence is linked to a particular location; thus, *einai* has local concreteness. The Greeks view reality as corporeal because they perceive ‘facts’ as ‘things’ and vice versa.

Based on the Greek interpretation of *einai*, the concept of ‘being’ is related to both essence and existence. This philological perspective highlights the very essence of ‘well-being’. Since well-being is derived from the term ‘being well’, the features of *einai* might be applicable to the notion of well-being. Well-being can bear similar characteristics as *einai* which means that well-being can be

veridical, durative and locative. To further explore the notion of well-being, the next part focuses on both philosophical and psychological perspectives.

2.1.2 Philosophical and Psychological Perspectives

The general conceptualisation of well-being is vague; therefore it is a difficult term to define (Danna and Griffin, 1999). In psychology, the concept of well-being is broadly referred to the optimal psychological experience and functioning (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Such a meaning is derived from two philosophical views: Hedonism and Eudaimonia.

a. Hedonism

From Hedonic view, well-being refers to happiness or pleasure. In the fourth century B.C., a Greek philosopher, Aristippus, believed that the goal of life is to experience the maximum amount of pleasure. This approach towards well-being has been followed by many utilitarian philosophers. For instance, DeSade believes that the ultimate purpose of life is to pursue sensation and pleasure; Hobbes argues that happiness is derived from the pursuance of human appetites; and Bentham emphasises that good society can be built through maximising individual pleasures and self-interests. Hedonism assumes human organism is initially empty. Therefore, human beings need to gain meaning in life by seeking bodily pleasure, appetites and self-interests. Within this paradigm, well-being is essentially equivalent to Hedonism (Kahneman et al., 1999). Thus, maximising happiness is the same as maximising well-being (Deci and Ryan, 2008).

Hedonism concerns with both physical and mental pleasures. The predominant view of Hedonism consists of (1) subjective happiness, (2) concern for pleasure versus pain and (3) good versus bad elements of life. One major theoretical construct of well-being is subjective well-being (SWB), which is developed by Diener (1984). Diener considers well-being as subjective since peoples are asked to evaluate their own sense of wellness. Although SWB is a broad category of phenomena regarding happiness (Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith, 1999), it normally consists of three elements: life satisfaction, the presence of positive mood and the absence of negative emotion (Ryan and Deci, 2001). The operational assessment of SWB often includes measuring experiences that are related to positive affect, negative affect and degree of satisfaction regarding different aspects of life, such as marriage, health and work.

Generally, Hedonic psychology is built on the assumption that humans have a malleable nature. A typical example is the set-point theory. Set point theory is one of the dominant research paradigms in the field of SWB (Headey, 2008; 2010). The theory espouses that an adult level of SWB is held at a 'set point', where it does not change because individuals can adapt to most of the situations, except

temporarily in the face of major life-events. The development of set-point theory usually provides account of linking three sets of variables: (1) stable person characteristics (including personality traits), (2) life events, and (3) measures of well-being (life satisfaction and positive affect) and ill-being (anxiety, depression and stress) (Headey, 2010). There are cumulative theoretical developments to supplement, extend or revise the set-point theory, such as the adaptation theory (e.g. Brickman and Campbell, 1971), the Easterlin Paradox (e.g. Easterlin, 1974), the personality theory (e.g. Costa and McCrae, 1980), the dynamic equilibrium theory (e.g. Headey and Wearing, 1989), the multiple discrepancies theory (e.g. Michalos, 1985) and the homeostatic theory (Cummins, 1995). Studies (e.g. Diener et al., 2006; Headey, 2008; 2010) challenge the set-point theory. They show that certain personal aspects or life events, such as the unexpected death of a child (Wortman and Silver, 1987), repeated unemployment (Clark et al., 2004), marriage (Lucas et al., 2003), cosmetic surgery (Wengle, 1986; Frederick and Loewenstein, 1999), family life and health (Easterlin, 2005) and emotional reactivity (Huppert, 2005), can cause serious and apparently permanent changes in individual set-points. Therefore, Page and Vella-Brodrick (2009) and Headey (2008; 2010) argue that the set-point theory is seriously flawed. They demand a replacement of the set-point paradigm.

While the subjective measures of well-being focus on self-reported happiness and life satisfaction, the objective measure of well-being is related to economics. In economics, the measures of well-being cover both macro and micro dimensions. At a macro level, economic researchers usually equate well-being with the material position of a country, which is usually measured by its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (e.g. Kahnemann et al., 1999) or income per capita. Standard economic analysis generally assumes people's well-being increases with consumption of goods and services, which in turns, leads to a growth of utility. Conversely, other economic-related variables, such as unemployment, poverty and inflation would decrease well-being (Clark and Oswald, 1994; Oswald, 1997). For micro-level analysis, an economic determinant of well-being is the respective income of an individual. This measurement is also based on the supposition that income drives consumption and raises individual utility. According to the economic perspective, well-being is associated with materials (Conceição, and Bandura, 2008).

However, it is arguable that well-being cannot solely be measured by GDP or income (Conceição, and Bandura, 2008). Giovannini, Hall and D'Ercole (2006) identify that the measurement of GDP has flaws. For instance, GDP does not account for market values of outputs, changes in asset values, externalities like pollution or depletion of natural resources, and non-market activities, such as housework or illegal activities. Most critiques argue that well-being is a multidimensional concept which encompasses all aspects of human life (Conceição, and Bandura, 2008). Hence, to understand well-being as multidimensional, non-economic indices (such as Quality of Life (QoL) and Human Development Index (HDI)) are created to complement GDP. These indices can include social and environmental indicators such as education, health and nutrition, environment (Giovannini, Hall and D'Ercole, 2006),

value of leisure, damage of pollution (McGillivray, 2007), infant mortality, life expectancy, and adult literacy (Stanton, 2007). Regardless of these measures of well-being, Conceição, and Bandura (2008) contend that a single index tends to oversimplify a complex reality especially when the methodologies used to construct these assessments are not always transparent. Indices can possibly be manipulated by politicians (McGillivray, 2007). This posts questions on the quality of data collected, which can make cross-country comparisons much more challenging (McGillivray, 2007; Conceição, and Bandura, 2008).

Hedonism is one traditional approach to well-being. Nevertheless, there has been considerable amount of debates on equating Hedonic pleasure with well-being. The debates concern whether Hedonic happiness or utility can adequately define psychological wellness (Ryff and Singer, 1998). Eudaimonia is, therefore, endorsed as another view of well-being (Ryan and Deci, 2001).

b. *Eudaimonia*

Many philosophers, religious masters and visionaries consider that well-being is more than happiness. For instance, Aristotle uses the term ‘Eudaimonia’ to indicate well-being (Aristotle, 1985). Eudaimonia is a Greek word, which signifies that human flourishing is the highest human good. Eudaimonia is a central concept in Aristotelian ethics. For Aristotle, Eudaimonia refers to “well-being as distinct from happiness per se” (Ryan and Deci, 2001, p.145). In other words, being positively affective or satisfied does not necessarily mean being psychologically well. Aristotle perceives Hedonic happiness as a vulgar ideal that can imply humans to be slavish followers of their ever-increasing desires. His *‘Nichomachean Ethics’* (1985), written in 350 B.C., posits that true happiness is found when one is expressing virtue – doing what is worth doing. He considers that virtue is the state of mind, which shows a disposition of choosing a mean. Any desire that is too extreme, excess or deficient would destroy virtues. Therefore, Aristotle clearly distinguishes the satisfaction of right and wrong desires. He recognises the importance of developing practical wisdom. He perceives rationality is imperative through virtuous training. Hence, he considers well-being as a process of preserving a mean, fulfilling one’s virtuous potential and living according to one’s inherent intention, rather than an outcome or end state.

According to Eudaimonia, being positively affective or satisfied does not guarantee well-being. Eudaimonia highlights that not all desires or outcomes, which are valued by an individual would lead to well-being. Based on Aristotelian view, Fromm (1979) argues that optimal well-being requires people to draw a distinction between purely subjectively felt needs with objectively valid needs. The subjectively felt needs are those desires that would only lead to momentary pleasure. They would not lead to psychological wellness if they are harmful to human growth. In contrast, objectively valid

needs are always conducive to human growth. The realisation of any objectively valid needs could contribute to human development and wellness.

Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs can be used to illustrate Fromm's categorisation. Maslow identifies several levels of needs: physiological, safety, love, esteem, self-actualization needs. Later on, he further differentiates the self-actualization needs into four more levels: cognitive, aesthetic, self-actualization and self-transcendence needs (Maslow and Lowery, 1998). Subjectively felt needs refer to the lower levels of needs, such as physiological and safety needs. They refer to those fundamental needs that are responsible for short-term pleasure but not for self-advancement. In contrast, objectively valid needs are associated with the higher levels of needs (such as esteem and self-actualisation). Self-actualisation refers to a tendency wherein an individual can comprehend his or her capabilities and attain self-fulfilment. While Hedonism seeks fulfilment on any levels of needs, Eudaimonia mainly targets on self-actualisation. "From the eudemonic perspective, subjective happiness cannot be equated with well-being" (Ryan and Deci, 2001, p.146), because subjective happiness can be attained by acquiring Maslow's (1943) lower level needs, which cannot actualise human potential. According to Eudaimonia, subjective happiness may not be able to promote wellness even though it produces pleasure.

Eudaimonia highlights the belief that humans naturally live for contentment. Eudaimonia aims to understand the conditions that enhance and diminish satisfaction (Deci and Ryan, 2008). Eudaimonia regards self-realization as the main route for contentment. Aristotle considers the highest human good is to realize one's virtues and potential. Unlike the assumption of human organism as empty as put forth by Hedonism, Eudaimonia believes human beings initially have their own potential. Therefore, people live to uncover their human potential. If they realise those needs that contribute to their growths and developments, they would feel contented.

Many psychodynamically and humanistically oriented psychologists reflect Aristotle's view in their works (Jahoda, 1958; Ryff, 1989; Ryff and Singer, 2008). One of the first attempts to explore positive psychological functioning is by Jahoda (1958). Jahoda identifies six healthy psychological functioning: (1) acceptance of oneself, (2) accurate perception of reality, (3) autonomy, (4) environment mastery, (5) growth and development, and (6) integration of personality. Her contribution is significant in terms of the conceptualisation of mental health. Nevertheless, she did not develop a measurement of mental health (Peterson, 2006).

Building on Jahoda's work, Ryff (1989) develops a lifespan theory of human flourishing, named psychological well-being (PWB). Ryff and Singer (2008) further present a multidimensional approach

to measure PWB and separate PWB with SWB. PWB consists of six aspects of human actualisation: autonomy, environmental mastery, life purpose, personal growth, self-acceptance, and positive relatedness (Ryff and Singer, 2008). These six aspects define PWB theoretically and operationally and represent emotional and physical health.

Elements of PWB are personified in the concepts of individuation (Jung, 1933), self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943), adult development and realisation of virtues (Erikson, 1959) and maturity (Allport, 1961). For instance, Deci and Ryan (1985) develop the theory of self-determination (SDT) to embrace these concepts. They identify three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. These needs are related to vitality (Ryan and Fredrick, 1997) and self-congruence (Sheldon and Elliot, 1999). For Ryan and Deci (2000), fulfilling these needs is important to psychological growth, integrity and well-being.

Waterman (1993) also relies on Eudaimonia and labels personal expressiveness (PE) as the circumstance in which peoples are able to feel alive. He found that PE was more strongly related to activities that could contribute to personal growth and development. While Hedonism pays little attention to autonomy, Eudaimonia accounts for the importance of authenticity, autonomy, competence, goals and efficacy (Brunstein, 1993; McGregor and Little, 1998; Carver and Scheier, 1999). Hence, Eudemonic well-being refers to contentment of being fully functioning, rather than simply fulfilling desires.

a. Comparison of Hedonism and Eudaimonia

Debate on Hedonic and Eudemonic approaches on well-being is intense. Table 2.1 shows differences between the two approaches. Discussions often relate to the nature of well-being: whether well-being is objective or subjective; stable or changeable; tangible or intangible and measurable or immeasurable.

In spite of the divergence between the two approaches, they can be complementary. For instance, Compton et al., (1996) examined the relationship among 18 indicators of well-being and concluded that Hedonic and Eudemonic foci could be both overlapping and distinct. Ryan and Deci, (2001) suggest that one defensible position of Hedonism is to use SWB as an operational definition of well-being but endorse an Eudemonic view of what fosters well-being. Hence, two approaches can be used complementarily to generate a deeper understanding of well-being.

Table 2. 1: Well-being: Hedonism and Eudaimonia

Dimensions	Hedonism	Eudaimonia
Principle of well-being:	✧ Being happy	✧ Being fully functioning when one realizes his/her virtues and potential
Happiness and well-being:	✧ Happiness is well-being ✧ Happiness is the goal of life – the end state.	✧ Happiness is distinct from well-being ✧ Happiness is the by-product of well-being ✧ Well-being is a process of fulfilling one's virtuous potential, rather than the end-state
Means to well-being:	✧ Satisfy one's subjectively felt needs (i.e. desires that would lead to momentary pleasure) ✧ Obtain pleasure, avoid pain	✧ Realize human objectively valid needs (i.e. wants that are conducive to growth and development) ✧ Demonstrate human potential
Assumptions:	✧ Human organism is initially empty ✧ Humans live to obtain pleasure and sensation	✧ Individuals initially have potential ✧ Humans live to uncover contentment through realizing their potential
Theoretical constructs in psychology:	✧ Subjective well-being ➤ Life satisfaction ➤ Presence of positive mood ➤ Absence of negative emotion	✧ Psychological well-being ➤ Autonomy ➤ Environmental mastery ➤ Life purpose ➤ Personal growth ➤ Self-acceptance ➤ Positive relatedness

The two approaches are complementary as they share similar ontological assumptions about human nature. Sullivan (1986) refers to 'human nature' as "the characteristics of mankind which generally enable us to distinguish humans from animals, from inanimate objects, and from social abstractions such as society or organizations" (p.535). The debates of human nature often lie in two issues: source and stability. The source relates to whether human is law-bound or self-bound. If human nature is the result of something external (such as biological, historical, cultural, or environmental forces etc.), it can be called law-bound. Conversely, if human nature is created through the course of sense-making and social interaction, it can be called self-bound. The stability dimension looks at whether human nature is malleable or not.

Based on Sullivan's classification, both Hedonism and Eudaimonia assume that humans are to be bound by external forces and rules; however, their learning ability makes them malleable. First,

humans are compelled by physical, chemical, psychological and social “law” (Sullivan, 1986). Based on this assumption, Hedonic and Eudaimonia approaches treat well-being as an ‘external force’ or ‘law’ that would influence human behaviours. In other words, humans are respondents to the ‘external force of well-being’. Resonating with similar thought, well-being is confined to have a definite and fixed prescription. This necessitated the meaning attested to well-being as happiness or economic utility in Hedonism, while in Eudaimonia, well-being means an optimal psychological functioning. Second, humans are assumed to be malleable. Both Hedonic and Eudaimonia approaches presume humans have the ability and tendency to make themselves flexible and adaptable to external forces. For instance, the set-point theory in Hedonism suggests that individuals can maintain their set-points of SWB as they are able to familiarise themselves with external situations; whereas the needs theory in Eudaimonia suggests that human needs vary in accordance with different circumstances. Both approaches assume humans can freely adjust themselves to the external environment.

In examining the ontological assumptions of well-being, Christopher (1999) reveals that well-being (i.e. SBW and PWB) is constructed based on the belief of individualism. Individualism considers each individual as a discrete entity. Accordingly, society is simply a collection of individuals, who are independent to each other. Each person has freedom to define and choose his or her own goals and interests. Needs fulfilment is seen as a natural function of human life; it grants meanings and purposes that underline human behaviours. Significantly, self is viewed as individualistic, independent, and autonomous. In that case, the notion of self with normative prescriptions for goodness is built upon “the ontological and liberal individualism” (p.141). For illustration, European Enlightenment gives rise to utilitarian individualism (Bellah, et al., 1985), which emphasises on the pursuit of rational goals. Since Hedonism focuses on self-interest, utility and rationality, SWB is formulated on the basis of utilitarian individualism. Similarly, the Romantic Movement encourages expressive individualism through self-cultivation. Given that Eudaimonia values self-actualisation and seeks to uncover human potentials, PWB is based upon expressive individualism. After analysing the notion from Hedonic and Eudemonic perspectives, the next part examines well-being in organisational context.

2.1.3 Organizational Studies of Well-being

Besides healthcare and psychology (Page and Vella-Brodick, 2009), attention to well-being has extended to work settings (Warr, 2011). Organisational studies of well-being usually rely on Hedonic and Eudemonic approaches to develop concepts, models and theories (Shizgal, 1999). For instance, behavioural theories of rewards and punishments have been developed based on a Hedonic approach to well-being (Shizgal, 1999). One example is Vroom’s (1964) expectancy theory. Vroom (1964) develops a model of work motivation that includes the components of valence, instrumentality and expectancy. Expectancy theory suggests that well-being is a desirable outcome which an individual expects to attain (Oishi et al., 1999).

Well-being is an important aspect of human resource management (HRM). Beer et al. (1984) illustrate the relationship between well-being and HRM. Based on their model, employee and societal well-beings were treated as long-term consequences of HRM policies and outcomes. Well-being is perceived as a distinct consideration in HRM, because the concept represents both a factor and an outcome for HRM (Noon, 1992). Examinations of employee's well-being normally adopts measurements related to the subjective well-being (SWB) or/and psychological well-being (PWB). A number of measurements are designed to measure employee well-being, such as job satisfaction (Rode, 2004), affective well-being (Warr, 1987; 2011), work stress (Liu, Siu and Shi, 2010), work-related affect (Daniel, 2000), burnout (Maslach, Leiter and Schaufeli, 2009), work attitudes, job security, physical and mental health and social integration (John, 2009). Variables on different levels have been constructed to study their linkages with well-being. For examples, variables related to individual level are: income, personality, strength (Buckingham and Clifton, 2001; Peterson and Seligman, 2004), leadership (Robertson and Flint-Taylor, 2009), work-life balance (Poelmans, Odle-Dusseau and Beham, 2009), coping strategies (O'Driscoll, Brough and Kalliath, 2009), work addiction (Burke and Fiksenbaum, 2009); while variables related to organisational level are: work hours, work pattern (Kirkcaldy, Furnham and Shephard, 2009), technology (Coovert, Walvoord, Stilson and Prewett, 2009), absenteeism, employee retention (Callan and Lawrence, 2009), performance (Iaffaldano and Muchinsky, 1985), employee engagement (Hodges and Clifton, 2004) and organizational interventions (including work-life balance programs, coaching and mentoring) (Biron, Cooper and Bond, 2009; Passmore and Anagnos, 2009).

Peter Warr provides extensive reviews on the concept of well-being in the workplace. Based on theoretical constructs of SWB and PWB, he constructs 'affective well-being' (AWB) as one of the components of mental health (Warr, 1987; 1990; 2007; 2009; 2011). AWB is considered as a domain, which is specifically measured in relation to work domain (job satisfaction and burnout), as well as life domain (life satisfaction and esteem). Warr (1990) presents AWB as a multi-dimensional construct, with two independent dimensions named "pleasure" and "arousal" (p.194). Along the two dimensions, he highlights six key indicators of affective well-being: displeased-pleased, anxious-contented, depressed-enthusiastic. These indicators are affected by job or organisational factors (working hours and organizational culture), dispositional factors (personality) and working attitude and behaviours (job security). Other aspects of mental health, which include competence, autonomy, aspiration and integrated functioning, can also determine an individual level of AWB.

Given the importance of well-being in management discourse, well-being is regarded as a significant aspect in family business. Ceja (2009) highlights that well-being is regarded as a driving force for family business. Well-being could impact the owner-entrepreneur's decisions to take part in the family business (Astrachan and Jaskiewicz, 2008), intention to exit from the venture, organizational commitment (Shepherd, Marchisio and Miles, 2009), ability to deal with challenging situations and

intrinsic work motivation (Ceja, 2009). Well-being could also influence whether the owner-entrepreneur can achieve family's goals, attain family's success and maintain family's commitment to the business (Astrachan and Jaskiewicz, 2008). Hence, well-being could affect the quality of family's life (Danes, Zuiker, Kean, and Arbuthnot, 1999). Furthermore, it could influence the family business in various ways, such as performance (Shepherd et al., 2009), absenteeism (Stier, 1993), productivity (Danes, Leichtentritt, Metz, and Huddleston-Casas, 2000), achievement of business goals, supply of trustworthy human resources (Danes et al., 1999), and succession planning and training (Ceja, 2009). Generally, well-being could assert influences on human, social and financial aspects of family business and could generate impacts on individual, familial and business level.

Even though well-being is important to family business, there are remarkably few studies of well-being in family business literature. Individuals who engage in family businesses could have a work-family relationship pattern that is distinct from other kinds of businesses (Smyrnios, Romano, Tanewskil, Karofsky, Millen and Yilmaz, 2003). For instance, they usually have high control and flexibility over work (Chiu, 1998; Fan and Frisbie, 2009; Wu, Chang and Zhuang, 2010) and perform multiple roles in the same place (Ammons and Markham, 2004; Chiu, 1998). Given the unique characteristics of family business, well-being in family business is most likely different from the conventional view. For example, Hu and Schaufeli (2010) examine the impact of job insecurity and current remuneration on well-being of CFB workers. They found that downsizing and current remuneration were associated with organisational commitment and turnover intention through well-being (burnout and work engagement). Their findings were different from previous surveys conducted in OECD countries, wherein current remuneration was found to be less significant in compensating uncertainty (Clark, 2005). Hence, the notion of well-being needs to be contextualised in a family business environment.

Studies, such as Rothausen (2009), Hu and Schaufeli (2010) and Dodd (2011), began to contextualise well-being in Western family business. For instance, Rothausen (2009) develops a work-family fit model to examine the well-being in family businesses. Her model asserts that separating work and family was essential to address work-family balance. Based on this assumption, she proposed three types of fit as a means of addressing work-family balance: (1) person-person (P-P) fit, which exists when a person maintains a good relationship with others at home or at work; (2) person-environment (P-E) fit, which refers to the match between an individual skills and the job requirements; and environment-environment (E-E) fit, which reflects harmony between one's family and employment context. She highlights that E-E fit is the most germane to family businesses because work or family outcomes are affected by the experiences in the other context. She uses this type of fit to frame the interdependencies of the two environments in family businesses. Besides, Dodd (2011) further presents an occupational stress and health framework for western family firms. She illustrates that the special dangers faced by the western family business owner-managers include heightened risk of accident and

poor physiological health. Nevertheless, the special benefits enjoyed by them are found to be higher task control, social support, evolutionary fitness and a rich accumulation of experiences.

Although well-being could be important in family business, can the notion be universally applied within the context of Chinese family businesses in Hong Kong? Are there any weaknesses and gaps in a mainstream approach to well-being? To respond, the next part evaluates the dominant methodologies employed in the well-being research.

a. Methodologies Employed in Well-being Empirical Studies

This part aims to provide an overview of the methodologies employed in the well-being literature. This review covers 26 articles and treats them as ‘exemplars’ to reflect dominant methodologies employed in the empirical research related to well-being. First, a keyword search on three databases, Science Direct, EBSCO and SAGE Premier is conducted. Keywords include well-being, health, happiness, emotion, satisfaction and work-family conflict, because these aspects are closely related to well-being in the workplace (Danna and Griffin, 1999). Then, purely conceptual studies are screened out. Finally, a total of 26 studies are examined (Appendix A: Table A1).

Following the approach adopted by Coviello and Jones (2004) in their discussion of the methodological issues in international entrepreneurship research, the following discussion review the methodologies used by the exemplars. The evaluation covers research designed employed (Parts i – iii), sampling (Part iv) , data collection (Part v) and data analysis (Parts vi – vii).

i. Methodology

Twenty-three studies reviewed are quantitative (88%), while there are only two qualitative studies (18%) and one study (4%) employs both methods (Appendix A: Table A2). There is a tendency of using quantitative research methodology to examine well-being in FB/entrepreneurship. As indicated by Bird et al. (2002), Kontinen and Ojala, (2010), Shen et al. (2011) in their methodological reviews, FB and applied psychology research is dominated by the positivistic approach. This approach relies on statistics to verify theory driven hypotheses (Kontinen and Ojala, 2010). For instance, the bulk of sample focuses on testing the devised hypotheses on antecedents, moderating or mediating variables that affect well-being. While knowledge of these factors are useful in sensitising researchers to important issues of well-being, it tends to generate limited description on the behavioural process, such as how well-being is being socially constructed or reconstructed within the context.

ii. Fieldwork Time Frame

The majority of studies are based on cross-sectional/single-year data (21 studies, 81%). Only five studies (19%) are longitudinal. These findings are consistent with FB/entrepreneurship research reviews conducted by Kontinen and Ojala (2010) and Chandler and Lyon (2001). Hence, the dominant approach in FB/entrepreneurship provides snapshots of the behaviours and situations at a given point of time (Coviello and Jones, 2004). One weakness of cross-sectional study is its difficulty in revealing the dynamic process and changes over time. This weakness can be a concern in FB research as the social process in FB may well be heterogeneous, dynamic, complex (Nordqvist et al., 2009) and perhaps political. Keeping the above point in consideration, longitudinal studies may be considered to account for possible complexities and changes over time.

iii. Context

Most FB research of well-being (21 studies) focuses on a single country and they are conducted mostly in America (73%) and Europe (15%). By contrast, only three studies (12%) are carried out in Asia. More investigations on well-being in non-western contexts (such as Asian countries and Africa) are encouraged, as their economic, political, cultural and social aspects are quite distinct. Thus, indicating that their forms of family businesses and views on well-being might be very different from that in the west.

iv. Sample Size and Key Informants

The qualitative studies reviewed have a sample size between 10 to 55 respondents, while the sample size of the quantitative research reported range from 55 to 4199 respondents. There is around one-third of the quantitative studies reviewed has a sample size which is less than 200 respondents. However, Coviello and Jones (2004) argue, “if high quality survey data are obtainable from a smaller sample drawn using well-developed selection criteria, meaningful findings can still result” (p.494). Similarly, a small set of case studies can be appropriate given generalizability is often not assumed in qualitative studies.

The main informants in the sample are the self-employed entrepreneurs / owners / owner-managers (18 studies, 69%) and managers / executives (7 studies, 27%). In contrast, only 3 studies (12%) account for the perspectives of non-managerial employees. This indicates that FB research on well-being lacks multiple views from different types of respondents.

v. Source of Data and Data Collection

Empirical studies under review rely on primary data (96%), while only one study (4%) uses secondary data (Appendix A: Table A3). Of the studies using primary data, the majority of them conduct surveys

as their key data collection method. Those surveys consist of paper surveys (73%), telephone surveys (19%), personal interview surveys (8%) and online surveys (4%). Only three studies (12%) employ interviews. None of the studies adopt other qualitative techniques, such as participant observation or documentary analysis.

vi. Level of Data Analysis

FB research on well-being is predominantly focusing on individual (96%), organizational (23%) and group (12%) levels of analysis. However, the societal level of analysis has largely been ignored (Appendix A: Table A4). This weakness is also observed by Davidsson et al. (2001), Coviello and Jones (2004), and Sharma (2004) in their reviews of entrepreneurship and FB research. Even though there are examinations of FB in different countries, most of them simply assume their instruments are culture-free. Out of the studies reviewed, only three studies reviewed pay attention to cultural differences and highlight the cultural specificity of their analyses. However, if the concept of well-being is inherently culturally rooted (Christopher, 1999), the study of well-being needs to be culturally sensitive.

vii. Analytical Approach

Most of the FB research on well-being is survey-based. Therefore, the analytical approach is quantitative, which involves statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics (77%), correlation (69%), some form of regression analysis (54%), mean comparison using t-test (35%), M/ANOVA (23%), factor analysis (19%), path analysis (12%), structural equation modelling (12%), and cluster analysis (4%). In general, the quantitative approaches are fairly sophisticated in terms of reliability and validity, in which most studies would use multiple techniques rather than simply rely on descriptive statistics or simple univariate analysis (Dean, Shook and Payne, 2007). Only three studies use qualitative analytical approaches, including content analysis, thematic analysis and pattern identification that are based on grounded theory. Yet, if researchers would like to gain an in-depth understanding the phenomenon under study, qualitative analyses would be helpful in discovering new themes about well-being.

With the above review on the methodologies, the next part highlights some gaps and weaknesses in the mainstream research.

2.1.4 Lacunae in Well-being Research

According to the above review, it is arguable that positivism and neo-positivism are the dominant epistemologies in well-being research. This argument is aligned with the analyses of Steffy and Grimes (1992) and Leppaaho, Plakoyiannaki and Dimitratos (2015), who found that positivism and neo-

positivism are the prevailing modes of engagement in Organisational Psychology and FB research respectively. The key assumption of the positivist view is that the “social world exists externally and its properties should be measured through objective methods, rather than being inferred subjectively through sensation, reflection or intuition” (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 1991, p.22). Therefore, to positivists, “science is value-free” and the “observer is independent” (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991, p.27). Researchers that follow the positivist paradigm would gather facts, collect statistical data, look for causality and laws, and measure the frequency in which certain patterns occur (Harvey and MacDonald, 1993). They aim to develop and confirm general laws and theories that govern the relationship between various observable variables.

Neo-positivism is a modification of positivism. Neo-positivists rely upon qualitative methods to inductively develop description of pattern, relationships and causal propositions to explain and predict behaviours. Even though neo-positivism rejects falsifications and is in favour of induction, neo-positivism is deeply rooted in positivism. Both treat “knowledge as a correspondence of representations and the reality” and “knowledge production rests on a privileging of the consciousness of the researcher who is deemed capable of discovering the ‘truth’ about the world of management and organizations through a series of representations” (Knights, 1992, p.515). Both positivists and neo-positivists seek to develop theories that aim to represent the empirical reality; construct conceptual frameworks based on various isolatable constituent variables to provide abstract representation of ‘thing’ or event assumed to be out there; and hypothesise relationships between variables. They assume that theory can be generated from the standpoint of the researchers (i.e. observers) who stand ‘outside’ the situations.

Positivism and neo-positivism have contributed to knowledge as these two methodologies are able to highlight the significance of well-being in organisational contexts. However, the possible weaknesses of positivism and neo-positivism are: (1) their restriction on “ontological potential” (Steffy and Grimes, 1992), and (2) limited degree of reflexivity (Jack, Calas, Nkomo and Peltonen, 2008). First, ontological and epistemological questions are largely assumed to be irrelevant in the positivist or neo-positivist research, since inquiries tend to be confined within those propositions that are empirically testable or observable (Steffy and Grimes, 1992). Criticism is generally confined to questions on the internal rules of method. For instance, positivists/neo-positivists seek understanding of well-being as if it was a ‘law-like’ process which influences human behaviour. They primarily focus on variables that affect well-being, whereas the ontological nature of well-being itself becomes a secondary issue which is rarely examined (Sarvimaki, 2006; Simsek, 2009). The practice of systematising and universalising scientific theories in positivism and neo-positivism, can “turn people (*subject*) into things (*objects*)” (Madigan, 1992, p. 266).

From the positivist perspective, the ontological assumption of well-being is confined to be predetermined, law-bound and static. For instance, cross-cultural examinations on well-being is always cross-sectional which assumes well-being is fixed in nature (Diener, Suh, Smith, and Shao, 1995; Veenhoven, 2000; Kontinen and Ojala, 2010; Chandler and Lyon, 2001). Both Hedonism and Eudaimonia have a similar ontological assumption on human nature, a Modern Man, which assumes that human beings would be bound by external forces. In that case, well-being is seen an ‘external force’ or ‘law’ that has the capability to influence human behaviours. However, a definite and lawful prescription of well-being as an external force can neglect the lived experience of human beings, since well-being could be socially constructed through interaction between peoples in a particular situation and within a particular historical and cultural context (Calestani, 2009). Could well-being be dynamic, flexible, interactive and political? Could well-being be (re)created through human interactions in different time and space and with different people? Giving well-being a fixed description or meaning may restrict its ontological potential. There is limited attention to generate detailed description about the dynamic social process in formulating and transforming well-being.

In the examination of international management (IM) discourse, Jack et al. (2008) consider that IM has remained firmly rooted in traditional-functionalist-positivism. Such a research approach has little reflexivity on its epistemological position. Their critique applies to a cultural understanding of well-being. Positivists seldom acknowledge their own participation in the constitution of social reality (Knights, 2005). They have a tendency to be un-reflexive about their ontology, epistemological strategy and the representation they produce. For instance, Christopher (1999) observes that the Hedonism and Eudaimonia may actually “*illuminate the Euro-American cultural roots*” (p.141) and could have little relevance to the *Other’s* (non-western) cultures. The theoretical constructs of subjective well-being (SWB) and psychological well-being (PWB) may constitute a social reality that is based on individualism. Misrepresentation and misunderstanding could result, if the prevailing components of SWB and PWB are transplanted to *the Other’s* culture. Hence, Christopher questions such cultural-free theories or assessments of well-being. He argues that the concept of well-being is inherently culturally rooted. Therefore, he claims that an “understanding of psychological well-being necessarily relies upon moral visions that are culturally embedded and frequently culture specific” (p.149).

Building upon Christopher’s argument, Lu (2010) explains that the notion of self is intricately linked with one’s perception of well-being. Lu argues that well-being is derived from the notion of self, which carries “cultural mandates in a culturally mandated manner” (p.334). By this, Lu emphasises that the perception of well-being is built upon the construction of self, which varies across cultures. For instance, Lu highlights that the Chinese locate self within social relationships and therefore their “social expectations” are “finely integrated into their sense of well-being” (p. 293). The Chinese view self as part of social nexus and nature (Lu, 2008). In contrast, Americans consider self as being

independent; they “uphold personal happiness as the supreme value of life, and blatantly assert individual agency against social restrictions” (p. 294). Thus, Lu contends, “culture serves as a major force shaping the way people conceptualize the self, think about happiness, and cope with difficulties and upheavals in life” (p.290). Hence, if a mainstream framework of well-being is brought to a Chinese context, its assumed universality is questioned. In that case, the voices of a Chinese subject could be marginalised. For illustration, cross-cultural examinations of well-being often exhibit that the Chinese have lower degree of happiness than westerners (Diener, Diener and Diener, 1995; Veenhoven, 2000a). Diener et al.’s (1995) cross-cultural research with students in South Korea, Japan, China and United States explored differences in reported subjective well-being (SWB). They found that students in East Asia appeared to have lower SWB than their American counterparts. Chinese students were found to be less familiar with the notion of SWB, and therefore, appeared to have less concern for SWB.

Why does research often show that the Chinese have lower degree of happiness? One reason is the word ‘happiness’ does not appear in Chinese colloquial language until recently (Lu, 2011). Although the research of well-being in Chinese societies has progressed, most of the studies are typically conducted based on western ideas, cultural tradition and instrumentation. Hedonism or Eudaimonia are always exclusively adopted to interpret the Chinese perspectives of well-being. In examining the conventional approach to well-being, Lu (2010) considers that the mainstream research may have twisted the Chinese culture in order to show psychological equivalence to western theoretical framework. This could be one major shortfall of the mainstream framework. Therefore, it is important to scrutinise Chinese expressions through its local language and intellectual traditions. Well-being is translated as *xing fu* 幸福 in Chinese (Lu, 2001; Dave, 2005). The next part attempts to scrutinise *xing fu* from a Chinese perspective.

2.2 *Xing Fu*: Chinese Expressions of Well-being?

2.2.1 Philological Perspectives

The notion of ‘*well-being*’ is itself a western concept with no exact Chinese equivalent. Lu (2010) notes that the word ‘*happiness*’ has not appeared in the Chinese colloquial language until recently. As suggested by Lu (2001; 2010) in most of his writings, the closest correspondent of the term, ‘*well-being*’ or ‘*happiness*’ in Chinese, is ‘*fu*’ (福). More specifically, Davis (2005) in his “*Encyclopedia of contemporary Chinese culture*”, refers well-being or happiness as ‘*xing fu*’ (幸福). To understand Chinese meaning of *xing fu* (幸福), it is helpful to consider this compound term in Chinese philology.

There is a relationship between a word and its meaning in Chinese linguistics. This indicates Chinese words are often motivated (有理據). Stephen Ullman (1962) classifies motivations into phonetic,

morphological and semantic. Based on Ullman's classification, Li (2005) highlights that the morphological motivation is the most relevant type of motivation in the Chinese language. Morphological motivation occurs in the compounds, words that are made up of more than one morpheme. Each compound is by definition morphologically analysable. Its meaning is motivated, because its component morphemes can more or less indicate its meaning. In lexicology, such a word is named as a 'transparent word'. Chinese are often morphological analysable and motivated by transparent words. Based on this characteristic, the words 'xing fu' (幸福) can be examined conventionally and morphologically.

The compound 'xing fu' (幸福) is made up of two morphemes, 'xing' (幸) and 'fu' (福). *Xing* (幸) means lucky and fortunate (*xing yun* 幸運), while *fu* implies happiness (*you fu qi* 有福氣). This may indicate that Chinese regard having luck and fortune as part of happiness. The word 'fu' appeared as early as bone inscriptions (*jia gu wen* 甲骨文) in Shang dynasty (from 1766 to 1122 BC) (Lu, 2001). Back then, *fu* implied to fill the container with wine and present it at the altar. As such, the original meaning of *fu* is to express human desires through worship of gods and prayers. It represents blessings from gods (Lu, 2001).

To further comprehend the meaning of a Chinese word, Wang Li (1982), a leading Chinese linguist of the 20th century, suggests to analyse the meaning of each Chinese word through decomposition of its character. The character '幸' can be decomposed into '土' and '干'. 土 means earth, ground or soil. The character 土 here has been resembled. In fact, it should be originally referred to the character '夭'. 夭 means early death, a person dies when he/she is young. For 干, if it is treated as a noun, it means a shield. The ancient Chinese view death as only a change in the rhythm of life. They believe that the deceased would continue life in the underworld (*yin jian* 陰間), where their souls could be satisfied as if they were living in this world. Western connotation of underworld would possibly refer to the hell. However, from ancient Chinese perspectives, *yin jian* has a little negative undertone. Many luxurious burial gifts are found in the excavation of Shang's graves, because the ancient Chinese treat burial gifts as shields for the deceased. They are indicators of what constitute happiness. Therefore, unlike western emphasis on contentment in life, the Chinese concept of happiness also includes pleasures after life (both in this world and in *yin jian*).

The character '福' can be decomposed into 示 (*shi*) and 畀 (*fu*). 示 means a sign, while 畀 indicates abundance. The two words put together to become 福 (*fu*), which means a sign of abundance. Further, 畀 is made up of the words '一' (*yi*), '口' (*kou*) and '田' (*tian*). 一 means the first. 口 refers to the mouth, which can have the connotation of eating. 田 stands for farmlands. Based on the composition

of 畝, it implies that the first basic sign of abundance for the ancient Chinese was the farmlands. They relied on farmlands to provide adequate food for eating.

Moreover, there are five signs of abundance in Chinese. The five *fu* (五福) refers to “一曰寿, 二曰福, 三曰康宁, 四曰有好德, 五曰好终命” (longevity, prosperity, peace and health, virtue and a comfortable death); and the six sufferings (六極) include “一曰凶短折, 二曰疾, 三曰忧, 四曰贫, 五曰恶, 六曰弱” (uncomfortable death, sickness, worries, poverty, wickedness and weakness) (*The Great Plan*, 11; in Zhao, 2003, p.38). The hortatory use of the five (sources of) happiness, and the awing use of the six (occasions of) sufferings – “向用五福, 威用六極” are stated in the *Ancient Classics (The Great Plan*, 2; in Zhao, 2003, p.38). A popular greeting at Chinese New Year is “May the five *fu* come beyond your door” (五福臨門).

The meanings of the five *fu* are consistent with Lu’s (2001) description concerning the Chinese concepts of happiness. His work discusses Chinese philosophical and folk views of happiness. He explains that *fu* consists of “material abundance, physical health, virtuous and peaceful life, and relief from death anxiety” (p. 409). In that sense, the signs of abundances include happiness across one’s life span. Therefore, the nature of *xing fu* seems rather stable and long lasting.

According to the Cambridge Dictionaries Online, happiness can also be translated as ‘*kuai le*’ (快樂) in Chinese. The compound of ‘*kuai le*’ (快樂) is made up of the morphemes, ‘*kuai*’ (快) and ‘*le*’ (樂). *Kuai* (快) indicates fast, quick, soon and shortly, whereas *le* (樂) means joyful, jolly and happy. Therefore, based on motivation of transparent words, *kuai le* implies happiness for a short moment or happiness comes quickly. Despite the fact that both ‘*xing fu*’ and ‘*kuai le*’ can be translated as well-being or happiness, they are distinct from each other. From a linguistic perspective, *kuai le* is consistent with Hedonism. In contrast, *xing fu* represents happiness across the life span.

To further comprehend Chinese perceptions of *xing fu*, the next part views *xing fu* from the two Chinese philosophical frameworks, including Confucian and Daoist perspectives.

2.2.2 Philosophical Perspectives

Chinese philosophies have profoundly shaped its culture. Among many schools of thoughts, Confucian and Daoist traditions are the backbone of the orthodox Chinese culture.

a. Confucian Framework

Confucian tradition originates in Shangdong province around 600 years before the Christianity era. Its founder is Confucius (551–472 B.C.), who comes from the landed class. He is known to be one of the earliest philosophers that devised a predominant thought system that shapes Chinese values and their corresponding behaviours. His follower, Mencius (372–289 B.C.), is one of the major contributors in Confucian tradition. The seminal works of Confucian teaching include *the Great Learning* 《大學》, *the Doctrine of the Mean* 《中庸》, *the Analects* 《論語》 and *Mencius* 《孟子》. These works are regarded as “*Four Books*” 《四書》. They explain various subjects, such as virtues, learning and governance of a state.

Even though Confucius does not give prominence to *xing fu*, he spent a lot of time touring the states, educating his disciples on how to build good characters, and preaching to rulers on how to maintain social order. His teachings are mainly concerned with *ba mu* (the eight steps): investigation of things, extension of knowledge, sincere in thoughts, rectification of mind, cultivation of moral characters, establishment of a harmonious family, governance of a state and maintenance of harmony in the world. The Confucian ideal is to achieve societal harmony. In contrast, the mainstream approach to well-being focuses on individual happiness and self-actualisation. While examining Chinese sources of happiness based on folk psychology, Lu (2001) points out that Confucian tradition regards "contributing to society is the ultimate happiness, whereas hedonistic striving for happiness is regarded as unworthy and even shameful" (p. 411). Christopher (1999) also notes that western promotion of individualism, independency and autonomy can be regarded as a sign of selfishness and immaturity in many collectivist cultures. Thus, instead of focusing on personal happiness, the Chinese measure the quality of life by the contribution made to society and the community. Rather than promoting individual well-being, Confucian teaching is concerned more with relational or collective well-being. To understand Confucian tradition, it is important to consider the following key concepts.

i. De (Virtues)

Confucian teachings concern humanism and *de* (virtues, 德). Confucius regarded the importance of spiritual happiness as more paramount than material satisfaction. Consistent with Aristotle's view, Confucius considers happiness could only be derived from having virtues. Confucius said:

“The Master said, “With coarse rice to eat, with water to drink, and my bended arm for a pillow; I have still joy in the midst of these things. Richness and honours acquired by unrighteousness are to me as a floating cloud.” (Analects: Shu R, 15; in Legge, 1949, p.200).

Confucius states that joy is independent of any external circumstances (Legge, 1949). He regards virtues as more valuable than wealth and social status (Yu, 1998). Hence, in the Confucian tradition, happiness is a by-product of being virtuous.

In addition, happiness is closely related to activities that build virtues. Confucius treats virtuous training as the focal point of achieving spiritual contentment. He regards learning as a source of pleasure (Analects: Xue Er: 1; in Legge, 1949, p.137). This perception is quite similar to Eudemonic recognition of growth and development. Both Confucius and advocates of Eudaimonia believe that individuals could develop virtues through self-cultivation, which means that learning can augment one's well-being.

Although both Eudemonic and Confucian frameworks see virtuous cultivation as important, their focal points of teaching are different. Based on Eudemonic perspective, self-determination theory concentrates on aspects like rationality, free agency and individual rights (Ryan and Deci, 2000). On the contrary, Confucian appeal of virtues emphasizes *ren* (benevolence, 仁), *yi* (appropriateness, 義), *li* (ritual propriety, 禮), *zhi* (acting wisely, 智) and *xin* (fidelity, 信). These five virtues are closely linked.

1. *Ren (Benevolence)*

Ren is considered as the principal virtue in Confucian tradition (Cheung, 2011). Other virtues are built upon the foundation of *ren*. *Ren* is normally translated as 'benevolence' or 'humanity'. This means *ren* is related to human kindness wherein one showcases that act of kindness to others. *Ren* concerns with cultivating love and building relations with people. It implies that one cares for the well-being of others (Cua, 1998). It is an other-regarding virtue that lays the ground and justification for altruism (Lu, 2001), to such an extent others become an end, rather than a mean. As such, interpersonal relationships are the central places where one can acquire *ren* (Tu, 1985a). Therefore, "self may not be defined by itself alone, but rather is situated between people" (Chang and Holt, 1996, p.1493). Significantly, self is being constructed interdependently with others (Lu, 2008). This is different from individualism discussed earlier, where self is seen as independent. The Confucian notion of self is based upon social relations (Cheung, 2011).

According to the Confucian teaching, there are five cardinal relations, named *wulun* (五倫). Mencius suggested that *wulun* includes: (1) a ruler and a subject (superior and subordinate), (2) father and son (parent and child), (3) husband and wife, (4) elder brother and younger brother (siblings) and (5) friends (Bockover, 2010). The five relations are interdependent. Among *wulun*, three of the relations belong to the family. Indeed, Confucian tradition places great emphasis on family (Ames, 2009). It sees family as a place for cultivating and extending *ren* (Herr, 2003).

"Benevolence is the characteristic element of humanity, and the great existence of it is in loving relatives" (Doctrine of the Mean, 20:5, in Legge, 1949, p.405)

Here, the degree to which *ren* is developed requires people to love their families.

Even if the relationship between a ruler, subject and friends are not within family ties, they are based on a family model (King and Bond, 1985). For instance, the word ‘country’ in Chinese is ‘*guo jia*’ (‘country family’, 國家), which means that the Chinese perceive their country as a family; and the Chinese could sometimes call friends as ‘*xiong di*’ (‘brother’, 兄弟), which implies that friends must be treated as close as brothers (Cheung, 2011). The concept of ‘*jia*’ (family, 家) can be extended, including non-kin ties that are established through appropriate mutual exchange (Chang and Holt, 1996). The concept of family is not bound by biological fact.

Cultivating *ren* is one of the most significant aspects of Confucian teaching. Ames (2009) translated *ren* as “authoritative conduct”, “to act authoritatively” or “authoritative person” (p.370). In *Mengzi*, it states:

“Benevolence (ren) is the tranquil habitation of man, and righteousness (yi) is his straight path”
(*Mengzi: Li Lou I: 10; in Legge, 1985*)

The quote suggests that righteousness is a way to encourage *ren*. Thus, an individual requires to perform *yi* (appropriateness) and *li* (ritual propriety) for attainment of *ren*. The virtue – *yi*, is, therefore, closely related to *ren*.

2. *Yi (Appropriateness)*

Yi means ‘appropriateness’, as the perspective of something being right is dependent on one’s role and context (Hall and Ames, 1987). *Yi* relates to one’s social status or roles (Cheung, 2011). The Confucian concept of self is placed within the social nexus (Chang and Holt, 1996), thus, the concept of self-worth and self-acceptance rely upon the appropriateness of one’s social behaviours. Based on Confucian teaching, the status or role of an individual is defined by *wulun* (the five cardinal relations). Each role has its own rights, duties, obligations and responsibilities. For instance, Mencius points out that a ruler needs to act appropriately to maintain social order (*Mencius: Liang Hui Wang I, 7*, in Legge, 1985). According to Confucians, the fulfilment of the physical needs of the citizens is an appropriate duty of the ruler.

Moreover, *yi* directs people away from egoism. Confucius perceives one of the qualities of *junzi* (a virtuous person, 君子) is to pursue *yi* and does not seek ego advantages (Cheung, 2011). For Confucius, *junzi* refers to a person who possesses *yi* and acts in accordance with *li* (ritual propriety). *Junzi* would attain *yi* through *keji* (self-discipline) (Hall and Ames, 1987). If one can maintain self-discipline, they would not focus on their personal gains. *Mengzi* states that *junzi* (a virtuous person) would be delighted when (1) his parents are both alive and brothers are not anxious; (2) he has no shame and (3) he is able to acquire, teach and nourish talents (*Mengzi: Jin Xin I, 20*; in Legge, 1985).

3. *Li (Ritual Propriety)*

Originally, *li* refers to sacrifice to the ancestors or spirit. The worship of ancestors is known to be a ritual of some kind (*li*). However, later on, *li* represents the rules that govern one's attitudes and conducts. It does not only indicate "what is appropriate?", but also "doing what is appropriate" (Ames, 2009, p.380). Confucian teaching emphasises "observing ritualized roles and relationship" (守禮) (Ames, 2009, p.122). *Mencius* asserts:

"between father and son, there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between old and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity." (Mencius: Teng Wen Gong I, 4; in Legge, 1985)

The above rules (*li*) guide individuals to act in an appropriate manner within a social relationship. They define appropriate behaviours and set boundaries for individuals to perform various roles in *wulun* (the five cardinal relations). One could accomplish *ren* (benevolence) through *li*, because *li* represents being respectful to others (Cheung, 2011). For instance, in order to instil affection within the relationship between a father and son, both must act in accordance with *li*. The son would, therefore, demonstrate filial piety (love and respect for the parents and ancestors), while the father would show concern and care towards his son.

Within the Confucian tradition, family is a crucial platform for the observation of ritualised roles and relationship. *Li* should begin in the family (Ames, 2009). The virtue of *xiao* (孝) is generally translated as 'filial piety'. Ames (2009) deciphers *xiao* as "familial deference" (p.122). He clarifies that *xiao* represents the kind of respect that is different from 'piety' and 'paterfamilias'. 'Piety' can have a religious connotation, while 'paterfamilias' may imply hierarchical differences. In Confucian teaching, individuals have *xiao* neither because of God's command nor hierarchical obedience. Indeed, *xiao* is a kind of *li* in the family. In Confucian tradition, family is the central point of focus within the life of an individual, thus, one would act in accordance to *xiao* by preserving and expanding the prosperity and vitality of his or her family (Lu, 2001). This further asserts that the well-being of the family would be an essential concern for an individual.

Similarly, if friends behave based on *li*, they would ensure fidelity, that is, honesty and sincerity (*xin*, 信). In fact, *xin* does not only refer to being honest and sincere, it also indicates the trustworthiness and reliability of an individual (Cheung, 2011). So Zi Xia (Tzu-hsia) regards "...in his intercourse with his friends, his words are sincere" (*Analect: Xue Er*, 7; in Legge, 1949, p.141). While blood relations demand obligations, *xin* would be the basis of friendship. Even though friendship is the only form of relation in *wulun* (five cardinal relations) that involves equality, *xin* is an important criterion that governs friendship.

4. *Zhi (Wisdom)*

Zhi is often translated as wisdom. The Confucian concept of *zhi* not only represents one's ability to distinguish between right and wrong (Mote, 1971), but also refers to the ability to understand the situation, their roles and proper interaction with others (Cheung, 2011). It implies knowledge to act in accordance with *ren*, *yi* and *li*. If one can cultivate *ren* (benevolence), possess *yi* (appropriateness) and perform *li* (ritual propriety) appropriately, one can attain *zhi* (wisdom). Therefore, the four virtues are inter-related. Confucian teachings advocate that achieving the four virtues would help a person to realise *dao* (the human way).

ii. *Dao (The Human Way)*

Dao means "the way" (Cua, 1975). The Chinese compound term "*dao de*" ("the way" "virtues", 道德) can be translated as "ethics", which indicates that *dao* and *de* are closely interlinked. Hansen (1993) explains the relationship between *dao* and *de*; *de* are the virtues that would consist of human character traits, skills and disposition and *dao* is the social way that guides a person to realise their virtues within the human system (i.e. individual, family or state). Thus, a person can obtain virtues from comprehending *dao* (the way).

Furthermore, Confucius perceives *dao* as the goal and the ideal of human being (Wong, 2011). *Dao* in Confucian teaching refers to "the human way" (*rendao*, 人道) (Zhang, 2002). *Rendao* refers to the way human beings should live (Wong, 2011).

To envision *dao* is to appreciate the value of *harmony* (Wong, 2011). Li (2008) explains that the principle of harmony (*he*, 和) comes from the Chinese cookery which emphasises that a dish should be made with an appropriate mixture of ingredients to produce a harmonious deliciousness (Ames, 2009). The *Doctrine of the Mean*, treats harmony as a central concept. It specifies that being *zhong yong* ("equilibrium" – "being balanced and upright", 中庸) is the way to achieve harmony (Li, 2008, p. 425). Confucius once said "Perfect is the virtue which is according to the Constant Mean" (*Analects: Yung Ye*, 27; in Legge, 1949, p.194). This implies that people need to act in accordance to the mean and maintain equilibrium in their daily activities (Ames, 2009). Most of the virtues in the Confucian framework focus on the attainment of harmony within an individual, among others and also in the world (Wong, 2011). For instance, *li* (ritual propriety) specifies the appropriate behaviours of various roles in order to maintain harmonious social relationships. Hence, following the patterns of deference could enable harmony (Ames, 2009).

iii. Summary: How Would Confucians Express Xing Fu?

To conclude, in Confucian teaching, *xing fu* does not relate to transient and sensual pleasures. Confucius stresses on collective welfare (including family, society and the entire human race) rather than individual interests. *Xing fu*, in the similar manner, represents a collective well-being, instead of individual well-being alone.

In addition, *xing fu* refers to being virtuous. The four *de* (virtues) are *ren* (benevolence), *yi* (appropriateness), *li* (ritual propriety) and *zhi* (wisdom). These virtues can be obtained through virtuous training. One can achieve happiness through self-cultivation and learning with friends. *Ren* (benevolence) acknowledges the intrinsic goodness of love and care to others. *Li* (ritual propriety) and *yi* (appropriateness) provide guidance in order to behave appropriately in the realm of a social relationship. *Zhi* (wisdom) involves one's knowledge in putting *ren*, *yi* and *li* into practice. Thus, in such a manner, the idea of self is identified in relations to others (Chang and Holt, 1996; Hwang and Chang, 2009). Therefore, *xing fu* lies in the social nexus.

In Confucian teachings, *dao* (the human way) is about one's life goal. To realise *dao*, one must cultivate *de* (virtues) and maintain harmony in different aspects. Hence, according to *dao* (the ideal of human life), the attainment of *xing fu* can be considered as a by-product of being virtuous, maintaining harmony and living in accordance to *dao* (the ideal of a good human life).

b. Daoist Framework

Daoist (also as Taoism) is another philosophical tradition in ancient China, founded in the sixth century B.C. Lao Zi (老子) is the founder of the Daoist tradition. His scripture is *Dao De Jing* 《道德經》. Zhuang Zi (莊子) is a key Daoist philosopher, who wrote the book named, *Zhuang-Zi* 《莊子》.

Chichao (2000) identifies the fundamental distinction between Confucian and Daoist traditions. He highlights that the former centres around human efforts and social relations whereas the latter emphasises on *wuwei* (non-assertive action). While Confucius teaches humans to cultivate social virtues, Lao Zi emphasises the virtue of naturalness (*ziran*). Lao Zi posits that people can enjoy themselves by following the pattern of Nature. To explore Lao Zi's philosophy, it is essential to understand the following concepts.

i. Dao: The Way of Nature

Similar with Confucian tradition, ‘*dao*’ is a key concept within the Daoist framework as well. Nevertheless, Morris (1994) specifies that the interpretations of *dao* between Confucius and Lao Zi are distinct. He highlights that Confucius focuses on *rendao* (the human way), while Lao Zi stresses *dao* as “the way of nature” (p.110). He interprets Lao Zi’s concept of *dao* in naturalistic terms, meaning that *dao* represents the pattern of nature. Lao Zi considers *dao* as the origin of the world. *Dao* is nameless and without any forms (*Dao De Jing*, 25; in Legge, 1891).

How does *dao* come into existence? For Lao Zi, *dao* first manifests itself as *wu* (non-being, 無) making it formless in nature. Then, it gives birth to all possibilities and realises them as *you* (beings, 有). ‘Being’ (*you*) refers to the Heaven and Earth; and ‘non-being’ (*wu*) refers to *dao*, inferring that the Heaven and the Earth are initially created by *dao*.

How does *dao* create all things?

“The Dao produced One; One produced Two; Two produced Three; Three produced All things. All things leave behind them the Obscurity (out of which they have come), and go forward to embrace the Brightness (into which they have emerged).” (Dao De Jing, 42; in Legge, 1891).

In the quote above, “One” refers to a *qi* (energy). Originally, *dao* creates a *qi* (energy). Morris (1994) described the *qi* as “vital pneuma”, “life-force” or “energy” (p.104). Then, the *qi* becomes the source of two opposite forces, *yin* and *yang*, which complement each other in producing things (Cheung, 2011). *Yin* represents obscurity (darkness), whereas *yang* represents brightness. The whole system of the world is built around the dynamics of the two forces. Hence, *yin* can be associated with ‘the earth’, ‘cold’ and ‘femininity’; while *yang* can be associated with ‘the heaven’, ‘heat’ and ‘masculinity’.

Ames (2009) explains the linkage of *yin* and *yang* by describing *wu* and *you* in another manner. *Wu* and *you* are relative and interdependent concepts, *wu* is relative to *you*, and vice versa. Although *yin* and *yang* are seen as opposite, they represent two complementary facets of existence (Morris, 1994). They are not isolated; indeed, they are mutually interdependent. For instance, happiness has emerged due to existence of unhappiness, and vice versa (Lu, 2010). Everything or phenomena have two sides: *yin* and *yang*. Therefore, well-being and ill-being are embedded within a never-ending relationship of interdependence; each depends on the other for existence, contrast and meaning (Lu, 2010).

Yin and *yang* also symbolise the importance of harmony. Neither *yin* nor *yang* exists in pure form. A balanced proportion between *yin* and *yang* has to be presented in every aspect of beings. Therefore, it

indicates that a balance between happiness and unhappiness should be maintained in life (Lu, 2010). How can harmony be maintained? Daoist tradition perceives that all things should be processed in accordance with their own natural order. If everything is allowed to go its own way, the harmony of the world will be maintained (Morris, 1994).

Daoist tradition treats *dao* as the way of life, wherein the individuals need to forsake their egos and pursue the order of nature. Thus, rather than controlling or regulating other things or people, Daoist tradition recognises self by harmonising everything in accordance to the natural rhythms and pattern of the world (Cheung, 2011). Daoist tradition advises people to embody themselves in nature. While Confucian framework constructs self within the social nexus, Daoist framework relates self as an integral part of the nature (Cheung, 2011).

In order to follow the pattern of nature (*dao*), one needs to manifest *de* (potency). *De* in Daoist framework is different from Confucian regards in the context of moral virtues. Kaltenmark (1969) notes that Daoists refer to *de* as the potency of an individual to realise itself within nature (in Lai, 2007). Such potency is obtained from *dao* since human beings come from *dao* (Cheung, 2011). The close connection between *de* and *dao* explicitly implies the importance of maintaining the natural order of things.

In Daoist tradition, any individuals who possess *de* (potency) are called *zhenren* (真人), which means a real or true person (Morris, 1994). *Zhenren* (a real or true person) would manifest *de* (potency) by dropping their egos and cultivating a way of living that is harmonious with the nature. They would not interfere with the natural order of things (Cheung, 2011). They would preserve *ziran* (nature, spontaneity).

ii. *Ziran* (Nature, Spontaneity)

For Daoist tradition, the way to attain *dao* is to preserve *ziran* (nature, spontaneity, 自然). Lai (2007) explores the two dominant interpretations of *ziran*. One is to understand *ziran* as ‘nature’. This interpretation suggests that everything should be attained in their ‘natural state’. Another interpretation is to refer *ziran* as ‘spontaneity’. In Chinese, *zi* (自) means “self” and *ran* (然) indicates “so”, thus *ziran* literally refers to “so-of-itself” (Liu, 2009, p.226). This suggests that individuals need to have mental space for spontaneity, they should refrain from interference and do not impose unnecessary constraints on any individual or situations. Lai (2007) further highlights the differences in these two interpretations with an example:

“People model themselves on the earth, the earth models itself on Heaven, Heaven models itself on Dao, and Dao models itself on ziran” (Dao De Jing, 25; in Liu, 2009, p. 227).

It suggests that a series of links culminate to *ziran*. If *ziran* is interpreted as ‘nature’, this would mean that every individual, the Earth, the Heaven and *dao* itself are ideally modelled on the basis of the nature. Everything should follow the pattern of nature. From this perspective, the natural world is an absolute value or ultimate principle. In contrast, if *ziran* means ‘spontaneity’, it draws attention to the uncontrived movement and changes that occurred within the natural environment. In response to these changes, the condition of beings is to be spontaneous, meaning humans should not disturb the pattern of nature and jeopardise harmony in the nature (Cheung, 2011). Even though, there are fundamental differences between the two interpretations of *ziran*, both of them emphasise on the importance of following the pattern of nature. Therefore, both explanations are supported in the *Dao De Jing*.

iii. Wuwei (Non-assertive Action)

To maintain *ziran*, one needs to practice *wuwei* (non-assertive action, 無為). The most relevant translation of *wuwei* is “non-action” or “doing nothing”. However, Morris (1994) argues that such translation can be misleading. He considers that *wuwei* is more related to a non-assertive action, instead of an excuse for not doing anything nor not daring to act. *Wuwei* is an attitude of mind that one seeks harmony with the nature, rather than in rebellion against *dao* (the way of nature). It represents non-interference and tolerance towards what exists and whatever comes (Villaver, 2007). It suggests that people to defer responses, fit into the environment and follow things as they are, so that confrontations to any obstacles are not necessary (Cheung, 2011). It is an effortless action that enables individuals to respond spontaneously to any situations or circumstances. Therefore, it is a response that preserves *ziran* (spontaneity).

How can one practice *wuwei*? *Wuwei* requires individuals to have an open mind (Cheung, 2011). It requires people to “forgetting of one’s own life/self” (Villaver, 2007, p.2). The individuals need to let go of their personal desires and pre-conceived preferences. They should not urge for fulfilling their wants and needs. They can follow the pattern of nature, and accept what life gives them. Only by living harmoniously with *dao* (the way of nature), they can feel happy, safe and secure.

iv. Summary: How Would Daoists Express Xing Fu?

Daoist framework promotes an attitude towards the natural world. It advocates people to follow the pattern of nature. Self can only be recognised through the harmonisation within the natural rhythms (Cheung, 2011). Therefore, Daoist tradition considers living harmoniously with *dao* (the way of nature) which would lead to true happiness. With *yin* and *yang* philosophy, it indicates that the relationship between well-being and ill-being are interdependent. Therefore, one needs to maintain a balance between happiness and unhappiness in life (Lu, 2010).

To live in accordance to *dao*, one needs to manifest in *de*, which refers to the potency of the individual to realise itself within the nature. Individuals also need to allow for spontaneity or naturalness (*ziran*) by practicing *wuwei* (non-assertive action) in life.

2.2.3 Psychological Perspective

Luo (2001) studies Chinese well-being. His endeavour is among the first to bridge the gap between conventional theories of SWB and Chinese perception on happiness. First, he concludes that for Chinese, happiness is prominently conceptualised as a harmonious state of existence, wherein one maintains a harmonious relationship with oneself and the environment. Such harmony requires an individual to (1) feel satisfied, (2) be the agent of his or her own happiness, (3) regard spiritual enrichment as more important than material satisfaction, and (4) maintain a positive outlook towards the future. Second, he highlights the dialectical relationship between happiness and unhappiness. Thus, happiness and unhappiness are perceived as the two sides of the same coin, wherein one side depends on the other for significance and existence. He explains that Chinese prefer to maintain a balance between happiness and unhappiness in life. Third, he describes that Chinese believe that the pursuit of happiness derived from discovery, contentment, maintaining gratitude, giving, sharing, serving others and self-cultivations.

Based on the above findings, Lu and Gilmour (2006) develop the individual-oriented and social-oriented cultural conceptions of SWB scales (ISSWB). ISSWB does not only consist of conventional aspects of SWB, which is based on the individualistic notion of self, but it also incorporated the East Asian view of self as a relational being. The social-oriented cultural conception SWB is composed of two distinct characteristics: role obligations and dialectical balance. For role obligations, it is based on the Confucian teaching that happiness can be obtained through fulfilling social role obligations and disciplined self-cultivation. For dialectical balance, it is built upon Daoist concept of *yin* and *yang*, which suggests that people should not pursue happiness in excess of unhappiness, and vice versa. Lu and Gilmour (2006) show that Chinese possess stronger social-oriented SWB than Americans, while Americans have stronger individual-oriented SWB. Their study clearly indicates that there are cultural differences in well-being.

Most importantly, ISSWB explores the possibility of a bicultural self. Lu and Gilmour (2006) found that both individual-oriented and social-oriented SWB coexisted among Chinese and American students. This may suggest that different cultural systems could actually coexist at the individual level. Therefore, Lu and Yang (2006) propose the Chinese bicultural self-model. They highlight that Chinese would be influenced by the western culture. Thus, the modern Chinese self-system can be inculcated with both individualistic and social orientations. While examining the bicultural self-model, Lu (2009) found that the aspects of independence and relatedness were both strongly valued among the Taiwan

youngsters. Lu, Kao, Chang, Wu and Jin (2008) also highlight that the bicultural self is prevalent among both the mainland Chinese and Taiwanese, with the former endorsed aspects of the individual-oriented self in a more determined manner than the latter. Their study indicates Chinese may face dilemma between individual-oriented self and social-oriented self. Therefore, Lu (2010) encourages more systematic and fine-grained investigations on examining the dynamic process of such cultural integration, social changes and psychological transformation in Chinese society. Given research on Chinese well-being is still in its infancy stage, he suggests researchers to have a moral obligation and maintain cautiousness to any social transformations. In response to his call, this thesis pays attention to the hybridity of the subject and the dynamics of change in the discourses of well-being and *xing fu*.

This section offers further layer of meaning about *xing fu*. Such a layer is often being ignored in the mainstream framework of well-being. In order to recuperate such a Chinese perspective of *xing fu*, a proposed conceptual framework (Table 2.2) that includes both well-being and *xing fu* is formulated. Both concepts will be contextualised within the chosen research site – Chinese family business in Hong Kong. Therefore, the next chapter will examine the setting.

Table 2. 2: Proposed Conceptual Framework

Dimensions	A western perspective		A Chinese perspective	
Philology:	'Being' in Greek - <i>einai</i> ✧ Meaning: - veridical - durative -locative		<i>Xing fu</i> (幸福) ✧ Meaning: - lucky and fortunate - durative, stable, long-lasting - blessings from the supernatural - harmonious - pleasures in and after life <i>Kuai le</i> (快樂) ✧ Meaning: - fast, quick, momentary, short-lived happiness	
Philosophy:	Hedonism	Eudaimonia	Confucian framework	Daoist framework
<i>Focus</i>	Individualism		✧ Be virtuous ✧ Social relations ✧ Collective welfare	✧ Pattern of Nature
<i>Concept of self</i>	✧ Individualistic, autonomous and independent		✧ Relational and interdependent	✧ Self as part of the Nature
<i>Life goals</i>	✧ Be happy	✧ Actualize human potential	✧ Observing or acting according to the way of Heaven (<i>tiandao</i>)	✧ Live in accordance to the way of Nature (<i>dao</i>)
<i>Ways to well-being</i>	✧ Obtain pleasure ✧ Avoid pain	✧ Realize human potential, growth and development	✧ Cultivate virtues (<i>de</i>) ✧ Maintain harmony in social relations	✧ Manifest the potency (<i>de</i>) to realize oneself within the nature ✧ Allow for spontaneity (<i>ziran</i>) ✧ Practise non-assertive action (<i>wuwei</i>)
Psychology:	✧ Subjective well-being (SWB)	✧ Psychological well-being (PWB)	✧ Socially-oriented SWB: Role obligations	✧ Socially-oriented SWB: Dialectical balance

Chinese family business (CFB) in Hong Kong is the context in which well-being and *xing fu* are scrutinised. In order to provide an understanding of the research context, this chapter examines the management discourse of CFB. The problems of *objectification* and *essentialism* are highlighted in the literature review. Foucault (1972) describes *objectification* as a discursive practice that “transforms human beings into (objectified) subjects” (p.777). While reviewing Redding’s (1990) account of CFB, Xu (2008) considers that a non-western subject is often unwittingly made as an object of knowledge for analysing the western theories. Similarly, Westwood (2001) diagnoses the occurrence of *essentialism* in his examination of management discourse. According to him, *essentialism* is “a reductive strategy” (p.258), in which *the Other* (a non-western subject) is being appropriated and positioned as a “counter-point” (p.250) to the cultural relevancy of *the Self* (the west). Thus, any cultural differences between *the Other* and *the Self* are essentially exaggerated, amplified, aggravated and distorted without rendering much significance to *the Other*. In the literature review, CFB is found to be constructed with distinctive management features, such as small in scale, defensive and unprofessional, which could portray a negative image regarding the well-being of CFB and its members (Redding, 1990; Whiteley, 1992; Chen, 1995; Yu, 2001; Poutziouris, Wang and Chan, 2002). Such an adverse characterisation is considered to be an incomplete or even incorrect representation of CFB (Xu, 2008).

Are the practices of CFB really falling behind the western professional management? Or is such a negative connotation of CFB evident of the *essentialist* tendency in the management discourse that impedes the development of Chinese management? Under what conditions could a Chinese management theory become possible? The thesis is an attempt to offer an answer to these questions. To do so, archaeology is proposed as a plausible way to reveal and dissect *essentialism* in the discourse. In particular, the *Archaeology of Knowledge* proposed by Michel Foucault (1972) is drawn to account for change in the discourse. This kind of archaeology is capable of tracing a sequence of “*conditions of possibility*” (Foucault, 1979, Preface: p. xxiv) that gives rise to a discourse. Thus, in such a way, Foucault’s (1972) archaeology could be able to examine how and when *essentialism* could have taken place within the discourse.

This chapter first discusses the roles of Chinese family business (CFB) in Hong Kong, which is helpful in understanding the broader context of the research. Then the chapter critically reviews CFB in management discourse and highlights the problems in the literature. In dealing with the problems, a new research direction that accounts for change is proposed.

3.1 Family Business in Hong Kong

By 2017, Hong Kong had a population of 7.38 million people wherein 3.96 million of them were included in the labour force (Census and Statistics Department, 2017). Among the working population, 5.5% were self-employed (Census and Statistics Department, 2017). The percentage of self-employed has been on a growth. Many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Hong Kong are family businesses as it is possible for local merchants to start their own businesses with little amount of capital (Zheng, 2002). SMEs still constitute over 90% of all business enterprises in Hong Kong (ECIC, 2005; The Hong Kong Institute of Directors, 2014). Most of the SMEs are controlled, managed and operated by entrepreneurs and their family members (ECIC, 2005; King and Peng, 2007; The Hong Kong Institute of Directors, 2014). Chiu (1998) defines a family business as any business that involves family members in shared ownership, management, or labour on a continuing basis. Approximately 75% of the listed companies on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange (SEHK) are family-controlled (King and Peng, 2007). Some well-established local family businesses that have been in operation since a long time and are being controlled by the succeeding generations, such as *Lee Kam Kee*, *Yu Yan Sang* and *Kwong Sang Hong*. It is not surprising that a substantial portion of firms in Hong Kong are family businesses that have been in operation for over three generations (Hong Kong Society of Accountant, 1997; The Hong Kong Institute of Directors, 2014). Hence, Chinese family business (CFB) plays a dominant role in the economic development of Hong Kong.

Given that a majority of the private enterprises in Hong Kong is small Chinese family firms, most of the Hong Kong Chinese employees have worked in CFBs (The Hong Kong Institute of Directors, 2014) before they are employed by the multinational corporations (MNCs). Their work expectations in MNCs would be most likely derived from their previous work experience in CFBs. Hence, the practices of CFB could be regarded as one reference for MNCs, especially when international human resource management (IHRM) is regarded as the biggest challenges for foreign companies doing business in China (The EU SME Centre, 2015). Very often, MNCs face difficulties in attracting and retaining talent in China (Cooke, Saini and Wang, 2014; The EU SME Centre, 2015). Some of the so called 'best practices' in western Human Resource Management (HRM) are ineffective in managing the Chinese employees (Ariss and Sidani, 2016). For instance, employee assistance programs are often universally used for improving employee well-being. These have been found to be less attractive to the Chinese employees and the concept of work-life balance in HRM is unfamiliar to the Chinese and less entertained by the Chinese managers (Xiao and Cooke, 2012). This indicates that Chinese employees are attracted by a very different set of incentives and disincentives in work (Xiao and Cooke, 2012). If MNCs want to attract and retain talent effectively in China, they need to adopt a more contextual approach in IHRM (Xiao and Cooke, 2012; Cooke et al., 2014; Ariss and Sidani, 2016). In short, understanding some specific practices of CFB is helpful to MNCs to deal with IHRM issues in China.

3.2 Chinese Family Business in Management Discourse

The paradigm of family business research has been developing since the last 20 years wherein the mainstream enquiries concentrate in the western contexts (Sharma, 2004; Zahra, Klein and Astrachan, 2006; Dess, Pinkham and Yang, 2011). Nevertheless, the rapid economic development in Asia (particularly in China and the Southeast Asia) leads to the development of research in the context of CFB. Loy (2012) presents a comparative review of literature on the overseas Chinese family businesses (OCFBs). According to his review, most of the studies examine the business aspects of OCFBs, which includes business growth, competitiveness, management culture, professionalism, performance and internationalism. Thus, the literature reviewed by him highlights ‘strategy’ and ‘management’ as the key areas of investigations in the CFB discourse. Yet, Loy (2012) emphasises the importance of ‘family’ in relations to CFB. Both, the financial and business aspects are interlinked which help to construct the daily lives and practices in CFB.

CFB is often constructed with distinctive features within the realm of structure, strategy and management. For instance, CFB is usually characterised as small and medium in scale that prefers centralised decision making (Redding, 1990; Whitley, 1992), flexible work system (Yu, 2001), paternalistic leadership (Redding, 1990; Whitley, 1992; Sheer, 2013), patriarch family culture (Minkes and Foster, 2011; Yu and Kwan, 2015) and strong stability with limited long-term planning, growth and innovation (Redding, 1990; Chen, 1995; Whitley, 1992; Poutziouris, Wang and Chan, 2002); while the individuals working in CFB are usually devoted to the business wholeheartedly, due to their intrinsic characteristics of being cost-conscious (Redding, 1990; Yu, 2001), diligent (Minkes and Foster, 2011), nepotic, loyal and obligated to family business and committed to prosperity (Redding, 1990; Whitley, 1992; Zheng, 2002; ECIC, 2005; Sheer, 2012).

In the literature of family business, Gordon Redding is a prominent researcher who has made a significant contribution to the understanding of the CFB management. Therefore, it is necessary to critically analyse his work, *‘The Spirit of Chinese Capitalism’* (1990). The aim of Redding’s (1990) study is to examine the notion of economic culture that is prevalent in CFB. He conversed with 72 executives, mainly in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Indonesia. His study pays tribute to Max Weber, as his attempt underlines the work of Weber’s (1958), *“The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism”* (Redding, 1990: Preface vii). Redding perceives the nature and management of OCFB as a cultural artefact, and based on this assumption, he describes the management ideologies of CFB as: “paternalism”, “familism”, “hierarchy”, “personalistic relations”, “reciprocity”, “nepotism”, “limited trust to employees” and “strategic and financial caution” (Redding, 1990: p.145). He considers that the mentioned characteristics are shaped by three key surroundings which are inherited from the Chinese culture: “paternalism”, “personalism” and “insecurity” (p.144). Thus, as a result, he characterises the typical organisational structure of CFB as “small scale” with “product or market specialisation”, “low standardisation”, “low role specialisation”, “strong workflow formalisation”,

“centralization” and “emphasis on line rather than staff” (p.154). For Redding, the CFB relies greatly on *“extensive networking”, “relational contracts”, “interlocking directorship” and “strategic alliances”* (p.144) and concentrates on *“centralised planning and control”, “tight financial and production management”, “informal and pragmatic personnel management” and “vestigial marketing”* (p.145). Redding describes the above features as *‘the Chinese family business management’*. He concludes that CFB has its own distinct managerial mechanism that is substantially different from western professional management, bureaucracy and neutralisation.

Are there any weaknesses and gaps in the above CFB discourse? To answer this question, a critical review of the management discourse is highlighted in the next section.

3.3 Interrogating Management Discourse

A tendency of *objectification* and *essentialism* is identified in the management discourse of CFB. *Objectification* and *essentialism* are issues raised by the critical perspective. In order to understand the two issues, it is necessary to examine the critical management studies.

a. Objectification

Poststructuralism can be regarded as an intellectual movement that was initiated by Michael Foucault and Jacques Derrida in the 1960s. It represents a radical disintegration from structuralism that was once a dominant mode of ideology in Europe since the early 1900s. Structuralism has been formulated on the works of a linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure, who is regarded as ‘the father of structuralism’. In his lecture notes, *Course in General Linguistics*, he states that:

“A language is a system in which all the elements fit together, and in which the value of anyone element depends on the simultaneous coexistence of all the others (de Saussure, 1983, p. 113).

According to the above proposition, he believes that a scientific model of language is connected with a system, which has an underlying structure of rules and codes. Resonating with the thought of de Saussure’s thought, Blackburn (2008) describes structuralism as:

“the belief that phenomena of human life are not intelligible except through their interrelations. These relations constitute a structure, and behind local variations in the surface phenomena there are constant laws of abstract culture”.

To a limited extent, structuralism views “language as a close and complete system” and studies phenomenon “with the law-like precision of a science” (Radford and Radford, 2005, p. 67). In such a case, structuralism tends to study the state of language or phenomenon at a particular moment and

overlook the changes that occurred with time. Such shortcoming gave rise to the post-structuralist movement.

Post-structuralism does not only provide critiques on structuralism but also reveal the diversity of discourse (Xu, 1997). This mode of thinking asserts that to understand any given object, it is imperative to scrutinise both an object or a phenomenon itself and its knowledge system. Thus, in such a manner, a post-structuralist approach examines the production of knowledge. Poststructuralist writers seek to have a critical self-reflection on how the western knowledge is produced and altered over time.

Michael Foucault (1972) studies the production of knowledge. His works refer to the critical studies of social institutions. One of the most influential themes in his works is power, knowledge and subjectivity (Townley, 1993). In *"The subject and power"* (1982), he notably observed the formulation of the discursive object. He asserts that '*objectification*' is a discursive practice that "transforms human beings into (objectified) subjects" (p.777). He highlights three modes of objectification: (1) scientific classification; (2) dividing practice (p.777) and (3) subjectification (p.778). Scientific classification refers to "the modes of inquiry which try to give themselves the status of sciences" (p.777). For example, Foucault explains that while analysing wealth and economics, labours were chosen as the subjects; they were objectified as a productive subject. The second mode of objectification is "dividing practice" (Foucault, 1982, p. 777), wherein the subject that exhibits differences would be divided socially or physically through objectification. This practice is tolerated, justified and even legitimised as the social group gives power to scientific claims (Madigan, 1992). Foucault uses the mad versus the sane and the sick versus the healthy, to illustrate that an individual is given a social and personal identity in the process of objectification and categorisation. He suggests that the mode of inquiry can support and legitimise dividing practice. Scientific evidence is generated to exaggerate or mythologise the differences between groups, which allows and supports the supremacy of dominant group over the others (Curtis and Harrison, 2001). The third mode of objectification is subjectification, "the way a human being turns himself into a subject" (Foucault, 1982, p.778). For this mode, Foucault takes the domain of sexuality to examine "how men have learnt to recognise themselves as subjects of "sexuality"" (p.778). This objectification is different from the other two modes as in this scenario, the person is taking an active role in comparison to other two modes in the process of self-formation. It is a self-understanding process that individuals would conduct and monitor themselves in accordance with the interpretations of their cultural norms (Madigan, 1992). While the human subject is placed in the production of knowledge, it is also located within power relations, because of which Foucault relates objectification to the question of power.

Johannes Fabian follows up on the similar question in his epistemological critique of anthropology: *"Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object"* (1983). He associates the answer with the issue of 'allochronism' (p.32), which indicates that the traditional forms of ethnographic representation necessitate the suppression of the voice of the subject via *"denial of coevalness"* (p.31). He explains that the denial occurs because of the epistemological position of the researchers. He criticises that the positivist approach would require the researchers to employ a given theory for organising the observed phenomenon. In such a way, the theory or the category of the theory is adopted to study *the Other's* culture. Any aspects of *their culture*, which are not covered in the theory, might be treated as unimportant or irrelevant. Accordingly, the positivist approach focuses on what *our theory* allows us to say about *their culture*. Thus, it requires anthropologists to locate their subject in the discursive space of *the theory*. In this case, the subject is made to be *an object of knowledge* for examining *the theory*, without critical self-reflection of all aspects of ethnographic praxis. Fabian regarded such a constitutive phenomenon as distancing and reifying the subject as an inherent object of the anthropologist's observation. For Fabian, such allochronic discourse is a product of ethnocentrism, which is considered as a vehicle of western Self domination and a political act, because the non-western *Other* is ethnographically depicted as "primitive" or "savage" (p.77).

With reference to Fabian's *allochronism*, Levinas' ethics, China's economic culture and language, Xu (2008) generates a critical review of Redding's (1990) *'The Spirit of Chinese Capitalism'*. She speculates that the assumptions made by Redding underpin *'the theory'* of Weber's cultural thesis; the interpretation of overseas Chinese is not devoid from Eurocentric tendency. Redding aims to create a "collectivist form of capitalism" (Goody, 1996, p.7) and "has appropriated the subject into an object of knowledge" to testify Weber's *"The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism"* (1958) (Xu, 2008, p.261). Xu highlights that Redding treated his subject as "data" for theorising, instead of being his interlocutors (p.252). She asserts that Redding is conversing with "those economists who discount culture in explaining economic activities" (p.252), rather than the overseas Chinese entrepreneurs. Thus, she considers such an approach as a process of *'objectification'* (i.e. making the subject as the object of knowledge), which can "interrupt the subject's continuity, deprive its voice and deny its capacity for dialogue" (p.242). Her critique of *objectification* is indeed parallel to the problem of *essentialism*, raised by the post-colonial perspective.

b. Essentialism

Said (1978) draws from Foucault's idea on dynamics of power and knowledge to develop the concept of *'Orientalism'*. He describes *'Orientalism'* as

"a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident" (p.2).

Here, 'the Orient' is referred to *the Other's* culture, particularly in the Near East (the Middle East), whereas 'the Occident' is regarded as Europe (or the west). Said perceives *Orientalism* as a discourse. He argues that the knowledge is formulated through the discursive social practices that create a representation of the object of knowledge. Due to this, the individuals follow these practices for communication, understanding and acceptance. He demonstrates the construction of the knowledge pertaining to Orient's culture through the Occident. *Orientalism* enables one to "understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period" (p.3). Said articulates *Orientalism* as follows:

“... *Orientalism*, a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience” (p. 1).

In brief, *Orientalism* implies “European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self” (Said, 1978, p.3). Said argues that “because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action” (p.3). Though he emphasises the west's encounter with the Middle East only, his logic of analysis could be extended to other European colonial expansions.

In addition to the writing of Said (1978), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is another significant contributor to postcolonial perspective. Spivak addresses a range of issues, particularly history and historiography, feminism, philosophy and literature. Spivak (1981) assays the colonial discourse of history. She posits that literal history is being devised and educated without the awareness about the danger of imperialism and its cultural representations. She considers historical narratives that are formulated on the basis of the perspectives and assumptions of the coloniser, as a form of “planned epistemic violence” (Spivak, 1985, p. 264). Thus, in such a manner, history can be formulated as an imperialist representation of a given object (Young, 2004). Spivak (1988) essentially focusses on the subordination in the South Asian society and the 'Third World'. She highlights how the history of South Asia is being misconstrued and represented; her works question the western fantasy on homogenising the historical narratives of the subaltern. She is one of the earliest scholars who acknowledges the danger of *strategic essentialism* in the subaltern studies.

Jack Goody (1996), a distinguished anthropologist, argues that there is an Eurocentric bias in the western historical writings about the East. He takes Redding's (1990) account of OCFB as an example to illustrate his argument. Redding focusses on Needham's work to examine the Chinese culture and society. However, Goody is aware of the weaknesses in Needham's perception of the Chinese society. Goody (1996) challenges the assumptions in European histories and social theories, particularly the notion of rationality. Rationality as a concept has enabled “the uniqueness” (p.4) of the west to modernise; however, such a notion has differentiated the East as “static” and “backwards” (Goody,

2012, p.118). He argues that there are indeed minimal variations between the East and the West in terms of mercantile activity during the medieval and early colonial periods. Yet, Redding asserts his analysis based on the European rationality. Therefore, Goody (1996) argues that:

“If you start with contemporary Europe or European science as the point of reference, everything else is bound to be deviant, as lacking something. That is the general problem for contemporary European historians looking backwards or elsewhere. Difference takes on a somewhat negative evaluation, since recent European science becomes the norm and everything else is found wanting, a failure that needs accounting for” (p. 153).

He highlights that Redding has ignored the language and logic of the Chinese, and did not cater for any changes in the Chinese oral language and society. Hence, Goody criticises Redding’s work as “it fails to allow for the lexical generativeness of language” and “gives insufficient recognition to the historical development” (p.46). He perceives work of Redding to be an overly “holistic view of man and his society”, wherein the *Greek rationality* and *European science* are used “to qualify men and culture” (p.46). Yet, the indigenous language, logic and social changes are ignored. In that case, even though Redding’s tone is sober, his representation of the Confucian management in OCFB is constructed with European bias.

Nandy is another significant contributor of postcolonial thought. His works primarily concentrate on “the psychology of colonialism” (Prasad, 2003, p.14). Nandy (1983) scrutinises an important aspect of colonialism - “the colonisation of the mind and imagination effected under the colonial situation” (Prasad, 2003, p. 15). According to him, the colonisers altered the minds, values and cultural priorities within the colonised society. Nevertheless, instead of regarding the coloniser as the winner, while the colonised is the loser, he insists that both the parties are victims of colonialism. On one hand, the colonised is perceived as a victim as the coloniser marginalised it; but on other hand, this victim could construct the west based on its own imageries, myths and fantasies. For instance, Nandy observed Indians to serve as an example how the colonised could indeed develop a strategy of survival, evaluate, judge and make choices for the sake of its own purpose. As a result, a plurality of ideologies is often accommodated within the lifestyle of the colonised.

In the light of Nandy’s ideological hybridity and Said’s Orientalism, Homi Bhabha reveals ambivalence in the colonial discourse. He highlights that the relationship between the coloniser and colonised is even more politically complicated than Said’s interpretation of Orientalism (Young, 2004). He identifies the notions of ‘ambivalence’, ‘mimicry’ and ‘hybridization’. Bhabha (1984) follows on the same idea of mimicry as perceived by Jacques Lacan to reveal the ambivalence of the coloniser; the colonial subject is often constructed in a way that is “almost the same”, but still different (i.e. “not quite” or not completely white) (p. 126). He asserts that mimicry implies the coloniser had a greater loss of control since the construction of the colonial, *Other* constitutes only a partial representation of the

coloniser, which is actually "incomplete" and "virtual" (p. 127). Bhabha (1996) regards such "partial culture" as something like "'culture's in-between', bafflingly both alike and different" (p. 54). For Bhabha, the partial culture suggests that there are limitations in the colonial power. Cultural clash and borderline negotiations over cultural differences are possible; therefore Bhabha perceives the colonised to be an agent of menace to the coloniser in an unconscious manner.

Furthermore, Bhabha (1985) develops the concept of hybrid. He describes the colonised as an object, namely, the hybrid. He further asserts that the partial representation of the coloniser indicates the hybridity of its object. According to Bhabha, the impact of colonial power might be observed as the production of hybridisation which undermines the colonial influence. He highlights that hybridisation represents a strategy that reverses colonial domination and enables native resistance and subversion. According to him, hybridisation implies how the culture of colonialism formulates a culture, which is blended in-between the coloniser and colonised. Such an intervention represents the "Third Space of enunciations", an in-between space with the essentialist opposition, contradiction, ambiguity, negotiations and hybridity (Bhabha, 1994, p.56). In reviewing Bhabha's works, Young (2004) comments that Bhabha has provided a solution for Said (1978), as Said was unable to show his representation that could be articulated with the phenomenon of cultural differences.

The postcolonial thought does not confine to the examination of history and psychology. Spivak's idea of *strategic essentialism* is also considered in the management studies. Robert Westwood is a key management researcher who focuses on the critical aspects of international management and organisational studies. While examining the realm of comparative management, Westwood (2001) regards *essentialism* as:

"a reductive strategy wherein the 'Other's' (non-western) subjectivity is constructed by a Western discourse which claims to speak authoritatively and definitively about what constitutes that subjectivity" (p.258).

Anshuman Prasad is another management researcher who focuses his research on postcolonial ideas, organisational culture and ideology, workplace diversity and multiculturalism, resistance and empowerment in organisations. Prasad (2003) refers '*essentialism*' to:

"the idea that any specific group of objects or people (e.g., a race, gender, or class) is marked, identified and defined by pure, immutable, and transhistorical characteristics and essences that inhere in the specific group in question, and that determines the fundamental and unique nature of that group" (p.25).

To further examine the problem of *essentialism*, Westwood (2001) discovers three strategies that are devised by the west to appropriate *the Other* in the dominant discourse. The strategies include (1) dragging *the Other* into the dominant discourse and generating a misrepresentation of their worldview;

(2) representing *the Other* in a way that enabled the west “to capture, lay out and make sense of *the Other*” (p.249); and (3) silencing and marginalising *the Other* through “repression, oppression or denial of the existence of any counterpoint to the dominant group” (p.250). These strategies essentialise *the Other* to operate within the conditions of economic, political and cultural context that are determined and controlled by the west. Specifically, they amplify, exaggerate and distort the perceived cultural differences through essentialising the crucial nature of a particular group of people. Thus, rendering *the Other* “accessible”, “comprehensible” (p.248) and manageable by the western audience. For example, according to Westwood (2001), the representations of Japan in the west have been problematic, with “‘pragmatic’ turns into ‘unprincipled’, ‘group norms’ becomes ‘conformity’, ‘discipline’ becomes ‘regimented’, and ‘paradox’ becomes ‘contradiction’” (p.261). In such a manner, the West could also “reaffirm its own value and power” (p.248). To Westwood, *the Other* is positioned as a “counter-point” (p.250) to the west, without any meaningful specificity attached to *the Other*.

While contemplating the discourse of comparative management, Westwood (2001) diagnosed an *essentialist* tendency in Redding’s work. He observed that Redding displayed a certain continuity of the colonial project. He points out that Redding’s study is based upon the premise that the overseas Chinese have different cognitive thinking on aspects such as “causality, time, self, probability and morality” (p.263). For instance, Redding claims that Chinese thinking is formulated on the basis of practical, pragmatic and concrete perception, rather than abstract logic. This implicitly implies that Chinese is incapable of the western professional management. As a result, CFB is usually being described as small in scale and non-complex in organisational structure. In such a representation, Redding associates Chinese with a negative connotation; CFB has not been able to keep pace with modernisation (Xu, 2008). That is why Westwood (2001) regards Redding has essentialised the Chinese culture.

To sum up, Redding perhaps unwittingly made a partial representation of CFB by:

- (1) ignoring the Chinese language, logic and social changes (Goody, 1996),
- (2) essentialising the Chinese culture (Westwood, 2001) and
- (3) objectifying his subject (the overseas Chinese) (Xu, 2008).

Despite the relevancy of Redding’s (1990) research, the degree of reflexivity is often questioned. To a certain extent, his work is formulated within the concept of structuralism while he examined the underlying structure of rules and codes that governed the Confucian management of OCFB. His work portrays a sense of timeless quality (Xu, 2008), assuming that Chinese culture and society does not change over time. The above diagnosis highlights problems in Redding’s approach to his Chinese subject. These problems could possibly appear in the Orthodox studies of international business management (Westwood, 2001), as well as in the well-being literature. As mentioned in chapter 2,

majority of the well-being studies assume the concept is static and context-free. The Chinese term, *xing fu*, is used as an equivalent to well-being. However, is *xing fu* the same as well-being? The thesis argues that these two concepts are culturally distinctive concepts. The thesis suspects that a Chinese subject could have been essentialised as an object of knowledge (Goody, 1996; Westwood, 2001; Xu, 2008) for testifying a western notion of well-being. A Chinese subject could have been marginalised as they were found to have a lower degree of well-being (Diener, Diener and Diener, 1995; Veenhoven, 2000a). If this is the case, the original meaning of *xing fu* could have been discounted in the well-being discourse. That means, the Chinese perspective of *xing fu* could have been made silence in the well-being literature. Under such a condition, is it possible for researchers to found a concept or/and theory on a Chinese subject? If not, what are the conditions for making a Chinese theory possible? To answer these questions, the thesis aims to explore the conditions in which management researchers could move away from an essentialist tendency. How? Instead of assuming discourse is context-free and static, this thesis takes change into account.

3.4 Accounting for Change

How can research account for change? As suggested by the post-structuralists, one way to look at mutations is to examine the dynamics of discourse. Michel Foucault, particularly in his writing, *'Archaeology of Knowledge'* (1972), adopted archaeology to scrutinise changes in discourse. His archaeology "tries to define those discourses themselves" (p.138), and seeks "a differential analysis of the modalities of discourse" (p.139), "defines types of rules for discursive practices" (p.139) and provides "systematic description of a discourse-object" (p. 140). In other words, archaeology investigates the conditions that give rise to discourse and examines discursive transformations. It uncovers the rules of discursive (trans)formations; it highlights "the analysis of the rules proper to the different discursive practices" (p.207). In short, archaeology is "a discourse about discourse" (p.205).

What is the objective of archaeology? The purpose of archaeology is "to uncover the regularity of a discursive practice" (p.145) through revealing "relations between discursive formations and non-discursive domains (institutions, political events, economic practices and processes)" (p.162). It "seeks to discover that the whole domain of institutions, economic processes, and social relations on which a discursive formation can be articulated" (p.164). Foucault specifically explained that:

"Its purpose is to map, in a particular discursive practice, the point at which they are constituted, to define the form that they assume, the relations that they have with each other, and the domain that they govern. In short, its purpose is to maintain discourse in all its many irregularities; and consequently to suppress the theme of a contradiction uniformly lost and rediscovered, resolved and forever rising again, in the undifferentiated element of the Logos" (pp.155-156).

What are the potential benefits of archaeology? How could archaeology contribute to the management discourse? Archaeology helps the management research to move away from the structuralist tendency and avoid the problems of *objectification* and *essentialism*. Foucault asserts that “history is now trying to define within the documentary material itself unities, totalities, series, relations” (p.7) based on the tradition of ‘structural analysis’ (structuralism). However, he is uncertain over “the possibilities of creating totalities” (p.8) and questions these representations of historical continuity. He considers that “once these immediate forms of continuity are suspended, an entire field is set free” (p.26). How can one break away from such chronology? Rather than describing a linear sequence of events, Foucault scrutinises history on the conditions or rules that govern the discursive (trans)formations. He assumes that the epistemological strategies and tactics can regulate knowledge production and can aid to define the parameters, shape and function of the knowledge products. Therefore, he uses archaeology to search “for the origin, for formal *a priori*s, for founding acts” that regulate discourse and describe the ruptures of a discourse. In such a way, archaeology is able to break down historical unity and hence “free history from the grip of phenomenology” (p. 203). As a consequence, archaeology provides an additional approach to management history.

Another advantage of archaeology is that it offers a possible way to dissect the problems of ‘*objectification*’ and ‘*essentialism*’ in the management discourse. Archaeology takes discourse as not only texts but practices (Foucault, 1972; Jacques, 1996). It examines discursive practices and treats them as conditions or rules governing a discourse. Hence, archaeology helps to investigate what conditions constitute to ‘*objectification*’ and ‘*essentialism*’.

Various researchers have followed Foucault’s archaeology to examine management knowledge. For instance, Jacques (1996) exhibits a history of American management discourse and contextualised the conditions that gave rise to ‘the employee’. He argues that management knowledge has been developed by “indigenizing ‘organisational science’ itself as a discourse shaped by its culture of origin” (p. xiii). His research provides a fundamental base that there is no universal or objective knowledge; management is arguably ‘historically and culturally specific’ (Jacques, 1996). His archaeological analysis offers a critical self-reflection of western management. Xu (1997) also suggests a supplementary account of total quality management (TQM) discourse. She examines the discursive emergence, formation and transformation of TQM and its knowledge production. She signified the importance of archaeology as:

“it enables us to appreciate a radically dislocating effect to ‘positive knowledge’ or to a familiar mode of thought” (p.428).

Her archaeological examination suggests a contribution to knowledge by “allowing historical detail to be played out on the central stage” (p. 429). Her paper is able to “give voice to what established procedures for ‘positive knowledge’ have been unable to deliver” (p.427). Thus, archaeology is able to

uncover the rules governing the management discourse and shows how they could or/and continually affect the present world. Paradoxically, examining the past may guide one to find a plausible resolution. Therefore, through the Foucauldian archaeology, the thesis seeks to (1) diagnose the problems of *objectification* and *essentialism* in the well-being discourse, (2) search for a possible solution to the problems and (3) open a new avenue for management research, where the previously deprived voice can be account for.

To conclude, this chapter has given a brief account of CFB. The dominant representation of CFB focused on the western logic of '*management*' and '*strategy*' because CFB is often construed with distinctive features that are dissimilar or even inferior to western professional management. In regards to *objectification* and *essentialism*, some poststructuralist and postcolonial researchers (such as Goody, 1996; Westwood, 2001; Xu, 2008) have already considered the above as a partial representation of *the Others* which implies a sense of structuralism, a timeless quality in the literatures of CFB and well-being. Considering the problems, this research proposes to adopt Foucault's archaeology to account for change in discourse. Through archaeology, a solution and a new direction to management research can be offered. Details of the methodology will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 Methodology

Chapters 2 and 3 raise issues in the knowledge production of well-being. The thesis suspects that there are issues of *objectification* and *essentialism* in the well-being discourse. To address the issues, the thesis explores conditions of two possibilities: (1) the conditions that made the discourse of well-being possible in a Chinese context and (2) the conditions that could make a Chinese voice possible in management discourse. Hence, two research questions are formulated respectively:

1. *How does the discourse of well-being emerge and transform in a Chinese context?*
2. *Do members of family business in Hong Kong draw upon the discourse of well-being in their daily practices? If not, what expressions do they use in a given period of time?*

Both archaeology and anthropology are used as the methodology. An archaeological examination is taken to answer the first question; while an anthropological examination is conducted to answer the second question. In other words, the first part of analysis will explore the discursive (trans)formations of well-being in a Chinese context; while the second part of the analysis will explore a Chinese perspective on everydayness of life.

Christopher (1999) suggests that any understandings of well-being need to be based on the ‘*moral vision*’, rather than solely relying on theories and measures of well-being that are developed in the west. He suggests alternative methodologies to contextualise individual perceptions of being well. In response to his call, a critical ethnography would be appropriate for this research as it does not only allow me as the researcher to get close to a Chinese subject, but also emphasise reflexivity in order to uphold ethics in research.

This chapter is divided into four parts. First, it describes the researcher’s ontological and epistemological assumptions – a critical perspective. Second, justification for the archaeological and anthropological approach is presented. The thesis draws from Foucault’s (1972) *Archaeology of Knowledge* to demystify a mainstream framework of well-being; while using Geertz’s (1973) ‘thick description’ to reveal indigenous expressions produced by the research subject. Third, a description of the research design is offered, which consists of selection of field site, sampling, challenges of access, methods of data collection and reflexivity. Lastly, the chapter considers activities after the fieldwork, including transcriptions, consolidating data and data analysis.

4.1 Ontological and Epistemological Assumptions

Ontology refers to the assumptions regarding the nature of reality. It concerns with whether social reality is an objective nature and has an independent existence prior to individual cognition (realist

view of social reality), or whether reality is subjective and an output of human cognition (the subjectivist view of social reality) (Johnson, Buehring, Cassell and Symon, 2006). “Epistemology means the theory of the nature of knowledge” (Harvey and MacDonald, 1993, p. 7). To further simplify the term, epistemology concerns itself with the ways with which individuals can gain knowledge about reality and communication knowledge to others (Johnson, et al., 2006). Researchers’ epistemological assumptions are closely associated to their ontological assumptions.

Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2012) classified two epistemological positions: positivism and social constructionism. Positivism is the oldest and dominant school of thought in social sciences (Sarantakos, 1998). Johnson et al. (2006) refer to positivism as a mode of research which relies on a realist view of ontology. Positivists assume that there is an external social world whose properties need to be measured in an objective manner. Therefore, researchers in this tradition pursue quantitative approaches that focus on hypotheses testing and deductive analysis (Easterby-Smith, et al., 2012). They presuppose “the possibility of a neutral observational language” (Johnson, et al., 2006, p.136). Thus, the epistemology of positivism is characterised as objectivist (Johnson, et al., 2006).

In contrast, social constructionism relies upon the subjectivist ontology of social reality (Harvey and MacDonald, 1993). Social constructionism perceives “reality is not objective and exterior, but is socially constructed and given meaning by people” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012, p.23). Johnson et al. (2006) considered such a view as subjectivist as it assumes that there is no absolute truth and law that governs human behaviours. Some researchers (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Sarantakos, 1998) classify social constructionism under the umbrella of the interpretivist or radical humanist paradigm as it assumes the understandings of social phenomena depends on the interpretation of their world by individuals. Thus, instead of looking for external causes and fundamental laws to explain human behaviours, subjectivists seek to understand the reason behind different experiences and examine the systems of meaning that are used by people to make sense of their world and interpret their meanings (Sarantakos, 1998). Subjectivists believe that human behaviours arise from people making sense in different situations, rather than as a direct response from external stimuli. They see an observer as part of what is observed and “human interests are the main driver of science” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012, p. 24). Therefore, subjectivists would “appreciate the different constructions and meanings that people place upon their experience” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012, pp.22 – 23). Hence, subjectivists prefer to take qualitative research approaches that concentrate on human experiences and the meaning(s) people attach to specific situations.

Comparatively speaking, well-being is very rarely studied from a cultural perspective and little empirical investigation has been carried out to examine well-being in a Chinese family business (CFB) context. Hence, this research is exploratory and descriptive, rather than deductive. In other words,

positivist position, which focuses on gathering ‘facts’ and examining causality and laws based on quantitative approaches like hypothesis testing and deductive analysis, would not be appropriate. On the contrary, social constructionism is deemed appropriate for this study given that the research questions require an in-depth understanding of the discursive (trans)formation of well-being and the subject’s lived experience related to well-being.

Undertaking qualitative research without a critical perspective can neglect the exercise of power and the existence of hierarchy and inequalities in the social settings, which can affect the status quo of a social and organisational life (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). Jack and Westwood (2006) criticise that qualitative research in international business is lack of critical perspective. Burrell and Morgan (1979) regarded such a critical orientation as a *radical humanist* paradigm. Apart from positivism and interpretivism, critical social science was developed in the second half of the nineteenth century (Sarantakos, 1998). The critical position is originated from the work of Karl Marx (1818-1883), the critical theorists and feminists. After the Second World War, the critical perspective was accepted in the social sciences, particularly in sociology (Sarantakos, 1998) and business and management (Chua, 1986; Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991; Myer, 1997). On one hand, the critical perspective assumes that human lives are shaped by the restrictive mechanisms and structures. While, on the other hand, it perceives humans to be capable of assigning meaning to the world, acting on it and eventually altering it. Thus, critical researchers do not only study the reality, they engage in it and act on it accordingly. Instead of simply describing reality through language, they recognise that language has the role of ‘constituting’ the social world (Johnson, et al., 2006). They seek to understand how language constitutes the social world in different spheres of social life. There are differences between the three philosophical perspectives (including positivism, interpretivism and critical perspective) (Appendix B: Table B1).

Researchers adopting a critical perspective aim to examine the constraint and oppression that people might feel in their actions and within the structural relationships (Harvey and MacDonald, 1993). Alvesson and Deetz (2005) point out that critical studies tend to focus on investigating “exploitation, repression, unfairness, asymmetrical power relations (generated from class, gender, or position), distort communication, and false consciousness” (p.62). Indeed, a critical lens can be used to examine various social issues, such as the constructed nature of people and reality; language as a system of distinctions is central to the process of construction, arguments against grand narratives and large-scale theoretical system (Marxism or functionalism), power and knowledge connection, fluid and hyperreal nature of the contemporary world, role of media and information technology, and narrative or fiction or rhetoric as the focus to research process (Alvesson and Deetz, 2005).

The critical perspective considers that social structure plays an important role in constituting social reality. To further explain, this means, “reality is constructed by the powerful to serve their needs” wherein the powerful people can “manipulate, condition and brainwash other to perceive things and to interpret them the way they want them to” (Sarantakos, 1998, p.36). This is aligned with postcolonial perspective, wherein it is argued that “the figure of the Other” is a “cultural production” since it is “a priori referent” which is made ontologically possible through the discourses of the researchers and their institutional locations, rather than being objectively existed (Jack and Westwood, 2006, p.493). Studies with a postcolonial thought could be arguably situated within the critical perspective, because they question the western orthodoxy of its reliance on its specific historical, ideological and cultural approaches to study and create *the figure of the Other* (Jack and Westwood, 2006). As outlined in section 2.3, many influential works review colonialism (Said, 1978; Nandy, 1983; Spivak, 1988 and Bhabha, 1990; 1994). Jack and Westwood (2006) call for more critical management studies with a postcolonial perspective. The amount of research which works resonating with a postcolonial perspective has been increasing in the recent years. These works cover a range of topics, including history and historiography (Chakrabarty, 2000; Goody, 1996; 2006; Young, 2004); language and literature (Innes, 2007); sustainable development (Banerjee, 2003); ethics and justice (Xu, 2008); cultural relativism (Ailon, 2008); human resource management of multinational companies (MNCs) in China (Cheung, 2008; 2011) and a variety of subjects in management and organisational studies (March, 2004; Jack and Westwood, 2006; Westwood, 2006). The context of this thesis is Hong Kong, a place that has been colonised by the British; thus, this research is informed by post-colonialism. Hence, this study locates itself within critical management studies.

The postcolonial perspective recognises “research is an exercise in politics representation” (Jack and Westwood, 2006, p.488). To provide future possibilities for critical analysis, Jack and Westwood (2006) propose “a reflexive re-examination of what we already know and having a commitment to bring others’ voices into an ongoing rewriting of IM” (p. 872). Their suggestion indicates a possible way to avoid the problems of *objectification* and *essentialism*. In other words, the researchers must be reflexive and should have a commitment to bring *the Other’s* (non-western) voice into the discursive space.

How can researchers be reflexive and engage *the Other’s* voice into the discursive space? One possible approach is to move towards a postcolonial paradigm, as suggested by Westwood (2004). A postcolonial paradigm refers to the practices that challenge the strategies of representation and try to show how other cultures can be examined and described based on their own standpoint, which is “not appropriating, repressive and controlling” (Westwood, 2004, p. 57). “Its epistemology(ies) reject(s) any universalist and unitarist view of science” and “encourages a paradigmatic shift away from the structural functionalism and neo-positivism that have dominated the field, and challenges any naïve interpretivism as a methodological rejoinder to it” (Jack and Westwood, 2006, p.493). Post-colonial

epistemology aims to open a space for recognising viable alternative knowledge systems and local voices within their own cultures. It helps to locate research in a particular historical, cultural and institutional context and takes local self-representation as the prime resource that drives research conceptualisations and practice. Thus, rather than applying the western hegemony into ‘the Other’s’ context and marginalizing the “voice of the Other” (Westwood, 2001, p.248), one looks for research approaches that are reflexive in nature and could provide space for indigenous values and knowledge system to speak for themselves (Westwood, 2004).

How can one carry out a research within the postcolonial paradigm? In examining the international business and management studies (IBMS), Westwood (2006) proposes few ideas that could reconfigure the IBMS research practice towards a postcolonial approach. He suggests that researchers rebuild their commitments in three aspects: (1) the ontology and epistemology, (2) methodology and (3) ethics and politics. This highlights that “research must become reflexive and aware of its ontological and epistemological assumptions, political position and ethical obligations” (Jack and Westwood, 2006, p.481). First, from ontological and epistemological dimensions, Westwood (2006) reminds the concerned researchers to radically question grand theories and narratives; challenge the functionalism dominant in IBMS and its presumption of universalism; accept the specific, local, historical, cultural and ideological location of any value and knowledge; and acknowledge the legitimacy and value for other indigenous accounts of business and management practices. Therefore, this thesis critically questions the notion of well-being and a mainstream approach. As shown in the research question (Question 1), the study targets to demystify the discourse of well-being.

Second, in considering appropriate methodologies, Westwood (2006) proposes an approach that is reflexive about the location of the researcher, the researched and the relationship between them. Johnson and Duberley (2003) encourage researchers to engage practitioners in reflective conversations. By this, they consider that research is a reciprocal process, wherein the researchers must hold their own logics of thinking as researchable and not immutable and examine how they are part of their own data. Jack and Westwood (2006) suggest using “critically-inspired ideographic methods, for example, critical ethnography” (p.493). Therefore, this research would conduct a critical ethnography. Besides this, Westwood (2006) demands research to be contextually rich. If researchers aim to understand the dynamics in family business, it would be useful to link business activities and practices with the local culture and history, which is embedded in people’s daily life (Chang and Holt, 1996). To understand a particular social context, researchers could carry out contextual analysis on the local language (Wang, 2009). In such a way, “language is not only content; it is also a context and a way to recontextualize content” (Boje, Oswick and Ford, 2004, p.571). Westwood (2006) suggested to “bring about transformation in the language - in the meaning system” (p.107), rather than a neutral translation. Transformation in language analyses the relationship between words and their meanings based on the local expression, traditions and values. In this way, the domain of the researcher is altered and

otherness is preserved. Differences across cultures can be shown. Hence, contextualising aspects of history, culture and language are important, as they are key elements that can contribute to understanding individual behaviours in a given context. To do this, the thesis contextualises the local expressions as revealed in the subject's language and practices.

Third, regarding ethical and political issues, Westwood (2006) reminded researchers to consider the possible effects and consequences of their research practices, such as *objectification* and *essentialism*. They need to reduce any practices that may objectify the subject as an object of knowledge, appropriate or essentialise representations. Researchers, such as Banerjee (2003), Prasad (2003), Learmonth (2009), Cheung (2011), Calestani (2013), Manning (2016) and Jiang and Korczynski (2016), avoided these two problems by offering a discursive space for the marginalised to speak for themselves. Following their lead, this study addresses the issues by undertaking an archaeological and anthropological examination.

4.2 An Archaeological and Anthropological Examination

4.2.1 An Archaeology of Knowledge

In order to answer the first research question, Foucault's (1972) archaeology is used as a vehicle to account for the change in discourse and demystify a mainstream framework of well-being. Archaeology is drawn to examine the discursive practice that produces the knowledge of well-being. For illustration, Xu's (2000) archaeology of quality is one example. She demonstrated that "how 'quality' and 'standard' may have become discursive objects" (p.427) in the discourse of *Total Quality Management*. Following Xu's (2000) approach, this thesis establishes well-being and *xing fu* as discursive objects and examines their (trans)formation in the discourse. Foucault (1972) pointed out that:

"to describe the formation of the object of a discourse, one tries to locate the relations that characterize a discursive practice" (pp.44 - 48)

Here, Foucault refers 'the relations' as "a group of relations establish between authorities of emergence, delimitation and specification" (p.46). To be more specific, it is a group of "discursive relations" (p.47) that "offer its objects of which it can speak ... in order to deal with them, name them, analyse them, classify them, explain them, etc" (p.46). "These relations characterise not the language used by discourse, nor the circumstances in which it is deployed, but discourse itself as a practice" (p.46). Foucault perceives "discourses as practices obeying certain rules" (p. 138). Hence, archaeology examines "the groups of rules that are immanent in a practice, and define it in its specificity" (p.46). For Foucault, discursive practice is particularly formulated by and for a particular group. In this case, archaeology provides a ground for the argument that there is no universal or objective knowledge of well-being. The formation of well-being can be culturally and historically distinctive.

Foucault (1972) identifies “five distinct tasks” (p.160) of archaeology. These tasks imply “what archaeology wishes to uncover is primarily – in the specificity and distance maintained in various discursive formation” (p.160). In short, archaeology is an examination of (a) discursive formation and (b) transformation through (c) different thresholds.

a. Discursive Formation

Foucault (1972) explains that discursive formation “deals with system of dispersion between a number of statements” and “defines regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations) between objects, types of statement, concepts and thematic choices” (p. 38) (Appendix B: Table B2). Such system of dispersion and regularity can be revealed on the basis of the unities of discourse that represent “the history of ideas, or of thought, or of science, or of knowledge” (p.21). Foucault comprehends that “if there really is a unity, it does not lie in the visible, horizontal coherence of the elements formed, it resides, well anterior to their formation, in the system that makes possible and governs that formation” (p.72). Hence, archaeology uncovers such unities and continuity, question them, and then disconnect them within the discourse. Foucault posits that “as soon as one questions that unity, it loses its self-evidence; it indicates itself, constructs itself, only on the basis of a complex field of discourse” (p.23). Therefore, he regards archaeology as “the project of a pure description of discursive events as the horizon for the search for the unities that form within it” (p.27).

How can one uncover unity and disconnect it? It is inclusive of two approaches. First, Foucault suggests to seek ‘a secret origin’ (p.25) in the discourse. He highlights that “the irruption of a real event; that beyond any apparent beginning, there is always a secret origin – so secret and so fundamental that it can never be quite grasped in itself” (p.25). Secondly, one can define the rules and conditions that enable the possibility of a particular statement, making it legitimate and inclusive and vice versa.

In Foucault’s writing, he divided discursive formations into four types: (i) Formation of objects, (ii) enunciate modalities, (iii) concepts and (iv) strategies.

i. The Formation of Objects

In Foucault’s archaeology, he discusses the formation of objects as the first type of discursive formation. The formation of objects examines a question: “what has ruled their existence as objects of discourse?” (p.41). Foucault considers “this formation is made possible by a group of relations established between authorities of emergence, delimitation and specification” (p.44). He further explains that “discursive formation is defined (as far as its objects are connected, at least) if one can establish such a group; if one can show how any particular object of discourse finds its place and law of

emergence; if one can show that it may give birth simultaneously or successively to mutually exclusive objects, without having to modify itself” (p.44).

Foucault devises three ways which can aid in the examination of the formation of the objects: (1) “map the first surface of their emergence” (p.41); (2) “describe the authorities of delimitation” (p.41) and (3) “analyse the grid of specification” (p.42). First, archaeology highlights the rules and object in which an object emerges in a particular context (societies, periods and forms of discourse). This level of analysis reveals “initial differentiation, in the distances, the discontinuities, and the thresholds that appear within it (the discourse)”. It examines how a particular discourse finds “a way limiting its domain, of defining what is talking about, of giving it the status of an object – and therefore of making it manifest, nameable, and describable” (p.41). Second, archaeology describes the individuals or groups who have major authority to “delimit, designate, name, and establish” (p.42) the objects. Hence, “this formation is made possible by a group of relations established between authorities of emergence, delimitation, and specification” (p.44). Lastly, archaeology examines “the grid of specification”, a system wherein the objects are “divided, contrasted, related, regrouped, classified, derived from one another as objects” (p.42) of a particular discourse.

For the feasibility of the above mentioned three tasks, there are several conditions that are imperative for the occurrence of an object: (1) a positive condition of a complex group of relations; (2) a system of relations, including both primary and secondary relations; and (3) “a group of rules that are immanent in a practice, and define it in its specificity” (p. 46). With these conditions, the discourse is regarded as a practice rather than a text.

ii. The Formation of Enunciate Modalities

The formation of enunciate modalities is to “discover the law operating behind all these diverse statements, and the place from which they come” (p.50). According to Foucault, the ways to discover the law operating behind the discourse is to ask: (1) Who is speaking?; (2) Where is the speaking taking place?; and (3) How is the discourse made possible?

The first question – ‘Who is speaking?’ could be more accurately referred as ‘Who is *qualified* to speak?’. For Foucault, archaeology investigates the one who has prestige and right to legitimately define, spontaneously accept or reject any offers of a discourse. For example, the status of one profession, institutions, system, social norms, economic and legal conditions may have given ‘the right’ and ‘limitations’ to practice and to further extend the knowledge within a discourse. The second question – ‘Where is the speaking taking place?’ describes the “institutional *sites*” from which the qualified individuals (in the first question) make their discourse, “and from which this discourse

derives its legitimate source and point of application (its specific objects and instruments of verification)” (p.51). The last question – ‘How is the discourse made possible?’ examines the contexts that enable “the position of the subject” “to occupy in relation to the various domains or groups of objects” (p.52). It looks for “a field of regularity (for various position of subjectivity)” (p.55).

As a summary, the above three questions scrutinise “the various status, the various sites, the various positions that he (the subject) can occupy or be given when making discourse” (p.54). The formation of enunciate modalities shows the manner in which the discourse is established and “linked by a system of relations” (p.54).

iii. The Formation of Concepts

The formation of concepts describes the “group of relations that constitutes a system of conceptual formation” (p.60). Foucault highlights that conceptual formation can be defined through: (1) “forms of *succession*” (p.56); (2) “forms of *co-existence*” (p.57) and (3) “procedures of intervention” (p.58). First, “forms of succession” includes “the various *orderings of enunciative series*” and “*types of dependence* of the statement” (pp. 56 – 57). These forms relate to “a set of rules for arranging statements in series, an obligatory set of schemata of dependence, of order, and of successions, in which the recurrent elements that may have value as concepts were distributed” (p.57).

Second, ‘forms of co-existence’ details all the statements that are involved within the discourse (no matter they are formulated, accepted, criticized, discussed, judged, rejected or excluded). It involves outlining: (1) “a field of presence” (p.57); (2) “a field concomitance” (p.58); and (3) “a field of memory” (p.58). Foucault explains that “in this field of presence, the relations established may be of the order of experimental verification, logical validation, mere repetition, acceptance justified by tradition and authority, commentary, a search for hidden meaning, the analysis of error; these relations may be explicit (and sometimes formulated in types of specialized statement: references, critical discussion), or implicit and present in ordinary statement” (p.57). ‘A field of concomitance’ is inclusive of statements that are active among the studied statements. On the contrary, ‘a field of memory’ refers to “statements that are no longer accepted or discussed, and which consequently no longer define either a body of truth or a domain of validity, but in relation to which relations of filiation, genesis, transformation, continuity and historical discontinuity can be established” (p.58).

Third, “procedures of intervention” refers to the ways that determine the manner in which the statements are *rewritten, transcribed, translated, approximated, delimited, transferred, systemized, redistributed or rearranged* from one discourse to another (p. 59). For instance, the rewriting techniques, modes of translation, ways of appropriation and transfer and systems of redistribution. To

summarise, the formation of concepts defines a system wherein varied elements that are part of the discourse are related to one another.

iv. The Formation of Strategies

The formations of objects, enunciative modalities and concepts could give rise to certain ‘themes’ or ‘theories’ in discourse. Foucault mentioned these themes and theories as “strategies” (p.64). He indicated three possible research directions that can lead to the formation of strategies: (1) “Determine the possible points of diffraction of discourse” (p.65); (2) study “the *economy of the discursive constellation* to which it belongs to” (p.67); and (3) examine how “the determination of the theoretical choices that were actually made is also dependent upon another authority” (p.67). For points of diffraction, they include (a) “*points of incompatibility*: two objects, or two types of enunciation, or two concepts may appear, within the same discursive formation, without being able to enter under pain of manifest contradiction or inconsequence – the same series of statement; (b) *point of equivalence*: the two incompatible elements are formed in the same way and on the basis of the same rules; the conditions of their appearance are identical; they are situated at the same level; and instead of constituting a mere defect of coherence, they form an alternative; and (c) *link points of systematization*: on the basis of each of these equivalent, yet incompatible elements, a coherent series of objects, forms of statement, and concepts has been derived” (p.66). These points “form discursive sub-groups” “as if they were immediately unity and raw material out of which larger discursive groups (‘theories’, ‘conceptions’ and ‘themes’) are formed” (p.66).

Second, the *economy of the discursive constellation* can be studied by depicting the particular authorities that has been directed by one’s own theoretical choice. The discursive constellation represents the role(s) played by the discourse being examined, in relation to other discourses that are currently with it or related to it.

Third, the determination of the theoretical choices can be “dependent upon another authority” (p.67). Foucault specifies that such an authority can be characterized by: (1) the *function* that the discourse under examination has to be carried out in a field of non-discursive practices, (2) “*the rules and processes of appropriation* of discourse” (p.68) and (3) “the possible positions of desire in relation to discourse” (p.68). These are the “formative elements” (p.68) that are made possible in the field of non-discursive practices.

The above description highlighted that under a system of formation, “there exists a vertical system of dependence” (p.73). However, the defined four levels of formation (formations of objects, enunciated modalities, concepts and strategies) are not independent and “there exists a whole hierarchy of relations”

(p.73) among them. Thus, archaeology helps to discover “the complex group of relations that functions as rules”, in which “it lays down what must be related, in a particular discursive practice” (p.74). Besides, Foucault specifies that “as a group of rules for discursive practice, the system of formation is not a stranger to time” and “*must not be taken as blocks of immobility, static form*” (pp. 73 – 74). Thus, discursive formations are susceptible to changes; therefore, archaeology helps to account for changes in the discourse. It seeks to study the transformation within a discourse.

b. Discursive Transformation

How can archaeology examine the mobility and changes in discourse? Foucault’s archaeology is an “archaeological description of change” (p.166). It accounts for discursive transformations in two ways (Appendix B: Table B2). First, discursive elements “may undergo a number of intrinsic mutations that are integrated into discursive practice without the general form of regularity being altered” (pp.74-75). In other words, even if the elements in the discourse might alter, the rules and laws of the formation remain unchanged. Thus, the system itself preserves individuality, within the same groups of relations that are being established. Conversely, the other way of mobility is “the discursive practices modify the domains that they related to one another” (p.75). The elements in the discourse would be articulated with one another which leads to modifications within the group of relations that has been established and developed.

How does archaeology examine the above two kinds of mobility? First, it suspends any “temporal succession” (p.167), that is, “this suspension is intended precisely to reveal the relations that characterize the temporality of discursive formations and articulate them in series whose intersection in no way precludes analysis” (p.167). This can be achieved by (1) defining “the rules of formation of a group of statement” and examining the hierarchy of rules, and (2) showing “how a succession of events may, in the same order in which it is presented, become an object of discourse, be recorded, described, explained, elaborated into concepts, and provide the opportunity for a theoretical choice” (p.167). Second, archaeology analyses the changes through speaking of “discontinuities, ruptures, gaps, entirely new forms of positivity, and of sudden redistributions” (p.169). Archaeology handles the occurrence of differences in a serious manner. Hence, “its aim is not to overcome differences, but to analyse them, to say what exactly they consist of, to differentiate them” (p.171).

How does archaeology analyse differentiations? It sees differences operate through: (1) “a single positivity” (p.171) in each level of events; (2) “the analysis of *transformations*” (p.172); (3) “new rules of formation” (p.173); and (4) “the appearance and disappearance of positivities” (p.175). To begin with, archaeology differentiates between varied levels of events: statement themselves, objects, types of enunciation, concepts, strategic choices and new rules of formation and more. Archaeology believes

there is always “single positivity” in each level of events. Hence, its aim is to reveal such single positivity in each level, so that differentiations between various levels of element can be known.

Second, “archaeology tries to establish the system of transformations that constitute ‘change’” (p.173) by conducting ‘the analysis of transformations’. ‘The analysis of transformations’ examines the disappearance of one positivity and emergence of another through different kind of formation. It also considers “how the different elements of a system of formation were transformed”; “how the characteristic relations of a system of formation were transformed”; “how the relations between different rules of formation were transformed”; and “how the relations between various positivities were transformed” (p.172).

Third, differentiations can be operated with the help of new rules of formation. Foucault regarded the new rules of formation as “the principle of their multiplicity and dispersion” (p.173). These new rules “describe and analyse phenomenon of continuity, return, and repetition” and distinguish formations of various elements as heterogeneous.

Fourth, Foucault believes “it is always a discontinuity specified by a number of distinct transformations, between two particular positivities” (p.175). Not only does archaeology identify appearance and disappearance of positivities, it also examines “the system of interpositivity” (p.176). It signifies the linkages between various positivities and examines the generation of symmetrical effects by such linkages.

Archaeology does not examine the discursive transformation on the sole basis of chronology. Instead, it considers the distribution of time in accordance to the “different thresholds, succession and possible coincidence (or lack of it), the way in which they govern one another, or become implicated with one another, the conditions in which, in turns, they are established...” (p.187). Therefore, the next section explains different thresholds for discursive (trans)formation.

c. Different Thresholds for (Trans)Formation

To describe discursive (trans)formations and to comprehend how the discourses could have developed into science, Foucault highlighted the importance of different thresholds. He outlined the mentioned four thresholds to describe various emergencies of discursive formations and transformations: (1) “Threshold of positivity”; (2) threshold of epistemologization”; (3) “threshold of scientificity”; and (4) “threshold of formalization” (p.187) (Appendix B: Table B3). The chronology of the four thresholds

“is neither regular nor homogeneous” (p.187). The discursive formations do not cross such thresholds at regular interval period of time nor at the same time. Instead, archaeology divides the history of discursive (trans)formations through different thresholds. It outlines the unique order of thresholds being crossed in a discourse, in order to scrutinise its discursive transformations and signify the hierarchy of relations and corrections between various elements.

After understanding the key elements in Foucault’s archaeology, how can research put his archaeology into operation? Some researchers have followed Foucault’s archaeology to examine management knowledge. As mentioned earlier, Jacques (1996) exhibited a history of American management discourse and contextualised the conditions that gave rise to ‘*the employee*’. Xu (1997) provided a supplementary account on *total quality management* (TQM) discourse. She examines the discursive emergence, formation and transformation of TQM and its knowledge production. She maps out the ‘generation of texts’ (p.167) as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4. 1: An Archaeology of TQM

Generation of texts	Description on each level of texts
Conditioning text	<i>Texts formulate earlier than the 1st order text (p.179)</i>
1st order texts	<i>“the original texts on total quality control (TQC)” (p.167) written by guru</i>
2nd order texts	<i>“introductory texts on TQM written by QM experts and/or academics” (p.169)</i>
3rd order texts	<i>“research projects” (p.170) on TQM</i>
4th order texts	<i>“for the consumption of the general public” (p.179)</i>

(Source: Xu, 1997)

Table 4. 2: An Archaeology of Well-being

Generation of texts	The archaeology of well-being
Layers underneath the origins	Conditioning texts of well-being; Conditions that gave rise to the texts
1st layer texts: Formation of a discursive object	Formation of <i>well-being</i> as an object
2nd layer texts: Formation of a discursive concept	Formation of <i>well-being</i> as a concept
3rd layer texts: Transformation of a concept	The discursive transformation of <i>well-being</i>
4th layer texts: Business practice of a concept	Business practices of <i>well-being</i>

Building on Xu’s (1997) ‘orders of TQM texts’ (p.166 – 200), this thesis traces the discursive (trans)formation of well-being. It aims to uncover the rules that govern every layer of the discourse as highlighted in Table 4.2. The procedures are developed on the basis of Xu’s (1997) ‘orders of TQM texts’, but, its focus of archaeological analyses is varied from that of Xu (1997). This thesis places its

centre of interest on the (trans)formation of a concept, whereas Xu (1997) examines the making up of a discourse. Xu (1997) treats TQC texts (i.e. the precondition of TQM discourse) as the 1st order of text and placed the 2nd order of text (i.e. trace of TQM) as the centre of TQM discourse “where ‘TQM knowledge’ appears as operational guideline” (p.172); while the archaeological operation in this study (1) puts any precondition(s) of an object in the layers underneath its formation (i.e. conditions of texts and conditioning texts); and (2) traces how an object is emerged, formed (i.e. in 1st layer of texts) and transformed into a concept (i.e. in 2nd layer of texts). Following Foucault’s sequence of discursive formation, an object is formulated before the formation of a concept. Hence, the movement from 1st layer to 2nd layer uncovers the conditions that an object is ‘recorded, described, explained and elaborated’ (p.167) into a concept. The 3rd layer of texts signifies any transformations of a concept. One needs to pay attention to the thresholds whenever examining the movements along different layers of the texts. Similar to Xu’s analysis, the 4th layer of texts is for knowledge consumption. For this thesis, the context lies in the realm of business management. Therefore, knowledge consumption could refer to any business practices related to the concept of well-being. To justify the use of Foucault’s archaeology, critiques of Foucault are considered in the next section.

d. Critiques of Foucault

Before going into critiques of Foucault, it is useful to understand how Foucault considers critique. In *The Politics of Truth*, Foucault (1997b) speaks about the question of ‘*What is critique?*’. For him, critique indicates a “critical attitude as virtue in general” (p.25). He regards critique as “the art of not being governed quite so much” (p.29). This definition implies a confrontation with power. In other words, there is an “interplay of governmentalization and critique” (p.31), in which “the subject gives himself the right to question truth on its effects of power and question power on its discourses of truth” (p.32). Hence, Foucault places critique in the context of “the politics of truth” (p.32). That is why his work does not only represent his critique of power, but also his devotion to the truth (Sheridan, 1990).

While debates about Foucault’s work as a whole are sometimes intense (Bevir, 1999; Barratt, 2002; Knights, 2002; Rowlinson and Carter, 2002), it is useful to consider his work by following his ideas in two periods: (a) The archaeological and (b) the genealogical phases (Dreyfus and Rainbow, 1982; Burrell, 1984; Knights, 2002; Barratt, 2008). Most criticisms of his archaeology of knowledge are related to epistemological aspects; while comments on genealogy are about political and ethical aspects.

i. Archaeological phase: Epistemological aspects

Foucault’s early work is about his critiques of structuralism. In the Classical period, knowledge is produced based on structuralism – representation and the sign; and analysis of the relationship between fixed elements (Sheridan, 1990). Foucault (1972) regards structuralism as a methodological problem.

Therefore, he uses archaeology to “question teleologies and totalizations” (p.16) in structuralism. His books, such as *Madness and Civilisation*, *The Birth of the Clinic* and *The Order of Things*, represent his critique to structuralism; while *Archaeology of Knowledge* is written to provide a rigorous elucidation of his epistemology.

Foucault is aware of criticisms against his archaeological approach. In the final chapter of *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault (1972) offers a response to an imaginary opponent. He replies to questions regarding the scope and limitations of his archaeology. His response covers the following: (1) anti-structuralism, (2) history, (3) non-science and (4) revolution.

1. Anti-structuralism

First, the opponent challenges Foucault’s dissociation from structuralism. On the one hand, Foucault refuses to locate his archaeological enterprise within structuralism. On the other hand, his approach applies some themes of structuralism. The opponent, therefore, argues that Foucault denies his archaeology as a structural analysis. For instance, the opponent claims that it is impossible to make discourse neither dispensing with the speaking subject nor removing away from history itself; otherwise, the discourse fails to account for its anthropological references and actual and successive events. Foucault (1972) responds by clarifying his aim – instead of isolating structuralism beyond its legitimate recognition; he intends to conduct an analysis that shows how discursive practices differ from one another. For instance, he has “never once used the word ‘structure’ in *The Order of Things*” (p.200 – 201). Although such an analysis does not rely on structuralist principles, he never intends to discard the speaking subject and history. On the contrary, he approaches the subject by defining its diverse positions and functions within discourse; and examining the history of ideas by revealing discursive transformation at different levels.

2. History

Second, the opponent does not accept Foucault’s approach to history, in which he frees discourse from its “constituent activity”, “fundamental teleology” and “subjectivity” (Foucault, 1972, p.201). The opponent questions the status of archaeology – is it history or philosophy? In response, Foucault insists that his archaeology is “a discourse about discourse” (p.205), which differentiates from philosophy as well as history. He highlights that:

“If philosophy is memory or a return of the origin, what I am (he is) doing cannot, in any way, be regarded as philosophy; and if the history of thought consists in giving life to half-effaced figures, what I am (he is) doing is not history either” (p. 206).

If archaeology is neither philosophy nor history of thought, what is it? Foucault specifies that archaeology is “a diagnosis” (p.206) of the potential problems in knowledge production. He treats archaeology as:

“a search for the origin, for formal a prioris, for founding act, in short, as a sort of historical phenomenology (when on the contrary, its aims is to free history from the grip of phenomenology)” (p.203).

Why is it called archaeology? Alan Sheridan offers an answer by an illuminating reading of Foucault. Sheridan is the first one who translates a number of Foucault’s works in English. In *Michel Foucault: The Will to Truth*, Sheridan (1990) offers a useful elucidation of Foucault’s archaeology. He distinguishes the positions held by Foucault and Marx, in terms of their views of the subject and history. Marx’s historical analysis is built ultimately on “the founding function of the subject” and “of human consciousness” (p. 91) – what we can call “total history” and “humanism” (p. 91 – 92). On the contrary, Foucault tries to move away from ‘totalities’ and generates a different form of historical analysis which undermines the primacy of the subject in order to uncover and examine the existence, functions and relations between various discursive practices. In doing so, Sheridan (1990) highlights that Foucault’s methodological approach is different from ‘total history’, in terms of “the attribution of innovation, the analysis of contradictions, comparative descriptions, and the mapping of transformation” (pp.102 – 103). Given Foucault writes a different form of history that moves away from what men have said, he would rather use a term, “archaeology” (Sheridan, 1990, p. 102). Hence, the term ‘archaeology’ is coined in order to separate what he was doing from the established norm in the history of thought.

Following Foucault’s archaeology, Jacques (1996) writes about history to interpret the present. He examines American management history in order to understand a direction for the future. He insists that:

“This history is written to show some of the patterns made by the present as its kaleidoscopes into the immediate future. It does not yield to prediction, but seeks to throw into relief the fault lines and points of leverage marking the points at which intentional action is most likely to have results” (pp.13 – 14).

Hence, Jacques’s archaeological examination “seeks to change work practices by changing the way we think about what can be changed, what should be changed and what possibilities exist for those involved in change” (p.14).

Another example is Xu’s (1997; 2000) assessment of Total Quality Management (TQM). She follows Foucault’s archaeological approach to trace the formation of knowledge on quality. In doing so, she studies historical details in order to address the problems in the established management knowledge,

such as an imbalance operating modes of thought in the discourse on quality and a gap in the division of 'theory and practice' (Xu, 2000, p.447). She highlights that:

"Paradoxically, asking questions backward does allow me (her) to think forward. Not only does a way of thinking produce knowledge, its production cannot be separated from its discursive condition" (p. 447).

Even though Foucault, Jacques and Xu have clearly indicated their purposes and ways of accounting for history, archaeology is still being disapproved by those historians who tend to have a very different commitment in terms of what history should be about. For instance, Rowlinson and Carter (2002) identify six criticisms of archaeology, which are "(1) impenetrable style; (2) avoidance of narratives; (3) ambivalence to truth; (4) errors in historical facts; (5) neglect of relevant historiography; and (6) questionable historical explanations" (p.527). They articulate these arguments and assess the works of Clegg, Jacques and Burrell, who took a Foucauldian approach in their organisational analyses. For example, Rowlinson and Carter (2002) suspect that Jacques (1996) has failed to engage with appropriate historiography and generalize with adequate textual evidence. To such a review, Knights (2002) argues that Foucauldian analysis should not be seen as a conventional style of history. Foucault does not show much interest in staying in the past nor resolving the scholarly debates (Barratt, 2008). Indeed, Foucault has never claimed that his archaeological approach represents an evolutionary development of history. In particular, Foucault's analyses are not equivalent to historical stages from feudalism to socialism through the process of capitalism in Marx's materialism (Knights, 2002). Rather than framing history in a linear sequence (i.e. the pre-modern, modern and postmodern times), Foucault looks at the conditions of historical possibility. He examines the conditions of and "an effect of 'problem' of the present, not the past" (Knights, 2002, p.579). Given that 'history' in the Foucauldian style has shed some light on management (Jacques, 1996; Savage, 1998; McKinlay, 2006); 'history' becomes a resource for understanding the present (Barratt, 2008). The historical nature of Foucault's archaeology highlights a sense of contingency and fluidity in the present day practices (Sheridan, 1990; Barratt, 2002). This is perhaps why Foucault (1977a) describes his distinct form of examination as "history of the present" (p. 31), and not about the past.

Barratt (2008) outlines three ways to construct a history in the Foucauldian style: (1) start to diagnose any problems of the present; (2) explore the complex and contingent process regarding how and when the present took shape; and (3) examine governmentality by studying the languages used by the authorities to analyse the objects and process of governance. Working along those three steps, Barratt highlights that the purpose of a Foucauldian history is to:

"seek to capture not only the rationalities or games of truth that underpin the activity of government, but how these particular ways or style of ordering, defining and regulating human being have come into being" (p.520).

Hence, Foucault considers that there is always a complex history underlying concepts, classification and instruments of control which consist of a given rationality (Barratt, 2008). That is why Barratt (2008) regards a Foucauldian history as:

“fictional narratives – not in the sense of a falsehood – but in the sense that through the ordering placed on historical data (Falzon, 1998) and the deployment of language (p.521).

Thinking along this direction, one can appreciate that a Foucauldian history lies in the way it enables and “seeks to transform the understanding of the reader” by moving away from the orthodoxy representation of historical truth (Barratt, 2008, p.521).

3. Non-science

Third, the opponent argues that Foucault’s archaeology is not a science. Archaeology is challenged for not being able to establish rigorous scientificity and create future generality (Foucault, 1972). Foucault defends that he has “never presented archaeology as a science, or even as the beginning of a future science” (p.206). That is to say, archaeology should never be treated as a science, because it is not supposed to be so. Nevertheless, archaeology is related to sciences, given archaeology describes many science-objects and touches on questions raised by psychoanalysis, philology, epistemology, political sciences, sociology and biology.

In his careful reading of Foucault, Sheridan (1990) offers some explanation of the archaeological enterprise. Sheridan highlights that the nature of archaeology cuts across both science and non-science domains, because archaeology functions in between scientific and non-scientific streams. For that reason, archaeology produces non-scientific knowledge which is not supposed to be judged by scientific criteria. To Sheridan, the key contribution of Foucault is his attempt to avoid Marxist analyses, and to inspect the system of articulation between discursive and non-discursive practices.

Although Foucault himself and Sheridan have clarified the scope and nature of archaeology, much criticism against archaeology is based on the rules of science. One condemnation is Foucault’s analyses lack implications that can unify theories with current practices (Smart, 1983; Barratt, 2004). For instance, Foucault is challenged by Marxist supporters for discounting the economic, social and political practices at that time (Sheridan, 1990). The empirical weakness of Foucauldian studies of management is that they provide little proof and evidence in telling the truth (Guest, 1999). Legge (1995) calls this problem as “relativism” – “a rejection of the existence of fundamental truths, in the power of reason and observation” (p. 301). However, in his defence, Foucault (1970) insists that it is not possible to generate any ‘final’ or ‘definite truth’. *Archaeology of Knowledge* is written to extend his previous outputs (such as *Madness and Civilisation* and *The Order of Things*) and that represents

his own elucidation and reflection of his analyses regarding certain theoretical and methodological problems. Foucault (1972) states that:

“Rather than founding a theory – and perhaps before being able to do so, (I (he) do not deny that I (he) regret(s) not yet having succeeded in doing so) – my (his) present concern is to establish a possibility” (pp.114 – 115).

Instead of constructing a rigorous theoretical model, he uses archaeology to open up and establish a possibility of mapping the linkages between discursive and non-discursive practices. To that end, Sheridan (1990) clarifies that Foucault does not intend to develop a theory of history. Nor does he support any theories related to political, social or economic practices. His archaeology is not meant to be a “pure theory”, but “an invitation to discussion” (p. 213).

Foucault’s distinctive form of analysis is “not ‘grand narrative’ or ‘totalizing theory’ (Knight, 2002, p.579). The objective of Foucault’s analysis is neither theory building nor preserving a particular ‘truth’ within a theory (Smart, 1983; Barratt, 2002; Knight, 2002). His archaeology focuses on examining:

“the interrelationship between formation of domains and objects (e.g. madness and sexuality, etc.) and their articulation within discourse itself subject to rules and procedures of verification and falsification – and the effects of this complex relationship ‘in real’” (Smart, 1983, p.136).

That means, the theoretical and practical implications of his work lie in revealing complicated processes and practices in which power relations are regulated, governed and rationalised, instead of a definite representation of an individual or a particular field of experience (Barratt, 2002). Foucault’s analyses contribute to “an understanding of the historical conditions of possibility of the human sciences and their social and political effects” (Smart, 1983, p. 73). Hence, Foucault’s (1972) archaeology is an analysis of conditions of possibility in the discursive (trans)formation.

Foucault’s writing represents a shift from theory to analysis. His work moves from a positivistic tendency towards a critical reflection upon the existing sets of stable and inviolable findings, concepts, principles and theories (Knights, 2002). One important practical implication from reading Foucault is to learn from his attitude and spirit which might guide one towards a distinctive form of reflexivity in scholarly practices (Barratt, 2002; 2004). In other words, a useful lesson from taking Foucault seriously is to: (1) follow his commitment to questioning conventional thought about what seems to be unthinkable (Knights, 2002); (2) maintain responsiveness to any danger and opportunities and (3) be willing to criticise and change one’s values and thinking (Barratt, 2004). In such a spirit, the researcher of this thesis attempts to (1) challenge the mainstream discourse of well-being; (2) respond to any potential danger of objectification and essentialism in discourse and (3) evaluate one’s values and practices in management and research.

4. *Revolution*

Last, the opponent argues that Foucault is making a revolution that causes difficulties to others (Foucault, 1972). A warning is issued regarding the conditions of Foucault's archaeology. Foucault responds tactically by identifying a double mistake of the opponent. First, Foucault makes it clear that the discursive positivities he has formulated should not be interpreted as limitations imposed on the subjects, but rather an attempt to reveal a complexity and density of discursive practices. He specifies clearly at the introduction chapter that his aim "is not to transfer the field of history" (p.15). Second, Foucault asks a rhetorical question to his opponent:

"What is that fear that makes you reply in terms of consciousness when someone talks to you about practices, its conditions, its rules and its historical transformations? What is that fear that makes you seek, beyond all boundaries, ruptures, shifts and divisions, the great historico-transcendental destiny of the Occident?" (p. 210).

Foucault considers the only answer to the above questions is "a political one" (p.210). Hence, he implies that after all, the criticism against him comes from a political intention. While such a note closes his defence of archaeology, it opens up his mind to genealogy.

ii. *Genealogical phases: Political and ethical aspects*

Foucault admits that a hidden criticism of archaeology is its lack of attention to power relations in discourse (Sheridan, 1990). Therefore, in the later stage, he takes an interest in examining the role of power in discourse and adopts Nietzsche's term of 'genealogy'. In his *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977a), he highlights the power/knowledge relations as follows:

"Power produces knowledge ... Power and knowledge directly imply one another... There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (p.27).

That means, power and knowledge are interdependent, in which "all knowledge is political" (Sheridan, 1990, p.220).

Foucault's genealogy arouses intense debates regarding power/knowledge relation. One typical argument against genealogy is that Foucault does not offer enough ground for any resistance or agency (Smart, 1983; Said, 1986; Barratt, 2003; 2004). Foucault has over-emphasised the effects of power. As a result, the subject is reduced as a passive recipient of power (Borg, 2015), who seems to be stripped off for any capacity to struggle (Gabriel, 1999; Newton, 1998; Reed, 1998). To defend against this denunciation, referring to Foucault's texts is necessary. In *the subject and power*, Foucault (1982) explains that:

“Power is exercised only over free subjects and only insofar as they are free. By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments may be realised” (p. 790).

By this, Foucault actually highlights the importance of the free subject in the power relation. He emphasises that:

“In this game freedom may well appear as the condition for the exercise of power... The relationship between power and freedom’s refusal to submit cannot, therefore, be separated” (p. 790).

Hence, Foucault suggests that power can be exercised only when the subject has a certain capacity of freedom to resist. That is to say, resistance represents a form of freedom of the subject. Hahm (2001), Barratt (2002), Knights (2004) and Borg (2015) derive a similar argument based on their thoughtful readings of Foucault. They argue that the existence of power implies the possibility of resistance – “whenever there is power, there is also resistance” (Knights, 2004, p. 22) or “there can be no power ... without the possibility of resistance” (Borg, 2015, p.13). Therefore, according to Foucault, freedom and resistance are regarded as the conditions of possibility for power (Hahm, 2001; Barratt, 2002; Knights, 2004; Borg, 2015).

Given genealogy scrutinises the conditions of possibility of how the subject is able to act according to themselves within particular power relations, the notion of agency has been inwardly examined (Barratt, 2003). In his *Politics of Truth*, Foucault (1997b) highlights that:

“I will say that critique is the movement by which the subject gives himself the right to question truth on its effects of power and question power on its discourses of truth” (p. 32).

Hence, Foucault implies that one can exercise his/her agency to resist the normalizing effects of power (Bevir, 1999; Hahm, 2001). In other words, the subject can utilize the capacity for agency to question any received identity (Bevir, 1999). This is the moment when the subject has the right to question the power. That is why Barratt (2003) argues that:

“If Foucault fails to theorize agency in any formal sense, this can be defended as a deliberate move rather than an omission” (p. 1077).

His argument is based on the view that agency should not be assumed as an abstract capacity. Instead, agency should be examined in relation to any social practices regarding how peoples with different capacities, resources and possibilities are able to act on themselves within a specific social context (Ross, 1999). Then, what are the conditions that the subject can possibly exercise agency in a social relationship? Foucault’s notion of *governmentality* sets out a condition of this possibility. In the *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, Foucault (1997a) defines that ‘governmentality’:

“implies the relationship of the self to itself, and I (he) intend(s) this concept of ‘governmentality’ to cover the whole range of practices that constitute, define, organise, and instrumentalise the strategies that individuals in their freedom can use in dealing with each other. ... Thus, the basis for all this is freedom, the relationship of the self to itself and the relationship to the other. ... I (He) believe(s) that the concept of governmentality makes it possible to bring out the freedom of the subject and its relationship to others – which constitutes the very stuff of ethics” (p.300).

For Foucault, the subject is involved in an active constitution of the self via his/her conscientiousness and self-knowledge and this is referred as critical self-reflection and transformation (Foucault, 1977b). Along the process, the subject can govern oneself by exercising a certain capacity of freedom in order to produce ethical conducts in a social intercourse (Hahm, 2001; Borg, 2015). In other words, the subject exercise agency and resistance through the ethics of care for the self and its relations with others, instead of the suppression of power (Hahm, 2001). This is what Foucault (1977b) calls *an aesthetics of existence* (aesthetic self), which can be considered as a condition in which the subject would exercise his/her autonomy of resistance for the purpose of producing an ethical self. Therefore, the concept of agency is implied in Foucault’s ideas of *governmentality* and *an aesthetics of existence*.

Foucault’s ideas are arguably applicable in the workplace given the subject at work is positioned in economic relations that are as much as in the power/knowledge relations mentioned by Foucault (Barratt, 2002; Knights, 2002; 2004). For instance, it is arguable that Foucault’s concern of power can be applied in relation to the limits of capitalism raised by Marx (Smart, 1983; Barratt, 2002; Bidet, 2016). Bidet (2016) has attempted to bring Marx and Foucault together. Bidet produced a synthesis of both Marx’s capitalism and Foucault’s liberalism. In particular, Bidet took Foucault’s dimension of knowledge-power to demonstrate the incompleteness and missing links of Marx’s theory of Capital. While Bidet’s attempt is insightful and novel, it is also unjustified to selectively appropriate Foucault’s power/knowledge without recognising the incompatibility between Marx and Foucault, in terms of their epistemologies and assumptions. This argument has been raised by Knights (2004) in his examination of organisational analysis. On one hand, Knights recognises the value of Foucault in management studies. On the other hand, he is also aware of a weakness in writing organisational analyses into Foucault – There is a strong tendency for organisational theorists to select Foucault’s genealogy to examine the power and discipline within organisations. In particular, *Discipline and Punish: The birth of the prison* has become a popular representation of Foucault, in which a majority of organisational studies focuses and draws from this book. As a consequence, Knights warns that such a selective appropriation of Foucault could lead to the following danger:

“Accordingly, his (Foucault’s) epistemology is often ignored, his uniquely sceptical approach to history marginalised, his analysis of power and resistance constrained by reading into it dualistic conceptions that are wholly inappropriate, his ethics seen as self-indulgent rather

than a culmination of his life's work and a vivid example of his method of deploying universally-held values precisely to struggle against them" (p.590)".

In order to avoid the above risks, Knights suggests pushing organisational analysis towards a manner that can fully engage with Foucault. One way to do so is to remain vigilant with Foucault's epistemological approach by constantly challenging what is taken for granted and examining the conditions of possibility. Therefore, following Knight's advice, this thesis deploys Foucault's archaeology to challenge the concept of well-being and scrutinise the conditions of subjectivity that made well-being possible in a Chinese context.

Postcolonial perspective is an example that builds from Foucault's idea of power/knowledge relations. Postcolonial studies challenge the politics of knowledge and examine the conditions of possibility of imperialism and colonialism. Given Foucault's epistemological approach tends to focus on 'how' and 'when' questions (Foucault, 1970; 1972), some postcolonial researchers have extended Foucault's inquiries and stepped further to address the 'why' question. They focus on investigating the details and impacts of the colonial projects. For instance, Stoler (1992) highlights the divisiveness of the colonial project by assessing its intentions, objectives, practices, interaction and impacts. Another example is Westwood (2001), who does not only examine the knowledge/power strategies of the colonist, but further analyse the purposes behind the strategies. He offers answers concerning why essentialism occurs in the comparative management discourse. In his examination, the three motives of essentialism are:

- (1) The West would like to spread modernization and development and incorporate underdeveloped nations into the world economy;
- (2) The process of incorporation reduce the uncertainties and threats posed by *the Other*;
- (3) Making *the Other* amenable to a system of categorization, organization and order.

In addition to identifying the causes of essentialism, Westwood (2001) calls for strategies that examine how *the Other* can be relocated in terms of agency, reversal and hybridity. For instance, Ngugi (1981) demonstrates a decolonisation by resisting the language of dominance (i.e. English), writing in African language and focusing on the specificities of African language. Another example is from Tibi (1995) who illustrates a possibility of de-Westernising science in Muslim society. He insists on Muslim knowledge system – 'knowledge for living'; while rejecting Western "knowledge for power" in the Islamic world (Watt, 1988: 13). These examples show how researchers may respond to critiques of Foucault by defending their approaches based on Foucault and extending his enquiries. The next section clarifies how this thesis draws from Foucault and justifies the use of Foucault's archaeology in light of its critiques.

iii. Justification for taking archaeology

In the literature review (Chapter 2 and 3), the researcher suspects a possibility of essentialism in the well-being discourse. Given Westwood (2001) has examined the causes of essentialism, the researcher of this thesis seeks to address another two gaps in the literature:

(1) Does essentialism occur in the well-being discourse? If so when and how?

(2) How can essentialism be avoided in management research?

In response to the above questions, this thesis consists of an archaeological and anthropological examination. A close reference to Foucault's (1972) archaeology is drawn in the first part of the analysis so as to diagnose essentialism in well-being discourse, while anthropology is taken in the second part of the analysis as a solution to overcome essentialism in management research.

The first task of the analysis is to examine whether essentialism occurs in the well-being discourse in a Chinese context. To do so, this thesis focuses on archaeology, not genealogy. In light of critiques of Foucault, the use of archaeology in this thesis is justified based on three reasons. First, archaeology is appropriate because it is "a discourse about discourse" (Foucault, 1972, p. 205) – an investigation that would allow one to examine how different discursive conditions and practices (including both discursive and non-discursive domains) have made well-being discourse historically possible in a Chinese context. Given essentialism is regarded as an epistemological issue (refer to section 3.3), it occurs due to certain discursive conditions and practices, rather than the speaking subject nor any fixed elements at the theoretical level. In that case, archaeology would allow one to go beyond any structuralist principles to analyse the discursive conditions and practices that lead to essentialism. In other words, an archaeological examination is taken to study the conditions of possibility of essentialism within the well-being discourse. Nevertheless, one cannot abandon the speaking subject. On the contrary, archaeology is deployed to scrutinise the subject's changing positions and functions within the well-being discourse. Furthermore, the second part of the analysis in the thesis is an anthropological examination which would allow one to get close to the speaking subject, so that a possibility for overcoming essentialism may be established.

Second, archaeology is taken because it is a "history of the present" (Foucault, 1977a, p. 31). Archaeology is a form of history – "a diagnosis" (Foucault, 1972, p. 206) of problems in the existing knowledge production. Archaeology reveals problems within discourse by examining its practices, conditions, rules and historical transformations. Discursive transformations are scrutinised at various levels, so as to identify problems along the change process. That is to say, archaeology highlights a sense of contingency in the present discourse. Through an archaeological examination, the conditions of historical possibility of essentialism and its impact on the current work practices of well-being are

explored. To that end, archaeology can be a way to critically examine the contemporary practices of well-being and their influences in management and research.

Third, archaeology is drawn because it is “an invitation to discussion”, instead of a “pure theory” (Foucault, 1972, p. 213). “Rather than *founding* a theory”, archaeology aims to “establish a possibility” (Foucault, 1972, p. 114 – 115). This objective aligns with the intention of this thesis. Based on the literature review, essentialism has denied or marginalised *the Other’s* voice. Under such a condition, founding an indigenous voice is impossible. In other words, conditions for forming any theory for an indigenous subject are not yet met. Therefore, archaeology is taken to create a possibility of illuminating essentialism in the well-being discourse; while anthropology is used to initiate a possibility of getting close to an indigenous subject. At the end, space is opened up for discussion regarding conditions of a possibility of founding an indigenous voice before any formation of theories in the future.

On the one hand, the use of archaeology is justified in light of its critique. On the other hand, the limitations of archaeology define the scope of this thesis. Three limitations of archaeology are highlighted. First, comparing with genealogy, archaeology pays less attention to the role of power in discourse. Therefore, this thesis delimits its area of research on the conditions of possibility in discursive (trans)formation; while the power/knowledge relations would carry less weight. That is to say, the focus of this thesis is on the epistemological level, not so much about the political.

Another limitation of archaeology is related to its scope. The scope of archaeology lies within “historical analysis of scientific discourse” (Foucault, 1970, Forward p. xv). The archaeological examination in this thesis is, therefore, a historical analysis, not an empirical study in its familiar sense. In other words, archaeology is a diagnosis of problems in discourse, rather than a solution to problems. In regards to such a constraint, the second part of the analysis is an empirical investigation – an anthropological examination, in which ethnography and ethics are proposed as a way to overcome essentialism in management research.

Lastly, the function of archaeology is not for founding a theory, but to “establish a possibility” (Foucault, 1972, p. 115). Why did Foucault not intend to found a theory? He admits that he has not succeeded in doing so at that moment of time (Foucault, 1972). What he could do is to offer “an invitation for discussion” (Sheridan, 1990). Similarly, the researcher of this thesis understands that the conditions of deriving ‘a Chinese theory’ have not been met yet, given there remains a possibility of essentialism in the management discourse. Therefore, rather than theory-building, this thesis aims at

opening up a discussion. In other words, the task of this thesis is to create a condition from which further formulation and development of theory may be possible in future.

To sum up, archaeology is used in the first part of the analysis because it is:

- (1) “a discourse about discourse” (Foucault, 1972, p. 205) which allows an examination of well-being discourse outside the boundary of structuralism;
- (2) a “history of the present” (Foucault, 1977a, p. 31) which offers a resource to understand the practices, conditions, rules and historical transformations in the current well-being discourse;
- (3) “an invitation to discussion” (Foucault, 1972, p. 213) which reveal a discursive space to account for conditions of historical possibility of ‘a Chinese management theory’ in the future.

The archaeology examines the discourse of well-being. Such an analysis relies on previous texts, which are past records that have been lying there, kept or assembled by others. In other words, archaeology is a historical analysis in which it is unable to reveal any empirical findings on the local expressions. Therefore, to answer the second research question, one needs to get close with the research subject and be sensitive to its expressions, including its own language and lived experience. This task would be achieved through an anthropological study.

4.2.2 Anthropology and ‘Thick Description’

This study is aligned with post-colonial thinking. It is an attempt to provide a space for indigenous values and knowledge system to speak for themselves (Westwood, 2004). An anthropological study is therefore conducted, in which the researcher can get close with an indigenous subject and understand its local expressions which are embedded in its everyday lives.

The term ‘anthropology’ comes from Greek ‘*anthrōpos*’ (ἄνθρωπος) meaning human and ‘*-logia*’ (-λογία) meaning discourse or study. Anthropology normally relates to the disciplines of history, social structure, economy and politics (Knibbe and Versteeg, 2008). Anthropology includes various sub-fields such as biological or physical anthropology, social or cultural anthropology, archaeology and anthropological linguistics. The main scope for this thesis is cultural anthropology.

One fundamental method for pursuing cultural anthropology is ethnography. Ethnography literally means description of people. It studies ways of life for a particular group of people (Angrosino, 2007). The distinctive manner in which the life of a group is governed is called culture. Ethnography examines a group’s learned behaviour, concerns the relationship between customs, beliefs and

behaviours and the ways culture develops over time. Hence, it is comprised of detailed description of social life or cultural phenomena of human groups. Considering this thesis, the use of ethnography would generate credible and viable description about the lived experience of an indigenous subject.

Angrosino (2007) describes ethnography as field-based and dialogic. Ethnography is field-based, as it is conducted in a real and natural setting to the subject, rather than in laboratories wherein the elements of human behaviours are controlled by the researchers. Ethnography is dialogic, because it requires researchers to interact with people they are studying on a daily and personal basis. In such a manner, researchers became both participants in, and observers of, the life under study. At the same time, the subject can provide comments on the conclusion and interpretations of the research. Given ethnography attempts to gain the fullest possible portraits of the group under study, it normally requires researchers to have a long-term commitment in the field (Angrosino, 2007). Ethnographers tend to interact with the people under study for an extended period of time.

Anthropology is not new to the field of organisational behaviour (OB). In fact, OB is originated from the Hawthorne studies conducted by a group of anthropologists. The first journal related to OB, that is, *Human Organization* is initiated by them, and the first textbook in OB is actually written by Whyte (1969), a social anthropologist. From this perspective, OB is closely associated with anthropology. While reviewing the fields of organisational studies and anthropology, Bate (1997) urges researchers to put these two fields in unison. In particular, anthropology could be relevant in a family business context. In Stewart's (2003) examination of articles in the *Family Business Review*, he highlights that family business researchers share many interests with anthropologists and they frequently address topics that are compatible with an anthropological perspective. For instance, many studies in family businesses (such as Perricone, Earle and Taplin, 2001; Hall, Melin, and Nordqvist, 2001; Moores and Mula, 2000; Acquaah, 2016) concern themselves with the cultural issues. Stewart (2003) suggests that if family business research is to be fully anthropological, rather than merely borrowing theories from other disciplines, researchers need to get close with the research subject by conducting ethnographies themselves.

Since the notion of well-being is arguably embedded in one's culture and daily lives, an anthropological study offers a justifiable and promising way for this research to be associated closely with the subject. As Mathews and Izquierdo (2010) highlight:

“Anthropologists specialize in understanding, through extended fieldwork, the complex cultural meanings that exist within a given society. They may be especially well situated to understand a given society's particular linguistic formations of well-being and to reveal,

through close ethnographic description, how these play out in people's daily lives, words and worlds" (p.9).

Some researchers have used an anthropological approach to examine well-being of a particular geographical context. For instance, Calestani (2009) analysed "the good life" in the Bolivian Plateau; Derne (2010) studied the well-being across social transformation in India; Jankowiak (2010) examined the Chinese cultural mode for life satisfaction in two different eras: work unit (*danwei*) socialism (1981-1983) and market reform (1987, 2000-2002); and Mathews (2010) scrutinised the Japanese term *ikigai* and used it as an analytical tool to examine the meaning of well-being in Japan.

Although an anthropological approach is appropriate for examining well-being in the context of CFB, researchers must also try to avoid the problem of *allochronism* (section 2.3). Fabian suggests that to depart from *allochronism*, ethnographic knowledge should be based on 'human intersubjectivity', rather than the logical consistency of a theory. Fabian asserts that ethnography could rest on the intersubjective process in which both the "ethnographer and his subject" could construct knowledge from and within the context of their communicative interactions. He highlights that human intersubjectivity can be understood through one medium: language, given that language represents and constitutes the context of communication (Forward xxi). By focusing on language as continuing and interactive communication that constitutes the intersubjective realities, Fabian considers anthropology as "dialogical" or "dialectical" (Forward xviii). Such dialectical element of epistemology requires ethnographers to be always "self-reflexive" (Forward xviii). Thus, ethnographers need to have radical reflections on their involvement in the knowledge production (p.20).

Indeed, Fabian's (1983) detection of *allochronism* is similar to the problem of *essentialism* as identified by the post-colonial thought (Section 2.3). Many post-colonial writers (such as Said, 1978; Spivak, 1999 and Prasad, 2003) challenge the taken-for-granted ethnographic approach and identify how ethnography could result in "orientalising, exoticising and marginalizing practices and processes" (Jack and Westwood, 2006, p.487). Both the problems account for the strategies that *the Other's* (non-western) subjectivity is being constructed by a dominant theory or discourse which claims to speak authoritatively and definitely about what constitutes that subjectivity. In that sense, the post-colonial commitment on giving a space for indigenous values and knowledge system to speak for themselves (Westwood, 2004) is working in a similar direction with Fabian's (1983) dialectical epistemology in which it takes language, expression and communication as a kind of praxis and no one can claim dominance nor superiority over another. Therefore, the researcher of this thesis is aware of *allochronism* and *essentialism*, and advocates to avoid them.

What are some specific tasks that the researchers could perform so as to avoid the two problems? This thesis suggests upholding ethics in research. According to Xu's (2008) study, she replaces ontology with ethics as the first philosophy. She essentially proposes three key principles, namely, (1) "ethics before knowledge", (2) "justice before power" and (3) "dialogue before vision" (p. 267). First, the ethical "I" – the self (the researcher) who is "willing to engage with the other without any reduction" (p.268), needs to be emphasised. The researchers need to "return to "their" (the non-western subject's) expression, not "*our (western) theory*" (p.267). To put it in a conclusive manner, the ethical "I" requires researchers to "respect and account for the diversity of human experience", "directly facing "other" (non-western) mode" and put such mode "in a shared discursive space" (p. 267).

Second, Xu suggests using justice and ethics as a response to "keep power in check" (p. 268). Ethics requires the power to act responsibly by reducing if not eliminating domination. Ethics allow the researchers to be conscious that "*our (western) theory*" has often been made as the starting point and the "only home for holding data from "*their (the non-western subject's) culture*" (p.270). Instead of "following a familiar chain of thought or the way connection are made" within "*our (western) theory*", researchers need to question Eurocentric assumptions and position "*our (western) theory*" as "one interlocutor, not the model for all" (p.270). Thus, in such a manner, one can ascertain the degree of domination embedded in "*our (western) theory*" could be reduced or even eliminated.

Lastly, Xu encourages the ethical "I" to engage with the non-western subject through conversation. For her, researchers need to treat the non-western subject as their interlocutor, so that both "the writer and subject share the same discursive space of theory in dialogue" (p.271). Researchers need to welcome the non-western subject's expressions and place the local expressions ahead of the vision of Self (the researcher). By this, she means one needs to "abandon the "monologue" of the researchers", "be prepared for a clearing operation with the familiar vocabulary and categories", and be "sufficiently attentive to other's (the non-western subject's) expression" (p.271). The questions of "Who is talking?" and "How does talking take place?" (p.271) should be emphasised.

Xu's (2008) critiques and supplements to Redding (1990) highlighted that "there are more layers to the Chinese entrepreneurs than what Redding's representation has framed them to be" (p.273). She calls for justice to Redding's subject. Thus, in response to her call, this thesis aims to return the subject's continuity by giving back its voice that has been deprived and demonstrate its capacity for dialogue. To achieve this objective, this thesis follows the mentioned three principles proposed by Xu (2008). First, to put "ethics before knowledge" (Xu, 2008, p. 267), the task of the researcher is "to recover" and "make space for the subject to speak" (Xu, 2008, p.273). To fulfil this task, this thesis aims to engage a Chinese subject by welcoming its expression. Those indigenous expressions will be interpreted based a conceptual framework that includes the Chinese language and its intellectual traditions. With such a

framework, this thesis is directly facing a Chinese (an non-western) mode of thoughts and locating it in a shared discursive space with a mainstream framework. In other words, it offers a space for a Chinese subject to have a self-representation (Jack and Westwood, 2006).

Second, to uphold “justice before power” (Xu, 2008, p.267), the task for the research is “to refuse operations of injustice through violence” and “to be aware of the potential danger in ontology as philosophy of power” (Xu, 2008, p.270). The thesis questions whether the mainstream assumption of individualism is applicable to a Chinese culture. Instead of benchmarking the indigenous expressions with ‘*our (western) theory*’, the mainstream framework of well-being will be demystified in order to explore how and where the knowledge of well-being comes from. Here, the mainstream framework of well-being is treated as “not the model for all” (Xu, 2008, p.270).

Third, to encourage “dialogue before vision” (Xu, 2008, p. 267), the task for the researcher of this thesis is “to seek conversation in the discursive space of theory”. To do that, this study would abandon the researcher’s familiar vocabularies and categories learnt from the mainstream framework. Any local expressions through the subject’s own language and intellectual traditions are welcome.

Indeed, Kondo’s (1990) writing, “*Crafting selves: Power, gender and discourses of identity in a Japanese workplace*”, is a critical ethnographic work which tries to offer discursive space for the voices of ‘the Other’ (in her case, Japanese women). She challenges the unity and fixity of ‘the self’ that has been assumed in western discourse, and makes reference to “creating selves in concrete situations, or to the larger historical and institutional processes shaping those selves” (p.42). She argues that the ways identities are asserted in everyday contest “cannot be understood without reference to the larger movements of what we would call history, politics, and the economy” (p.10). She demonstrates that the concept of self is crafted in contexts of power, history and culture.

Kondo is not the only one who emphasises on the inseparability of selves from power, culture and history in her critical ethnography, some indigenous anthropologists in China (e.g. Fei, 1939; 1948; 1953 and Ji, 2011) also account for the importance of examining the local meaning(s) of the phenomenon through the investigation of the local culture and history. Fei Xiaotong is a world-renowned sociologist and anthropologist whose works (1939; 1948; 1953) are influential because they lay a solid foundation for developing sociological and anthropological studies in China. In reviewing his sixty years studying ethnic groups in China, Fei (1997) points out the significance of social historical perspectives in ethnological studies. He argues that China is an integrated nation with cultural diversities and that is why the Euro-centric definition of nation-state is inapplicable to China.

Similarly, Ji (2011) undertook an historical examination of changes in rural discourse, its transformation and integration process in rural society to account for the reality of the subject in a time of change and transformation. In his analysis of the rural discourse, he examines the relevant responses from rural society and reified the transformation and integration process of rural society in the construction of the whole country. He concluded that the materialism and innovation of discourse play a significant role in the process of transformation in rural society. Both Fei and Ji place their critical ethnographic studies within a historical context of the societies under investigation. Following their indigenous studies, this ethnography will scrutinise local expressions through ‘thick description’, which takes the context, including Chinese language, culture and history into account.

‘Thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) plays a primary role in this research because it takes readers to the heart of the interpretation and offers an in-depth understanding of human behaviours within a particular social, historical and cultural context. Geertz (1973) highlights ethnographic description can be “extraordinarily thick” (p.9). He regards “ethnography is thick description” (p.10), because the data of the ethnographer is in fact his/her “own constructions of other people’s constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to” (p.9). For Geertz, an ethnographer needs to interpret other’s people’s constructions through comprehending a lot of details, including a number of events, rituals, customs, ideas or whatever expressions which serve as background information before he/she can directly go to examine the notion itself.

Geertz highlights ‘thin description’ describes what a participant is doing, such as he is “rapidly contracting his right eyelids” (p.7). This divorces an act from its applications and makes its account vacant. In contrast, ‘thick description’ reveals “a stratified hierarchy of meaningful structures in terms of which twitch, winks, fake-winks, parodies, rehearsals of parodies are produced, perceived, and interpreted” (p. 7). ‘Thick description’ pays attention to expressions (both verbal and non-verbal) and interprets them by “sorting out their structure of signification – what Ryle called established codes” (p.9). Hence, ‘thick description’ moves further away from superficial explanation and interprets the richness of intentions, thoughts and meanings of action. Geertz mentions that whatever ‘get said’ by expressions, ethnographer would interpret it as thickly as possible. That is why Geertz considers that ‘thick description’ is an anthropological interpretation that defines the intellectual effort of an ethnographer.

Denzin (1989) has employed ‘thick description’ with the following benefits:

“A thick description ... presents details, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another ... evokes emotionality and self-feelings. In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions and meanings of interacting individuals are heard” (p.83).

‘Thick description’ is used in this thesis because it allows local expressions to be thoroughly interpreted based on context. Specifically, ‘thick description’ is able to: (1) give readers a sense of verisimilitude as they are able to visualise the research subject’s lived experience in family businesses, the context of the field sites, the participant-ethnographer interaction and social process (Ponterotto, 2006); and (2) allow readers to understand the ethnographer’s interpretation regarding various layers of meanings of each local expression. In short, Denzin (1989) equalises ‘thick description’ with ‘thick interpretation’. Therefore, it is the thick interpretation of the researcher that gives readers a comprehensive understanding of the social expressions being reported. Ponterotto (2006) integrates the works of Ryle (1971), Geertz (1973), Denzin (1989), Holloway (1997) and Schwandt (2001) to provide a guide to ‘thick description’:

1. *“Thick description involves accurately describing and interpreting social actions within the appropriate context in which the social action took place.*
2. *Thick description captures thoughts, emotions and web of social interaction among observed participants in their operating context.*
3. *A central feature to interpreting social actions entails assigning motivations and intentions for the said social actions.*
4. *The context for, and the specific of, the social actions are so well described that the reader experience a sense of verisimilitude as they read the researcher’s account” (p.542).*

Since Ponterotto’s (2006) guidelines are clear and systematic, this thesis would follow the respective procedure to generate a thick description.

4.3 Research Design and the Fieldwork

Research design is a strategic plan and structure of the research. It is a blueprint and a road map for ethnographers to conceptualise each step before they build knowledge and understanding (Fetterman, 2010). As suggested by Brewer (2000), an ethnographic research design can include the outline and features of the topic, the choice of research site or field, the form(s) of sampling employed, the resources available for the research, the sampling of the time and the events to be experienced in the field, the method(s) of data collection, negotiating access to the field, the nature of the fieldworker role(s), the form of analysis and dissemination to be used to report the results and more. Among the research process, fieldwork is one of the most significant elements of any ethnographic research design (Fetterman, 2010).

The fieldwork started on 1st March 2012. The researcher selected four field sites: FB 1 – 4. All four companies are family business of small and medium-size. The fieldwork ended on 31 December 2015. The amount of fieldwork (in terms of hours and periods) is shown in the table below:

Table 4. 3: Amount of fieldwork in each field site

Field Site	Period	Hours
FB 1 (An Education Centre)	1 Mar 2012 – 31 Dec 2015	252 hours
FB 2 (A Dance Studio)	27 Sept 2013 – 31 Dec 2015	224 hours
FB 3 (A Jade Accessory Maker)	1 Jan 2013 – 31 Dec 2015	231 hours
FB 4 (A Fashion Business)	3 Feb 2014 – 31 Dec 2015	212 hours
Total hours:		919 hours

The fieldwork is discussed in five aspects: (1) selection of field site, (2) sampling, (3) gaining access, (4) data collection and (5) reflexivity.

4.3.1 Selection of Field Site

In the context of post-colonial thought, Jack and Westwood (2006) suggest that local self-representation should be taken into account and become the key resource driving research. They encourage indigenous researchers from non-western contexts to engage in their own research practice and conduct truly emic studies. With the need for such studies, I chose a Chinese backdrop, Hong Kong as the site for research. Clifford (1986) referred to those researchers who act as insiders to study their own cultures as “indigenous ethnographer” (p.9). I took advantage of being a local, familiar with the Hong Kong dialect, Cantonese (which is the mother language of the researcher), its culture, lifestyle, weather and environment. Thus, the key advantage of being an ‘indigenous ethnographer’ is that I “know exactly what one is talking about” (Madden, 1999, p.260), thus such familiarity may “offer new angles of vision and depths of understanding” (Clifford, 1986, p.9).

The researcher would like to emphasise that this thesis is an ethnography, rather than a case study research. The researcher has never intended to produce case studies. Yin (1981) highlights that:

“A common misconception is that case studies are solely the result of ethnographies or of participant-observation, yet it should be quickly evident that numerous case studies have been done without using these methods (e.g., Allison, 1971). Conversely, using these methods does not always lead to production of case studies (e.g. the ethnographic and observational research on police behaviours by Reiss, 1971; Rubenstein, 1973; and Van Maanen, 1979; none of which had typically been designed as case studies)” (p.59).

Cohen and Deborah (2003) make a clear differentiation between ethnography and case study. They highlight a crucial difference between ethnography and case study lies in the intention of the study. Ethnography is ‘inward looking’, which centres on ‘culture’ and intends to study ways of life for a particular cultural participant; while case study is ‘outward look’, that aims to delineate the phenomenon through a detailed examination of individual cases and their contexts (Cohen and Deborah,

2003). As mentioned in the methodology (Chapter 4), the purposes of the researcher are to get close with an indigenous subject and understand its culture by capturing its local expressions which are embedded in its everyday lives. Hence, judging from the intention of the thesis, it is an ethnography, instead of a case study.

Based on the methodological position, the thesis belongs to ethnography. According to Guba and Lincoln (2005), they position case study within the ‘post positivism’ – the conservative end of the qualitative research continuum which seeks to exclude researcher’s influence on the data or evidence. That is why case study can be regarded as a part of the conventional methodology that insists on rigour, validity, reliability and objectivity (Stake, 2005). Although individual case study does not aim at generalisation, the accumulation of case studies does target on generalisation (Cohen and Deborah, 2003). On the contrary, ethnography is situated along the critical perspective and social constructivism which allows researchers to be part of the researched (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). Based on the ontological and epistemological assumptions of this thesis, the researcher holds a critical perspective, rather than positivism nor post positivism. Hence, ethnography is chosen because it would be more aligned with the philosophical position of the researcher.

Based on the above justification, the researcher regards this thesis as a critical ethnography, instead of a case study. The researcher chooses the four Chinese family businesses in order to examine the local expressions of a Chinese subject in its everyday lives. Hence, the four family businesses are regarded as four field sites for the ethnography. Due to the small amount of the field sites, classification into cases is insignificant and even impossible. The researcher actually declines to do so because this thesis has never been a case study research that requires classification and generalisation among the four businesses.

4.3.2 Sampling

Snowball sampling is also known as chain-referral sampling, in which researchers develop contacts with informants through referral (Cohen and Arieli, 2011). Snowball sampling is commonly used in ethnography because it helps ethnographers to gain access to the field sites and develop contacts (Grbich, 1999). This research employs snowball sampling given developing trust is necessary if one wants to gain access to the Chinese family business. Firstly, I used my local network to develop contacts. To begin the fieldwork, I contacted my relatives and friends to see if they could participate in my research or refer anyone. That was how the snowball started rolling. Then, close contacts recommended other participants to me. The snowball kept rolling until I was able to gain access to the four field sites: FB 1 to 4. Regular field site visits to the four companies ensued. At the end, the four family businesses should be enough to generate sufficient data for the research. The profiles of my informants can be referred to Appendix B: Table B4.

Sampling within the case is another aspect that deserves attention (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Once the researcher could feel free to chat with the people in FB 1 since June 2012, I adopted a ‘big-net approach’ (Fetterman, 2010). As the study progressed, I gradually refined and narrowed the focus to specific portions of the population under study. Fetterman (2010) admits that most ethnographers employ the big-net approach in their participant observations, because it “ensures a wide-angle view of events before the microscopic study of specific interactions begins” and “this big picture helps refine an ethnographer’s focus and aids the fieldworker in understanding the finer details that he or she will capture on film and in notes for further analysis” (p.35).

Fetterman (2010) indicates that “anthropologists have traditionally relied most heavily on one or two individuals in a given group”, given “time is always a factor” and the “key actors are excellent source of information and important sounding boards for ethnographers ... (who) can provide detailed historical data, knowledge about contemporary interpersonal relationship (including conflicts), and a wealth of information about the nuances of everyday life” (Fetterman, 2010, p.50). Although I tried to speak with as many people as possible, I still relied heavily on some key players in the business. In each family business, there are various members in the company. For example, FB 1 has different groups¹ of people. I looked for some key actors of the business. For example, major players include Ada, Mrs. Alice, Amy, Ann and Audrey in FB 1; Betty and Bonnie in FB 2; Uncle Carl in FB 3 and Doris in FB 4. These players were able to provide background stories and keep me updated on relevant issues and events occurring in the business.

Five local HR practitioners are selected for semi-structured interviews. They are mainly selected due to their close friendship with the researcher. The main purpose of including their views is to indicate that they are familiar with the concept of well-being. Such a finding is aligned with the archaeological examination of this thesis, which shows that HR professional is the one who speaks for the well-being. However, the researcher does not intend to compare any differences in terms of how the local HR professional expresses well-being. It is because that is not the focus of this ethnography. The purpose of this ethnography is on uncovering the local expressions in a Chinese context – Chinese family business in Hong Kong. The local HR views on well-being are mostly expressed within the mainstream interpretation, in which well-being is associated with benefits, work-life balance and job satisfaction etc. Instead of following the mainstream debate that argues well-being can be measured by a number of variables, this thesis would like to open a discursive space outside the boundary of well-being. As a result, alternate local expressions can be revealed and emphasised. In other words, local

¹ Basically, the staff of FB 1 can be ranged from:

- family workers versus non-family workers;
- employees versus management;
- full-time versus part-time staff;
- teaching staff versus non-teaching staff

HR views are not the focus in the research questions nor in the data analysis. They are taken as an empirical supplement to support the archaeological analysis.

4.3.3 Access

Once the decision was made to examine the family businesses in Hong Kong, the first potential opportunity was the logistics company (FB 5) inherited by Mr. Edmond from his father. Before I went to the United Kingdom to complete the first year of PhD study, I had used his personal contacts to establish talks with the respective firm for the research. Thus, the fieldwork was established with FB 5. Nevertheless, as indicated by Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), “the course of ethnographic work cannot be predetermined” (p.24). In early 2012, shortly after I went back to Hong Kong for the fieldwork, I was told by the owner of FB 5, Edmond that the sale of his family business was confirmed. Given such situation, I needed to look for another firm to conduct a pilot study.

Although the way of conducting ethnography cannot be definitely set out, this does not mean “the researcher’s behaviour in the field can be haphazard” given the researcher can make adjustments to events by “taking ‘the line of least resistance’” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p.21). Therefore, in searching for another firm to start my fieldwork, I used my personal contacts to conduct the research with an acquaintance. I gained access to FB 1 (An education center) through Ada, who is the youngest daughter of the owner in FB 1. My first meeting with Ada was arranged by Gigi wherein we had a casual dinner together. In the dinner, Ada accepted my request to conduct a study about her business and agreed that I could regularly visit her company.

Blomberg, Giacomi, Mosher and Swenton-wall (1993) remind the field-worker that:

“jeopardizing one’s position in the community by insisting on observing or participating in an activity, when doing so is deemed inappropriate in the community, could easily spell disaster for the project. It is more advantageous to proceed slowly, gaining trust before insisting on access to certain events, people and activities. Often patience and greater familiarity with local custom will pay off. What was off limits initially may become open in time (p.132).

I was therefore cautious about the possible consequences of being too ‘pushy’ with participants. Brewer (2000) point out that “the time spent in the field can even be restricted at the beginning in order for people to get used to the presence of the ethnographer slowly, although thereafter it needs to be intensive” (p. 85). Therefore, to start the fieldwork in FB 1, I visited the company on a bi-weekly basis. Initially, I usually talked with Ada only, as I aimed to develop a close relationship with her, before gaining the trust of other people on site. I was aware of the significance of gaining trust with Ada and making people in the company feel comfortable with my presence. Meanwhile, being a relatively silent observer at the beginning of the visits, would allow me to learn about the company’s culture,

custom and routines. Thus, considerable time was spent for the research and other employees to be at ease within the new dynamics.

Since first visit on 1st March 2012, I was waiting for ‘signs’ which indicate a certain degree of trust has been established, before I could move further to chat with other people openly and freely in the company. However, “trust is rarely instantaneous and is usually like any friendship in being a slow, steady process” (Brewer, 2000, p.85). After 3-month visits, the ‘signs’ came in June, when I received Whatapps messages from Ada in response to regular request for company’s visit:

“...Remember please do NOT buy anything if u come this time” (5 June 2012).

“Okay, actually u can come anytime u like... U can come without prior notice...” (14 June 2012).

Even upon the visit on 29 June 2012, the owner of FB 1, Mrs. Alice told me:

“You can come whenever you like.”

At the beginning of June 2012, I was introduced to some colleagues in the company. Following this, I was able to chat with them, observe their daily routine operations, offer some ad hoc clerical assistance and have lunch with them occasionally. As recorded in the field note:

“This time, I also had chance to get involved in some ad hoc administrative tasks. The staff and owners started getting familiar with my regularly visit and I started feeling I’m being part of the company” (14 June 2012).

“When I arrived to the centre, Ada and Mrs. Alice were having lunch with the other staff. I was invited to join them for lunch and we have a casual chat over various topics, such as family lives, work, current educational issues and hobbies etc.” (29 June 2012).

The above were perceived as ‘signs’ which show that a certain level of rapport has been established between the informants and me. With these ‘signs’, I started to move to the next stage since June 2012 where (1) increase the frequency of visit to around 1-2 times per week, (2) lengthen the duration of each visit from within 2 hours to more than 3 hours, and (3) go and chat with the people in the company. That was how I began my ethnographic journey in FB 1, which was treated as the pilot study of this thesis.

Research design can involve extending cases (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). However, a major difficulty in extending the pilot study is the access to further sites. As a response, I started to work on with the informants who are considered as potential gatekeepers, like Uncle Carl and Ms. Doris. Moreover, I did not exclude data from the informants who previously worked or have worked in family businesses (such as Mr. Edmond and Mrs. Eden E in FB 5 and Mr. Isaac in FB 10 (Appendix B: Table B4). At last, I am able to gain access to FB 2, 3 and 4 as well.

I gained access to FB 2 because its owners – Betty and Bonnie who are my close friends. I shared close relationships with both of them for nearly twenty years, since we were at the same secondary school. Given we are very *shu* 熟 (familiar with each other), it was not difficult to gain access. The access was naturally obtained, without much hesitation nor obstacles. The close relation with the two owners affected how I conducted the fieldwork in this company. In FB 1, I had taken a relatively conservative and passive approach given trust and rapport had not yet been built at the beginning. I would always remind myself to be cautious about my responses and behaviours. To play safe, I would rather be less intrusive and focus more on participant observations. In contrast, more aggressive and active roles at FB 2 were taken. With a close peer relation with Betty and Bonnie, I would share the views about the business, and participate in the business operation and evolution.

For FB 3, its owner was one of my personal contacts. Therefore, gaining access was straightforward. The request for including this business as part of the study was simply made by a phone call. As Uncle Carl always said to me: *'You can visit me at anytime you like. We are one family. You are always welcome to have a chat with me and your auntie (his wife, Auntie Connie) when you are free. We can go for lunch or tea'*. As an ethnographer, it was concluded that I acted on various roles. In FB 1, I would normally be a participant observant and did not disturb the daily operation of the tutorials. In FB 2, I would behave as a *peng you* (friend), whom Betty and Bonnie would be able to freely share their feelings and thoughts. As *peng you*, I would also offer assistance to them and share my advice with them. In FB 3, since Uncle Carl and Auntie Connie are seniors and I respect them dearly. I call them Uncle and Auntie, instead of calling them directly by their first name. Hence, in this case, I would take a role as a patient listener when they shared their stories and experiences. This business is of a different nature from FB 1 and FB 2 and I have limited knowledge in this industry. Thus, while visiting FB 3, I acted as a journalist.

The journey in FB 4 began in February 2014 when I had an afternoon tea with my close contact Doris. On that day, she shared her good news: *"I'm going to open my own retail store"*. Doris had been working in the fashion field for number of years. After the tea, she immediately brought us to PMQ, where her new shop would be situated. The shop was still under renovation and was not yet ready for business. After visiting her shop, I asked if I could make regular visits to the shop and invited her to

participate in my research. She instantly made a casual respond with a joke to indicate her agreement: *“Of course, you definitely need to come regularly. I need you to look after the shop! Ha ha ha!”*. Her reaction signified that my roles as an ethnographer would be different in FB 4, when compared to that in FB 1, 2 and 3. Provided the close relationship between I and Doris, I regarded myself as a key family member who should bear social obligation and responsibilities to look after her business. Hence, in FB 4, I would be an active participant in the business.

4.3.4 Data Collection Methods

In this study, the data was obtained mainly by: (a) participant observation, (b) informal conversation, (c) documentary and photos evidence, (d) writing interpretive field notes and diary and (e) semi-structured interviews.

a. Participant Observation

Brewer (2000) regards participant observation as the data collection technique that is most closely associated with ethnography. Ethnographers would collect data by participating in the daily life of informants in their natural setting. They would watch, observe and talk to informants in order to understand their interpretations, social meanings and daily routines. During the field visits, I had the opportunity to walk around and observe how the informants perform their daily activities. Though I was an overt observer, I aimed not to create any disturbance over my informants' work, especially when they are conducting lessons. For instance, in FB 1, I would normally sit at the corner of the room, taking my notes and observing without much intrusion. Nevertheless, I occasionally offered assistance by engaging in some clerical ad hoc tasks. The purpose was not only “to generate data through watching and listening to what people naturally do and say, but also add the dimension of personally experiencing and sharing the same everyday life as those under study” (Brewer, 2000, p.59). The personal reflection, attitude and social meanings when engaging in and living with the people in the field form part of the data

b. Informal Conversations

Another main method of data collection is informal conversations. This method is common in ethnography (Fetterman, 2010). For instance, in FB 1, I would usually have informal conversations with the informants before the start of any classes at 3:00pm. These conversations cover wide range of topics, such as family, hobbies, current news, TV programs, food and issues in work and more. Most often, I would attempt to have ‘informal interviews’ with them. Thus, I have “a specific but implicit research agenda”, in which there are series of questions listed in the field diary and will “wait for the most appropriate moment to ask them during informal conversations” (Fetterman, 2010, p.41). Indeed, casual conversations are a major method to collect data, particularly in FB 2, 3 and 4, given the close relationships developed by the researcher. In addition, living in Hong Kong, I also had chance to chat

with some local citizens, youth, Human Resource Professionals and academics. Having dialogues with them enables me to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon.

c. *Documentary and Photo Evidence*

The companies' and participants' Facebooks, documents and photographs, such as the company's brochures, photographs of the office environment and events previously organized etc. were examined. All hard-copy documentary evidence is filed according to different categories and they are stored. Although, these sources of data may not provide a direct link to the topic, they can reflect the company's value, area of concern and culture implicitly (Fetterman, 2010). Hence, proper use of them would be helpful and relevant.

Despite the focus of the thesis is the concept of well-being in China, the researcher makes reference to secondary data: the published documents and records regarding aspects of Hong Kong communities, such as news reports, public speeches, government reports, census and reference books. These sources of information could help to understand the lives of the locals on a macro level.

d. *Field Notes and Dairy*

I took notes on every fieldwork activity, such as company visits, informal conversations and social gatherings. However, the process of note-taking varies depending on different sites and occasions. In FB 1, I usually sat in the corner of the classroom to observe and take notes; in FB 2, I normally sat in the reception counter, chatted with the owners and staff while jotting down the notes; in FB 3, I often sat next to the owner, asked him questions, observed his works and wrote down the notes; in FB 4, I always first oversaw the operation, then chatted with the owner when she came back and finally wrote the notes in the last hour of my visit. Various approaches in note-taking could generate impacts on what was observed. For instance, in FB 1, I usually acted as an observant and described things and incidents based on my observation and feelings. In FB 2 and 3, I often chatted with the owners and staff during the operation. In that case, I was able to write down their answers, describe their feelings and comments in the notes. In FB 4, I often participate in the operation. As a result, I described the working lives I experienced and jotted down the conversation with the owners. In general, the content of the field notes covers my feeling, experience, activities, incidents, events, observations and conversations occurred in each fieldwork. I tried to write as many as I could in every fieldwork, so that I did not need to repeat the same description in the dairy. Afterwards, when I went back home, I read my field notes and wrote a diary. The diary is mainly my personal interpretations and critical reflections (both emotionally and intellectually) on each visit. Occasionally, I included some key references or quotations that are relevant to my interpretations. I also marked down the things I need to follow-up in the next visit. Two samples of the field notes and diary are typed out and shown in Appendix B: Table B5.

The field notes are written on the notebook during each visit. The field notes are consisted of 603 A-5 handwritten pages; while the dairy consists of 152 A4-typed pages. The diary is stored as encrypted Microsoft Word files and is indexed onto the encrypted USB memory stick and PC hard drive.

e. Semi-structured Interviews

Following Learmonth's (2009) methodological approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted at the later stage of the ethnography where a certain degree of trust has been established. In total, 33 semi-structured interviews with the participants were conducted. The interviewees range from family business owners, family workers, their family members, employees and Human Resource professionals. The questions asked in the interviews are related to the interviewees' past and present living experience and their expectations in the future.

4.3.5 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is defined as "a turning back on oneself, a process of self-reference" (Davies, 1999, p.4). It refers to a concern on how the selves and identities of the researchers and subject influence the research process, given the ethnographers are part of the context, setting and culture they are trying to understand and represent (Brewer, 2000). Reflexivity needs to be maintained throughout the whole research process (Davies, 1999).

Stanley (1996) asserted two forms of reflexivity: descriptive and analytical. Descriptive reflexivity involves reflection on the impact of various contingencies which may affect the research outcome, such as the geographical and social location of the research, the preconceptions of the researcher and the relationship between the researcher and the researched among others. This kind of reflexivity assumes knowledge of the process of knowledge production, is shaped by the social context or power structure (Collyer, 2011). Therefore, descriptive reflexivity requires ethnographers to develop a critical attitude towards their data (Brewer, 2000).

Analytical reflexivity demands reflection on the epistemological matters and knowledge claims (Brewer, 2000). It requires ethnographers to explicitly explain the process through which they reach their understanding and interpretation of the phenomena (Collyer, 2011). Thus, the ethnographers need to reflect upon areas, such as the theoretical or conceptual framework and methodology they are using; the values, commitments and preconceptions they bring to work; their ontological assumptions about the social reality and nature of society; and the topic and the approach of research in which they are interested (Brewer, 2000). Hence, analytical reflexivity reflects upon the process by which ethnographers reach their conclusion and looks at how they 'construct' their knowledge claims (Collyer, 2011).

Reflexivity is of utmost essence for this thesis as it provides a solution for the legitimacy of my interpretation and representation of data (Davies, 1999; Brewer, 2000). Therefore, this thesis would reflect on the following aspects:

a. The Researcher

The personal history of researchers, as well as the disciplinary and broader sociocultural circumstances they are faced with, can have a profound effect on the entire research process, from the initial topic selection to final writing up (Collyer, 2011). I come from a family wherein the family members are engaged in family business founded by my grandparents. Thus, due to this, I experienced the dynamics in a family business and the complex relation within a family tie. For instance, the boundary of the family and work lives were not distinctly defined and the family obligation was often overlapped with the work duties. Given such family background, I recognise the importance of well-being in such type of business. Thus, this provides me with the research interest towards the lives and well-being of people in family businesses.

The topic of the thesis is well-being. The choice of this topic is due to my interest over the issue of work-family conflict in the Human Resource Management field during my postgraduate study in Australia. Such area of study is largely quantitative, which relies greatly on western assumptions and models, such as the segmentation model, integration model or boundary theory etc. Given the fact that little examination has been carried out to question whether the segmentation model (which is based upon the western assumption of treating work and family as two distinct domains) is appropriate in a Chinese context, my initial proposal (July 2010) aims to offer a new variable: work-family harmonisation and look at its linkage with well-being through a qualitative approach. The intent of the researcher was to use structured interviews, focus groups and participant observations to obtain data to examine the relationship between work-family harmonisation and well-being. Hence, the original proposal was situated within the neo-positivism/neo-empiricism with realist ontology and objectivist epistemology (Johnson, et al., 2006).

After reviewing the literature related to post-colonialism and discussions with my research supervisors, I realised that examining the indigenous culture would be more interesting to me. Therefore, I chose to employ an anthropological approach to reveal the current local expressions. Once I chose an anthropological study as my primary methodology, the next step was to determine an appropriate method. Several possibilities were taken for consideration, such as grounded theory, hermeneutics, phenomenology, critical discourse analysis and Foucault's (1972) discourse.

Since the ontological nature of well-being was considered, I began to scrutinise the concept from a critical stance given such a methodology would be more aligned with the ontological assumption of reality, epistemology and moral concern described in section 4.1. Given the post-colonial perspective (particularly Said's (1978) Orientalism) is influenced by Foucault's idea of power and knowledge, I began to pay attention to Foucault's discourse since August 2012. Thus, the possibility of using Foucault's (1972) archaeology as another part of the methodology to demystify the mainstream framework of well-being was considered. By May 2011, the research evolved into one which employs both archaeological and anthropological examination.

I am a Chinese with both local and overseas educational background. Therefore, my prior knowledge in the context of well-being can consist of both western perspectives and Chinese point of view. Thus, I would aim to demystify the mainstream framework through archaeology, and reveal local expressions through 'thick description'. Since I was born in Hong Kong, there are personal experiences in relations to the political, economic, social and historical changes of Hong Kong, both before and after its Handover (1997). Such experience and prior understandings would be taken into account while interpreting the findings. Thus, the interpretation of the data would account for my prior knowledge of the Chinese language, local traditions and societal changes.

b. Difficulties and Challenges

Globalisation has raised questions on the traditional anthropological values of 'locality', 'primitive' and 'tribalism'. The emergence of urban anthropology also required appropriate modifications to traditional anthropological methods of investigation. In assessing methodological issues of anthropological field research in the 21st century, Teshome-Bahiru and Negash-Wossene (2007) underline the challenges of urbanisation and cultural pluralism. They compare village communities with urban areas and described that urban cities are comparatively more congested, more diverse in population and bigger in size. Hence, researchers who conduct anthropological studies in towns and cities may encounter problems such as lack of time and space to privately stay with the people involved in the investigations; communication problems due to the diversity of languages in urban areas; and difficulties in dealing with various social life and complexity of the urban centre. This thesis takes place in Hong Kong, a modern metropolis which is perceived to be crowded, busy and time-conscious with varieties of social life and urban complexities. There were a few challenges I encountered which are mentioned previously by Teshome-Bahiru and Negash-Wossene (2007). Those challenges are related to the following aspects:

i. Researcher in the Field

Choosing Hong Kong, an urban city, as the site of fieldwork is regarded as both an advantage and a challenge for me. On one hand, I am an indigenous ethnographer who can enjoy the advantage of being familiar with the local culture, language, living style and environment. On the other hand, going back 'home' imposes challenges, as I need to take up multiple roles at the same time, given obligations to the family, work and study. Not only do I need to spend time with my family and participate in the family social gatherings, I also had to engage in a full-time job to financially support the family and study. Therefore, after the return to Hong Kong, I got a full-time job in January 2012, working as an Assistant Lecturer in The Open University of Hong Kong. This work allowed me to go for the fieldwork as long as the research activity did not restrict the performance at work. Nevertheless, taking up multiple roles has created time-management problems and stress. As reflected in the field note:

"I have just finished a company visit and now I need to rush back to the office for work. I start feeling a bit tired to go for fieldwork, rush back to work for teaching and meeting and write up diary at night (after a full-day work)" (5 April 2012).

In an attempt to resolve the above problem, I altered the mode of study as part-time since July 2012.

An ethnographer often encounters difficulties in balancing the dual role of being both an insider and outsider (Brewer, 2000; Sherif, 2001; Fetterman, 2011). In terms of macro level, I am a local, an insider; although, "sometimes a familiar setting is too familiar... and the researcher takes events for granted, leaving important data unnoticed and unrecorded" (Fetterman, 2011, p.39). For instance, I received local education and have worked in an academic field for more than 5 years. I am used to the teaching culture that is prevalent in Hong Kong, which may sometimes lead me to take for granted the teaching approach adopted by the staff in FB 1. In regards to this potential problem, after each company visit, I would retreat from the setting and go to a quiet place at night to write my diary. While writing the diary, I would reflect, examine and question every tiny detail of that visit and reassess the roles and interactions during the day.

Researchers need to spend time in building trust with different participants in the site (Brewer, 2000). I gain access to the four field sites by having close contacts with a senior figure in each firm. In that case, I may run the risk of forming an impression of the business solely based on the perspectives of those in power; while marginalizing the lives and views of other members of the business. In order to reduce such a risk, I tried to get in touch with other staff. In particular, the experience in FB 1 can illustrate my role in the research process, in terms of how the relations with a senior position may have impacts on me as a researcher. Although the initial access to FB 1 is granted by Ms. Ada (who is the successor, the family worker as well as the management of the company), I still have to build trust with other staff in FB 1. When I was introduced by Ada, I was cautious that the other employees may perceive me as a 'spy' or 'power broker'. Hence, I aimed to perform a "non-threatening role in the

field” (Fetterman, 2010, p.82). Paradoxically, I tried to prevent cutting off other lines of communication by establishing independence in the field (Fetterman, 2010). For example, in the first few visits, I bought cakes and cookies for the staff and told them that my presence was solely for the academic purpose of my PhD study. In the beginning, I acted like a complete observer (Gold, 1958) without much participation in the field. Thus, I adopted a subtle observation especially when the teachers are conducting classes. This can convey a message to the staff that they are the ones who can ‘control’ the class. In the first two months of visits, the part-time teachers and students were curious. As a result, I spent time to develop relationship and trust with them. After 3-month visits, they started to see me differently. They began to get used to my presence and chat with me naturally. Since then, my role has changed to more like an observer-participant (Gold, 1958). Another example is the experience in FB 2. To begin my field visit in FB 2, I was introduced by the owners, Ms Better and Mrs. Bonnie. In the first few weeks, I found it difficult to chat freely with Ms. Brenda (i.e. a full-time employee) since she was aware that I was a close friend of Ms Better and Mrs. Bonnie. In order to break the ice, I enrolled in a one-to-one Chinese dance course taught by Ms. Brenda. After attending her class for a month, I developed a closer bond with Ms. Brenda. We could then have more casual chats on a range of matters, such as family, love, study, hobbies, dream and even work. The experience in FB 1 and FB 2 made me aware that “trust has to be continually worked at, negotiated and renegotiated, confirmed and thereafter repeatedly reaffirmed” (Brewer, 2000, p.86). Hence, building rapport is an on-going concern along the research process (Sherif, 2001).

My roles entailed are varied in the fieldwork and are constantly changing as “there are no clear boundaries between researchers and ethnographic contexts, but where in reality, the boundaries are more entrenched and yet constantly shifting than initially imagined” (Sherif, 2001, p.445). Here is an illustration: Since most of the informants come from the local network, some of them are regarded as my close contacts. While engaging in informal conversations with them, I would sometimes struggle between the roles of being a close contact (i.e. a relative or a close friend) and a researcher. When discussing issues that are regarded as emotional and controversial, such as the conflicts in the family or work, I occasionally chose to remain neutral and suppress any personal comments, beliefs, emotions and political sympathy to these issues. My aim is to avoid increasing the tension between the parties involved. However, while I would retain neutrality in those sensitive issues, as a close contact, there is also a need to demonstrate care and concern to the feelings of my close contacts. This role ambiguity reminds me to be constantly reflexive upon the multiple selves, experience and potential interpretations.

ii. Choices in the Academic Community

The “hegemony of apparent rationality that typifies conventions in academic publishing” (Learmonth, 1999, p. 1010) may restrict researchers from taking a critical position. Johnson and Duberley (2003) acknowledge that researchers who take on a critical position could face resistance and challenges from a community whose quality and validity criteria are at odds with their ontological and epistemological

commitments. As a researcher taking a critical stance, there were certain personal experiences that were difficult during the journey of research. For instance, I received the following comments from my academic work colleagues and friends:

“How can you ‘prove’ your interpretation represents the truth of reality?” (from one who takes on a positivist epistemology)

“Em ... given your research is not in the mainstream ... would you consider to change the direction back to the conventional approach so that you can gain more acceptances?” (suggested by one who takes on a neo-positivist epistemology)

“To what extent can your findings claim to have high validity and reliability?” (questioned from one who is familiar a quantitative approach)

“This kind of research is not from the mainstream. You can hardly get publications!” (commented by one who comes from the mainstream)

Thus, as Johnson and Duberley (2003) remind us “we must not underestimate the role that researcher’s own community plays in sanctioning particular representative practices, whose norms may exclude the dissemination of the outcomes of collaborative inquiry” (p. 1296). Their remarks sensitised me to the existence of potential concerns and challenges, their dynamics and the political and ethical implications underlying the knowledge production process. Thus, there cannot be assumptions about the easy and straightforward pursuit of research. While working on such challenges, researchers are encouraged to stay sensitive to one’s ontological, epistemological and political position and welcome dialogue for promoting critical consciousness (Johnson and Duberley, 2003).

iii. Ethical Issues

Teshome-Bahiru and Negash-Wossene (2007) remind researchers to pay attention to ethical issues when conducting anthropological studies in cities. Researchers may consider the three principles suggested by the University of Victoria in its “*Protocols and principles for conducting research in an indigenous context*” (2003): (1) partnership, (2) participation and (3) protection. ‘Partnership’ means that the working relationship with the indigenous people should be based on collaboration. ‘Protection’ refers to protecting the individuals who participate in the research process through informed consents, maintaining confidentiality of any research material and safeguarding them from any negative impact of the results. ‘Participation’ implies indigenous people have the right to participate in the research and

derive benefits that might result from the research. They also have the right to not participate if they do not feel comfortable with the research.

With regards to the above three principles, this thesis aims for partnership and participations in a respectful manner. For every informant, I would explain the aims, approach, confidentiality and possible outputs of my research. There will be protection of the welfare, health and right of the people under investigation. The ethical review checklist has been sent to the University for approval at the beginning of the fieldwork in 2012. Direct quotes may be used to illustrate participants' expressions in everyday lives. However, to protect the confidentiality of their identity, they will be referred to by pseudo-names. For easy reference, the pseudo-names of the participants in FB 1 start with 'A'; while those in FB 2 begin with 'B' and so on. The pseudo-names of the Human Resource Professionals start with 'P'. Similarly, the organisations they are working with are anonymised as FB 1, 2, 3 or 4 and so on.

Most importantly, this research would be accountable to the locals in family businesses, who may be traditionally treated as an "object" in Eurocentric representations. Reflexivity, respect and account for the diversity of human experiences are always the priorities in this research.

4.4 After the Fieldwork

After the fieldwork, I transcribed the interview records, consolidated all the data and then analysed the data.

4.4.1 Transcribing Interviews

A notation system is used in order to capture some non-verbal expressions, such as pauses, emphasis and laughter. The main target of this ethnography is to uncover the current local expressions, rather than tacit reasoning procedures nor sequences of interaction. A conversational analysis which demands a relatively detailed notation to produce orderly social interaction (Silverman, 2001) is regarded as overly detailed and time consuming. For that reason, this research adopt a simplified notation system (Appendix B: Table B9), which is based on Poland's (1995) alternative abbreviated instructions and Silverman's (2001) simplified transcription symbols. One of the limitations of such a notation system is it is unable to capture information related to the setting, atmosphere and some facial or bodily expressions such as smile, wink and gesture. Poland (1995) considers this constraint as unavoidable. In this case, some non-verbal clues, such as the context and posture are written in my field notes. Field notes can be used it as a "partial interpretive account" (Poland, 1995, p.306) to supplement the interview transcription.

The whole process of each semi-interview is recorded. These recordings need transcription as it would help to organise the disorderliness of natural conversations (Silverman, 2001). The transcription is made in Chinese. Initially, I tried to do the transcription. However, it took me 15 hours to transcribe one 45-minute interview. After transcribing a few interviews, the experience was considered to be inefficient. Therefore, I decided to hire a transcriber to do the transcription. The transcriber is Hong Kong Chinese and speaks both Cantonese (the most common Chinese dialect in Hong Kong) and English. Since all of my interviews were in Cantonese and occasionally with some English words, the chosen transcriber is qualified to undertake transcription. Although I hired transcriber, I collaborated with her as a team to ensure the transcription quality. Before the actual transcription, I had a face-to-face meeting with the transcriber wherein a brief understanding of the thesis, including the topics, objectives, methodology and research questions were mentioned. Afterwards, I had regular meetings with the transcriber as they help to provide feedback to the transcriber. At the same time, the transcriber shared with me her difficulties in the transcription process. Every transcript was reviewed. Since I establish communication with the transcriber, difficulties and problems were also resolved in the early stage of the transcription. For instance, regarding the interviews with the HR Professionals, the transcriber commented that she finds it difficult to understand some jargons in Human Resource Management, such as 360 degree feedback, flexitime, Quality of Work Life (QWL) etc., given she is not working in this field. As a result, I listened to the particular audio clip, find out those jargons that she is not familiar with, and explain the terms to her. The above process is regarded as transcription training, which is an important strategy to enhance transcription quality (Poland, 1995). The key problems that were encountered in the transcription process and their respective resolutions are summarised (Appendix B: Table B6).

4.4.2 Consolidating Data

After the fieldwork, there is an abundant amount of data derived from field notes, diary, interviews, documentary and photos. On one hand, a large body of data may help to generate a ‘thick description’ (Greertz, 1973). On the other hand, the amount of data can be so overwhelming that it creates anxiety to the researchers. To consolidate the data, data management is an important technique in qualitative research (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). The thesis employs thematic analysis to sort out the ethnographic data. Thematic analysis is a process for locating codes and themes in qualitative information (Boyatzis, 2000; Braun and Clarke, 2006). Boyatzis (2000) identified the purposes of thematic analysis as follows:

1. “A way of *seeing*
2. A way of *making sense* out of seemingly unrelated material
3. A way of *analysing* qualitative information
4. A way of *systematically observing* a person, an interaction, a group, a situation, an organisation, or a culture
5. A way of *converting* qualitative information into quantitative data” (p. 4).

Generally, thematic analysis is regarded as one of the generic skills shared across qualitative analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). One key benefit of thematic analysis is its flexibility (Braun and Clarke, 2006) (Appendix B: Table B7). It enables researchers to communicate their findings and interpretation to the readers using different methods. For this advantage, this thesis adopts thematic analysis as a way to process the qualitative data so as to identify themes and patterns of living or behaviours of the research subject. Then, the themes and patterns are analysed and presented through ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973).

Braun and Clarke (2006) outline six phases in the process: (1) Familiarising yourself with your data, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Searching for themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming themes and (6) Producing the report (Appendix B: Table B8). The thesis follows the above six steps to consolidate the data. First, I familiarised myself with the data. The data was classified into three sets: (1) family business, (2) HR professional and (3) miscellaneous (including data from local academics, youth, citizens and secondary data). The semi-structured interviews were transcribed (Section 4.4.2). While re-reading the data, the initial ideas for coding were developed. At this stage, I tried to get a general understanding of the data.

After data collection data, coding ensued. At this stage, initial codes were generated. I went through the notes of initial thoughts for coding; the data was read several times. Manual coding was pursued; at this stage, an effort was made to situate the data in the context. Coloured pens were used to indicate potential patterns. After the initial coding, three excel sheets were created, including family business, HR professional and miscellaneous. In each spreadsheet, all possible codes were listed out along with the data that supported each code. There are three main difficulties at this stage. One is the data itself sometimes is contradicting. Following the advice given by Braun and Clarke (2006), the accounts that departed from the dominant story were retained and were reviewed later in the analysis stage. Another problem is that some data can be coded with different ‘themes’. Initially, I tried to write down as many codes as possible. Later on, I would do the re-coding and encoding again when the themes were searched. The last issue was when to stop coding. The process of coding can be long and tedious and ongoing; however, the researcher should decide when to move to the next phase. According to Braun and Clarke’s (2006) guideline, I began to move to the subsequent stage when each data item has been given an equal amount of attention.

In the third stage, I searched for themes. Different codes were reviewed (including codes that are contradicting) and were compared them to find the patterns. I started with the spreadsheet and data set of family business. Based on the data of each family business, all the codes were analysed, sorted into potential themes and sub-themes based on the pattern found. For each themes and sub-themes, relevant data as evidence was extracted for illustrations. After finding the themes for each family business, the

themes among the different organisations were compared similar themes were grouped together. Next, I read the spreadsheets of HR professional and miscellaneous. Again, the codes were analysed. Then I associated the codes with the themes found in the family business data set. After all the themes have been searched, a new spreadsheet called ‘Themes’ was devised. In this spreadsheet, all the potential themes and sub-themes were noted and were supported with surrounding data. The main challenge in this stage is grouping and screening. I need to search for the pattern among the codes and group the similar codes into one theme. During the process, the irrelevant themes were screened. In short, I need to decide what to include and what to exclude. To handle this question, I referred back to my research questions and literature review. Since the key objective of the anthropological study was to reveal other local expressions made by the research subject, I tried to include those themes that are relevant to the research questions. The relevant themes were prioritised according to their significance which is reflected by their frequencies of occurrence, emphasis made by the research subject and amount of supporting data. Themes and codes of less importance were screened out. For instance, *kuai le* 快樂 and *fu zi* 福祉 are found in the written brochures of FB 1. Nevertheless, these two Chinese terms only appear once and they are seldom used as oral language. They seem to be comparatively less significant to the locals. Therefore, I decided to exclude these two terms in the findings. All the themes are checked in relation to the codes extracted and the three data sets, so as to make sure they are presented with thorough, inclusive and comprehensive details and examples from the data sets.

In the fourth stage, I reviewed the data sets again and coded any additional data within the themes which have been missed out in the earlier coding. The themes were checked against one another and back to the original data. Some of the data was re-coded to enhance accuracy and coherency. At last, the themes are rearranged into the four key local expressions: (1) *jia ting*, (2) *peng you*, (3) *kai xin gong zuo* and (4) *xin zhong fu you*.

In the fifth stage, I defined and refined the essence of each theme. The four themes were grouped into two specific indigenous notions – *xing fu* and *xin* and generated a final version of thematic map. Based on the thematic map, a story was generated for each theme. To prepare for the writing up, the scope and content of each theme was written. At last, I related the analysis back to the research questions and produced ‘thick description’.

To reflect upon the entire process, thematic analysis is never as systematic as described above. Instead, it is long, tedious, repetitive and even chaotic, because it is difficult to go along each phrase step by step. Often times, I felt the need to go back to the data sets and spreadsheets to recode and encode again in order to improve the conciseness, preciseness and coherence of the analysis.

4.4.3 Data Analysis

The empirical data of the ethnography is initially presented through a ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973). As discussed, ‘thick description’ may potentially help to generate an in-depth understanding of the research subject. However, Ponterotto (2006) questions how far ‘thick description’ could be expanded within the qualitative research. In other words, what comes next after ‘thick description’? It seems that Geertz (1973) did not provide any clues to answer such a question. Therefore, this thesis proposes using a dialogue to extend ‘thick description’. Within ‘thick description’, a theoretical discussion and a possible dialogue among different perspectives (i.e. Hedonism, Eudaimonia, Confucian and Daoist teachings) are made. Hence, this thesis is a methodological experiment to formulate a dialogue within ‘thick description’.

Some postcolonial researchers, such as Banerjee (2003), Prasad (2003), Cheung (2011), Calestani (2013) and Manning (2016), advocate the idea of clearing a space to allow ‘the Other’ (non-western) to speak back to the west. In particular, Cheung’s (2011) thesis, *“Managing Chinese Employee: Dialogues from the notion of self”*, is an attempt to create a platform for meaningful dialogues to take place between the Chinese and the west. In her research, she investigates how Chinese employees make sense of their selves in relation to their works in MNCs. To reduce any practices that may give rise to *essentialism*, she places both the western and Chinese conceptual frameworks of selves on an equal footing. While she interprets the interview data through the notion of self in the frameworks of Giddens, Taylor, and Ricoeur, she also read through the notion in the Confucian and Daoist frameworks. After her interpretation, she further provided a platform to engage both the Self (the west) and ‘the Other’ (the Chinese) into a theoretical dialogue. Moreover, she mentions the following advantages of attempting such a dialogue:

“By engaging them into dialogue, one may be able to see what the common focal points of interest and shared concerns are, what is absent in one which is found in the other, and what is crucial to one but less important to the other. Such knowledge may help both sides understand each other better, and shed some light on understanding Chinese employees, the research subject”
(p. 201)

Significantly, her approach has created a discursive space wherein the Chinese could speak as an equal partner to the dominant (the west). The dialogue aims to help both sides to understand each other better, enhances expatriates’ understanding of Chinese employees and provides some insights to manage the local employees effectively. Her study could make impact on the human resource management of MNCs operating in China.

Following the above researchers’ lead, the thesis proposes a conceptual framework (Table 2.2) that consists of both the mainstream and the Chinese perspectives. The framework is used to produce theoretical discussion and dialogues. The advantages of this framework are: (1) it provides a discursive

space for local self-representation (Jack and Westwood, 2006); and (2) encourage dialogues among different perspectives. First, a Chinese subject's voice is put at the centre of the discursive space. Their expressions are first interpreted through a mainstream framework of well-being (mainly Hedonism and Eudaimonia) and then through a Chinese perspective, namely Confucian and Daoist frameworks. Here, the Chinese language and its intellectual traditions can be the key resources to understand a Chinese subject (Westwood, 2004). Second, each perspective (i.e. Hedonism, Eudaimonia, Confucian and Daoist teachings) would initiate a dialogue. The dialogue begins by highlighting the crucial ideas and concerns from a particular framework. Then, space will be provided for other perspectives to speak as an equal partner, and respond to any focal points of interest being raised. Hence, a theoretical dialogue among various perspectives is initiated. Hopefully, the dialogue enables each side to better understand one another and shed some light on understanding the research subject – members of CFB in Hong Kong.

Chapter 5 An Archaeological Examination

This chapter addresses the first research question – *How does the discourse of well-being emerge and transform in a Chinese context?* Here, well-being and *xing fu* are considered as discursive concepts. The archaeological examination scrutinises well-being per se and examines its knowledge production. The examination makes a contribution to knowledge by showing well-being is culturally distinctive and dynamic; and locating the issues of *objectification* and *essentialism* in the well-being discourse. More importantly, a suggestion to deal with the issues will also be offered.

The analysis will first demystify a mainstream framework of well-being in a Chinese context. Next, the formation of *fu* and how it is transformed to *xing fu* are examined. As discussed in section 4.2.1, Foucault's (1979) archaeology of knowledge will be operationalised through five layers of texts (Table 4.2). Lastly, implications from the archaeological analysis will be drawn.

5.1 Discursive (Trans)Formation of Well-being

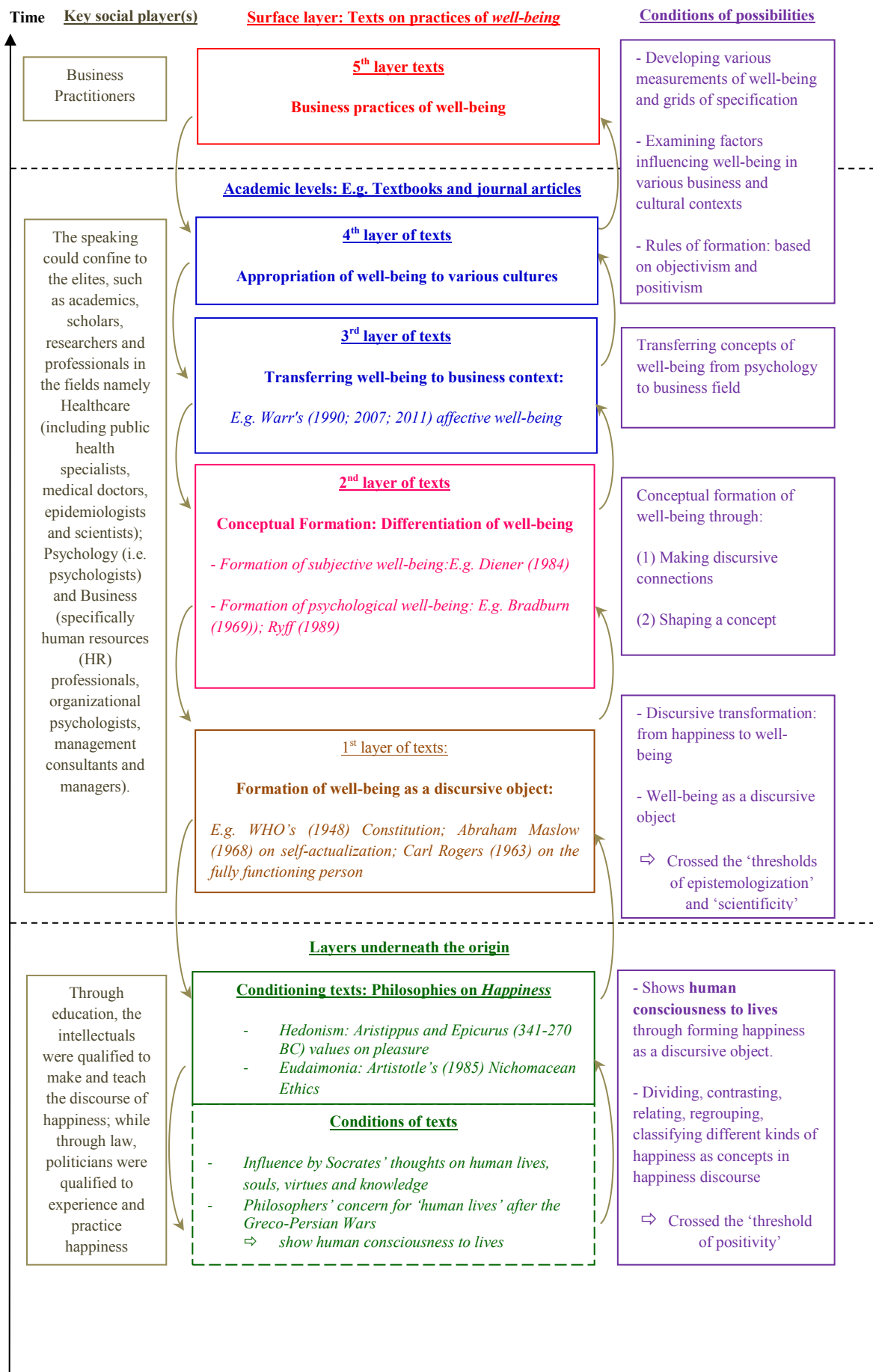
The notion of well-being is based upon Hedonism and Eudaimonia. These two philosophical approaches are related to the ideas on happiness. Therefore, texts on happiness could be regarded as conditioning texts for well-being.

5.1.1 Conditioning Texts of Well-being

This part illustrates the formation of happiness as a discursive object and the subsequent emergence of well-being (Figure 5.1: Layers underneath the origin). Based on Foucault's (1972) archaeology, one could examine a discursive formation by defining the formation of an object. Thus, the examination of the thesis begins by looking at how happiness is formed as a discursive object.

First, the conditions that allowed happiness to emerge on the surface are examined. By the mid-5th century, the experience of wars had made some sophists question the traditional religious beliefs of gods and goddesses over the world of nature. After the Greco-Persian Wars, philosophers were concerned about issues and topics related to human lives. This was the time when consciousness of happiness seemed to emerge. Socrates (469BC – 399BC) often argued eloquently with his students regarding the topics of human lives, souls, virtues and knowledge. Hence, his thoughts cover these topics and have influenced many of his students, such as Plato, Aristippus and Antisthenes. During this time, these intellectuals came from aristocratic backgrounds, which provided them with the status and authority to discuss, argue and teach on these issues and topics. Such situation constituted a precondition for happiness to emerge as a discursive object in the discourse of philosophy.

Figure 5. 1: Discursive (Trans)Formation of Well-being



In ancient Greece, Aristotle (Plato's student) began to explore his value and meaning on happiness. He had thoroughly examined happiness in his writing: *Nichomachean Ethics* (1985). This was the moment when happiness, firstly emerged as an object in philosophy. Almost at the same time, his texts on eudaimonia became conditioning texts for well-being.

Second, the appearance of happiness is made possible through a "grid of specification" (Foucault, 1972, p.42). In ancient Greece, different types of happiness are "being divided, contrasted, related, regrouped, classified, derived from one another" (Foucault, 1972, p.42) as objects in the discourse of political science. Aristotle (1985) defined various objects related to happiness and formed grids of specification for differentiations (Table 5.1). These grids of specification became a condition that allowed happiness to emerge as a discursive object.

Table 5. 1: Grids of specification of *happiness*

Objects of happiness							Grids of specification of <i>happiness</i>			
The life (p.68)	Pleasure		Political		Contemplative					
The goods (pp.70-78)	Substance <i>(God or mind)</i>	Quality <i>(The virtues)</i>	Quantity <i>(What is moderate)</i>	Relation <i>(What is useful)</i>	Time <i>(Opportunity)</i>		Place <i>(Habitual)</i>			
	Means			Ends						
	External		Of the soul		Of the body					
The virtues (p.90)	Intellectual			Moral						
The soul (pp. 88-89)	Rational			Irrational						
	Good			Bad						
	Continent			Incontinent						

(Source: Aristotle, 1985)

Third, the formation of happiness is made by "the authorities of delimitation" (Foucault, 1972, p.41). As specified by Aristotle (1985),

"...the best and most pleasant life is the life of the intellect, since the intellect is in the fullest sense the man. So this life will be the happiest" (p.331).

According to this, in ancient Greece, only the intellectuals were qualified to speak about happiness. They were the ones who had the authority to talk about happiness since their lives were perceived to be the happiest. Thus, education could be considered as 'the institutional site' (Foucault, 1972) wherein the intellectuals created the discourse on happiness. Aristotle (1985) even highlighted that:

“Education in goodness is the best undertaken by the state ... this (being a good man) can be achieved by living under the guidance of some intelligence or right system that has effective force” (p.337-338).

At that time, politicians were the key audience for such knowledge as they were qualified to practice happiness through the means of law. Aristotle (1985) differentiated the roles between sophists and politicians:

“But as for political science, although the sophists profess to teach it, not one of them practices it; that is done by politicians, and they would seem to do it from a sort of ability aided by experience rather than by the exercise of reason” (p.340)

Thus, with the help of education, the intellects were qualified to make and teach the discourse of happiness for the politicians; while through law, the politicians were qualified to experience and practice happiness. Discourse on happiness at that time was made for the politicians to regulate and control the public. As Aristotle (1985) said:

“The science that studies the supreme Good for man is politics ... Clearly this description fits the science of politics; for it is political science that prescribes what subjects are to be taught in states, and which of these different sections of the community are to learn, and up to what point ... Such, then, is the aim of our investigation; and it is a kind of political science.” (p.64)

Hence, studies on happiness at that period of time, were regarded as a crucial aspect within the realm of political science. Once happiness has been formed as an object in political science, discourse on happiness began to form.

Based on Foucault's (1979) sequence of thought, conceptual formation of happiness has been formed when it has crossed the “threshold of positivity” (p.186). Such formation could be defined through “forms of co-existence” (p.57). Hedonism and Eudaimonia were the two schools of thoughts that co-existed in the ancient Greece. Hedonism was founded by Aristippus (the student of Socrates) and championed by Epicurus (341-270 BC); while Eudaimonia was founded by Aristotle. They are individual schools of thought, which represent a distinct system wherein statements about happiness were formed and operated. This was the moment when happiness was first perceived as a sort of positive knowledge, in which the two schools of thoughts served as ‘general principles’ or ‘models’ of happiness. Thus, in this manner, happiness is transformed to become a concept.

For Foucault (1972), “knowledge is that of which one can speak in a discursive practice, and which is specified by that fact: the domain constituted by the different objects that will or will not acquire a scientific status” (p.182). Hence, the knowledge of happiness in ancient Greece, was not the sum of things thought to be true, but the whole set of practices, singularities and deviation which could be presented within the discourse of political science. At that period, the role of happiness discourse

could reflect and strengthen the status, authority and functions of the intellects since they were qualified to speak, guide and teach others (in particular, the politicians) to live well. Therefore, the conversations of happiness among the intellects in various schools of thought (mainly Hedonism and Eudaimonia) in ancient Greece, was a reflection of their social status, authority and functions in the society. As a consequence, the discursive formation of happiness (both as an object and a concept) was made possible by a group of relations established between: (1) the life and status of the aristocracy and intellects; (2) the authority of the intellects and politicians; (3) the roles of the intellects and politicians; (3) the authority of the academic institutions and government; (4) the roles and functions of the academic institution and government; (5) the systems of classification for sciences or faculties and philosophy; and (6) the systems of specification in philosophy and psychology.

5.1.2 Well-being as an Object and a Concept

a. *Formation of Well-being*

Foucault (1972) defined that an object “may give birth simultaneously or successively to ... objects without having to modify itself” (p.44). In this way, happiness gave birth to an object, named ‘well-being’. The following layer of texts represented the transformation of happiness to well-being (Figure 5.1: 1st layer of texts). In 19th century, happiness was not just limited as a philosophical concept within the discourse of political science; it was discussed in varied fields, such as, healthcare, psychology and even business management. For instance, the following excerpt highlights the importance of happiness into the discourse of healthcare:

In 1948, World Health Organization (WHO) describes in its Constitution:

“THE STATES Parties to this Constitution declare, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, that the following principles are basic to the happiness, harmonious relations and security of all peoples: Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 1948, p.1).

Here, health is made as a basic principle of happiness. Hence, the relationship between happiness and health are emphasised in the healthcare field.

Psychology is another major field where the concept of happiness flourishes. From 1950s to 1960s, the American public and the community of scientific psychologists exhibited strengthened interest over the issues of psychological growth and health (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Thus, this led to the idea of happiness to be ingrained within the field of psychology, in particular humanistic psychology, such as the works of Abraham Maslow (1943) on self-actualisation and Carl Rogers (1963) on the fully functioning person (Harrington, 2013; Huppert and Linley, 2011). Since the late 19th century, the discourses of happiness and well-being have been classified within Positive Psychology (Harrington, 2013). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi’s (2000) seminal paper in the field of Positive Psychology discussed well-being as “the aim of positive psychology is to... focus...[on] building positive qualities” (p.5). Similarly, Haworth and Hart (2007) emphasised that “well-being offers a paradigm that allow

those in academic, policy and user field to focus on positive outcomes, and how best to realize them” (p.1). Even Seligman (2011) highlighted that: *“I now think that the topic of positive psychology is well-being”* (p.13). Thus, since then, well-being has become a key discursive object in Positive Psychology.

Based on Foucault’s (1972) archaeology, the advent of well-being as a discursive object represents the moment when the discourse of happiness crossed the “threshold of epistemologization” (p.187) and “threshold of scientificity” (p.187) in the science of psychology. Post World War II, psychology has become a science, with major focus on healing (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Kashdan, Baswas-Diener and King (2011) highlighted that although Hedonic (which is regarded as subjectivist or mentalist tradition) and Eudemonic (which is regarded as objectivist tradition) approaches to examine happiness might make sense for philosophers, they are less appropriate to the science of psychology. They argued that:

“Eudaimonia and Hedonic happiness are intriguing philosophical concept ... While they are entirely appropriate to the philosophical traditions in which they were produced, these concepts do not translate well to modern scientific and empirical inquiry ... While philosophers have often emphasized the different types of happiness, social scientists must consider the best available empirical evidence when making arguments” (p.330-331).

They stressed that “as scientists we draw on research to ... examine the validity of the notion that feeling good about one’s life is unlikely to provide a reliable assessment that one is happy for the right reasons” (p.319). They believed that the science of psychology needs to provide “a unique approach to issues about the nature of happiness in the good life”, and that “scientific methods and empirical attention to mental status add a new perspective on the historical dialogue on happiness” (p.332). Hence, in order to make research on happiness sound more scientific in the discourse of psychology, another object, ‘well-being’ was introduced in 1984 by Ed Diener. Diener (1984) published on the construct of ‘*subjective well-being*’ (SWB). Later in 1989, Carol Ryff, introduced another construct called ‘*psychological well-being*’ (PWB). Thus, these key moments in the field of psychology established the advent of happiness to well-being.

In Diener’s (1984) and Ryff’s (1989) productions of SWB and PWB, well-being has been made as ‘a construct’ to differentiate itself from its predecessor, happiness (Seligman, 2011). As a construct, well-being could have “several measurable elements” and “each of the elements is a measurable thing” (Seligman, 2011, p. 15). In such a manner, psychologists made the object of well-being as ‘a construct’ for the science of psychology, “and thus one of the great dividing lines of happiness and well-being research was born” (Linley and Huppert, 2011, p.7). Since then, research on well-being has been regarded as a scientific discourse which emphasises on its measurement, validity, coherence and functionality. It stresses on the significance of scientific models, critiques, or verification. Hence, well-being as an object was born because it has crossed the “threshold of epistemologization” and “threshold of scientificity” (Foucault, 1972, p.187).

Why was it necessary to create a new name called *well-being*? In her archaeological analysis on the transformation of TQC to TQM, Xu (2000) provides an answer. She explains that “to distinguish a discourse from its earlier version, a change of name is necessary” (p. 431). Thus, to differentiate the discourse of political sciences from the healthcare of psychological discourse, a creation of an object named, *well-being* is necessary. This is the moment when well-being as a discursive object firstly emerged. Xu (2000) argues further:

“A conventional view holds that, if the world is constituted of ‘thing’, the enterprise of enquiry must be on or of ‘things’; they constitute a first order, whereas links or relationships constitute the second” (p.432).

In this light, the coming-into-being of well-being could be made possible through the creation of its name, which had diverted the psychology discourse to examine the ‘essence’ of such a ‘thing’, given its formation emerges only in discourse. Hence, well-being provides scholars with ‘a scientific language’ for talking about such an object (Kashdan, et al., 2011, p.317).

Who are qualified to speak about well-being and where is the speaking taken place? Haworth and Hart (2007) specified that researchers, educators, policy makers and politicians are all interested in well-being “consciously or subconsciously, as together we create well-being” (p.1). Kashdan et al. (2011) further specified that “the search for something ‘better’ than SWB or better form of happiness connotes a potential elitism, that the Good Life is an experience for individual who have attained some transcendence from everyday life” (p.331). Resonating with their argument, the speaking could be possibly confined to the elites, such as academics, scholars, researchers, professionals, politicians and government officials in the fields, namely Healthcare (including public health specialists, medical doctors, epidemiologists and scientists); Psychology (i.e. psychologists) and Business Management (specifically human resources (HR) professionals, organizational psychologists, management consultants and managers). Academic institutions, governments, inter-governmental organizations (such as World Health Organization organized by United Nations) and professional bodies (such as Psychology Associations and HR Association) are the ‘institutional site’ wherein such speaking takes place. Since the formation of Positive Psychology, various associations, networks, and databases have been established to encourage the discourse of well-being. For instance, An International Positive Psychology Association (IPPA) and an European positive psychology network have been formed to promote regular conferences and publications; a World Database of Happiness Research in Europe is freely offered on the internet at <http://www.eur.nl/fsw/research/happiness>; the Centre for applied Positive Psychology (CAPP) has been established to offer assessment and development tools to examine the potentials and strengths of individuals, teams and organizations (Haworth and Hart, 2007). Even a Psychinfo search on the term *well-being* can result in over 28,000 citations (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Hence, the formation of the new field, *Positive Psychology*, has not only granted a discursive space for the object of well-being to emerge, but has also positioned well-being in a manner to lead to its flourishing in the discourse.

b. Well-being as a Concept.

Foucault (1972) defines ‘*the procedures of intervention*’ as a way to uncover the formation of concepts (p.58). He explains that “these procedures are not in fact the same for all discursive formations; those are used (to the exclusion of all others), the relations that link them and the unity thus created make it possible to specify each one” (pp.58-59). Well-being could be made a concept (particularly in the discourse of Psychology) through the two procedures of intervention: (1) making discursive connection and (2) shaping the concept of *well-being* through interpretations (Figure 5.1: 2nd layer of texts). First, the concept of *well-being* is formed through successive connection of Hedonic happiness with *subjective well-being*; and Eudemonic happiness with *psychological well-being*. Foucault (1972) traces the formation of concepts through “forms of succession”, in which “a set of rules for arranging statement in series, an obligatory set of schema of dependence, of order, and of succession, in which the recurrent elements that may have value as concepts were distributed” (p.57). Based upon his idea on succession, the sets of rules governing the discourse of Hedonic happiness and Eudaimonia have amalgamated to the discourses on SWB and PWB respectively. How did such succession take place? Xu (2000) posited that by creating “links” between “quality control” and “quality management”, “one shapes a discursive space” (p.429). With her argument, one could trace a discursive transformation from happiness to well-being by delineating the discursive connections between them. Kashdan et al. (2011) highlighted that Hedonic and Eudemonic happiness “are the most useful way to frame contemporary research in well-being” (p.330), because “it is the very link between Eudaimonia and Hedonics that justifies the psychologists’ place at the table in the discussion of the Good Life” (p.332). Therefore, making a discursive connection of Hedonic happiness with SWB; and Eudaimonia with PWB is another mode of discursive formation. This mode of discursive formation allows the SWB and PWB to be formulated in sets of successions that are instilled with similar predecessors, such as, Hedonic and Eudemonic happiness respectively. Hence, concepts of *well-being* are formed with such form of succession.

Second, given *well-being* is made as ‘a construct’ in research, Seligman (2011) highlighted that “enumerating the elements of well-being is our (academics and psychologists) next task”. Since *well-being* is formed as an object, academics and psychologists have been keen on operationalising well-being through their interpretations. Various elements of *well-being* have been measured and examined which led various exclusive objects to devise the concept of well-being. Such operation is similar to Xu’s (2000) metaphor of making a snowball by adding a ‘patch’ to a concept. She highlighted that:

“Another mode of discursive formation is through shaping concepts. Like making snowballs ... One adds a ‘patch’ to a concept so that a desirable shape emerges ... One common procedure is interpretation” (p.433).

How have they made a snowball? Snowball has been advanced through the development of different measurements and “grids of specification” (Foucault, 1972, p.42). For example, ‘*living standard*’ is considered as another discursive object that allows the assessment of well-being through measurements such as *Quality of Life (QoL)*, *Human Development Index (HDI)* and *living standard index* and more.

Various grids of specification have been used which have led to the development of various object concerned with well-being. For example, there are differentiations on health, as health includes physical, mental and social well-being; *subjective well-being* versus *psychological well-being* in the discourse of psychology; and well-being in various contexts such as in business / work (e.g. *affective well-being, job satisfaction, work-life balance and stress* etc.); in family (e.g. *familial relation, familial climate and familial health* etc.); and in society (e.g. *economic wealth, technological advancement and human development* etc.). While devising snowball, well-being is measured, divided, contrasted, related, regrouped, and classified into different *degrees, levels* and *kinds*. In such a manner, well-being is incorporated into various fields of scientific and empirical discourses, including the healthcare, psychology, and business management.

The above analysis shows that the discursive formation of well-being is made possible by a group of relations established between: (1) the status and authority of the academics, governments and professionals in healthcare, psychology and business; (2) the roles of the academics, governments and professionals in healthcare, psychology and business; (3) the authority of the academic institutions, governments, inter-governmental organizations and professional bodies; (4) the roles and functions of the academic institutions, governments, inter-governmental organizations and professional bodies ; (5) the systems of verification, classification and specification in the fields of healthcare, psychology and business.

5.1.3 Transformation

The discursive transformation of well-being can take place by transferring the concept to different business and cultural contexts. Along this direction, well-being is made as a global concept, which seems to be universally applicable across any fields and contexts.

How did well-being transfer to the business field? Well-being devised a number of discursive objects in the business field (Figure 5.1: 3rd layer of text). For instance, initially, *job satisfaction* emerged in the sales and marketing field during 1920s (Wright, Emich and Klotz, 2017); *Quality of Work Life* (QWL) was introduced during 1960s (Jacques, 1996); and *affective well-being* was developed by Warr in 1990s (1990; 2007; 2009; 2011) to assess the importance of well-being in the workplace. These objects were successively formed to indicate a shift of attention to *employee well-being*, which is an advancing concept in the management discourse.

How did such a transformation of management knowledge occur? During the examination of the management knowledge from the 19th century to 21st century, Jacques (1996) provided a probable answer for the question. He classified management history into five themes, including Taylor's

scientific management; Hawthorne organisational behaviours Study; Weber's structural consideration; integrated perspectives and a paradigmatic science of behaviours in organisations. The movement from Taylorism to the Hawthorn studies represented a transformation in management knowledge, that is, from mechanic engineering to informal organisations.

This transformation in management discourse has been made possible with the rise of industrial-organisational psychology (I/OP); the first textbook on which was published by Munsterberg in 1910. Most of the psychologists working in this area were based in universities and are responsible for defining the tone and structure of I/OP (Landy, 1997; Link, 1994). Jacques (1996) reflected that:

“the entry of industrial psychology into the discourse of employee was a point from which the extensive interpenetration of the university and the organisation began to produce a distinct product. Industrial psychology was the first institution of management to be enunciated primarily by academics” (p.140).

In such a manner, psychologists rather than the management engineers were the key individuals who generated and monitored the discourse of management knowledge. The academic bodies and laboratories, instead of the industrial units, turned out to be the institutional site of management discourse. The above changes represent a discursive transformation in management.

I/OP followed the Positive Movement that took place within the field. As a consequence, Positive Psychology extended to business arena, such as positive organisational behaviours (POB), positive organisational scholarship (POS) and positive human resource management (PHRM) (Wright et al., 1997). Along the same lines as Positive Psychology, I/OP is placed upon sound and scientific techniques. Its ontologies and epistemologies have again transferred to the management discourse. Jacques (1996) called this transformation as “phenomenological shift” (p.141):

“The convergence of Scientific Management with the vocational, employment managers’ and industrial psychology movements indicated and accelerated a profound shift in reality of work. Because of the strong influence of German idealism in this transformation. I will refer to it as the ‘phenomenological shift’. It was manifested in a decentering of the material and economic aspects of work in favour of an emphasis on work as what would today be called a social construction” (p.140).

Steffy and Grimes (1992) further specified that positivism and neo-positivism were the dominant modes of engagement in I/OP. Under such practices, *employee well-being* was assumed to be a ‘real’ object that could be tested through scientific methods. In this case, the subject (the employees) were treated as an object of knowledge to testify the notion of employee well-being in the management discourse.

More significantly, well-being is applied to various cultural contexts through appropriation (Figure 5.1: 4th layer of text). Using the Chinese context as an example, well-being was being directly translated as ‘*xing fu*’ in Chinese. However, is *xing fu* emerged from well-being? Are the two concepts identical with the same origin? If not, would there be a tendency of *objectification* and *essentialism* along the discursive transformation? If so, how and when did these problems occur? In order to provide answers to these questions, section 5.2 examines the discourse of *xing fu* to understand its formation and transformation.

5.1.4 Business Practice of Well-being

How did well-being shape business practices? The fifth level of texts indicates the discourse on well-being practices in workplace (Figure 5.1: 5th layer of texts). After the First World War, the employees were encouraged to apply I/OP to the workplace by the army (Jacques, 1996). With the influence of Positive Psychology and Hawthorn Studies, employers and managers changed their focus to positive managerial human resource practices, such as employee involvement, work-life balance initiatives, wellness programs, employee assistance programs, family-friendly policies, employee satisfaction surveys etc. (Jacques, 1996; Wright et al., 1997; Ballard and Grawitch, 2017; Burke, 2017; Warr and Nielsen, 2018). Such interventions were designed to generate a healthy work environment and also contribute to the building up of performance (Warr and Nielsen, 2018) and public reputations, such as being Employer-of-Choice and award-winning organisations given by the American Psychological Association (APA) (Ballard and Grawitch, 2017). At the same time, these recognitions could be served as standards or expectations for employees in regards to their desired work lifestyle or well-being (Warr, 2017). That is why these interventions are often regarded as part of the ‘best practices’ in Human Resources Management.

5.2 Discursive (Trans)Formation of *Xing Fu*

Xing fu is made up of two Chinese words: ‘*xing*’ 幸 and ‘*fu*’ 福. Therefore, one needs to trace the (trans)formation of *fu*, in order to examine the discourse of *xing fu* (Figure 5.2).

5.2.1 Conditioning Texts of *Fu*

The word, ‘*fu*’ 福, first appeared as bone inscription in ancient China before being transformed to a modern term, *xing fu*. These bone inscriptions were found on the burial gifts of the graves of Shang’s kings. They had become conditioning texts for the discursive object of ‘*fu*’ that emerged later in the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Period (770 BC to 221 BC). Wolfgang Bauer (1976), a German sinologist, identified that:

“The ‘bone inscriptions’ from the Shang dynasty ... show quite clearly on what depended the weal and woe of mankind or, perhaps more accurately, of the aristocracy of the time” (p.4).

Those bone inscriptions were related to the concerns that were addressed to the spirits that mainly included queries on “nature events of all kinds such as rain and sunshine, floods, the failure of harvests, and the right time for hunting and fishing” and “the advice sought in all human affairs such as the sending of envoys, the founding of cities, sacrifice to the spirits of nature and the dead, military expedition, illnesses and dreams” (Bauer, 1976, p.4). Thus, in Shang dynasty, the Chinese consciousness of lives was emerged through the dimension of spirits (Figure 5.2: Layers underneath the origins).

What were the conditions that gave rise to those bone inscriptions? During Shang dynasty, Shang’s rulers relied on the oracle priests to understand life on earth and the underworld. Bauer (1976) specified the social roles of the oracle priests in Shang:

“The oracle priests thus became indispensable guides in a world divided into wilderness and civilization, this world and the beyond ... They intend to provide guides for action in the Here and Now.” (p.5-6)

Hence, the oracle priests were qualified to speak and guide the rulers for a living. They “had formed a kind of second government up to that time because their predictions had also influence politics” (p.12). To maintain their stature and power that could influence politics, the priests built up the consciousness of life on earth and the underworld through the dimension of spirits. They used the “bone inscriptions” as a means to understand the will of the spirits and guide the Shang’s rulers to live well. Hence, during that period, the consciousness to live well was once built and governed by the oracle priests given “their position as councillors of the king and as men whose word was all powerful” (p.12). They were the ones who were considered qualified enough to speak and provide guidance and counsel to the rulers on matters related to living.

5.2.2 Fu as an Object and a Concept

a. Formation of Fu

This part traces the formation of *fu* as an object (Figure 5.2: 1st layer of texts). According to Foucault (1972), the formation of *fu* as an object could be etched with the mentioned three steps: (1) mapping the first of its emergence; (2) analysing the grid of specification; and (3) describing the authorities of delimitation (p.41). First, the discursive object of *fu* 福 was primarily appeared in *The Book of Documents (The Great Plan)* during the Zhou dynasty. In Chinese, the book is known as *Shang Shu (Hong Fan)*. The invasion of Zhou led to the downfall of the Shang dynasty and eventually, the rule of Zhou took the title of King and attained a position to perform rites of his own. This also resulted in the declination in the importance of the oracle priests to influence politics with the use of their bone and tortoise shell to indicate the weal and woe of humankind as addressed by the spirits. Bauer (1976) described that the decline of oracle priests:

“They literally lost their entire existence – at least the existence which they had always considered ideal, i.e. their position as councillors of the king and as men whose word was all-

powerful. The new rulers had sufficient confidence in themselves to eliminate them (i.e. the oracle priests) rigorously from this position. At the same time, they were intelligent enough to continue occupying them in the administration as slave officials of a sort.” (p.12).

Contrary to the rulers of Shang dynasty and their reliance of the oracle priests, the King of Zhou engaged in extensive political doctrine on ‘morality’, as he aimed to make the citizens, particularly those who formed the nobility to believe that such change in the leadership was justifiable (Bauer, 1976). Hence, *The Book of Documents (The Great Plan)* described the conversation between the first king of Zhou (i.e. *Zhou Wu Wang*) and the former Shang’s prince named *Jizi*. *Zhou Wu Wang* once visited *Jizi* to gain his advice on leadership and government. *Jizi* told the king of Zhou the nine principles of governance, known as nine divisions in the *Great Plan*. Among the nine divisions, the five *fu* (i.e. five sources of happiness) were listed as the ninth division. Here *Jizi* emphasised the importance of:

“the hortatory use of the five (sources of) happiness, and the awing use of the six (occasions of) Suffering.” (Shang Shu: Great Plan, 2, in Legg 1985)

Hence, at this moment *fu* firstly emerged as a discursive object, in *Shang Shu (Hong Fan)* in Zhou dynasty.

Second, the appearance of *fu* has been made possible due to ‘the grid of specification’ (Foucault, 1972, p.42). The grid of differentiation consists of three aspects:

1. the sources of ‘fu’ is being divided into five sources:
“... of the five (sources of) happiness. The first is long life; the second, riches; the third, soundness of body and serenity of mind; the fourth, the love of virtue; and the fifth, fulfilling to the end the will (of Heaven).” (Shang Shu: Great Plan, 11, in Legg 1985)
2. the occasions of suffering is being classified into six evils:
“Of the six extreme evils, the first is misfortune shortening the life; the second, sickness; the third, distress of mind; the fourth, poverty; the fifth, wickedness; the sixth, weakness.” (Shang Shu: Great Plan, 11, in Legg 1985)
3. the five (sources of) *fu* is being contrasted with the six evils.

Hence, the above systems of classifications could be seen as a condition that allowed *fu* to emerge as an object.

Third, the formation of *fu* as an object was devised by “the authorities of delimitation” (Foucault, 1972, p.41). In Zhou dynasty, the empire was regulated and governed the kings who only worshipped heaven and the stars and also, limited the discursive power regarding governance to themselves. They started engaging in political propaganda, which emphasised on governance through morality. The conversation between the first king of Zhou (i.e. *Zhou Wu Wang*) and the former Shang prince, *Jizi*,

was where *fu* firstly emerged as a discursive object to indicate the principles of moral governance. In this case, the kings of Zhou were the ones who were deemed qualified enough to speak, generate and discuss the discourse of *fu* and formulate it as an important perspective for governance within the political circle. Hence, government and political circle were considered as “the institutional site” (Foucault, 1972) from which the rulers made the discourse of *fu*.

b. *Fu as a Concept*

The concept of *fu* was formed (Figure 5.2: 2nd layer of texts) when it crossed the “threshold of positivity” (Foucault, 1972, p.186). Such formation can be defined through “forms of co-existence” (Foucault, 1972, p.57). In ancient China, the rulers and officials were appointed due to the hierarchical system in place, while the land was allocated to the regional lords through the *Fengjian* system. In Zhou dynasty, the nobles were chosen on the basis of their birth and thus enjoyed the privilege of being officials for generations, disregarding of their abilities and capabilities. Thus, the commoners had limited chance to pursue a career within the political circle. Thus, the social status of an individual was determined by birth, rather than his/her ability.

Nevertheless, the situation began to change since the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Period (770 BC to 221 BC). At the beginning of the Spring and Autumn period, Zhou emperor had lost its power. Therefore, warring regional lords (such as *Qí Huán Gōng*, *Jìn Wén Gōng*, *Chu Zhuāng Wáng* and *Qín Mù Gōng*) began to compete amongst themselves for survival. To further strengthen their power, they aggressively looked for skilful and literate officials and teachers who could offer them advice on economic, military and cultural developments. Thus, since this time, the officials were recruited on the basis of their merits rather than their birth.

Those commoners and literates who came from minor nobles would win the favour of the monarchs by engaging in the imperial examination and using their talents and abilities to participate actively in the political circle. Hence, they were regarded as the intelligentsia class (士) and gradually became the pillar of society. Such change in the system created a condition for private schools to prosper and lecture tours to become popular. One typical example is *Confucius*, who was a literate at that time. He travelled throughout China, hoping to share his political and ethical ideas with the warring regional lords, who might hire him and implement his ideas. By the time of the Warring States period (476BC and 221 BC), the monarchs continued to seek intellectuals and patronise them. Such social reform stimulated various thinkers and led to a situation wherein a “*Hundred School of Thoughts*” (*zhu zhi ba jia*) emerged. Indeed, such situation provided a condition for various schools of thought to formulate their own concepts of ‘*fu*’.

The “Contention of a Hundred Schools of Thought” (*bai jia zheng ming*) was marked as the “Golden Age” in the Chinese history of thought. Those major schools include *Confucianism*, *Mohism*, *Daoism*, *Legalism*, *Sophists*, *Military Treatises*, *Yin and Yang*, *Divine Farmer*, *Coalition Persuaders* and *Selecticism*. Each school of thought was inculcated with its own distinct and varied perspectives on different political and social issues such as governance, war, diplomacy, society, human life and the world. In fact, each school of thought embodied its own connotation of *fu*. To analyse each school’s perspective of *fu*, Wang (2008) wrote a thesis to describe the evolution of the concept of *xing fu* held by different schools of thought over different historical stages. He highlighted that the concept of happiness of Confucianism emphasises moral satisfaction; Mohism focuses on utilitarian happiness with pleasure-sharing and altruism; Legalism regards benefits as the essence of happiness; and Daoism concentrates on naturalistic happiness. The Hundred Schools of Thoughts co-existed during that period. Each school of thought represented a single system where statements related to *fu* are formed and operated during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods of time. This is the moment when the concept of *fu* was formed and perceived as positive knowledge, where each school of thought had developed its own ‘guidelines’ and ‘model’ of living. Here, the object of *fu* has transformed into a concept.

During that period, the formation of ‘*fu*’ as a concept, is made possible by a group of relations established between: (1) the life and status of various social classes and the intelligentsia class; (2) the authority of the intelligentsia class, the schools of thought and rulers; (3) the roles of the intelligentsia class, the schools of thought and rulers; (4) the authority of the schools and government; and (5) the roles and functions of the schools, government and imperial examination system.

For Foucault (1972), “knowledge is that of which one can speak in a discursive practice, and which is specified by that fact: the domain constituted by the different objects that will or will not acquire a scientific status” (p.182). Based on his argument, the knowledge of *fu* in the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period, is not the sum of what was thought to be true, but the whole set of practices, singularities and deviation of which one could speak in the discourse. During that period, the consciousness of *fu* was initially made within the intelligentsia class who learnt and taught about the social and political matters such as governance, wars, diplomacy, social relations and roles. The role of discourse on those issues was made to reflect and strengthen the status, authority and functions of the intelligentsia class, as they were the ones who were qualified enough to speak, guide, counsel and teach others (in particular, the monarchs) to live well.

The thinkers of each school of thought came from various social groups. For instance, both Confucius and *Lao Zi* came from minor nobles; Divine Farmer were driven by agriculturists; Legalism represented the rising landlords; Military Treatises were made of the military experts; and Coalition Persuaders were mainly consisted of diplomats and more along the same lines. Hence, each school of thought was formed and developed according to the values and interests of a particular social group in which its thinkers belonged. Thus, for such a case, the discourse on *fu* was made in order to protect

and strengthen the position, roles, interests and benefits of various social groups. Therefore, the debates on *fu* among the intelligentsia class in the Hundred Schools of Thought, could be a reflection of their social class, status, authority and functions in the society at that period of time.

5.2.3 Transformation: From *Fu* to *Xing Fu*

Following Foucault's analysis of transformation, the discursive transformations of *fu* take places in two stages: (1) Advancing knowledge of *fu* through rationality and scientificity (Figure 5.2: 3rd layer of texts) and (2) Transforming from *fu* to *xing fu* (Figure 5.2: 4th layer of texts). In stage 1, that is during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period, the concept of *fu* was developed. During this time, the discourse of *fu* was formed without the development of a scientific status. However, the rules of formation had begun to change since the late Ming dynasty. Such a change in the rules represents what Foucault calls, a discursive transformation. How did the rules change? What were the new rules of formation? In the late Ming and early period of Qing dynasty, Chinese intellectuals (*Huang Zongxi*, *Gu Yanwu* and *Wang Fuzhi*) were inspired by the movement of Enlightenment that took place in Europe in the late 17th century. Chinese intellectuals were influenced by western thinking such as *individualism*, *rationality* and *capitalism*. Thus, they began to challenge the ideas and systems of Chinese traditions, ethics, faith and beliefs. For instance, they criticised the *fengjian* system and *despotism*. Some of the intellectuals also questioned the Confucian deontological concept of *fu* which was rooted mainly on the social relations and virtues (Wang, 2008). These intellectuals aimed to analyse the knowledge of *fu* through rationality and scientific methods. As a result, they reconstructed the concept of *fu* from "balanced multi-dimensional" perspectives to "the relation of rationality, justice and commonweal" (Wang, 2008, p.III). In that case, '*rationality*' and '*scientificity*' became the new rules of formation that governed the discourse of *fu*. In Foucault's (1972) archaeology, at this moment, the discourse of *fu* "comply not only with archaeological rules of formation, but also certain laws for construction of propositions" (p.187). In other words, such discursive transformation has crossed the "threshold of scientificity" (p.187) and it had been made due to the power and status of the Chinese Enlightenment thinkers, who were qualified to speak and argue for such a change of rules.

In stage 2, *fu* is transformed to *xing fu*. The rise of the Chinese Enlightenment thinkers (such as *Kang You Wei*, *Liang Qichao*, *Tan Szu-tung* and *Yan Fu*) provided for an environment wherein various western ideas of *capitalism*, *individualism*, *rationality*, *equality*, *freedom* and *democracy* generated a deep impact upon the modern Chinese discourse of *fu*. This is the time when the appropriation of western theories of happiness and well-being to the Chinese contexts has begun. Consequently, the discourse of *fu* has transformed to a stage where it has crossed the "threshold of epistemologization" (Foucault, 1972, pp.186-187). In Wang's (2008) thesis on the evolution of *xing fu*, he highlighted:

"In modern times of China, facing the historical task of saving the nation from subjugation and ensuring its survival, new thinkers advocated moral revolution, formed concept of happiness featured by seeking pleasure and escaping from bitterness on the basis of Western theory of happiness and pleasure, which became the most influential mainstream concept of happiness."

And it was generally and reasonably expounded in the period of May 4th Movement of 1919” (p.III).

Wang’s (2008) analysis highlighted that the western discourse of *well-being* was transferred to the modern Chinese context and had become the mainstream concept of *xing fu*, especially in the Chinese academic institutions, governments, inter-governmental organizations and professional bodies. When academics, scholars and researchers transferred the concept of well-being to the Chinese context, the most common procedures of intervention is through transplantation. Thus, the entire rules of transformation which were used in the framework of well-being are being copied and applied to the Chinese contexts. One illustration could be: well-being is being translated as *xing fu* (Lu, 2001; 2010; Davis, 2005), making *xing fu* as the direct equivalent of well-being. Since then, both well-being and *xing fu* have adopted the same grids of specification. For instance, the discourse of *xing fu* is made possible by the classification between *subjective well-being* (in Chinese, it is directly translated as 主觀幸福感) and *psychological well-being* (in Chinese, it is directly translated as 心理幸福感). Through such transplantation, the rules governing the formation of any empirical and scientific discourses of well-being (mainly positivism and objectivism) are also applicable to the discourse of *xing fu*. Thus, on such layer of texts, the idea of *xing fu* could be measured, divided, contrasted, related, regrouped and classified into different *degrees, levels* and *kinds* across various Chinese contexts. The discourse of *fu* has gone through another transformation, wherein initially the name is altered to a term called ‘*xing fu*’. Post the changes in the term, the statements of *xing fu* are articulated and validated according to the norms of verification and coherence operated in the discourse of well-being. Henceforth, the discourse of well-being has eventually served as a dominant function (as a model, a critique, or a verification) over the knowledge of *xing fu* (Foucault, 1972). According to Foucault’s (1972) term, this level of text represents a discursive transformation since the discourse of *fu* has crossed a “threshold of epistemologization.” (pp.186-187). *Xing fu* is subsequently governed by the same set of rules of formation in the *well-being* discourse. This is the moment when the discourses of well-being and *xing fu* have been merged together (Figure 5.3: 4th layer of texts). Hence, at this level of discourse, transformation from well-being to *xing fu* occurred.

5.2.4 Business Practices of *Xing Fu*

Since *xing fu* is made as an equivalent to *well-being* in 1900s, the two concepts have been applied interchangeably in many Chinese workplaces. In the management discourse, business practices of *xing fu* often correspond to the positive human resource management practices designed for *employee well-being*. However, would the practices of *xing fu* be different in the Chinese family business (CFB)? How far would the members of the family business draw upon the discourse of *well-being* in their daily lives? To answer these questions, an anthropological study is carried out to explore the lived experience of a Chinese subject.

Figure 5. 2: Discursive (trans)formatation of *xing fu*

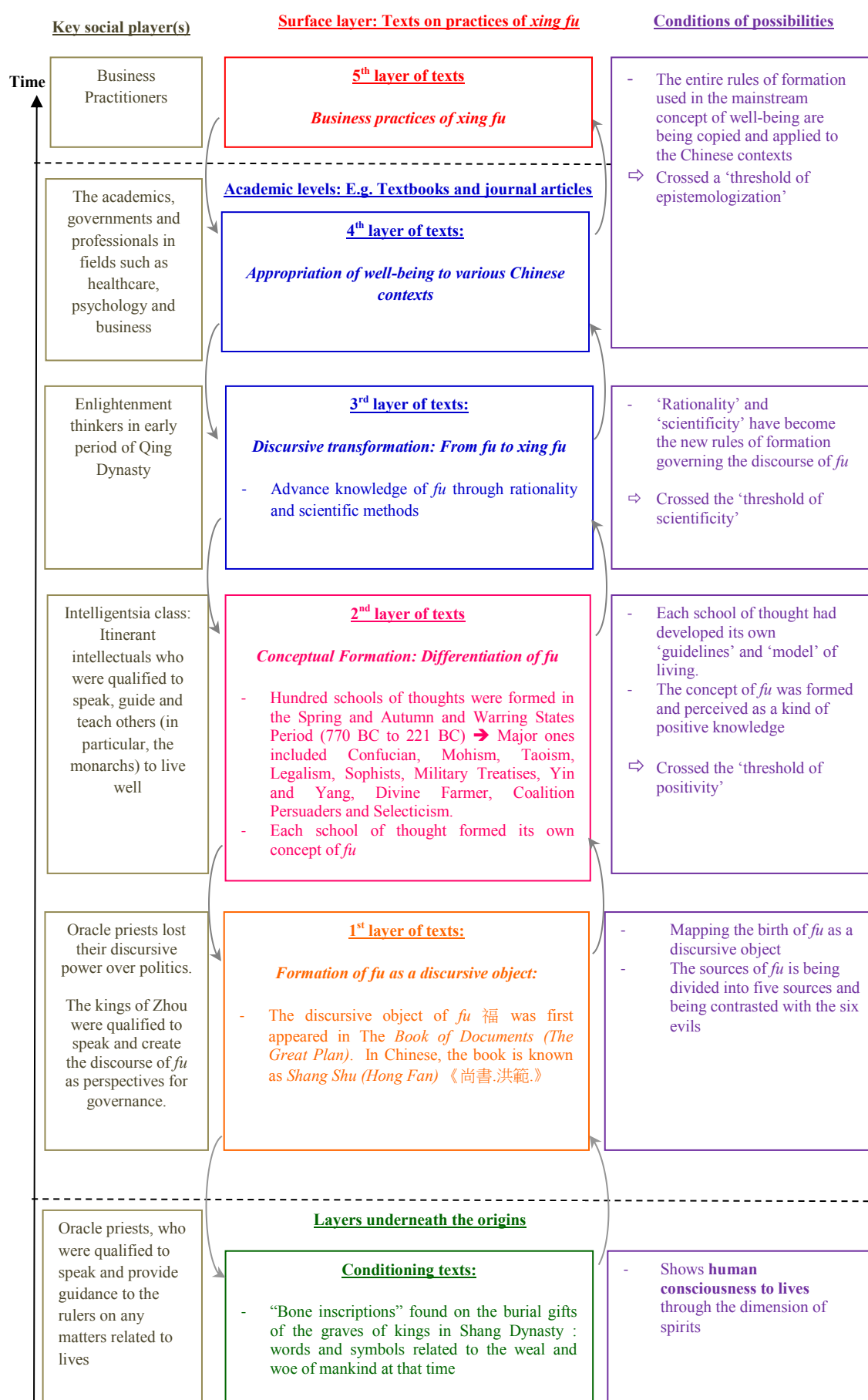
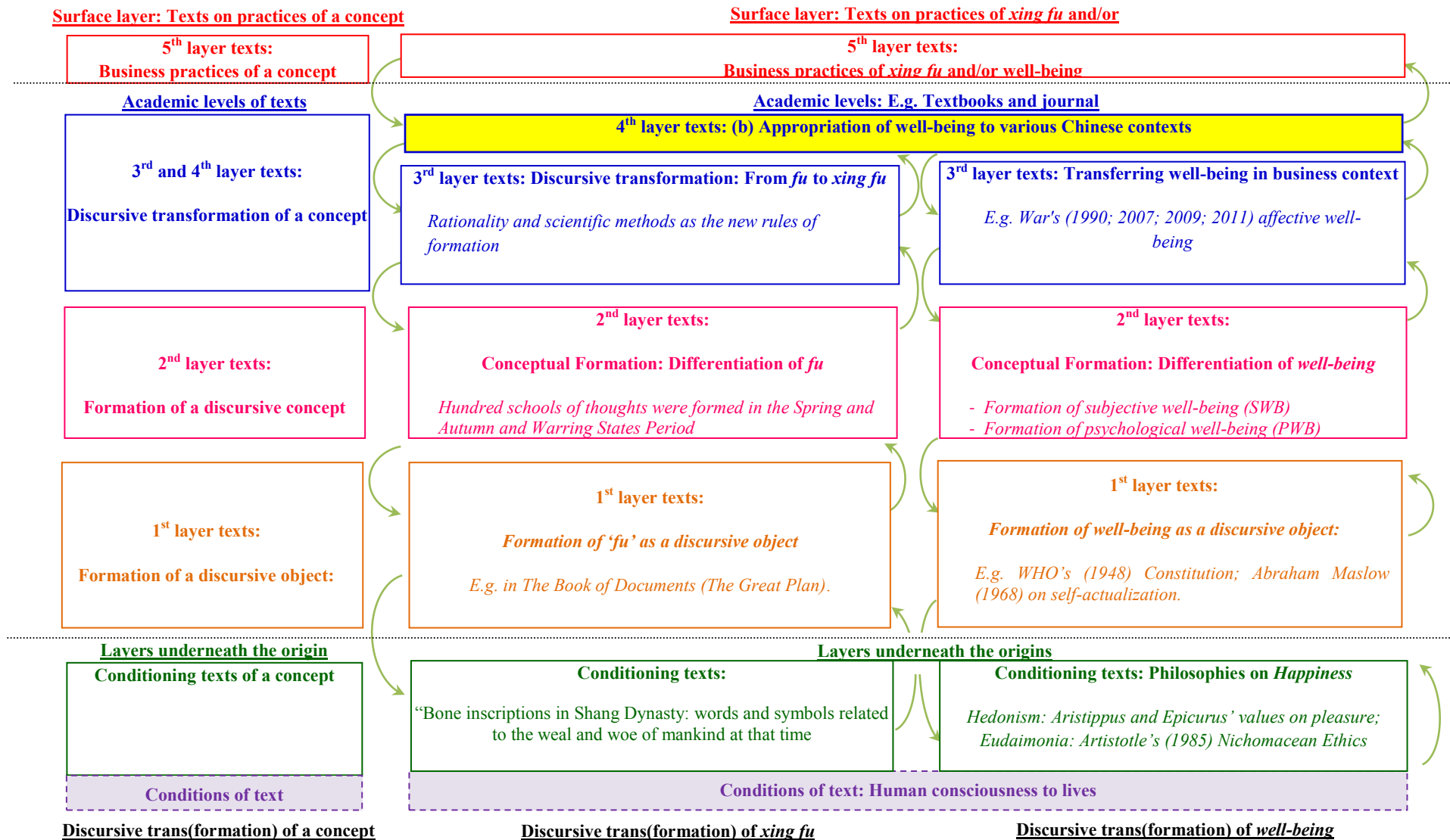


Figure 5. 3: Discursive(trans)formation of well-being and *xing fu*



5.3 Between Well-being and *Xing Fu*

This part derives implications from the archaeological examination. The archaeology uncovers ‘a’ sequence of rules that govern the discourse and examined the possibility of it impacting the present world. The examination considers well-being as a discursive object. With such an assumption, a discursive space is created to examine the discourse of well-being.

From the archaeological examination, two additional ontological possibilities of *well-being* are revealed. The first is that well-being is *dynamic* in nature, since, it has gone through a major range of transformation in the discourse. Well-being has emerged from a discursive object to a concept and has been applied to various fields and cultural contexts. The second ontological possibility is that well-being is *culturally distinctive*, rather than context-free. Well-being has originated from the Eurocentric philosophies on happiness and hence, the knowledge generated is “culturally and historically specific” (Jacques, 1996, p.vii). With the above two additional characteristics of well-being, this thesis makes a contribution to knowledge by revealing more ontological possibilities of well-being.

This archaeological study reviews problems of *objectification* and *essentialism* in the discourse of *well-being*. Foucault (1982) classified *objectifications* into three modes: (1) scientific classification; (2) “dividing practice” (p. 777) and (3) “subjectification” (p.778) (Section 2.3). These three modes of objectifications can be found in the well-being discourse (1st to 5th layers of texts). First, the science of psychology relies on tactics, such as ‘objective’, ‘reliable’ and ‘accurate’ measurement and statistical analysis (Steffy and Grimes, 1992) to examine the validity of well-being. These tactics make well-being as an authentic and ‘real’ scientific object. The inquiries of well-being would emphasise on social norms and generate individual differences based on variables of interests (Madigan, 1992). Under this practice, to measure individual well-being, human is turned to be an object. For instance, for *employee well-being* (3rd layer of texts), employees who are supposed to be the subject, have become an object of knowledge to testify well-being in the work context. Foucault perceived this practice of classification as “an individualizing and a totalizing form of power”, because it turns humans into an object of knowledge and “ignores individuals, looking only at the interests of the totality” (p.782). Thus, he argued that:

“There is nothing “scientistic” in this (that is, a dogmatic belief in the value of scientific knowledge), but neither is it a skeptical or relativistic refusal of all verified truth. What is questioned is the way in which knowledge circulates and functions, its relations to power” (p. 781).

Hence, the notion of well-being is not externally ‘given’, but produced historically through the elements of power and knowledge (McGillivray, 2005) produced by the key social players.

Second, the dividing practice can be found in the positivist and neopositivist approaches to well-being. The rationale of these epistemologies tends to create individual as an analysable and describable object that can be objectively assessed, judged, measured, categorised and compared (Townley, 1993). For instance, the major psychological or economic measurements of well-being tend to classify individuals hierarchically along the predetermined scales, such as index of happiness, index of well-being, Quality of Life (QoL) and Human Development Index (HDI) (UNDP, 2007). These scales divide peoples or countries with labels based on the grids of specification such as well-being versus ill-being, wealth versus poverty, health versus illness, and developed country versus the Third World. The dividing practice can be seen as a tool adopted by the disciplinary power to “gaze at, scrutinize, classify and count individual characteristics and behaviours” (Steffy and Grimes, 1992, p.192).

Third, the dominant discourse of well-being emphasises on the economic benefits that can be gained from the discussed subject. For instance, in the 3rd layer of text, the benefits for business can include variables like reduction in absenteeism, improved performance, employee engagement and retention and more. Taking inspiration from Foucault’s idea of subjectification, McGillivray (2005) highlighted that positivist and functionalist discourses of organisational wellness are increasingly legitimated. In such discourse, the rationalisation and function of wellness are encouraged to an extent wherein the concept of well-being plays a significant role in shaping the lifestyle behaviour of the employee. Hence, well-being can become a “commodity”, “fashion” or “culture” that can induce people to commit themselves to an organisation (Burrell, 1992, p.73). Under such perspective, the concept of well-being has been internalised by human beings. Accordingly, the individuals would take initiatives to alter themselves into a subject and practice well-being since well-being is deemed to be a norm that is desirable in lives. For instance, in the 5th layer of texts (Business practices of well-being), people view work-life or work-family balance as a desirable lifestyle and demand family-friendly initiatives in the workplace.

With regards to Foucault’s three modes of objectification, the discourse of *well-being* can be seen as a way to legitimise dominant knowledge group, divide individuals and shape the behaviours and identity of the individual. For instance, based on Foucault’s ideas of governmentality and the subject, McGillivray (2005) provided an analysis on the discursive social practices of organisational wellness (OW). He challenged that while the managerial discursive practices of OW has formulated the notion as ‘productive’, ‘transformative’ and ‘performative’ to any individuals, businesses and societies (p.125), they have neglected the heterogeneity of employee responses. Therefore, while developing a spectrum of self-governance, he suggested identifying various subject’s positions, “ranging from employees who utilise wellness facilities to realise their own projects of the self, to those who fail to recognise the value of discourses of wellness in their entirety” (p. 135), and give each of them a voice.

The problem of *essentialism* is dissected through the archaeology of well-being. Jacques (1996) argues that management knowledge has been developed by “indigenizing ‘organizational science’ itself as a discourse shaped by its culture of origin” (p. xiii). Well-being is rooted with Eurocentric beliefs on happiness and thus, is a culturally-bounded concept. It supposedly bears no significance to the Chinese culture, because as shown in the archaeology of *xing fu* (Figure 5.2), Chinese has its indigenous prescription of *fu*. Well-being and *xing fu* first emerged as two individual discursive objects with separate conditioning texts (cultural origins). They were perceived as two distinctive concepts in their formations (Figure 5.3). Nevertheless, the issue of *essentialism* (Westwood, 2006) has occurred along their transformations. When, how and why did it happen? The archaeological examinations above provide an answer. During the period of May 4th Movement in 1919, the Chinese Enlightenment thinkers promoted western ideas (such as *individualism*, *rationality* and *democracy* etc.) which provided a condition for academics, scholars and researchers to directly transfer the concept of well-being to the Chinese context. In the 4th layer of text (Figure 5.3), the appropriation of well-being to various Chinese contexts has begun. Under this level of discourse, *xing fu* is a direct equivalent to well-being even though the two concepts were inherently and culturally distinctive. Thus, during this time, the issue of *essentialism* first appeared because the Chinese (*the Other*) was being dragged into the dominant discourse of well-being, while the existence of the Chinese concept, *fu*, was denied. Consequently, the indigenous views on *fu* were silenced in the well-being discourse. The concept of well-being is developed globally, while *the Others*’ voices on what they think to be good are rarely heard. In this light, it represents an insidious form of colonisation and marginalisation. With the archaeological examinations, the thesis makes a methodological contribution by offering a way to dissect the *objectification* and *essentialism* in the discourse.

Are there any ways to avoid the problems of *objectification* and *essentialism* in the discourse? Is decolonisation possible? Xu (2000) explains in her archaeological examination:

“Paradoxically, asking questions backward does allow me to think forward. Not only does a way of thinking produce knowledge, its production cannot be separated from its discursive condition” (p. 447).

She highlights that even though archaeology deals with history of discourse, it allows the people to learn from the past and think in an advanced manner. To learn from the past, the archaeological examination reveals that any formation of a concept and its knowledge production is “culturally and historically specific” (Jacques, 1996, p. vii). Thus, each discursive concept is entailed with its own cultural orientation and is formed historically within a particular set of conditions. Hence, the study claims that transferring a western concept to any *Other*’s cultural context could run the risk of dragging *the Other* (the subject) as an object for illustrating or testing western ideologies and lead to *essentialism*. This assertion is aligned with the argument made by Xu (2008) in her critical appraisal of Redding’s *The Spirit of Capitalism*. She has exhibited how Redding’s subject is made an object of knowledge to testify Weber’s thesis. As a consequence, “the subject’s continuity is interrupted, its voice deprived

and its capacity for dialogue denied” (p.242). In order to avoid objectification in the research process, shall we not place *the Other* within the well-being discourse? If so, where could we possibly locate *the Other* in a discourse that would avoid *essentialism*? The thesis suggests opening a discursive space, where the voices of *the Other* could be heard and conversations with *the west* could be made possible.

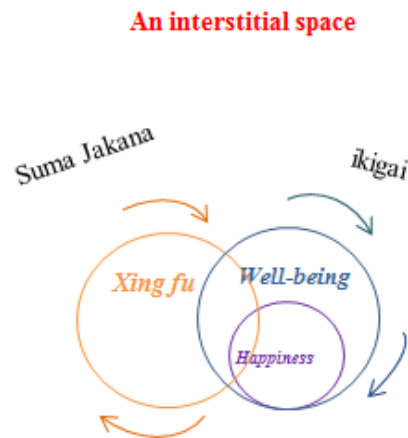
5.3.1 A Discursive Space

Is there any discursive space outside the interface of well-being? This thesis opens ‘a’ discursive space outside the well-being discourse. In Xu’s (1999) examination of quality management discourse, the name, TQM is demystified as “*an arbitrary linguistic sign*” (p. 659) which enables the possibility of substitutions. In her analysis, three possibilities of substitution could be considered: (1) Same name can be used for separating events and engendering different identities; (2) Different names can be used for similar events or practices; and (3) ‘Something’ (i.e. other names) can be appeared in between these names. Building on her statement, the name, ‘*well-being*’ can be regarded as *an arbitrary linguistic sign* as well. The archaeological examination of well-being reveals that the change of name, from *happiness* to *well-being*, is made for the purpose of differentiating well-being from the earlier discourse of happiness. Nevertheless, well-being is indeed discursively connected with Hedonic happiness and Eudaimonia. Hence, well-being can arguably be regarded as another name, representing similar images of happiness (i.e. the 2nd probability made in Xu’s (1999) analysis). Similarly, ‘*xing fu*’ is made as another name for the concept of well-being in the discourse. In this light, ‘*well-being*’ “is merely one of a number of possible names” (Xu, 1999, p.665). Numerous names could appear in the discourse; some names are recently formulated while some are old names that have disappeared due to the discursive transformation (Xu, 1999). Some names are for different images or practices; whereas some names are different but for similar images or practices. Also, there are certain names that go in between ‘names’. Thus, there is a discursive space outside the discourse of well-being, wherein different *arbitrary linguistic signs* are made possible.

Then, where can researchers find a discursive space outside the boundary of well-being? Where is the interstitial space in a discourse? According to the archaeological examinations, one common condition that can give rise to happiness, well-being and *fu* is human consciousness to lives (Figure 5.3: Conditions of texts). In other words, it is the human consciousness to lives that leads to the formations of happiness, well-being and *xing fu*. In the light of such condition, human consciousness to lives could lead to various distinctive cultural expressions. In turns, there is ‘an’ interstitial space in between happiness, well-being and *xing fu*, where numerous discursive objects and concepts, illustrating human consciousness to lives, could have possibly been formed in accordance with specific historical and cultural contexts. For example, ‘*Suma Jakana*’ in Bolivia (Calestani, 2013) and ‘*ikigai*’ in Japan (Mathews, 2010). This interstitial space allows other cultural objects and concepts to emerge and be transformed. Within such a discursive space, cross-cultural examinations among various discursive

objects and concepts are made possible (Figure 5.4). As a result, instead of dragging *the Other* to the discourse of *well-being*, researchers could locate *the Other* in such an interstitial space.

Figure 5. 4: A discursive space ‘outside’ the well-being discourse



How could researchers locate *the Other* in the discourse without objectifying or essentialising the subject? This thesis suggests taking a critical ethnography to study *the Other*. The ‘thick description’ in the next chapter explores an indigenous (a Chinese) perspective.

Chapter 6 A ‘Thick Description’: From Managing to Living

The archaeological examination shows that well-being is brought to business management and become a well-known concept particularly in Human Resources Management (HRM), Industrial / Organisational Psychology (I/OP) and Professional Business Management fields. This indicates that in the management discourse, the speaking is possibly confined to the business elites, naming Human Resource Professionals (HRP), I/OP practitioners and managers. Similarly, the anthropological examination also illustrates that the notion is well-known to the local HRP, I/OP practitioners and managers who work in Multinational National Corporations (MNCs). All of them are familiar with the term *well-being*. They can explain well-being as follows:

“From the staff perspective, well-being refers to the totality of physical state, mental state and psychological state ... (Well-being) is referring to the positive state ... so it’s a positive physical state, mental state, as well as psychological state ... and also positive relationship (with others)! Positive state means ‘healthy’, that means physically healthy, mentally healthy and psychologically healthy. That what well-being means.” (Mr. Peter)

“‘Well-being’ is referring to something that would make one feels satisfied or happy. ‘Well-being’ is more related to the employee benefits ... and even employee relations. ... I would think (well-being) is equivalent to ‘job satisfaction’!” (Ms. Paris)

“In general, ‘well-being’ is: do you feel happy in work? ... We (My company) offered work-balance week last year. During that week, (it) offered many healthy snacks, activities ... (Employees feel free to) turn off (the office’s) light and leave (work) earlier etc.” (Mrs. Pansy)

“‘Well-being’ is ‘work-life balance’... Yes, you need to maintain work-life balance in both physically or mentally ... That’s why my company offers work-life balance leave ... By nature, it’s a kind of benefits to the employees” (Mrs. Hestia).

“‘Well-being’ ... um ... is ... that’s to say, you are ... are feeling comfortable. I mean, by all (aspects), including eating, healthy (in) psychological state, (and) physical body, all aspects” (Patricia)

“‘Well-being’ is very (related to) material aspect. It is because Western often views well-being as (equivalent to) something material, such as job satisfaction, how much salary do you have ... If you look at (well-being in) a country, (it is referred as) social welfare, benefits, GDP ... That is whether you are rich or not, how many poverty index is it?...” (Pauline)

The above responses show that the concept of ‘well-being’ is quite well-known to the HR professionals and management in the MNCs. Nevertheless, some of them expressed that well-being is not exactly the same as *xing fu*, or vice versa. Here are their comments:

*“Using xing fu to describe work? Em... or should it used to describe (one’s) whole (life)... Em... Very strange! Xing fu... should include many aspects. (If) Everything is very good, I think (you) can call (you are) xing fu. So, **xing fu does not seem to be the same as well-being**”(Paris)*

*“**Xing fu and well-being, to my feeling, (they are) very different things!** You would feel: Wa, (I’m) very xing fu!; But you wouldn’t feel: (I’m) very well-being! Xing fu includes more elements ... (such as) have energy to breath, or have energy to work ... this is already very satisfied, very xing fu! At the very beginning, I won’t take ‘well-being’ to be translated as ‘xing fu’”(Patricia)*

“‘Well-being’ is not a word that enters deeply into my heart! This is a word that comes from foreign (countries)! I know this English word only when I had entered university. (This is a word that) I did not use it as an expression when I was small. So, I especially feel strange when I use this word! May be because I encounter this word only when I studied Psycho(logy)... In contrast, I know the term, ‘xing fu’, when I was small. I would use it (xing fu) to express myself, such as when I feel satisfied, I have a family who loves me, I feel healthy in all aspects...” (Pauline)

“I was a bit surprised of this translation (i.e. ‘well-being’ is being translated as ‘xing fu’)! That is (if talking about) work aspects, I don’t use xing fu (to describe work). (Rather, I) may use ‘job satisfaction’, or ‘positive mind-set’. Xing fu is usually used to describe a little woman ... associated with you have cars, have flats, have doggies, (you) don’t have any worries nor pressure! Once you need to work, you are not xing fu. Because you have work pressure! Besides, xing fu is not said by yourself, it needs to be said by others: (That is) How do others perceive you?” (Pansy)

The above feedback shows even some of the local HR and I/OP professionals and management do not agree on taking *xing fu* as if it is equal to well-being. They think that well-being and *xing fu* are two distinct concepts in which each has its own cultural usage and meaning. Their view is aligned with the

archaeological examination. Well-being is not exactly the same as *xing fu*. The findings from both archaeological and anthropological examinations reinforce the need to justify *xing fu* as an equivalent of well-being.

This anthropological examination carries further to ask: *Do members of family business in Hong Kong draw upon the discourse of well-being in their daily practices? If not, what expressions do they use in a given period of time?* To answer the questions, I observed and participated in the informants' daily lives. The findings reveal that the informants used alternate local expressions, instead of well-being. These expression(s) are written according to various aspects of life. Nevertheless, the narration may appear to be scattered and fragmented. Every night, I recalled the experiences of a particular day and wrote the diary. Various pieces of memories would be scattered in the mind and while recollecting those thoughts, I ended up writing down every tiny piece of details. This writing experience was similar to the daily lived experience of me and the informants. On one hand, the narration in this chapter revealed our expressions in life. On the other hand, in making sense to our lives, doubts, puzzles, ambivalence and pressures would sometimes appear. Hence, the complexity of life is highlighted.

My ethnography began at the end of December 2011 when I returned to Hong Kong to start data collection. This chapter richly describes and analyses the findings of the ethnography. Through a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973), the context of each family business, the practices and lived experience of the research subject are scrutinised in detail. Chinese family businesses in Hong Kong are chosen as my field site to investigate whether their members would draw upon the discourses of well-being in their everyday practices. I first give a brief general background of each company which describes the context of Hong Kong's Chinese family businesses. Then I go into participants' lives and look at how they would live well in the family businesses. Other expressions are explored to describe their works and daily lives. Lastly, I further interpret their lives into four kinds of practices. These practices represent an embodiment of their expressions, which can offer an additional layer of understanding to Chinese family business without essentialising them based on western professional management.

6.1 Managing Family Business (FB)

This section introduces each family business and its main characters. Totally, four field sites (FB 1, 2, 3 and 4) are chosen. These four companies are small-sized businesses, with less than 30 employees. In fact, most of them are micro-enterprises which have less than 10 employees. The following description briefly explains how the owners started the businesses and their daily operations.

6.1.1 FB 1 (An Education Centre)

FB 1 is the first chosen site. Since this was the first attempt to conduct a site visit, I was nervous and cautious. FB 1 is an education centre which provides tutorial services mainly for the primary school pupils. Ada was the successor of FB 1. She is in her early 40s and was a friend of one of my close contacts, Gigi. Ada and Gigi were classmates and they studied in the same secondary school. Ada graduated with a degree in business in London. In the first dinner with Ada, she shared the story about how FB 1 has been started and evolved. Here is her story: The business started in 1996. Before opening FB 1, her father (Mr. Alex) owned a store, which was a family business from his parents. With the instruction of his parents, Mr. Alex decided to pass the business to the fourth wife of his father and became a taxi driver. Few months later, his wife (Mrs. Alice) initiated to start a new business because she would like to *'find another way to generate income for the family, instead of solely relying on her investment in the stock market'*. More importantly, *'she (Mrs. Alice) realized there was a demand for private tutoring, because at that time, there were two kids from our jiu jie fang 舊街坊 (previous neighborhood) who had come to our home and asked us (Ada and her elder sister) for tutorship ...'*. That was how Mrs. Alice started the business.

On 1 March 2012, I started the company visit at FB 1. FB 1 is situated at the Eastern district where I had lived for almost 20 years. On the first day of visit, Ada explained the usual daily run-down of the business while showing me around the centre. The company mainly involved the following staff:

- 6 – 8 full-time employees: An owner (*Mrs. Alice*), a family worker (*Ada*), 5 full-time teachers (*Audrey, Amy and Ann*; while *Ally and Abigail* were resigned in October and November 2012 respectively) and Mrs. Ashley who is responsible for clerical assistance and pantry work.
- 10 – 15 part-time teachers on seasonal demand, such as Ms. Averil, Ms. Alysia and Ms. Abbey.

6.1.2 FB 2 (A Dance Studio)

This business is a dance studio which offers various dance courses, such as ballet, Chinese dance, jazz, hip pop, K pop, rhythmic gymnastics and yoga and more. It has been functioning since September 2013. It was first owned by two partners, Betty and Bonnie. Both of them were in their late 30s. Betty was single while Bonnie was married with a three-year old daughter. Betty had a larger percentage of ownership. Three months after the start of the business, Betty found it difficult to maintain the operation due to the limited amount of financial capital. Hence, she invited her past superior, Bob, to invest in the business as a limited partner. He would mainly provide FB 2 with sufficient source of capital and seldom participates in its daily operation.

The story of FB 2 begins when Betty and Bonnie intended to start a business which surprised me. Here is our conversation:

I asked them: *“I thought you two would start the business through franchise!”*

Betty replied with an anger tone: *“Sigh! Don’t mention about the franchise! then we turned down the partnership ... By that time, we have found a place for our studio and signed the lease contract for two years already. In that case, we still need to open the studio by ourselves. We have already made our hair wet (已經洗濕個頭) (meaning: We have already started it, we can’t stop immediately)”*

The above conversation captured how Betty and Bonnie began the business. Since Betty and Bonnie had signed the lease contract, they decided to open a dance studio. The studio has started its operation since September 2013. Once the studio opened, Betty and Bonnie were busy in arranging office facilities, designing course schedules, hiring full-time staff and planning for promotion etc. As their close friends, I offered some help.

During the fieldwork, FB 2 mainly involves the following staff:

- Betty, Bonnie and Bob are the owners
- 2 full-time employees: Brenda and Blossom (but they were terminated after the first three months of employment)
- 1 – 2 Part-time teachers, such as Ms. Bessy

6.1.3 FB 3 (A Jade Accessory Maker)

This business was focussed on jade accessory making. It was a kind of craftsmanship that was once very popular in Hong Kong in 1960s to 1980s. It was owned by a sole proprietor, Uncle Carl. He was in his 60s and has a wife (Auntie Connie), two sons and a daughter.

I started visiting FB 3 since 1st January 2013. FB 3 was situated in the same district as FB 1. Uncle Carl and Auntie Connie were living in a residential building under the home ownership scheme. Uncle Carl’s flat is situated right next to the lift on the 8th floor. There was a *tu di gong shen wei* (a spiritual tablet representing the God of Earth) placed outside his flat. It was a flat with around 550 square meters. When entering the flat, I saw the kitchen and his work station. His work station was placed right next to entrance door with a bench, a high chair and a light. The bench was made of a hard rock with dark grey colour. Rulers, pencils, erasers and various tools for carving were placed on the right-hand side of the bench. A machine for polishing jades was placed in the middle of the bench, with many small semi-polished jades scattered around. A bowl of water was always placed on the lower left-hand corner. Uncle Carl would usually dip the jade in the water for a few seconds before showing

it. On the left-hand side, there was a cupboard with many small drawers. Different kinds of semi-finished and finished jade accessories were classified and put into these drawers. Underneath the bench, there were stocks of large jade stones. They were all wrapped by newspapers and were scattered on the floor. Auntie Connie once commented: *'This is his (Uncle Carl's) work station where no one in the family is allowed to reach. Ha ... You see, things are arranged in a messy manner. I guess only he (Uncle Carl) could be able to identify the things he needs to use.'*

On each visit, I would go to Uncle Carl's home first, engage in a social conversation and observe him while he worked in his station. I would have also lunch or tea with them. Then, after the lunch or tea, I would visit Uncle Carl's retail store, which was a leased market stall issued by the government. The stall was in the marketplace, where it was located right next to where Uncle Carl lives. It was a marketplace with several storeys. Uncle Carl retail store was located on the third floor. The stalls in this floor sold mainly clothes and accessories. They were arranged according to rows. His store was located in the last stall of the first row. The store was around 100 square meters, which was much larger than his work station at home. Inside the stall, there were two cupboards with window. They were placed as an 'L' shape. His finished jade-made accessories are placed inside the cupboard. The customers were able to browse the goods through the windows. At the back of the stall was another work station. The setting of this work station was almost the same as that at his home. Next to his work station was another table. A water bottle and a cup are always placed on the table. Above the table, a paper fish, which was made from red pockets, was hanging from the ceiling. Uncle Carl was quite satisfied with such the environment of this stall. He commented with comfort: *'This stall is much better than my previous one! It offers bright lightings, a sink with a water tap and an air-conditioned environment. Its area is much larger than the old stall.'*

6.1.4 FB 4 (A Fashion Business)

FB 4 is the last chosen site for this research. FB 4 is a business that focuses on fashion design, production and retails. It is a fashion label which offers clothes that are gender-neutral. FB 4 was owned by two partners: Doris and Dave. Doris is in her mid-40s; while Dave is in his late 50s. Doris is a fashion designer who has created her own design label since 2006; while Dave is a businessman who owns a company. Doris was an employee of Dave's company. Dave's business was originally focused on garment manufacturing. In 2009, he planned to expand its business to both food and fashion fields. Therefore, he hired Doris and gave her a primary responsibility of developing a sport fashion label for the company. Nevertheless, with her efficiency, passion and diligence, Doris has become a right-arm to Dave after a few months of her employment. She helped Dave to manage the company, including both food and fashion businesses. Until 2014, she has partnered with Dave, to start FB 4, a fashion business. They have opened a fashion retail shop at PMQ.

The new shop finished its renovation and began its operation in the late April 2014. On 3rd May 2014, I was asked by Doris to look after the store. The fashion retail shop of FB 4 is situated in one residential unit of PMQ (Appendix C: Figure C1). PMQ was once the Police Married Quarters in 1951, but now it was revitalised in 2010 to become a site for creative industries (PMQ, 2015). The lightings inside the shop are made of a number of white water pipes. A pair of iron stands and shelves is placed at the two sides the wall, for displaying products. A few wooden boxes are put on the shelves for storing stock. A sound bar is hanged on the left-hand side of the wall, with a purpose of playing sound and music. At the middle-bottom of the room, a glassed table with iron stands is hanged from the ceiling. This is where the cashier is placed. A changing room is situated on the left of the cashier, while a sewing machine is placed on the right-hand side. The area behind the cashier is a work station. There is a big wooden table in the work station. Doris normally uses the station for designing, ironing, sewing and doing administrative works. The design of the shop is likeable and reflects a feeling of simplicity, but yet stylish and durable. The interior design of the shop actually matches its fashion style.

6.2 Living Well in Family Business

How did the members of family businesses in Hong Kong live? Do they draw upon the discourses of well-being? I did not find the term *well-being*, to be spontaneously expressed during the field visits. It is doubtful whether well-being is a familiar language or significant issue to the locals who work in small family businesses. Even though some of my informants (usually those with tertiary education qualification, such as Ada, Betty, Doris and Hestia) may understand the idea of well-being, they do not agree that such an idea can be entirely applicable to their lives. For instance, in one of my social chat with Ada, she asked about my research progress and the details of my topic. In our discussion, she made the following comments:

“Yes, ‘the balance’ talked by the foreigners are different from the local view of balance. Foreigners work for four days only. But, here, maybe (we) see work as lives. Indeed, people who talk about balance are most probably those already have had a certain degree of wealth. That’s why they can seek for (a quality of) lives. Those grassroots do not talk about ‘balance’. But, the demand (for balance) also depends on different people” (Ada)

From Ada’s comments, she thinks that the idea of ‘*work-life balance*’ cannot be entirely applicable to the local lives of the grassroots. Her view is similar to the following comments made by Hestia:

“(For) Small-sized firms, especially family businesses, everyone is ‘one foot kick’ (one is responsible for all duties and tasks). Hence, ‘well-being’ is not a matter (to them). I think foreign-invested firms must have this so called ‘well-being’, because they are relatively more easy-going, are more open-minded. (They) do not (only focus on) working (even though) they sit down (in the office) ... (However), Chinese would work very hard once they have sat down. They strive to work (for their own businesses) because family businesses are their own businesses.

They need to monitor the financial performance. They are more anxious on the financial performance, rather than their own well-being. I mean, they won't even think of well-being (as an issue) to their lives.” (Hestia)

Hence, well-being is not entirely applicable to the lives of the informants who work in the local family businesses, because they could not afford the luxury of work-life balance given they need to work hard for survival.

I found that management language is scarcely spontaneously used in a Chinese working environment. After months of field visits, an absence of well-being discourse became apparent. Such a finding is similar to Learmonth's (2009) examination of argument regarding avoiding the colonization management language among the clerks in a UK hospital's medical records library. Given it is obvious that management language and concepts are seldom practiced in business organisations (particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in China), the focus of this ethnography is on working with indigenous expressions (in terms of both language and practices) used by a Chinese subject in everyday lives.

If members of family business in Hong Kong do not draw upon the discourse of well-being in their daily practices, what other expressions would they use in daily lives? The archaeological examination (Chapter 5) opens up a discursive space, where it allows various cultural expressions to be articulated. The following description reveal some key terms expressed by the research subject. Each term has its own contextual meaning and highlights the aspect of life that the informants regarded as important. As a local, these terms are of no stranger to me. These expressions were arranged according to their frequency of occurrence and importance. Besides using language, the subject lived well through their daily practices. These practices represent the embodiment of their expressions (Appendix C: Table C1).

6.2.1 Jia Ting (Family)

During the fieldwork, I lived with a local family who is one of my close contacts. The head of this family was Mr. Isaac, who passed away in his early 70s in 2013. He worked in a *wu jin pu* (a metal work store) during his lifetime, which was a family business succeeded from his father. He and his wife (Mrs. Cindy) have seven daughters. I stayed with the couples and two of their daughters. They often shared their lifetime stories with me. Living with them allowed me to grasp, experience, participate and comprehend the local daily lives. They are my central family and were regarded as the most important aspect of my life. Similarly, most of the informants expressed '*jia ting*' (family)' as their most important aspect of lives.

Mr. Peter, who was working as a Human Resources Director in a medium-sized trading firm, thought there is a difference between foreign and Chinese families:

*‘(In) Foreign countries, most of the children would leave their families when they have grown up. However, for the Chinese, they emphasize on xiao (filial piety). Therefore, (for Chinese) **familial relationship is very important!**’*

Bonnie in FB 2 even highlighted that:

‘(If I need) To prioritize the order of importance, for sure, it would be my family, indeed ... I think ever since I was little, I know my family is the most important ... I can only think of family (as the most important aspect of my lives)!’.

From the observation on how FB 1, 2, 3 and 4 operated, it could be posited that all the businesses demonstrated a degree of **‘familial’ culture that blurred the boundary between family and company**. Below are evidences that illustrate family is embedded in their daily practices:

FB 1: Work like a family

My general impression about the people in FB 1 was they were working like a family, with Mrs. Alice as their family head. **‘Go and ask Mrs. Alice’** is the phrase I would usually hear, which highlighted Mrs. Alice as the authority of FB 1. Mrs. Alice is the owner of FB 1 and is in her late fifties. She always wore a smile on her face whenever she walked around the centre. Everyone in the centre was polite to her. Instead of calling her by her first name, everyone would call her “Mrs. Alice”, indicating a kind of respect to her. They never criticised Mrs. Alice directly. Once the tutorial started, Mrs. Alice would walk around to oversee the operation. As the owner of the business, she took up the leadership roles: for being the decision makers, problem solver or conflicts handler, performance monitor as well as spokesperson. By taking these roles, she gained authority and respect from everyone, including the staff, pupils and guardians. And thus, she represented the family head.

With a family head, the next question is: Who are or could be regarded as family members? The answer could depend not only on biological criteria, but also on one’s position and seniority in FB 1. Headed by Mrs. Alice, FB 1 was managed by a family member (Ada) and three full-time teaching staff (namely Audrey, Amy and Ann). Since Ada is Mrs. Alice’s younger daughter, she is biologically regarded a key family member (and most likely the successor) of FB 1. She was mainly responsible for administration, marketing and management in the main centre, such as arranging teaching schedule, designing teaching curriculum and materials, making marketing leaflets, recruiting and selecting new staff, collecting tuition fees, giving out receipts and picking up phone calls etc. Although she is responsible for administrative and managerial tasks, she would also engage in teaching and sometimes cleaning and maintenance. For teaching, she was mainly responsible for classes, such as Chinese and English composition, artwork and cookery classes. These classes were usually held on Saturday or during the summer holidays. Since she is the youngest daughter of Mrs. Alice, the staff and pupils in

the centre would normally call her “*xi jie jie*” (Young sister)”. This appellation indicated her distinct identity, as the youngest daughter of the owner. Thus, it adds a stronger familial flavour to the business.

Mrs. Alice, Ada, the full-time teaching staff (such as Amy, Audrey and Ashley) and the female part-time teachers who have been working here for more than two years (such as Averil and Abbey) were working like a family. They were able to chat freely among themselves and walk around the centres. They chatted with each other happily, thus, creating a casual working environment and building a strong ‘familial’ culture. They could enjoy the freedom to handle their own personal and familial matters at work.

Teachers did not only discuss familial issues in the workplace, they would also treat their pupils as their own children. The teachers would usually call their pupils: ‘*a zi*’ (sons) or ‘*a nu*’ (daughters) or ‘*xiao bao bao*’ (kids). Calling their pupils as their own kids conveys a strong familial atmosphere.

I felt at home and part of the family when Amy made the following comments:

‘你加入我地一份子啦，係我地自己人啦!’

(You have joined as being part of us! (You) are our zi ji ren 自己人 (one of us))

The recognition as ‘*zi ji ren*’ (being one of us) provided me with much freedom. However, my ambivalence was augmented because *zi ji ren* implies a reciprocal obligation. Thus, I offered assistance and was given some teaching and clerical duties occasionally. The feelings of nervousness and uneasiness disappeared with time and also due to the presence of ‘other family members’ who would aid me whenever I required.

FB 2: My own baby

“Because (we) really start from ... we start from zero ... from thinking about the name of the studio, then design the logo, then design the leaflets, manage renovation ... yes ... yes... because from the beginning to the end, (everything) is done by two of us (Betty and Bonnie), so it (FB 2) is just like my own baby... I would not give it up!”

The above was commented by Betty, which showed how she felt about the business. Her expression reflected her mental and personal attachment to this business. She treated this business as if it were her own baby. Knowing her great passion, she and Bonnie showed determination to continue this business even when they encountered much financial burden at the start-up stage. They insisted to hold on the

business by cutting as much of cost as possible. In order to save cost, they had stopped hiring any full-time staff and tried to handle almost every task by themselves. Both Betty and Bonnie would be willing to try their very best to look after ‘this baby’ by themselves.

FB 3: Home office

Uncle Carl has his work stations both at home and in the stall. Thus, while observing his workplace during the field visits, I noted the following about his daily routine:

‘Uncle Carl works from Monday to Friday. Every morning (at around 9:30 a.m.), he goes to the marketplace and opens the stall. Then, he would stay in the window counter to serve customers whenever there is anyone comes over his stall and browse the products. In the time when there are no customers, he would stay back in his work station and continue producing jade accessories. Auntie Connie, who has quitted her job to become a full-time housewife, would go to the marketplace to buy food in each morning. Then she would go home to prepare lunch. At around 12 p.m., Uncle Carl would close the stall and go back home to have lunch with Auntie Connie. After lunch, he would take a rest for around 30 minutes. Then he would sit at his work station at home and make jade accessories again. He stays at home to work until 4 p.m. Then he would go back to the marketplace again and open his retail stall. He chooses to open the stall in every morning and evening because these are the periods when the marketplace would be most crowded with customers. When there are not many customers, he sometimes would chat with the neighbours in the next stalls. They are selling baby clothes. At around 9:00 p.m., he closes the stall and go back home for dinner. After dinner, he would sit on the sofa and watch television with Auntie Connie. At around 11p.m., he would go to sleep.’

Based on the above description, Uncle Carl keeps working irrespective of whether he is at home or in the store. The setting of his work station at home is similar to that in his store (office). Hence, in terms of production, there is not much difference between home and office in FB 3.

FB 4: Family helper

Doris hires a part-time staff, Ms. Daisy, to look after the shop occasionally. Daisy is in 20s and is currently studying fashion in the Hong Kong Polytechnics University. She would offer assistance to Doris in terms of store operation and some designing works. I met Daisy for few times only, as Doris would ask me as a family helper to look after the shop, when she needed to attend classes during the weekend. Only when I was not available to offer help, Doris would ask Daisy to work. Whenever I offer the assistance, Doris would leave me a WhatsApp message detailed with the things that needed to be taken care of.

Hence, the culture and operations in FB 1, 2, 3 and 4 highlight that *jia ting* played an important role in the businesses. *Jia ting* is the key part of the informants' lives, no matter they were at work or at home.

a. *Xing Fu Jia Ting (Good Family)*

Jai ting is the most important aspect of life for most of the informants; thus, the next question would be: What is/are the expression(s) for 'a good *jai ting*' (a good family)? The Chinese term, '*xing fu*', is usually used to describe 'a good *jia ting*'. This term had been appeared in several occasions during my fieldwork:

Occasion 1 (in FB 1)

'Amy was teaching one primary three pupils in doing the Chinese composition on the topic of "My family". She taught the pupil to use the term "xing fu" to describe the fact that the pupil has a good family'.

Occasion 2 (in FB 1)

'Ada gave me the latest marketing brochure. It lists and describes all courses that the centre will offer in the coming summer holidays. During summer holidays, the centre would offer some interests classes, such as drawing, painting, artwork and cookery courses. One description of an artwork in the brochure caught my attention. It states "幸福小兔音樂盒" (a music box with a xing fu rabbit). Here, the term 'xing fu', is used to describe a female rabbit that wears a wedding dress with a bright smile (Appendix C: Figure C2).

Occasion 3 (in FB 2)

'I have a Whatsapp chat group with my close secondary schoolmates. Betty and Bonnie were part of this group. We always have social chats via this platform. Today, while all of us were still working, one of our secondary schoolmates chatted with us through Whatsapp. She told us that she was now having a spa in the Peninsula Hotel. This was one of her wedding gift given by her friend. She has just married to a Singaporean guy. She had resigned and was preparing to live in Singapore. Bonnie commented "Wow! You are xing fu shao nai nai (a wife who can enjoy life and does not need to bear any financial burden). Then Betty also replied "Yes, You are very xing fu! What a good life!"'

Occasion 4 (in FB 4)

'Doris told me: "Xing fu is... may be I have the best wife or husband, then I have some very guai zi nu (obedient son(s) and daughter(s))...This is a typical xing fu ... '

Based on the above occasions, the local term, 'xing fu' was used to describe a good marriage (occasion 2, 3 and 4) or/and a good family (occasion 1 and 4). It is a term that is particularly used within the context of *jia ting* (family).

Since *xing fu* is one key local expression of good family, the anthropological examination further examines how the informants look at *xing fu*. I ask: What does *xing fu* mean? When would the locals express *xing fu*? How would they feel *xing fu*? To answers the above questions, the following expression(s) were revealed to illustrate the cultural meaning of *xing fu*:

i. Qi Zheng (Orderly Complete)

This was the phrase expressed by Mrs. Cindy, to describe her desired life in a family, which seems to capture her feeling of loss when her husband had passed away. She emphasised that:

'I think a desired life is ... the whole family needs to be qi qi zheng zheng(orderly complete)... '.

Based on her expression, *qi qi zheng zheng* is also known as *qi zheng*. *Qi zheng* can be referred as *wan zheng*, which means perfectly complete. Here, it means having a complete family that consist of a father, a mother and children.

Brenda was once a full-time Chinese dance teacher in FB 2. She expressed a similar thought of what made up a happy family. She indicated that:

'My second (important aspect of lives) is jia ting. Need to have a happy family ... that is (it consists of) having a good partner, daddy, mother, da jia yi qi (A big family stays together)'

Her expression highlighted the importance of having a good partner to make up a family which involves a father and a mother. Indeed, the Chinese term 'xing fu' (which appeared in occasion 2, 3 and 4), is mostly used in the context of marriage. Hence, finding a partner to marry is a fundamental step for making up a *xing fu jia ting*.

Build a family with children

Marriage can be regarded as an important life goal for some of the female informants. For instance, Alysia was a part-time teacher at FB 1. She was in her early twenties and was hired as she was referred by her friends who had been working in FB 1 for a long time. I was assigned by Mrs. Alice to work with Alysia since she was not familiar with the working procedure in FB 1 yet. After the conduction of tutorials for a few times, both I and Ms. Alysia became familiar with one another (in local term: *shu*) and soon established personal contact and communication. When enquired about her future aspirations, she answered *'I would like to become a flight attendant. In particular, I want to work in Emirate. This airline provides opportunity for me to stay in Dubai, the place where there are a lot of rich men. My target is to diao jin gui'*. Literally, *'diao jin gui'* in Chinese means fishing for a golden turtle. Indeed, golden turtles in Chinese represent rich men and the whole phrase implies 'marrying a rich man'. Alysia's answer showed that marriage was one of her life goals. Thus, maybe *diao jin gui* (marrying a rich man) seems a way that can make her feel *xing fu*. Without commenting on the practicability of her goal, I was amazed at her courage and openness to reveal such thoughts to me.

While *diao jin gui* provided Alysia with hope and motivation in life, the urgency for finding a right partner for marriage could sometimes create pressure, particularly for some local single females who are already over 30 years old. Indeed, being a single woman, I did experience such anxiety, particularly when there are local *chao yu* (buzzwords), such as *'zhong nu'* (women who are middle-aged and single) and *'sheng nu'* (women that are leftover, unmarried). These buzzwords bear a negative connotation over females who are over thirty years old, but still single. Mrs. Cindy often urged me to get marry. She often said to me, *'You need a husband who can walk with you for the rest of your life. I really want you to be xing fu. You know, I can't walk with you for the rest of your life. One day, I would die'*. Even Betty, who was still single, often said to Bonnie, *'You don't need to worry about future life because you have already shang an (landed) (meaning: got married already and can rely on her husband)'*. Betty noticed a sense of urgency in getting married, particularly when her mother would push her. For instance, her mother had brought her to walk around the *tao hua yuan* in the *tian hou miao* (Tin Hau Temple) during the Chinese New Year. *Tao hua yuan* literally means the garden of the peaches of immortality. Chinese believe *tao hua* can bring luck in love. Many of the friends would remind such single women to get married and would refer their single male friends. Although Betty and I wished to get married and make up a *xing fu jia ting* in the near future, it is mentally exhausting to attend those planned dating arrangements.

'Qi zheng' could also refer to having children in a *jia ting*. Hestia was working as a manager in local bank which can be considered as a multinational corporation. After she got married, she was eager to have a baby. Thus, she visited a Chinese doctor and took Chinese medicine regularly. She hoped that taking Chinese medicine could improve her physical health condition, which in turns may increase the chance of getting pregnant. However, she also shared with me her difficulties in striving for pregnancy:

'It's really not easy! The process is really stressful. It's just a cycle which you work hard for it, but you fail and then you work hard again! Every day, I also need to keep monitoring my health and temperature. There are a lot of works to be done ...'. On one hand, she strived for building a *wan zheng jia ting* (a complete family) with parents and children. On the other hand, she encountered many failures and frustration in the process.

While the concept of '*qi zheng*' or '*wan zheng*' requires a *jia ting* to have children, there are people who do not aim to have children. For instance, although Ada had often persuaded Gigi to have a baby, Gigi and her husband, Daniel, have never planned to have one. Gigi stayed firm with her view, *"Having children require much responsibility! We (she and her husband) don't see there is any need for us to have any kids."*

Not only having a child or children could constitute a *wan zheng jia ting*. Ada further emphasised the importance of having both a son and a daughter in a *jia ting*. She made the following comments when Audrey got pregnant with her second child: *'She (Audrey) wants a son this time ... because you nu you zi jiu xi ge hao zi.* Literally, the Chinese word, *hao* 好 (good) is made up of two words: *nu* 女 'a woman' and *zi* 子 'a son'. It originally means it would be a good thing if a woman gives birth to her son. Nevertheless, Ada's expression even implies that it is good to have a daughter and a son in a family. She recognised the value of having a daughter and a son in a *jia ting*. Therefore, she was excited to get pregnant with a boy (her second child) in 2014 given her first child was a girl.

Mrs. Eden, whose husband (Mr. Edmond) had succeeded the family business from his father, showed similar preference over the gender of her second child. When she got pregnant, she chatted with me in a dinner: *'Of course, we (she and her husband) want it to be a girl. We have Eric (her son's name) already ... so this time, we want it to be a girl!'*. Therefore, her expression shows that having children (including at least *yi zi yi nu* (one son and one daughter)) would constitute to be their typical *xing fu jia ting*.

ii. Yang Jia (Feed a Family)

Yang jia 養家 was made by Uncle Carl, which seemed to highlight the gender roles within a *jai ting*. While female informants expressed concern for marriage and having children; the male informant, Uncle Carl, highlighted his responsibility as a financial supporter in a *jia ting*. Here is Uncle Carl's story of how he entered the field of craftsmanship in order to feed his family:

FB 3: Craftsmanship for a living

Before Uncle Carl entered into this field, he had worked in various occupations, such as selling lively poultry, fish balls and fruits in the market, food-processing and wholesales and oil spouting for cars and more. Until 1968, one of his relatives referred him to the field of craftsmanship. At that time, there were two kinds of craftsmanship available for him to learn: denture or jade accessories. Among the two choices that was provided, he has chosen jade accessories. He started as an apprentice and learnt from one *shi fu* (a master) for four years. He recalled his experience of apprenticeship: *'Normally we entered the field with a very low salary. At the beginning, (my salary) was \$15 each month, including meals and accommodation. At that time, I slept on a piece of wood only ... Working hours started from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Being an apprentice in the past had long working hours. Normally, at the first few months, there would be no holidays. The first and fifteen days of lunar month would not need to work at night. (After I) Had worked (there) for around half a year, then it started to offer (me) holidays. (I) could take two-day leaves, that means taking leave on the first and fifteen days of lunar month ... At the beginning, (I) only responsible for doing some simple tasks. Wait until you (I) gained more knowledge on jade, then shi fu 師傅 (my master) would teach you (me) more... It (This craftsmanship) is the techniques for maintaining my future lives. Learn yin men shou yi (one kind of craftsmanship), so (I) don't have to worry the basic living in the future'*. His experience of apprenticeship demonstrated his hard-work and great assiduity.

After the apprenticeship, Uncle Carl began his business as a jade accessory maker. At the beginning, his sources of customers were mainly referred by his *shi fu* and he paid the commission fees to his *shi fu*. By that time, his *shi fu* helped him to build network and contact with the suppliers and customers, so that he would later on contact them by himself. Since then, he had focused on the wholesales business of jade accessories. Post 1994, the wholesale industry of jade products started declining. At that time, he had a large surplus of the finished products. Therefore, he decided not to solely focus on wholesale business and started the retail business. He opened a retail stall in the same district where he was living and rented a market stall issued by the government. The stall was located in a temporary marketplace and was made of iron panels. It was 30 square meters in area without water supplies and air-conditioning. He ran that retail stall in the temporary marketplace for six years. It was in 2000 that the government built a new marketplace with storeys. Afterwards, he was able to move to his current market stall where it had a larger space and better facilities. He opened his stall in both morning and afternoon. He ended his story with a pleasant tone: *'Now, the business is mainly relied on shu ke (the acquainted customers... (My current lives is) so-so ... At least (I was) able to guo dao sheng huo, yang dao jia (maintain lives and feed the family)... because at the end she needs to look after a lot of household matters'*

His comments suggested that he expected his wife to be responsible for handling household issues, while he would take up the role of maintaining a living for his *jia ting*. In that case, being able to maintain a living for a *jai ting* was regarded as another important aspect of good family.

Mrs. Cindy had a similar thought as that of Uncle Carl. She insisted the importance of *'you fan shi, you qian xi'* (*Have food to eat, have money to spend*). It is understandable that both Uncle Carl and Mrs. Cindy regarded the ability to maintain a living as an important aspect of life. Uncle Carl and Mrs. Cindy share the same family; Mrs. Cindy is Uncle Carl's elder sister. Their father left the family in their teenagers and without their support it was their mother who was responsible to provide livelihood to the family. Both Uncle Carl and Mrs. Cindy needed to quit the school and go out for work during their teenage years to have money to support their families. They had experienced hunger and homelessness in their childhood and hence, understand the importance of *yang jia* (feed family).

The value of *yang jia* is not only restricted to those who are married and have children. Even Brenda recognised the importance of having a stable income. She expressed: *'It's important to have economic foundation, (so that) lives would not be too (financially) difficult'*. Hence, she regarded that *'having a stable job'* was what she and her boyfriend were looking for.

1. Mai lou (Buy One's Own Place)

Once Brenda was able to earn a living, she would then focus on her residential place. *'Living in a residential place where I (she) like(s)'* was regarded as her most important aspect of life. Doris also recognised that it was necessary to have a residential place for living. She commented: *'Xing fu also means you lou shu(having a residential place for living)'*.

Similarly, Betty and Bonnie had concern over their respective residential living. They paid attention to where their customers lived. They intentionally chose to locate their dance studio in a district where there are various high-class residential buildings. They hoped that people with relatively high income would be their target customers. Bonnie would sometimes sit near the windows and stare blankly at those high-class residential buildings. She would dream that one day, she could live in one luxury flat nearby. To be more practical, I and Betty created an 'Investment chat group' through Whatsapp. This was a communication platform for the close friends, wherein one can disclose current news and issues related to property market and our future investment plans. All the participants in the group shared their interest in owning a place for living (in Chinese, it is called as *mai lou*) and paid attention to the property market. Thus, this showed that being able to **buy one's own place** was one key aspect to feed a family.

Although having a residential place to live is important, one's financial capability of *mai lou* is another concern. Such concern could become a burden for some locals, especially when the current property market has been overheating. Even though, the Hong Kong government has imposed new housing policies (which are locally referred as *la zhao* (*spicy policy*)) that target on stabilising the market rate in

the property market, they are being criticised as not being effective in cooling down the market. Betty and Doris further complained that *'these so called la zhao are not helping us to shang che (Literally, shang che means getting on the car. Locals refer the term as the first time of buying a residential place)*. Both Betty and Doris feel worried as they found it difficult to *shang che*. While buying one's own place is important to them, the process of *mai lou* could also make them feel frustrated.

2. *Shape Quai (Good) Children*

The responsibility of local parents is not just providing physical and financial supports to their families. They also show concern in the whole person development of their children. Hence, shaping their children to be good becomes particularly important for local parents, teachers in schools and educational institutions and governments. Since FB 1 and FB 2 are classified as educational centres, they both take responsibility in shaping their students to be good. What do local parents and teachers mean by 'a good child'? I noticed that the local word – "*quai*", is often used to describe a good child. Literally, *quai* means obedient and well-behaved. *Quai* is a term used for complimenting a child who has appropriate discipline, behaviours and performance. Indeed, the teaching approach of FB 1 reflects the obligations of the teachers to train their students to become '*quai*'. According to the observations in the field visits, I characterised the teaching styles adopted by the teachers in FB 1 as *rigorous, disciplinary, with appropriate amount of autonomous, all-rounded, focusing on mutual respect, politeness and humbleness, preventing selfishness and arrogance, training on responsibility and independence and motivating with both positive and negative reinforcements*. Hence, the teaching of FB 1 reflects a local perception of a *quai*(good) child; thus, a *quai* child should be *all-rounded, good at both academic and non-academic aspects, obedient, self-disciplined, independent, polite, 'respectful', humble and generous*.

How can local parents and teachers shape their children to be '*quai*'? "*Ying zai qi pao xian*" (literally means: Win at the starting line), is one *chao yu* that was being quoted in the website and Facebook page of FB 2, as a kind of promotion. *Ying zai qi pao xian* is an expression that describes the process by which the local parents try to shape their children to be all-rounded (good) by offering them with abundant resources. Given the emphasis placed by the local parents on the whole person development of their children, FB 2 creates its mission as "*Our academy focuses on children's healthy growth, our formal dance training aims to ensure that students have a healthy physical development*". Its mission highlights the importance of enabling children to have healthy growth and physical development.

The advertising brochures of FB 1 also stresses on shaping children to be good in every aspect of lives. The brochure highlights that its educational centre offers: 「全方位補習班」(Holistic and comprehensive regular class), 「一站式服務」(One stop service) and 「尖子班」(Top students class)

and more. FB 1 puts emphasis on providing a one-stop tutorial service to students, so that they would become all-rounder and top students in their schools. They do not only offer classes on academic aspect, but also non-academic areas (such as arts, cooking and playing chess etc.). These classes aim to develop the interests and potentials of the students in different areas. Hence, in order to meet the demand of the local parents and teachers, both FB 1 and FB 2 target on shaping children to be all-rounder by offering a comprehensive development for the children.

iii. Jian Kang (Being Healthy)

Jian kang 健康 refers to being physically and mentally healthy. The health condition of family members could be another important aspect that constitutes a good family. Mrs. Cindy always emphasised: *'The most important is everyone (in the family) is jian jian kang kang (being healthy) ... I wish that each of my children has good health'*. Likewise, Doris (being Mrs. Cindy's fourth daughter) regarded *xing fu* is related to *'fu mu jian kang' (father and mother are healthy)*.

The emphasis on *jian kang* is reflected in the social interaction among the participants. Here are some examples:

Example 1 (in FB 1)

Since working in FB 1 was like a family, members in this 'family' showed care among each other's health. For instance, Ada showed care to Amy whenever she was feeling unwell or caught cold. She would help Amy to buy cream and lotion online, knowing that Amy would get skin allergy in winter. Members in 'this family' would often refer doctors among themselves. For instance, Mrs. Alice and Ada referred a Chinese *tie da yi shi* (Chinese medicine bonesetter) to me when they were aware about my foot injury. Hence, in 'this family', health became one common topic for social chats.

Example 2 (in FB 3)

In FB 3, Uncle Carl would protect his family's health by not allowing his wife to work and succeed his business as the nature of his work could cause severe injuries. He explained *'I don't allow my wife (Auntie Connie) to help me because I don't want her to get hurt'*. He showed me the scars on his hands to illustrate that it was dangerous to use those tools and machines. Although those scars represented the hardship he had encountered in his career, they also symbolised his care for his family.

Physical Exercises and Good Sleep

How can the locals maintain *jian kang* (healthy)? One common way to maintain *jian kang* is through doing exercises. Mrs Cindy has a habit of doing morning exercise in the park. Every day, she wakes up at around 6 o'clock in the morning, brushes her teeth and gets dressed with sportswear. Then, she walks to the park next to her home. In the park, she does some morning exercises (mainly stretching and jogging) for around an hour. Afterwards, she goes to the Chinese restaurant to meet her neighbours and have morning tea with them. Mrs. Alice has similar habit too. In one of our causal conversation, she mentioned:

"(I) always feel sick ... like feeling dizzy, like that. With this symptom ... (I) need to do exercises in the morning. (There should be) no problem (if it only takes) half an hour ... I would walk by the seaside ... (My) mood would be quite good. (There are) some people doing exercise too. (I) can say hello to them (and chat with them for a while)."

Mrs. Alice asserts that doing exercises helped her to maintain good blood circulation, mental health and social life. Hence, she thinks that physical exercise is essential to maintain *jian kang*.

Another symptom of being healthy is to have good sleep. Both Mrs. Cindy and Pansy associate *xing fu* with sleeping well:

"Able to sleeping well is the most xing fu" (Mrs. Cindy)

"Sleeping is the time when I think that I'm the most xing fu. (It is) Because you don't need to think, so comfortable" (Pansy)

Uncle Carl has suffered from insomnia in the past due to stress. He took medicine to enable him to sleep well at night. However, he found that relying on medicine is not an impactful way to release stress or to maintain *jian kang*. When he recalled his past experience on the ways to relieve stress, he said:

"The most jian kang (healthy) (activity) is to do exercises" ... (I) must maintain healthy through doing exercises. (Doing exercises) can reduce stress. I would go hiking and running ... Now, (I) can sleep well. (Even though I) have been working in this field for many years, now is the time when I can sleep more stable"

Uncle Carl considers that being able to sleep calmly and orderly is important to *jian kang*. He thinks that physical exercises can help him to release stress and enable him to have a good sleep. Hence, based on his experience, doing exercises (such as running and hiking) can enable him to have a better sleep, hence maintaining *jian kang* both physically and spiritually.

iv. Ping Jing (Peace; At Ease)

Ping jing is an expression used by Blossom when she described *xing fu*. Her expression indicates that *xing fu* can be related to *ping jing* (feeling peaceful and at ease) in one's spirit. She further explained: "(*Ping jing* is) Do not have many worries...do not need any excitement ... I want *ping jing* ... *jian dan kai xing fu* (simple *xing fu*) ...*jian dan kai kuai lei* (simple happiness) is *xing fu* ... *wu bao fu*(no burden)...". She felt the peace spiritually when she did not have any worries, excitements and burdens. She preferred to have simple happiness: "To be herself; work as she likes; and dance from her heart".

Similarly, Pansy who is also aged between mid-twenties, described that "*xing fu* (means), you don't need to worry. You don't have any burdens. I already think (that) is *hao hao* (very good)". Hence, both Blossom and Pansy thought *xing fu* means having neither worries nor burdens in lives.

When would the informants feel *ping jing*, without worries and burdens? Following are certain expression on when they could feel *ping jing*:

FB 1: Tai ping (Peace; stability)

Both Mrs. Alice and Ada valued "*tai ping*" (peace and stability). For them, *tai ping* would mean that they can maintain a stable operation without the worry of losing the education license. One major challenge for FB 1 is to maintain its education license through complying with the statutory requirements on private schools. Ada thought the challenge of complying with the statutory requirement was terrifying. She described: "*The most terrible is (we) always dan jing shou pa* (worry and afraid of) to wait for the government official check". This frightening experience reflects that they seek for *tai ping* in running the business.

FB 2: No monetary pressure

Financial burden was a key aspect of lives that would make Betty and Bonnie felt pressured. In the first half year of business, Betty was often worried: "*Indeed, if there is no monetary pressure, actually it's really quite kai xin* (happy) (to run FB 2)". Thus, Betty felt worried due to the financial pressure in running FB 2. She would feel *kai xin* (happy) if she could get rid of the financial burden.

FB 3: Ping wen (Peace; stability)

Uncle Carl described his current life with comfort: "(My life is) *Ping ping wen wen* (peace and stable) ... I'm at a semi-retired stage, so semi-retiree won't work for long. (Otherwise) it would be

very exhausting. (I have) Changed to make myself be less stressful. (I) Won't be too attached to whether it has business or not". This indicated that Uncle Carl is comfortable with his stable life wherein he does not need to work for long hours and be stressed and worried about the business.

FB 4: Be relax

Doris shared the kind of lives she is looking for: "*Be relaxed ... I wish to be not so busy ...then I can try other things... things that are not related to work. I will try to study cookery*". She would feel relaxed in a spiritual manner if her work is not too busy. Then, she can have some time to learn other things, such as cookery.

Based on the above expressions, one could feel *ping jing*:

- (1) when the business is *tai ping and ping wen* (FB 1 and FB 3);
- (2) when he/she does not bear any financial burden and stress (Betty and Uncle Carl);
- (3) when he/she is less busy in work and feels relaxed (Uncle Carl and Doris).

1. Rituals and Gestures

How can locals feel *ping jing* (or *ping an*) (spiritually peaceful and secure)? One common way to enable the informants feel *ping an* is by performing rituals. Some common rituals which are performed by the locals are: worshiping ancestors and *feng shui*. Mrs. Cindy has been following this ritual since she was young. She insisted to install a worship table in her new home, even though all of her daughters are Christians and they do not believe in these rituals. She puts incense into a censer every morning and evening. She would also burn joss paper and incense as a way to offer sacrifice to the ancestors. When asked about the reasons for the rituals, she asserted that:

*"You know what? You can hardly understand! That's **my responsibility!** That's what I need to do! **If I don't do that, I would feel insecure!** Just let me do that if you want me to **feel an xin!**"*

Hence, her answer indicated that performing rituals is her responsibility. She intends to fulfil such responsibility because she would like to feel secure and *an xin* (spiritually peaceful and comfortable).

The worship of the ancestors is not religiously followed by the seniors. In fact, many local young adults would follow such custom as well. One typical example is to cut the roasted pork to worship gods when one starts a business and opens a new branch. In the opening of FB 2, Bonnie had arranged a series of worship ceremony. First, before the opening, she asked a *feng shui* specialist to inspect the

new branch. She followed the specialist instructions by placing some *feng shui* ornaments in the branch, hoping that would facilitate the financial performance of the business. Then, in the morning of the opening, she worshiped the four corners of the branch by placing four censers in each corners of the wall and putting incenses into those censers. Lastly, she bought a whole set of roasted pork, cut it for ancestor worship and share it with all the guests. She made sure that all these rituals were done at the beginning of the opening ceremony. Since Betty is a Catholic, she was asked the reason that led to following of such rituals. She replied:

*“Bonnie, her family and my family said it is necessary to perform all these worships. Yes, I don’t believe it. However, **they (Bonnie and their family members) would be more an xin** if they had performed these worship and followed what the feng shui specialist has asked them to do. Otherwise, they may complain if the studio had poor performance”*

Betty response shows concern for her friend (Bonnie) and their family members (mainly the parents of both Betty and Bonnie). She demonstrated that her reason for performing these worships is not for her own sake, but rather for the sake of her friends and family. She performed all the above worship given she would like Bonnie and their family members to feel *an xin* (spiritually peaceful and comfortable) and worry less about the performance of the studio.

Another common way to make locals feel *ping an* is through gestures, such as wearing some symbolic accessories. That is one of the reason why FB 3 can be sustainable in the market. Uncle Carl shares his knowledge and experience about his business with me:

“You know, people wear jade accessories because these products bear some symbolic meaning to one’s life. They can bring good fortune (hao yi tou) to the person wearing it”

FB 3 can be sustainable since many locals hold a belief that wearing jade accessories can bring good fortune to them. With these accessories, they would feel more secure towards their future.

No Strategy: Jian Bu Xing Bu (See one step, take one step)

Since the informants value *ping wen* (peace and stability), such value is embedded in their business practices. One significant practice that represents the embodiment of *ping wen* is that they do not adopt a particular business strategy, they simply *jian bu xing bu*. *Jian bu xing bu* is a Chinese expression, which literally means ‘see one step, take one step’. It implies a specific practice in which the informants would act as their businesses go along. Instead of having specific planning, strategies nor management, they claimed that they would see how things go and plan the next step. Such a practice enables the informants to maintain peace spiritually since they moves along as life unfolds. Below are how they describe their ways of running the business:

FB 1: Act ... right timing

When I inquired about the business strategies for running FB 1, Ada's response is as followed:

'(We use) no special strategies, (nor) plans. (We) do (the business) as it goes along. (We) see how things go and then plan (our) next step' (23 February 2012)

The above expression indicates that, Ada's thoughts were that there were no special strategies or plans involved in managing the business. I would consider her expression: '**shun zhu qu zuo (do as it goes along)**' and **jian bu xing bu** as her specific business practices. That is to say, she would see how things go and plan the next step accordingly. This practice brings forth that that Mrs. Alice and Ada prefers to act through right timing. There are three occasions produce the image that that Mrs. Alice and Ada prefer to manage the business through right timing (i.e. Occasion 1 – when it is necessary for them to act; Occasion 2 – when there is an opportunity; or Occasion 3 – when there are no obstacles). In the business expansion, they would rather slow down process, wait and see how the business goes. They would wait until the pertaining obstacles are eliminated, providing a platform for business development.

FB 2: Jian bu xing bu (See one step, take one step)

As the business was becoming more financially stable, Betty and Bonnie were asked to recall their experience in the previous year to analyse if they could be able to elaborate on the business strategy opted. Betty answered the question immediately:

'No strategy ... (we) are jian bu xing bu(See one step, take one step)' ... Every day, a lot of things (are happening) ... with various variety! (There are) Many of problems emerged, (and there are problems) you have never thought of ... That's why we have to always change and adapt.'

Rather than strictly following rules, both Betty and Bonnie are willing to change and adjust. The willingness to adapt reflect their flexibility in running the business. Therefore, it can be outlined that even without a definite strategy, they could run the business flexibly.

FB 3: No perfect plan

"(I) followed the market to see what the customers like ... so, (I) don't have any perfect plan to do this (business)"

This was Uncle Carl's response when I asked him for the strategy in running the business. Uncle Carl's answer portrays his flexibility in carrying out the business.

FB 4: Keep going until opportunities arise

*‘(There is) **No specific point** (of time to start the business). It (has started) only because (this business) is (what I) ongoing (continuously) want to do... to have my own brand label and fashion business ... To achieve this, I didn’t set a particular time frame for myself ... what I did is **simply do, do and do**’*

The above statement was Doris’s comment on recalling the time period and reason behind the initiation of FB 4. Her expression clearly indicates her persistence in living up her dream. Even though Doris did not have a precise plan for the commencement of her business, she kept working for it. She **simply worked and waited until an opportunity came** and she grabbed it and that was how the story of FB 4 began.

How does Doris run the business? Doris simply answered:

*“Indeed, I’m not a person with good planning. ... **In fact, (I can) not say (I’m) strategically doing (such) business.** ... Yes, (what I can do) is **simply walking slowly: walk and walk...**”*

The above response reflects that Doris did not claim to have any good planning nor strategy in the management prospect. As FB 4 is still at the start-up stage, she prefers to run it as it goes.

6.2.2 Peng You (Friends)

Beside *jia ting*, *peng you* (friends) is another aspect of life that the informants had regarded as important. Bonnie has once commented: “*Peng you (Friends) is also very important, because I myself do not know many friends. (But) We have known each other since we were small. (Betty) is very important to me*”. In fact, both Betty and Bonnie regarded *peng you* as the second important aspects of their lives (which is right after *jia ting* and marriage). Betty even made a post on her Facebook, saying ‘*you qing dan, que bi ai qing chang jiu. Wo men bu ji jiao shui ai shui bi jiao duo, bu xu yao wu shi wu ke de xiang ban, ke shi dang xu yao shi, peng you yong yuan ye zai shen bian (Friendship is indifferent. But compare with love, (friendship is) more long-lasting. We do not need to bother whose love is more. (We) Do not need to always accompany each other. However, every time when (we are) in need, friends always stand by (our) side*’). Betty’s post is a display of the value accustomed to *peng you*.

Xin (trust)

What counts a *hao peng you* (a good friend)? When reflecting on the social experiences as a *hao peng you* (good friend) of Betty and Bonnie, I take up the following roles inherently: (1) being a listener to whom they can share their worries and thoughts, especially when they are encountering any difficulties in lives; (2) being an opinion sharer, who can discuss any sorts of matters and exchange the views with

them truthfully; (3) being a helper, who always provide them support whenever in need (e.g. being their receptionist, first customer and referee etc.); and (4) being a cheerer, who try to cheer them up whenever they are perturbed and disappointed. These roles symbolize that we are *zi ji ren* we can *xin* (trust) and rely on each other. *Xin* is regarded as an important element for *peng you*.

Work with Peng You

The significance of *peng you* is reflected in the four family businesses (FB 1, 2, 3 and 4), given they have chosen to work with *peng you* in their businesses. The importance and obligation of *peng you* do not only show in a business partnership (FB 2 and FB 4), but also in business operation and practices (shown in FB 1, 2 and 4) and apprenticeship (FB 3). Here are the examples:

FB 1: Hire shu ren

Ada has the management authority and status, being the only family worker at FB 1. In order to search for assistance, Mrs. B has chosen to extend the family circle by recruiting and selecting the full-time teachers. The key criterion for selection in FB 1 is *xin* (trust). Hence, the most preferred channel for recruitment and selection is by referral. The majority of the full-time staffs were referred by '*shu ren* 熟人' (acquaintance). Mrs. Alice had often asked me: '*Do you have any shu ren 熟人 (acquaintance) to recommend?*' For Mrs. Alice and Ada, *shu ren* means their relatives, close friends or *jiu jie fang* (previous neighbourhood). Here is Mrs B's experience on working with her *shu ren*:

'With three to four full-time staff who are trustworthy enough, the business has become more stable'

Amy, Ann and Audrey are the full-time staffs who Ada regards as trustworthy. Amy was in her mid-twenties while Ann was in her early-thirties. Both Amy and Ann have worked at FB 1 for almost 8 years. As told by Ada, they were referred by *shu ren*. With the long years of service, they had gained the trust from Mrs. Alice and Ada.

How about the management in the branch? The branch is mainly managed by Audrey who is the secondary schoolmate of Ada's elder sister. Audrey is in her late 40s, married and has two kids. Ada explained why the branch centre was managed by Audrey:

'This centre (the branch centre) is managed by Audrey, because my family trusts her very much. It is due to her long years of friendship with my elder sister. We trust her very much'

Hence, the daily operation of the two centres was managed by Audrey, Amy and Ann. Even though they do not have any biological relation with Mrs. Alice, they can be regarded as family members of

the business due to their loyalty and trustworthiness. They also asked the *shu ren* for assistance, maintenance and renovation during the peak seasons or summer. Therefore, the significance of the friendship is reflected in the operation and practice of FB 1.

Indeed, the value of *xin* is embedded in the daily operation of FB 1. In FB 1, ***‘No need management! Everyone would *zi dong bo* (work automatically) Teachers and pupils... everyone would *zi dong bo* because all of them have worked (here) for a long time, (they) are familiar with the operation here’***. This comment was induced by Ada, which captures the labour expectation in FB 1. According to Ada’s comments, staffs were expected to take the initiative to work. That means, once you are regarded as part of the family, you would have an obligation to facilitate the daily operations.

FB 2: Rely on *zi ji ren*

Among the four field sites, FB 2 had been started due to the friendship between Betty and Bonnie. Betty chose to start FB 2 with Bonnie because Bonnie *“is my (her) secondary schoolmates. We (They) are already very shu to each other. I (She) think(s) the most important is to find a partner whom you (she) *xin de guo*(can trust).* Given that FB 2 did not start through the franchise, Betty and Bonnie have to handle everything by themselves. They had to search for a right way to run the business, sometimes through trial and errors, sometimes by learning from mistakes and most of the time by seeking advice and assistance from *shu ren*. The operation of FB 2 relies heavily on the network and support their *peng you*:

“(The workforce is) mainly come from our common friends ... so (we) want to find some *xin de guo kai zi ji ren*(people who we regarded as part of us and trustworthy) ...The most important are to find someone *xin de guo*(you trust)” (Betty).

Therefore, as their close friends, I was regarded as ‘*zi ji ren*’. They have told me the door password and have given me the office key in case I need to offer office support at any time. They perceived that it was important to ‘*find some *xin de guo kai zi ji ren*’*, who were ‘*mainly come from (their) common friends*’, given they had an unpleasant experience in hiring and managing the full-time staff. In the beginning, FB 2 had hired two full-time staffs: Brenda and Blossom. Both Brenda and Blossom were hired as a full-time teacher with a fixed monthly salary. They designed the teaching curriculum and conducted the classes. Besides teaching, they were also responsible for any office support, such as handling clerical works, greeting visits and answering phone calls etc.

Betty and Bonnie found it difficult to manage the performance of the two full time staffs. For example, in our informal chats, they often complained: ‘*She (Brenda) sometimes would be late at work*’; ‘*She (Brenda) often forgot to specify our company’s name when receiving phone calls*’; ‘*I don’t know why*

her (Brenda's) class is too unstructured. She seems didn't follow the teaching plan'; 'She (Blossom) did not tidy up the studio after the Yoga class'; 'She (Blossom) showed her unwillingness to teach this class. Seems I need to beg her to teach. But she is employed with salary!' etc.. Given the business was under financial burden at that moment, Betty and Bonnie decided to terminate the two employees. After the termination, Betty told me with a sense of release: *"I think recruiting, **managing full-time (employees) is very troublesome!**"*

FB 3: Take care shi fu and shi mu

Peng you are not bound within peers, but is also important in the apprenticeship. In FB 3, Uncle Carl pays high respect and gratitude to his *shi fu* (master). For instance, the last year of apprenticeship was to be called *bu shi* (a supplementary). This year, the apprentice would work for the *shi fu* (the master) and help the *shi fu* in earning money. Uncle Carl said with respect: *"Because shi fu (the master) have taught you (me) a lot of things, bu shi is (I) help shi fu to do more works, earn more money ... The best reward is shi fu is willing to teach you (me) things, then I could be able to finish learning."* That was why he tried to do more works and earn more money for his *shi fu* in the year of *bu shi*. He also took responsibility to look after his *shi mu* (the master's wife) after the death of his *shi fu*.

FB 4: Work wholeheartedly

In FB 4, Doris showed thankfulness to Dave (her boss). Doris felt grateful for the trust and recognition Dave had in her capability to work. She is responsible for all the tasks in FB 4 (no matter is an operation, administration, production, marketing and promotion, human resources management, accounting or logistics etc.) even though she did encounter the following challenges in management:

"I guess the challenge is coming from yourself ... I guess it lies in the management ..."

Her comments reflect that she regards "management" as a challenging and difficult task. Doris found it challenging to manage the following three aspects: (1) fashion design, (2) production and (3) retail. Although these tasks are closely related, they can create conflicts in terms of management as well.

The lives of Uncle Carl and Doris demonstrate that *peng you* can be extended to relations between master and disciple (in FB 3) and between the boss and employee (in FB 4). These social relations can play an important role in one's lives.

6.2.3 Kai xin gong zuo (Happy work)

Kai xin gong zuo 開心工作 (happy work) is the wish made by Mrs. Cindy. She wished her children can “kai xin xin chu qu zuo ye” (go out to work happily). Brenda prioritised that having a “hao gong zuo (good work)” as the third important aspect of her life. Therefore, gong zuo (work) is another important aspect of the lives of the informants. Doris even made ‘work as part of herself’. Doris’ view of her work is as follows:

FB 4: Work as part of self

Doris is always the key person who manages FB 4 and works in the shop. Most of the time, Doris is the only person who looks after the shop. When the shop has a manageable amount of customers, Doris would usually work in the work station behind the cashier. Developing new designs, setting the price lists, creating the price tags and labels, ironing the clothes, sewing, managing the stocks via the computer system, communicating with the manufacturers through emails etc. would be done at the time. In Cantonese, her role could be described as *yi jiao ti* (This term literally refers as ‘one foot kick’), which means, a person who is responsible for all the duties and tasks pertaining to the work. In FB 4, Doris is the one who is responsible for everything.

My impression of Doris is that she is quite a workaholic. She usually goes out to work at 9 o’clock in the morning, and came back home late, around 10 o’clock at night. When she comes back home, she will take the dinner which her mother prepares for her. Once she has finished her ‘late’ dinner, she would keep working in front of her computer till midnight and goes to sleep at around 3 a.m. I appreciate her diligence and passion towards her work. Even Dave showed gratitude to her in the opening of FB 4. He made a comment to Doris in front of her family: “Doris is very hard-working and capable! She always keeps working. I wonder if she eats nor sleeps! Thanks for her diligence!” From his compliment, I could understand why Dave treats her as his right-arm, leaving much important management duties to her. It is because she is hard-working, loyal, trustable and capable.

One day, I asked Doris casually: “Why do you work like a workaholic?” She gave me the following response:

*“Indeed, I think ... I think this work has already become part of me. It has been a very large ... very large part of me. Because (this business) already is my own business. It’s not saying I’m now working for somebody or a company. It is my own business. Given it’s my own business, I want to do it well and make it successful. I guess ... **if (your work) does not become part of you, you can hardly work.**”*

Her answer demonstrates her strong devotion towards work. It is such devotion that keeps her and her business (FB 4) alive. Given *gong zuo* (work) becomes part of the informants' lives, my next questions would be: What shapes a *hao gong zuo* (good work)? How would one feel *kai xin* towards his/her work? To answer these questions, here are several expressions used by the informants to express what made them feel *kai xin* in work:

i. You Xing Qu (Have Interest) and Zhong Yi(like)

'You xing qu' (have interest) and 'zhong yi' (like) are two important expressions used by the informants to describe *hao gong zuo*. Here show their expressions related to a *hao gong zuo*:

*Brenda described that "One hao gong zuo is: I myself would **you xing qu** over such work";*

*Betty explained how she started FB 2: "because I myself **zhong yi** dancing very much ... He (Her father) thinks that it is good that I can work according to my **xing qu**. He is very supportive"*

*Uncle Carl chose to be a jade accessory maker because: "I, from the beginning to the end, **xi huan(like)** jade accessory making...zui kai xin(The happiest) is I **zhong yi** (like) this occupation"*

*Doris recalled: "since I was in the school that is in secondary school and university I recognised that I **zhong yi** fashion design ... then I feel that I would like to know more about (this field)... I think (I have) the passion and talent in here (this field). I always have a feeling that if I don't work (in this field), I would somehow feel sorry for my dad and mum. So...I want to work (in this field)"*

The above expressions indicate that *you xing qu* (has interest) and *zhong yi(like)* are important elements that shape a *hao gong zuo* (good job). In particular, Doris emphasized that she *zhong yi* her work as a fashion designer because her passion and talent is in that field. In her view, passion and talent are natural gifts from her parents. Hence, she would disappoint her parents if she would not fully utilize her talent in work.

ii. You Man Zu Gan (Have Satisfaction)

'You man zu gan (have satisfaction)' is another expression that indicates why one could feel *kai xin* in work. Betty expressed *kai xin* over her work when she saw the pupils were dancing happily:

'You man zu gan (have satisfaction) is the little kids won an award ...Indeed, not only because of getting the award. It is (because of) seeing those kids. (I) Hao kai xin (feel happy) that (we)

have tried very hard to choreograph a dance ... then you (I) saw those five pupils. (Seeing they are) Very united ... very happy ... enjoy very much the process (of dancing). Then (I) would be hao kai xin.'

iii. Chuang Zuo (Creative Work)

Chuang zuo (creative work) is also expressed as a key element that enables the informants to feel *man zu*. *Chuang zuo* in work is critical and relevant to some of the informants. The significance of *chuang zuo* is especially emphasised in FB 2, 3 and 4, because the business nature of the three FBs is related to art and design:

FB 2:

*Brenda expressed that: "A hao gong zuo is to **do some chuang zu (creative work)**. Can give more to others; can inspire more people ... (Such as) art... That is to say, **demonstrate chuang zuo (creative work)**, **chuang yi (creativity)**"*

FB 3:

*Uncle Carl explained the main reason why he zhong yi his work: "A finished product is (originally) started from (a stone that was) not beautiful. **Then through (my) xin ji(hard work) and chuang yi (creativity) to sculpt it into a perfect product...**Sometimes, the clients keep praising(me), (saying my products are good. This would (give me) hao you man zu gan'.*

FB 4:

*Doris expressed that "zui kai xin (the happiest experience) always comes from that man zu gan ... **That is I want to have the chuang zuo kong jian (room for creativity)**... Then when you (I) look at those products that you yourself (I myself) feel satisfied, and receive some compliments from others, your man zu gan would be very great".*

The above expressions indicate *chuang zuo (creative work)* as an important aspect of work (as reflected in FB 2, 3 and 4). *Chuang zuo* shapes the informants' sense of *man zu gan*. They would be *kai xin* particularly when their *chuang zuo* are being recognised and praised.

iv. Work hard and bear xin ku: Strive to survive

In contrast to *kai xin*, how would one express uneasy towards his/her work? '*Xin ku (hardship)*' is an expression used by the informants when they felt difficult in work. *Xin ku* is supposed to be in contrast to *kai xin*. How do the informants handle *xing ku*? Even if the work is not always easy, the informants would still work hard. Such a positive attitude shows they are able to live well because they are working hard to overcome difficulties in lives. Below show how the informants **strive to survive** by overcoming the challenges and hardship at work:

FB 1: Liu de qing shan zai , na pa mei chai shao

In 2013, I witnessed how the centre had gone through another official supervision conducted by the Department of Health, Fire Service Department and Building Department. In order to fulfil the supervision requirements, two centres were required to be renovated. While the centres were under renovations, I chatted with Mrs. Alice, regarding how she responded to such official supervision. She replied: '*now, engaging in tutoring business would encounter many problems: one (problem) is the expensive rental fee, another (problem) would be getting a license ... And so, we currently reduced the number of pupils ... Anyway, never mind, (we can) plan further later! Liu de qing shan zai , na pa mei chai shao*'.

'*Liu de qing shan zai , na pa mei chai shao*' was the comment that was made by the owner (Mrs. Alice) in a time of challenge, which seems to capture her core value for survival. This is a Chinese proverb. Literally, it means 'stay on the green mountain, do not afraid (there is) no wood to burn'. That implies, as long as (we) are able to survive and maintain existence in the market, (we) will not be afraid of having no revenue to stay alive. Even though FB 1 has gone through several challenges since 1996, Mrs. Alice's comments gave me a deep impression that she had a strong sense of striving in the time of difficulties. Hence, such persistence to survive and thrive suggests why she would be able to operate FB 1 in this fast-moving world for 18 years.

FB 2: Shou zhu xian (Hold on to survive first)

In the start-up stage, Betty and Bonnie have been looking for clients. In the beginning, Betty and Bonnie seemed quite optimistic about their business future. Nevertheless, the business was still having a deficit after it had been operating for three months. There were only a few clients who come from the artist's studio next door. I could feel the worries of Betty and Bonnie, every time when I visited the company. Bonnie sighed for a number of times in our social chats: "*Sigh! (The business is) Really very quiet! Indeed, (we) really need to find (more) new clients. (If we) Rely on friends (only), we can hardly survive for long!*" She even said: '*Sigh! Now the only way is to shou zhu xian (hold on to*

survive first)... (We) Have started (the business), (we can) only continue doing it...maybe I need to ask my mum to lend me more money'. Her expression - *shou zhu xian*, seems to highlight her persistence to survive.

A few weeks later, Bonnie told me her new idea: "Need to have a tight control on budgeting ... (Since we) *kai wu dao yuan, jiu yao jie liu xian* (have not been able to find more sources of revenue, (we) need to reduce expenses first)". With this new strategy, they had reduced expenses in several ways: (1) terminated all full-time staff and hired part-time staff only, (2) tightened the marketing budget and focused on a few key promotional channels and (3) designed and printed the marketing posters and leaflets by themselves rather than hiring an advertising agency. With these practices to reduce expenditure, FB 2 had become more financially stable. This story illustrates how FB 2 strived to maintain its existence in the market.

FB 3: One man band (Zi ji zuo)

This is my impression of how Uncle Carl worked at FB 3. He did not recruit any employees. Everything is done by him. In order to reduce cost in recruiting and retaining staff, Uncle Carl would rather be 'the one man band'. He told me: "So now, I would *jin liang zi ji zuo* (try to do it by myself)". Auntie Connie seldom participates in the business because Uncle Carl does not allow her to do so. He would rather handle the business all by himself, so that Auntie Connie could concentrate on handling household matters. Uncle Carl once commented: "Now, I would rather do it all by myself. (I) hope that (doing it by myself) would reduce (staff) cost. Hence, (my) working hours would be quite long." Even though being an one man band is never easy, he feels proud of himself given he is able to finish all the tasks by myself.

FB 4: Gong fu and xin ji

Instead of focusing on management with strategies, Doris would rather rely on her own hard work. Whenever I met her in the studio, she would be busy in working, such as ironing clothes, buttoning, designing new clothes via her computer notebook, making procurement, serving customers, doing accounting works etc. One day, I went to her studio as usual on the weekend. When I walked into the shop, I saw her trimming the thread ends. When she saw me, she said:

"Therefore, indeed, doing fashion this industry is ... really require (me to) spend a lot of xin ji(heart-mind; effort). ... You see, even for trimming the thread ends, also need to spend a lot of xin ji. ... Also for choosing cloth, even for choosing which threads ... also require (me to) spend so much gong fu (effort) (and) xin ji. Therefore, doing fashion this industry, really is not an easy

*task. (Producing) A garment is (required) (me) a lot of **gong fu** (and) **xin ji**. That is why it is sold at such a price. (This work) Is not easy!"*

Doris needs to closely monitor every detail and follows through every procedure and task. She has emphasised that her work requires her to spend a lot of *gong fu* and *xin ji*. She has repeated the following phrases: '*xin ji*' for three times and '*gong fu*' for twice. This shows she would put much *xin ji* (heart-mind) and *gong fu* (effort) in work.

The above stories demonstrate the subject's strong willingness to bear any hardship at work. They would strive to survive in the market by: (1) persistently being able to maintain existence in the market, (2) trying to handle most of the tasks by themselves, and (3) working hard with *xin ji* and *gong fu*.

6.2.4 Xin Zhong Fu You (Being Rich at Heart-mind)

Some locals (particularly the youth) regard "***xin zhong fu you (being rich at heart-mind)***" as another important aspect of life. I found this expression from the following casual conversation with Doris when I asked her when she could feel *xing fu*:

*"That's NOT about: (If) you have much money, you would feel xing fu. Indeed, (if) you don't (have money,) you would then become xing fu. You know that is (if) you don't have (it), you are (rather) xing fu. (It is) Because that satisfaction does not come from external. But money or materials are always come from external sources, right? ... This is similar to taking drugs! (If you have) relied on it (the drugs), indeed you have already lost your own self. It's about (a matter of) control! Indeed, once you can't control yourself (and rely on something externally given), you can't take control of your own happiness. (That's why) **xin zhong fu you**... yes! **xin zhong fu you** is alright!"*

Doris's expression: "***xin zhong fu you***" is another local *chao yu* buzzword. *Chao yu* originates from the lyrics of the local song with the verse: "Hunger for being rich at heart-mind; do not intentionally chase for reputation and benefits". This *chao yiu* are normally used to describe the current local youth (new generation) who do not demand things that are of material existence. They could rather look for being rich at heart-mind, such as freedom, democracy and social justice etc. For instance, the previous Financial Secretary of Hong Kong, Mr John Tsang Chun Wah, has used this phrase to praise the new local generation. In his speech, he mentioned:

"After hundreds of years of development, Hong Kong's economic capability has already been positioned at the top tier of the world. Hong Konger, especially the new generation, looks for something outside the material life; (they are) rather "hunger for richness in heart". This is a mature social behaviour!"

After the speech, he uses this phrase for a second time in order to make further complements to the local youth. The local youth who try to make use of the various forms of social enterprises to make their dreams come true and change the world are often appreciated. Hence, with such compliments given by Mr. Tsang, this phrase has become one local *chao yiu*, which also symbolizing the path that the local youth have accepted to lead a good and successful living.

When would the local youth have *xin zhong fu you*? During the fieldwork, I found that the local expression: '*Wo yao zhen pu xuan*' (*I want real universal suffrage*) is often expressed by the local youth to indicate their demand for *xin zhong fu you*. *Wo yao zhen pu xuan* is the slogan that expresses the local appeal for a real universal suffrage in the election of Chief Executive in 2017 and forming the Legislative Council in 2016. A majority of the locals rejected the 831 decision, made by The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (SCMNP), not only expressing their views verbally but also through the provision of art and design. The yellow ribbon is used to symbolize the demand for real universal suffrage in Hong Kong. In particular, the graphic of yellow ribbon with a black colour as a background (Appendix C: Figure C3) is used to show the disagreement over the use of any violence suppressed by the Hong Kong Police in the Umbrella Movement in 2014. How did *zhen pu xuan* mean to the informants? Around 75 percent of the informants have Facebook and nearly 53 percent of them had changed their profile picture as Figure C3 to express the support towards the real universal suffrage. Five of the informants have even posted the slogan of '*Wo yao zhen pu xuan*' as their status on Facebook. The above verbal or graphic expressions reflect the fact that *zhen pu xuan* is rather relevant in the lives of the informants living in Hong Kong. Social protest is one of the significant ways in which the locals could voice out their concern for better life to the government.

Nevertheless, some locals expressed the acceptance of the 831 decision. Mrs. Cindy expressed her view over the *zhong yang zheng fu* (Literally means the central government. It refers to the government in Beijing):

"Given zhong yang zheng fu would never change, dai zhu xian(take it first) would be necessary".

Indeed, '*dai zhu xian*' is a local expression that is first suggested by Chief Secretary, Carrie Lam, to promote an acceptance of the 831 decision. This term literally refers as "*Pocket it first*". It means 'let us take the 831 decision first', so that local voters can have a chance to vote for their own Chief Executive in 2017.

Both Uncle Carl and Auntie Connie had similar thoughts on Mrs. Cindy. Uncle Carl even lamented:

"Sigh ... Let's dai zhu xian given it has already led to she hui si lie (Social cleavage)".

Social cleavage refers to the division of people into various social groups based on their views and voting preferences. When the social cleavage is applied to the local political situation, it is translated as *she hui si lie*. Indeed, '*she hui si lie*' is locally expressed to highlight the negative impact of fighting for *zhen pu xuan*: breaking down the social harmony due to the differences between the people's views and voting preferences. It is an expression that bears negative connotation against the people supporting *zhen pu xuan*.

6.3 From Managing to Living

This section aims to interpret the above business practices adopted by the four family businesses. The literature review (Chapter 2 and 3) highlights the problem of *essentialism* in the mainstream research on the Chinese family business (CFB) and well-being. With the critiques given by the post-colonial thoughts (section 2.3), the thesis avoids *essentialism* by offering interpretations based on both mainstream and Chinese perspectives. The analysis starts with a familiar approach (a mainstream perspective) to understand the business practices adopted by the four family businesses. While it seeks understanding based on the mainstream perspective, it also reveals possible weaknesses and restrictions when the data are interpreted based on the mainstream. In responses to those flaws and limitations, the analysis then moves to interpret the same data through Chinese language and two major Chinese philosophies (the Confucian and the Daoist traditions) so as to (1) reveal an alternative perspective or/and (2) to provide an additional layer of understanding.

From the data in the last section, the local expressions have shaped the practices within the four firms (Appendix C: Table C1). Those major practices include:

- a. Familial culture: Blurring boundary between business and family
- b. Absence of / Resistance to strategy and management
- c. Strive to survive
- d. Move on as life unfolds

a. Familial culture: Blurring boundary between business and family

As revealed in section 6.2, the informants are working like "*a family*" (FB1) and treating the business as their "*own baby*" (FB 2) or even "*part of self*" (FB 4). They treat home as office or vice versa ('*Home office*' in FB 3) and often rely on '*family helpers*' (FB 1 and 4). If these values and practices are to be interpreted based on the mainstream discourse on CFB, such way of work would be interpreted as 'a business management' with features of "paternalism" (Redding, 1990; Whiteley, 1992; Sheer, 2012), "familism", "nepotism" and "personalism" (Redding, 1990, p. 145). Similar to a typical CFB in the management discourse, the family businesses in this study have a patriarch family leadership and culture (Yu and Kwan, 2015; Minkes and Foster, 2011), adopt centralization (Redding, 1990, p. 154) with ownership and control being held among the family members, and rely on

“relational contracts” and “reciprocity” (Redding, 1990, p. 144). “Informal”, “sparse” and “pragmatic”, could be used to commonly describe the personnel management of the family businesses (Redding, 1990; Whiteley, 1992; Zheng, 2002; ECIC, 2005; Sheer, 2012). Hence, their management would most possibly be concluded as ‘unprofessional’ with “low standardization” and “low role specialization” (Redding, 1990, 154).

Although the above analysis seems to be quite aligned with the typical description of CFB in the management discourse, it is questionable that the subject views business as a separate sphere that requires ‘professional management’. Given they work like “*a family*” (FB1), treat the business as their “*own baby*” (FB 2) or “*part of self*” (FB 4); work in ‘*home office*’ and rely heavily on ‘*family workers*’, these practices over their work (or business) indicate that the informants regard their work (or business) as part of their families or selves. Why do they treat work (or business) as part of their families or selves? The answer could be explained by the Confucian perspective. In the Confucian teaching, self is constructed within the social nexus in which it is relational and interdependent (Chang and Holt, 1996; Hwang and Chang, 2009). Among different relation, the Confucian tradition strongly focuses on family (Ames, 2009). Three of the five cardinal relations (*wulun*) are belonged to the family. Besides, the Chinese concept of ‘*jia*’ (family) does not only bind by biological relation. Even though the relations between a ruler and the subject and friends do not lie within the family ties, they are developed according to the family model. *Jia* can be extended to non-kin ties through appropriate mutual trust (*xin*) and exchange (Chang and Holt, 1996). The Chinese treats *guo jia* (state or country) as family. *Zhi guo* 治國 (the governance of *guo jia*), is therefore regarded as part of the familial duties of a ruler. In the findings, the subject regards work (or business) as a way to maintain a living for their families (section 6.2.1). For example, Mrs. Alice starts FB 1 because she needs to “*find another way to generate income for the family*”. Uncle Carl engages in FB 3 as he needs to maintain “*a basic living*” for his family. Hence, it is understandable that the subject regards work (or business) as part of family and self.

‘Business strategy’ and ‘professional management’, produced in the business management discourse and are usually used in the work (or business) context rather than in the familial nor personal lives. If the subject regards work (or business) as part of family or self, are ‘business strategy’ and ‘professional management’ still meaningful to them? Would they adopt any ‘strategies’ and ‘professional management’ in their familial or personal lives? The answers to these questions are provided in the next part.

b. Absence of/ Resistance to strategy and management

As shown in last section, the informants aim at “*liu de ging shai zai*” (FB 1), “*shou zhu xian*” (FB 2), “*zi ji zuo*” (FB 3) and “*simply do, do and do*” (FB 4). All of them indicated that they had “*no plans*”

at all. If these expressions have to be interpreted based on the mainstream management discourse on the Chinese family business (CFB), such way of running a business could be typically scrutinized as *defensive*. CFB, in the management discourse adopts a classic business strategy termed as defensive (Redding, 1990; Whiteley, 1992). Under such a defensive business strategy, the CFB would usually have a “*tight financial and production management*” (Redding, 1990, p. 145) and little ambition to seek for further growth and expansion (Redding, 1990; Chen, 1995; Whiteley, 1992; Poutziouris, Wang and Chan, 2002). Therefore according to the mainstream discourse, FB 1, 2, 3 and 4 are regarded as “small-scaled” (Redding, 1990, p. 154) which only focus on maintaining daily operation for business survival. Besides, findings show the informants would “*jian bu xing bu*” (FB 1 and 2) and “follow the customers’ preferences and reactions” (FB 3 and 4). Based on the mainstream discourse, these strategies could be seen as overly stable with limited long-term planning (Redding, 1990; Chen, 1995; Whiteley, 1992; Poutziouris, Wang and Chan, 2002). Hence, in the mainstream discourse, the business strategies adopted by FB 1, 2, 3 and 4 could be characterized as *defensive*, *stable* and *short-term*.

Although the above interpretation is common within the management discourse on CFB, the question lies on whether the subject regards such a living approach as ‘a business strategy’. Does the use of ‘business strategy’ apply to them? Do they familiarize with what is so called ‘business strategy’? As mentioned in 6.2, the informants revealed specifically that they ran the business with “*no strategies*” (FB 1, 2 and 4) nor “*any perfect plan*” (FB 3). That means, they regard ‘business strategies and plans’ are unnecessary and non-applicable to them. If the term, ‘business strategy’ is alien to them, the interpretation that they are using a defensive, stable and short-term strategy would possibly become a misrepresentation of their lives. Such a misrepresentation has neglected the abstracts in Chinese language and logic (Goody, 1996); has made the characteristics of CFB essential with negative connotation as being small, defensive and short-term focused (Westwood, 2001). And, it has objectified the Chinese subject to test the western concepts and theories of ‘strategic management’ (Xu; 2008). In order to avoid the above misrepresentation that would lead to the problem of *essentialism*, this research pays attention to the local language, its logic, values and the traditions.

Intrinsically, the findings show that the subject regards ‘management’ as “*no need*” (Ada, FB 1), “*troublesome*” (Betty, FB 2) and “*a challenge*” (Doris, FB 4). Uncle Carl (FB 3) even did not mention the word, ‘management’ at all. That means, the informants think using ‘management’ in work is unnecessary, difficult and challenging. Their expressions reveal that they do not think ‘management’ is meaningful to their lives. They did not talk about ‘management’ spontaneously. They did not adopt ‘management’ in their lives. Some of them even resist to ‘management’. Why do they seldom or even never mention ‘management’ spontaneously? Why do they think it is unnecessary to adopt ‘management’ in their lives? Why do some of them even resist to management? Their responses to ‘management’ could be explained by the Chinese language and traditions. Firstly, the word, ‘management’ is definitely not a Chinese word. Geert Hofstede (1993) examines the history and

evolution of ‘management’ when he tries to differentiate management practices across countries. In his examination, the linguistic origin of the word is from Latin, *manus*, hand, via the Italian *maneggiare*, which is the training of horses in the *manege*. Subsequently, its meaning was extended to skill of handling in general. The word also became associated with the French *menage*, household, as an equivalent of “husbandry” in its sense of the art of running a household. The theatre of present-day management contains elements of both *manege* and *menage* and different *menages* and cultures may use different accents” (p.82). From Hofstede’s examination of the history of ‘management’, the word is originated from not only a single foreign language, but a plethora of languages (starting from Latin and Italian, and then associated to French and English). Later on, ‘management’ is further developed as ‘a process’ by Adam Smith in 1776 and Scientific Management by Frederick Taylor in 1911 (Hofstede, 1993). Until now, ‘management’ is being developed as ‘a concept’, ‘a science’ and ‘a field of study’. Various ways to ‘management’ are being created in the discourse, such as quantitative approach, behavioural approach, system approach and contingency approach (Robbins and Coulter, 2010). Although ‘management’ is well-developed and spread to other Asian countries, it is not originated from the Chinese language and traditions. ‘Management’ is seen as a foreign language to the Chinese. That is why the word, ‘management’ is not spontaneously being mentioned and adopted by some of the informants.

Secondly, ‘management’ is seen to be unnecessary to the subject because ‘management’ has never become an approach to living in Chinese philosophies, such as the Confucian and the Daoist tradition. In the Confucian teaching, human approach to social lives should be governed by *yi* (appropriateness). In the Confucian teaching, each role has its own rights, duties, obligations and responsibilities within a particular context. If the locals follow *yi* in their works, they would fulfil their roles as well as the duties by themselves. In that case, it is not essential to use ‘management’ to exercise any monitoring and control (e.g. scientific management), nor encourage motivation (e.g. human resource management). This explains why Ada (FB 1) thinks it is not necessary to adopt ‘management’ given “everyone would *zi dong bo* (work automatically)”. She believes the staff in FB 1 would follow *yi* as their approach to work. Besides, the Daoists practice *wuwei* (non-assertive action) on a daily basis. Based on *wuwei*, the Daoist leadership would avoid any coercive policies and practices that would discourage or restrict people from being spontaneous. Given ‘management’ requires implementation of any coercive policies and practices in work, The Daoists would probably avoid using ‘management’ in lives. Hence, the concept of ‘*wuwei*’ in Daoism can also explain why the subject does not exercise ‘management’ in work (or business).

Thirdly, ‘management’ is being seen as “*difficult*” and “*a challenge*” by some of the subjects. Why did they have such feeling towards ‘management’? One possible account for this local response could refer to Bhabha’s (1985; 1990; 1994) concepts of ‘ambivalence’, ‘mimicry’ and ‘hybridization’ within the post-colonial thoughts (Section 2.3). Bhabha highlights the ambivalence of the colonizer because

the colonial Other was constructed in a manner that was only a partial representation of the colonizer, instead of portraying the real image. Hong Kong was colonized by Britain, therefore the locals' knowledge, values and thinking will be influenced by the colonizer. In the critiques towards Redding's (1990) *The Spirit of Chinese Capitalism*, Xu (2008) draws research to pay attention to the subject's "hybrid" legacy:

"It is the colonial nineteenth century as part of the subject's "hybrid" legacy, and the interviewees' sense of being both "Chinese" and the product of a society once run by outsiders. Hence, one discerns both favourable feeling towards Chinese tradition and for western institutions as well as criticism, predicament, and tension in terms of power, control and identity." (p.266).

Some of the informants view management as "difficult" and "a challenge" because of their "hybrid" legacy – they experience tension when they live with both local traditions and knowledge on 'management'. It is no doubts that some locals, especially the younger generation, often acquire western values and knowledge on 'management', while they treasure and live according to many Confucian and Daoist values. For instance, Betty, Bonnie (FB2) and Doris (FB 4) understand 'management' very well because they have been studied business subjects since they were in secondary schools. With adequate business knowledge, they understand the value and importance of management. Both of them understand about personnel management, cost control and time management, etc. At the same time, they also treasure and live according to many Confucian and Daoist values, such as Betty and Bonnie treasuring *zi ji ren*, rely *xin* (trust) and valuing harmony; while Doris strives to survive (*zi qiang bu xi*) by spending a lot of *gong fu* (effort) and *xin ji* (heart-mind; effort) in her work. With favourable feeling towards Chinese traditions, as well as adequate knowledge on 'management', they feel that exercising 'management' in their family businesses would create tensions in work. For instance, Betty and Bonnie found it difficult to impose any control and monitoring to their staff, because they would like to maintain harmony. Besides, in dealing with the challenges of managing different aspects of the business, Doris did not implement any strategies. On a contrary, she chose to "simply walking slowly: walk and walk" with her *gong fu* and *xin ji*. Based on these two examples, the subject's responses reveal that implementing 'management' could violate harmony, *tiendao* and *wuwei* in the Confucian and the Daoist teachings. Hence, they express management as "difficult" and "a challenge".

If the subject does not focus on 'management', what could be their real concern in lives? In the findings, the subject have mentioned terms such as "basic living", "simply do, do and do", "liu de ging shai zai", "jian bu xing bu" etc.. These local expressions are all related to the "livings" or "approaches to living" of the respondents. In other words, they are simply concerned about 'life'. As mentioned in the last part, the subjects treat work (or business) as part of their families and their own selves. The concept of self is socially constructed (Chang and Holt, 1996; Hwang and Chang, 2009), and they work (or do business) in order to maintain a living for their families. That means they are more interested on

maintaining ‘a living’ for their families, rather than ‘management’. They care about ‘life’ (or ‘a living’) due to the local traditions. Both the Confucian and the Daoist traditions are regarded as ‘philosophies of living’ (Xu, 2008, p.258). That is to say, they target on providing meaning to human lives and teaching people the appropriate ways of living, rather than ‘management’. For example, in the Confucian teaching, the cultivation of human virtues in daily lives are, including *ren* (benevolence), *yi* (appropriateness), *li* (ritual propriety) and *zhi* (acting wisely), while the Daoists encourage humans to live according to the nature. Since ‘life’ (or ‘a living’) is the main concern of the subject, the next section seeks an understanding their ways of living, which are embedded in their business practices. It explores the local lives with alternative themes: (1) Strive to survive and (2) Move on as life unfolds.

c. *Strive to survive*

The local expressions: “*liu de ging shai zai*” (FB 1), “*shou zhu xian*” (FB 2), “*zi ji zuo*” (FB 3) and “*simply do, do and do*” (FB 4) reveal that my research subject has been **striving to survive**. They work hard in order to maintain a living for survival. For instance, Mrs. Alice has been maintaining the survival of FB 1 for 20 years; Betty and Bonnie are willing to take compromises to retain their clients, so that FB 2 could “*shou zhu xian*” (hold on to survive); Uncle Carl starts FB 3 so that he does not need “*to worry the basic living in the future*”; and Doris can start FB 4 because “*(this business) is (what she) ongoing (continuously) want to do*”. Their behaviours can be interpreted by one Chinese idiom: ‘*zi qiang bu xi*’. The Chinese idiom translates that one strives with unremitting efforts. Therefore, striving continuously in order to survive could be seen as an ultimate life goal of the subject.

This life goal can be interpreted by the Confucians as “positive self-striving”, one key characteristic of *junzi* (a virtuous person) (Xu, 2008, p. 270). In the Confucian teaching, *rendao* (the human way) is treated as one’s life goal (section 3.2.2). *Rendao* symbolizes how human should live on *di* (the Earth, the material world). Hence, *rendao* represents a moral ideal of an entire human life. What does a moral ideal mean in the Confucian teaching? A moral ideal in The Confucian teaching refers to a sage who understands *dao* and lives according with it. Then, how can one become a sage? To become a sage, one must cultivate *de* (virtues). That means lifelong self-cultivation of *de* is necessary. When one attained *de* with a high degree of standard, he/she is regarded as *junzi* (a virtuous person). According to *Yi Jing*, *zi qiang bu xi* is one characteristic of *junzi*:

“*Xiang Zhuan: Heaven, in its motion, (gives the idea of) strength. The superior man, in accordance with this, nerves himself to ceaseless activity.*” (*Yi Jing: Qian, 1; in Legge, 1985*)

The above indicates that *junzi* must strive positively and ceaselessly. Hence, the subjects struggle towards survival can be understood as *zi qiang bu xi* (positive self-striving), one of the key virtues that a *junzi* would be accustomed to.

d. Move on as life unfolds

The Chinese language of “*jian bu xing bu*” (FB 1 and 2) and “*follow the customers’ preferences and reactions*” (FB 3 and 4) portrays that the subjects believe that **moving on as life unfolds** is indeed important. That means, they live by following the way of the Nature. This approach to living can be understood by the Daoist teaching, as it inspires humans to live according to *dao* (the way of Nature) (Section 3.2.2). The Daoists encourage humans to allow for spontaneity (*ziran*), i.e. humans should live in accordance with the pattern of the Nature. In fact, both the Confucian and the Daoist thoughts are known to be inspired by *Yi Jing*. Xu (2008) translated the above opening line of *Yi Jing* as “Heaven moves eternally. *Junzi* who follows its way strives unceasingly” (p.270). With regards to the Chinese language, logics and traditions, she thoroughly interprets the line as follows:

“In Chinese, “Heaven” refers to nature. Humans are part of nature. Therefore, they follow nature’s way. Here, the order Tian di junzhi/ren suggests, firstly, to position “human (junzhi/ren) in nature’s movement; and secondly, to learn from nature’s way in one’s positive striving” (Xu, 2008, p.270).

Based on Xu’s explanation, *junzhi* has to follow the pattern of Nature while they strive positively and unceasingly. That is why the subject responds to live by acting spontaneously to any happenings being occurred (i.e. *jian bu xing bu*). For instance, Ada runs FB 1 by “*shun zhu qu zuo* (do as it goes along)”. Mrs. Alice and Ada prefer to act at the right timing. That is to say; they would suspend an act until there is an opportunity or wait until there is no obstacles. Doris also starts FB 4 with no particular point of time. She simply keeps working until a chance is at her disposal, and she grabs for it. Hence, the informants walk according to the natural pattern of life. They strive to survive by following the pattern of Nature – act through the right moment when there is an opportunity or no obstacles. This approach to living is regarded as positive, because this is how a *junzhi* would live on the Earth, the material world (*di*) – lives according to the Nature’s way along one’s positive striving.

Chapter 7 Within ‘Thick Description’: A Possible Extension in Dialogue

The data in chapter 6 highlights two alternate local expressions of: (1) *xing fu* and (2) *xin*. These two terms have their inherent meanings and they are embodied in the subject’s daily lives. As mentioned in section 6.2.1, *xing fu* is expressed within a particular context – in a marriage and family. Hence, such a contextual term highlights that the informants value social relations. In particular, they regard *jia ting* (family) and *peng you* (friends) as the most important aspects of their lives. Therefore, this chapter begins by scrutinising *xing fu* within the familial context. Next, *kai xin gong zuo* (section 6.2.3), and *xin zhong fu you* (section 6.2.4) are expressed to indicate how the informants work and live well in society. Both expressions contain an expression – *xin*. *Xin* has its specific connotations (Li, Ericsson and Quennerstedt, 2013; Zhang, 1993). Hence, the meanings of *xin* from various philosophical perspectives are uncovered. This chapter aims to contribute to knowledge by shedding light on an indigenous perspective.

The first section of this chapter presents a theoretical discussion of the local expressions. The two Chinese expressions: *Xing fu* and *xin* are explored from both western and Chinese perspectives. Each expression is scrutinised initially via the notion of well-being from a mainstream framework. The discussion reveals possible boundaries when the data is analysed from a mainstream (western) approach. Afterwards, the same expressions are interpreted through the Confucian and the Daoist frameworks – so as to offer further layers of understanding. The second part of the chapter draws the four perspectives into dialogues. By engaging them in conversations, the section aims to highlight the similarities and the differences between different perspectives and further demystify the notion of *xin*. Such knowledge may help westerners and Chinese to better understand each other.

7.1 Theoretical Discussion

7.1.1 *Xing fu* (Living well)

Xing fu is the first expression to be analysed. This term is used to describe *jia ting*. To my subject, *jia ting* (family) is the most important aspect of life. This compound is made of two morphemes: ‘*jia*’ and ‘*ting*’. *Jia* is written as 「家」. The character 家 can be seen as 「宀」 and 「豕」. 「宀」 represents a roof; 「豕」 symbolizes pigs (猪). In Ancient China, people feed pigs for a living, and they would live with pigs. Feeding pigs is part of daily lives. That means, 「家」 may be under a roof – a home. As for *ting*, it is written as 「庭」. 庭 signifies a courtyard, spacious hall or yard. This implies the place for living. Both *jia* and *ting* are therefore literally referred to the home of a family. In other words, *jia ting* 「家庭」 is simply ‘family’.

Table 7. 1: Local expressions: *Xing fu* and *Xin*

Thick Description		
Local terms of living well	Embodiment of living well	Themes
<i>Xing fu</i> (Living well)		
(1) <i>Xing fu jia ting</i> 幸福家庭 (Good family)		
➤ <i>Qi zheng</i> 齊整 (Orderly complete)	Build a family with children	Completeness: Build a family with children
➤ <i>Yang jia</i> 養家 (Feed family)	Support family: - Buy one's own place - Shape <i>quai</i> 乖 (good) children	Role obligations: Support family - Feed family - Teach children
➤ <i>Jian kang</i> 健康 (Healthy)	Physical exercises, good sleep	Healthiness: Physical exercises and good sleep
➤ <i>Ping jing</i> 平靜 (Peace and at ease)	Rituals and gestures	Spiritual peace: Rituals and gestures
(2) <i>Peng you</i> 朋友 (Friends)		
➤ <i>Xin</i> 信 (Trust)	Work with <i>peng you</i>	Trust and work with friends
<i>Xin</i> (Heart-mind)		
(3) <i>Kai xin gong zuo</i> 開心工作 (Happy work)		
➤ <i>You xing qu</i> 有興趣 (Have interests)		For interests, affection, satisfaction and creativity
➤ <i>Zhong yi</i> 鍾意 (Affection)		
➤ <i>You man zu gan</i> 有滿足感 (Have satisfaction)		
➤ <i>Chuang zuo</i> 創作 (Creativity)		
➤ Contrast with <i>xin ku</i> 辛苦 (hardship)	Work hard and bear <i>xin ku</i>	Work hard to bear hardship
(4) <i>Xin zhong fu you</i> 心中富有 (Being rich at heart-mind)		

Why does the research subject regard family as the most important aspect of life? How can one explain such a view based on the notion of well-being? Hedonism values family if individuals are able to derive happiness from their families. From an utilitarian perspective, the family can be a means for obtaining pleasures and self-interests. That is why people would desire to have a good family. Likewise, Eudaimonia also believes that family can be significant to one's life. According to Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, the familial relation is classified as a social need. Humans seek to have a favourable relationship in order to fulfil their social needs. Hence, the good familial relation could contribute to positive relatedness, which is part of psychological well-being. Although from such a perspective, one can see the significance of family, they never perceive family is the most necessary element of human life. Based on Maslow's (1943) theory, social need is characterised as a lower order of need (a subjectively felt need), which would only bring short-term pleasure to humans. In this case, the notion of well-being cannot explain why the research subject treated the family as the most vital aspect of their life.

To appreciate why the subject regards *jia* (family) as the first priority of life, The Confucian and The Daoist frameworks are helpful to comprehend Chinese perspectives. The Confucian education emphasises on five cardinal relations – *wulun*. *Wulun* includes: (1) a ruler and a subject (superior and subordinate); (2) father and son (parent and child); (3) husband and wife; (4) elder brother and younger brother (siblings); and (5) friends (Bockover, 2010). According to *wulun*, three of the relations are about the family. This reflected the significance of family in The Confucian teaching. The Confucians recognise the family as the most fundamental factor in one's life (Ames, 2009) because family is the chief platform for individuals to acquire, exercise, cultivate and extend *ren* (benevolence) – the principle virtue for Confucians.

Is family perceived as important from a Daoist perspective? It seems that the Daoists do not directly address family. Instead, it pays attention to *dao* – “the way of nature” (Morris, 1994, p.110). In the Daoist thinking, *dao* is the origin of the world and it is the base of all creations, including family. That is to say, family is formed due to people following *dao* – the pattern of Nature. From this perspective, the family is seen as essential when it is formed in accordance with the Natural rhythm of life. Hence, following the Confucian and the Daoist teachings, one would be able to recognise ‘family’ as the most important aspect of human life.

a. *Xing Fu Jia Ting (Good family)*

Xing fu jia ting is an expression that the subject would use to describe a good family. Based on the data in Chapter 6, four values emerge under the context of *xing fu jia ting*. They include completeness, role obligations, healthiness and spiritual peace. In seeking these values, different practices are

embodied in the subject's daily lives. The practices consist of: (a) Seeking completeness through building a family with children; (b) Fulfilling role obligations by feeding family and shaping a good child (supporting family); (c) Maintaining health through physical exercises and good sleep; and (d) Gaining spiritual peace through rituals and gestures (Table 7.1). The following discussion relate to interpretation of these values and practices based on the mainstream and the Chinese perspectives.

i. Completeness: Build a Family with Children

Some of my female informants (e.g. Ada, Mrs. Cindy and Hestia) live with the aim of building a complete family which consists of a father, a mother and children (Section 6.2.1). Hence, they put efforts in getting marriage and giving birth. Based on Eudaimonia, building a family with children can be viewed as a life purpose that contributes to one's psychological well-being. Nevertheless, the Eudemonic approach cannot explain why those informants could have such life objective. The mainstream framework does not discuss why people seek for building a complete family.

Both the Confucian and the Daoist frameworks could offer an understanding on why those informants would aim at building a complete family. As mentioned in section 3.2.2, *junzi* (a virtuous person) has three delights. The second delight occurs when his father and mother are both alive. This does not only explain why Mrs. Cindy had a feeling of loss when his husband (as well as the father of her family) passed away, but it also reflected the importance of having a complete family (which consists of a father, a mother and children). Confucius encourages individuals to build their own families and have children. He teaches people to pursue four missions in life: (1) cultivation of moral characters, (2) establishment of a harmonious family, (3) governance of a state and (4) maintenance of harmony in the world (修身, 齊家, 治國, 平天下). These four missions are to be achieved in accordance with its order and represents what a person should target on for his/her life journey. Among these four duties, *qi jia* 齊家 is the second mission of individuals before they could order well in their own states. *Qi jia* means to establish a complete as well as a harmonious family. Therefore, the basic tasks of *qi jia* are to build a new family through marriage and children. Only after an individual have created a complete family, he/she could try to regulate the family and make it become harmonious.

What is the Daoist view on marriage? How relevant are the Daoist thinking in explaining these informants' intention of getting marriage and having children? Even though The Daoist teaching does not discuss marriage and children explicitly, its ideas of 'yin' and 'yang' suggest the importance of a harmonious marriage – matrimony between a man and a woman. Men present *yang*; while women represent *yin*. According to The Daoist teaching, *yin* and *yang* are opposite but mutually interdependent. Therefore, a balance between *yin* and *yang* should be maintained. *Yin* and *yang* symbolize the significance of harmony. Marriage (between a man and a woman) illustrates that a family is built with a balance between *yin* and *yang*. From The Daoist perspective, marriage is a part of

nature if forming a new family could help to maintain a harmonious balance in the system of the world. This can also explain why some of the informants (e.g. Ada and Eden) seek to have both a son (*yin*) and a daughter (*yang*) in a family – *You nu you zi* (have a daughter and a son) can help to maintain a balance in a family.

Although forming a complete family can be a life goal for the Chinese, the pressure for getting marriage and giving birth had also created distress to some informants (e.g. Betty and Hestia). How can the Daoist thinking explain this kind of frustration? How would the Daoists encourage a family that is harmonious in nature? The Daoists advocate living along with the pattern of nature. They preserve *ziran* (nature, spontaneity) and *wuwei* (non-assertive action). Hence, they believe that marriage and giving birth should all be taken place spontaneously. That is, these events of life are in need to occur along the pattern of nature. With the Daoist attitude of *wuwei*, patience and non-interference should be maintained along the life process. In this case, the Daoist would not support any assertive intentions and acts on marriage and have children, such as speed dating, *cui hun* 催婚 (pressing for getting married) and artificial insemination. Hence, this can explain why some of the informants felt uncomfortable in attending the planned dating arrangement (e.g. Betty) or striving for pregnancy (e.g. Hestia). They felt frustrated because these arrangements are regarded as not spontaneous – given they may have to interfere the natural order of things and violate the way of nature (*dao*). Based on The Daoist tradition, individuals engaging in these arrangements would be criticized as not possessing *de* (potency) – because they are unable to drop their egos and live harmoniously with nature. That is why they would feel uneasy when they do not follow the pattern of nature.

ii. Role Obligations: Support Family

Once a complete family is formed, the informants are obligated to carry out their family roles. They would provide supports to their families in terms of (1) feeding the family (*yang jia*) and (2) teaching their children to be *quai* (good) (Table 7.1). These roles are aligned with the Chinese literal meaning of *jia ting*. *Jia ting* is the place where a family can physically live in there and be fed. *Jia ting* is regarded as the home of a family. How could the mainstream approach to well-being explain the above familial role obligations? Given Hedonism concerns on life satisfaction only, it does not offer any discussion on family roles. According to Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, feeding the family and educating the children can satisfy one's physiological needs as well as social belongingness, respectively. In addition, Eudaimonia would perceive supporting family as a way to build positive relatedness. Hence, this practice would contribute to one's psychological well-being. However, both approaches do not explain why familial role obligations are seen as essential to the subject. The mainstream framework provides no clues on why feeding the family and teaching the children would be an embodiment of good family.

How could one understand the local familial role obligation through The Confucian teaching? Familial role obligation is related to *yi* and *li*, the two key *de* (virtues) in The Confucian education. *Yi* highlights the importance of behaving appropriately in the social relations; while *li* defines the rules that govern and guide peoples to perform their roles in *wulun*. Parents cultivate *yi* by taking their role obligations to look after the family. The family is treated as the first major platform for observing and following *li*. In a family, “*fu fu you bie*” (between husband and wife, attention to their separate duties) (Mencius: Teng Wen Gong I, 4; in Legge, 1985). That is to say, father and mother have separate duties in the family. According to *Chunqiu fanlu* written by Dong Zhongshu, it introduces *sang gang* 三綱 which are the three cardinal guides for individuals to observe their social roles. *Sang gang* consists of:

(Ruler guides subject; father guides son; and husband guides wife)

Based on the three cardinal guides, two of them are related to the family. *Sang gang* specifies the role obligations of a father and a husband in the family. The father (the husband) is treated as *yi jia zhi zhu* 一家之主 (the head of a family) who is responsible for looking after his sons (children) and wife. That is why the findings in section 6.2.1 showed Uncle Carl took the responsibility of feeding his family. In the *Three Character Classic*, it specifies:

“To feed without teaching is the father's fault. To teach without severity is the teacher's laziness.” (Three Character Classic: 5, in Giles, 1910)

The above Chinese saying highlights the ritualized duties of a father – He is not only responsible for feeding but also teaching. If a father fails to offer guidance to his children, he would be regarded to be at fault in failing to fulfil the obligation of his role as the father. Hence, a father bears the responsibilities of both feeding as well as of teaching. Although, nowadays the husbands are often not the sole breadwinners of the families, both fathers and mothers are obligated to support the family (Tu, 2002). They try to develop *yi* by taking up their familial role obligations and act in accordance to *li* through feeding and teaching their children. In the Confucian teaching, these practices are regarded as a self-cultivation of *de* and would be seen as the ways to attain *xing fu*.

Furthermore, teachers also held accountable to teaching students. Both FB 1 and FB 2 have their role obligations in teaching. The teachers in FB 1 and 2 target on the whole-person development of students, because they are obligated to teach severely. If not, they would be regarded as lazy. This explains why the teaching style of FB 1 is seen as rigorous and disciplinary. The third delight of *junzi* (Section 3.2.2) indicates that one would be able to derive satisfaction from teaching. This explains why the teachers in FB 1 and 2 are willing to teach their children (students) to be *quai* (good).

How could the Daoist teaching explain the local familial role obligations? As discussed before, the Daoist thinking inspires individuals to drop their egos and live in harmony with nature. From that perspective, parents are advised to follow *dao* (the way of nature). They are encouraged to take up their *tian zhi* (bounden duties) – To support their families by feeding and teaching. Although The

Daoist value the bounden duties of parents, they believe that the growth and development of children should not be carried out in an assertive manner. Freedom should be offered to children so that they can grow and develop spontaneously (according to the way of nature – *ziran*). The Daoist perceive everything comes from the same origin (*dao*) and such pattern of nature should be followed. In that case, The Daoist would not appreciate FB 2's promotion on enabling the kids to *ying zai qi pao xian* (win at the starting line), because any deliberate control and supervision on the child development would violate *wuwei* (non-assertive action) and distort the pattern of nature.

iii. Being Healthy: Physical Exercises and Good Sleep

The findings show that the informants value health (Section 6.2.1). They recognised the need to do exercise and sleep well. How is healthiness understood from the mainstream framework of well-being? Hedonism assumes human lives to obtain pleasure and avoids pain (illness). Physical condition is important in Hedonic approach because health affects one's subjective well-being. Eudaimonia also recognises the importance of physical health. Fitness helps to satisfy one's physiological and safety needs. Individuals would like to take control over their health. Eudaimonia perceives such sense of control as a way of environmental mastery, and thus health contributes to human psychological well-being. Even though the mainstream perspective realises the importance of health, it offers little substantive discussion on how individuals can become healthy. It would be difficult to apprehend why the informants would like to do exercises and sleep well through the mainstream framework.

How important is health in Chinese linguistics and traditions? Do the Confucian, and the Daoist teachings suggest any ways for individuals to become healthy? In Chinese language, *wu fu* 五福 represents the five signs of abundance, which includes longevity, prosperity, health and peace, virtue and a comfortable death (Section 3.2.1). Health is part of *wu fu* – The Chinese think physical fitness is an imperative element in lives. Although Confucius stresses on the self-cultivation of virtues and spiritual attainment, it does not deny the need for maintaining good health. The Confucian teaching promotes *liu yi* 六藝 (six arts), which consists of rites (禮), music (樂), archery (射), riding chariots (御), calligraphy (書), mathematics (數). Among the six arts, archery and riding chariots are physical exercises that are promoted in The Confucian education. Although Confucius does not discuss health in details, his training on archery and riding chariots reflected the significance of doing physical exercises in daily lives. Furthermore, *The Analects* points out:

“When eating, he did not converse. When in bed, he did not speak.” (*The Analects: Xiang Dang*, 8; in Legge, 1985)

The above Chinese saying highlights a person does not speak while he is sleeping. One needs to fall into sleep peacefully. Hence, this portrays that it is crucial to have a good quality of sleep in daily lives.

Following The Daoist thoughts, harmony is the way to stay healthy. That means a balance between *yin* and *yang* should always be maintained. Doing exercises can be associated with *yang* since it symbolizes *dong* 動 (movement); while sleeping can be associated with *yin* because it implies *jing* 靜 (quietness). The Daoist recognise the interdependence between *dong* (*yang*) and *jing* (*yin*). In that perspective, doing exercises (*dong*) and sleeping well (*jing*) are mutually supportive to healthiness given they are carried out to maintain a balance between *yang* and *yin*. Both of them are mutually important to lives, and therefore they represent the embodiment of good health.

iv. Spiritual Peace: Rituals and Gestures

The informants did not only concern with physical fitness (*jian kang*), they also valued spiritual health. They seek for spiritual peace (*ping an*, *ping jing* or *an xin*) through performing rituals (such as ancestor worship) and wearing symbolic accessories (such as jade accessories) (Section 6.2.1). Is spiritual peace also considered as important in the mainstream perspective? Are local rituals and decorations appropriate to Hedonic and Eudemonic approaches to well-being? Hedonism pays attention to both physical and mental pleasure. It defines happiness as subjective well-being, which consists of life satisfaction, the presence of positive mood and the absence of negative emotion (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Hence, happiness (subjective well-being) signifies a positive state of mind. Is spiritual peace implies a positive state mind? According to the findings, the informants (e.g. Ada, Mrs. Alice, Brenda and Uncle Carl) looked for *ping an*, *ping jing*, *an xin*, *tai ping* or *ping wen*. All these local terms indicate a tranquil life encompassed of peace and stability. They imply a well-balanced spiritual state, neither positive nor negative. In this case, Hedonism cannot interpret why a well-balanced spiritual state is important.

To what extend would Eudaimonia help to explain spiritual peace? According to Maslow's (1943) theory, spiritual peace would be regarded as a safety need. For security purpose, a human would demand a life with stability as they prefer to maintain control over their lives (environmental mastery). Hence, spiritual peace contributes to individual psychological well-being. However, if the informants perceive they can take control over their lives, why do they need to perform rituals and wear symbolic accessories in order to gain spiritual comfort? It is unlikely that the mainstream approaches would appreciate the local rituals and decorations because these practices tend to undermine the human potential and self-governance.

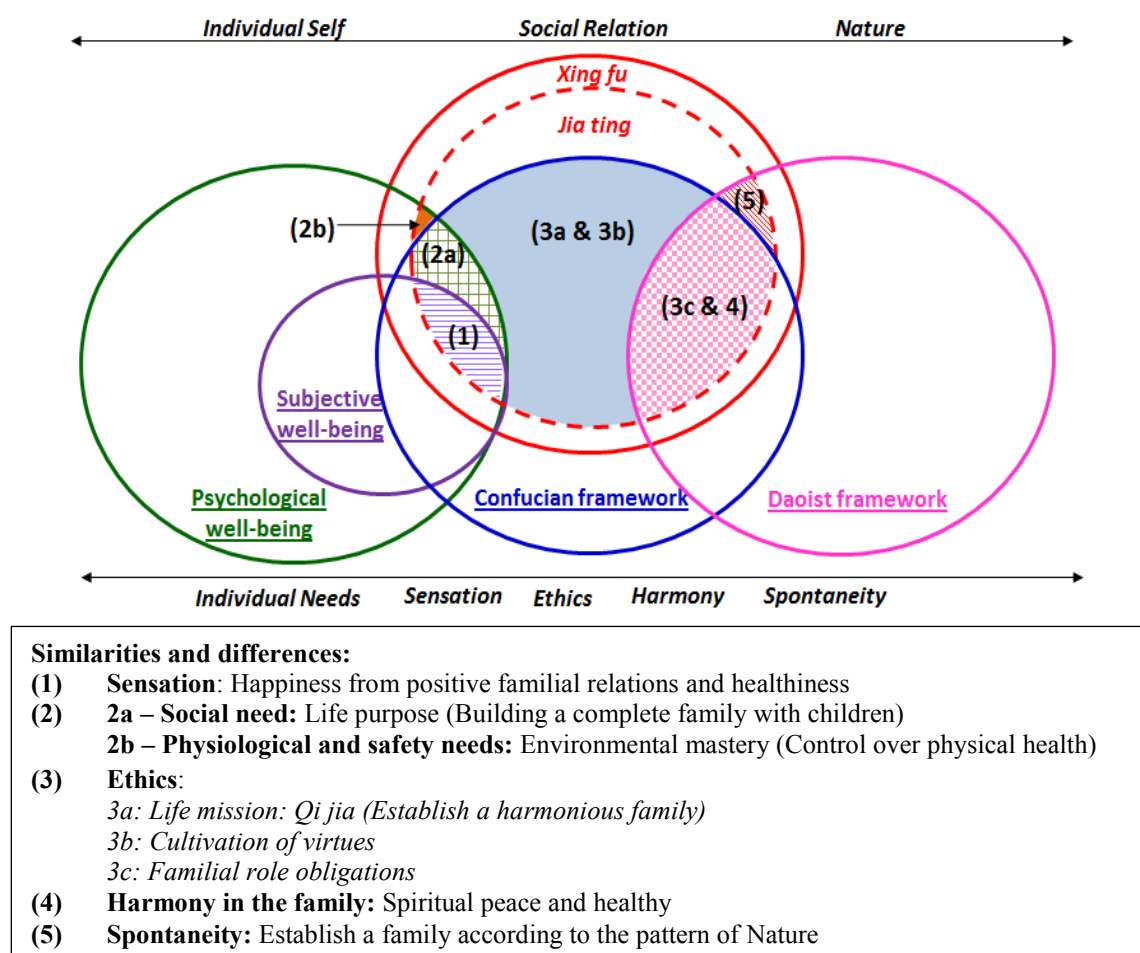
If one finds it difficult to understand the local value of spiritual peace through rituals and decorations, could the Confucian and the Daoist thoughts help to explain these local practices? As mentioned in chapter 2, peace and health are one of the five *fu*. The Confucians value harmony, which indicates that a balance between physical and spiritual aspects should always be maintained in order to become healthy. *Zhong yong* 中庸 (equilibrium) is the way to form a harmonious whole person. In that

perspective, spiritual peace and comfort imply *ping he* 平和 (harmony) in every aspect of a person – a well-balanced state between both physical and spiritual elements. In The Confucian teaching, harmony can be achieved and maintained through *li* (ritual propriety). *Li* refers to sacrifice to the ancestors and spirits. Ancestor worship is considered as a kind of ritual (*li*). The informants would perform rituals (e.g. ancestor worship) and wear symbolic accessories because these practices are appropriate ways (*li*) for individuals to seek for *shen xin ping he* 身心平和 – a well-balanced state between physical and spiritual aspects. These practices are ways for one to become a harmonious whole person.

How would the Daoists value harmony in a person? The Daoists support the notion of harmony. Based on The Daoist perspective, physical body represents *yang*; while spiritual mind represents *yin*. The Daoist perceive individuals would naturally become healthy if there is a harmony between human body (*yang*) and spirit (*yin*). Similar to the Confucian thoughts, the Daoists would value spiritual peace; given it symbolizes the state of *shen xin ping he*. However, the Daoists suggest that the individuals let go of themselves (*wuwo*) in order to become spiritually at peace and stable. Individuals need to accept what life gives them, rather than seeking for personal desires and pre-conceived preferences. To the Daoists, performing rituals and wearing symbolic accessories would be considered as assertive actions that target on fulfilling individual desires and wants. Hence, it is likely that the Daoists would discard any assertive rituals and behaviours, because these practices may interfere the pattern of nature (*dao*).

The theoretical discussion of *xing fu jia ting* is summarised (Appendix D: Table D1). The similarities and differences among the four perspectives are illustrated (Figure 7.1). As a summary, Hedonism interprets *xing fu jia ting* as a happy family; while Eudaimonia realizes building a family as a life purpose to satisfy one's social need. Although the Confucian framework also values human need for affiliation, Confucius does not agree with Eudaimonia that individuals have to control their environment and health. Rather than focusing on personal autonomy, the Confucians target on *qi jia* (establishing a harmonious family) as a life mission. It is because family is treated as a platform for cultivating virtues. Both the Confucian and the Daoist frameworks recognize that parents have their natural role obligations to the family. They need to maintain harmony in the family. However, the Daoists insist that any familial duties should be carried out spontaneously (in accordance with the pattern of nature).

Figure 7. 1: Theoretical Discussion of *Xing Fu Jia Ting*



b. Peng You (Friends)

Friends in the local term is called ‘peng you’. *Peng you* are regarded as the second main element of life to the subject. *Peng you*, in Chinese is written as 「朋友」. 「朋」 is a measurement unit of the Chinese currency in the Ancient time. By that time, the Chinese regarded five shells as one *peng*. This implies *peng* 朋 has a connotation of ‘forming a unit’. According to the Oracle Bronze inscription, 「朋」 is also written as 「𠂔」, in which 「人」 is added to 「朋」. Thus, it implies the meaning of ‘friends’. In particular, it denotes a companionship with those who have good moral conducts, similar goals and interests. For 「友」, the Oracle Bone Inscription is written as 𠂔. Such characters signify two hands are moving towards the same direction. Hence, it indicates two person associate with one another, and they would offer to help hands to each other. Again, it refers to friendship. As a consequence, *peng you* are contemporarily defined as ‘friend’; ‘companion’; ‘acquaintance’ or ‘fraternity’.

Chinese families tend to extend their familial network to friendships (Appendix D: Figure D1). For Chinese, *peng you* are regarded as a part of *jia ting* – an extended family. In particular, the informants

(e.g. Mrs Alice, Ada and Betty) expressed their high preference over working with their *peng you* (acquaintance). Why are friends seen as essential to the informants? How would the mainstream framework interpret the demand for friends? Similar to family, Hedonism values companionship because individual is able to derive happiness and pleasure from amity. By the same token, Eudaimonia treats friendship as a kind of relations that enables individuals to satisfy their social needs. In such perspective, the informants need friends because of positive relatedness, which could contribute to their psychological well-being. Even though friends are constructive to one's well-being, social belongings are categorised as a lower level of needs only. In the mainstream perspective, friends are separated from work, and they are not necessary to be extended to comradeship (working associates). In the current case, the mainstream perspective might find it difficult to understand why the informants inclined to work with friends who are trustworthy.

i. Trust and Work with Friends

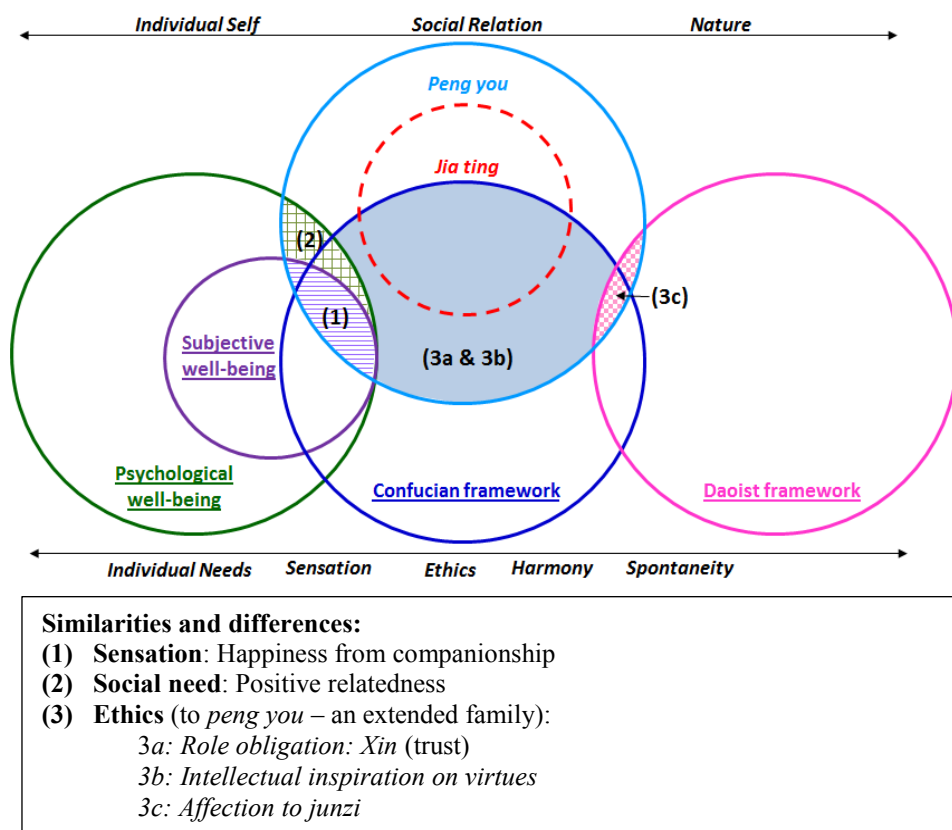
Is *peng you* substantial to the Chinese traditions? How might the Confucian and the Daoist frameworks help to explain the practice of working with *peng you*? Confucius views *peng you* as '*tong zhi*' (同志), meaning those who possess the same mind. In that case, the Confucian view reflected the inherent philological meanings of the term, 「朋友」 – companionship with those who have similar thoughts, goals and interests. The term, *tong zhi*, portrays that *peng you* can be treated as members of an extended family, whose relationship can be as close as *xiong di* 兄弟 (brothers). In The Confucian education, *peng you* can play a role of *juanzi* 君子 (virtuous person), who can help to exchange view on virtues and provide supports on cultivating *ren*. That is why Confucius views *peng you* as critical to one's virtuous training. The informants highlighted the importance of *xin* 信 (trust) among friends. Their notion of *xin* can be well understood based on the Confucian framework. According to *li* in the Confucian education, *xin* (fidelity) is the basic governance of friendship, as well as a quality in a friendship. "Trustworthiness is one of the five fundamental the Confucian virtues" and "quality" valued in a friendship (Cheung, 2011, p.136). Hence, my informants' perceived trust is an important element in friendship. If trust is built in a friendship, they would feel comfortable and reassured to work with *peng you*. They would feel more *a xin* (spiritually secure) to work with *peng you*, who they can trust and rely on. How is trust built in a friendship? One way to build trust is through *zhong cheng* 忠誠 (loyalty and sincerity). *Zhong cheng* is seen as a reciprocal obligation between *peng you*. One would trust their friends who are loyal and sincere. On the contrary, *xiao ren* 小人 (mean men) are not trustworthy. When loyalty cannot be maintained, trust in a friendship would be destroyed. As a consequence, *peng you* have turned to *xiao ren*.

How do the Daoists look at *peng you* and *xin*? The Daoist teachings offer not much discussion on friendship. It does not examine the notion of *xin* directly given that the Daoists stress on the relationship with nature, rather than people. Nonetheless, in *Zhuangzi*, it contrasts differences between

the intercourse of *junzi* (superior men) and that of *xiao ren* (mean men) (Zhuangzi: *The Tree on the Mountain*, 5; in Legge, 1891). Although the intercourse with *junzi* could be tasteless, it can lead to affection. Conversely, the intercourse with *xiao ren* could be sweet, yet it can become an aversion. Similar to the Confucian thoughts, the Daoists encourage the communication with *junzi*, rather than *xiao ren*. The informants regard their friends as *junzi* who they show affection to; while they averse to dealing with *xiao ren* who have betrayed them (or have been disloyal to them). Hence, the informants prefer working with *peng you*, instead of *xiao ren*.

To sum up, the discussion of *peng you* (Appendix D: Table D1) highlights the similarities and differences among the four perspectives (Figure 7.2). Hedonism regards *peng you* as one source of happiness. Eudaimonia does not only value such joy from companionship; it regards *peng you* as constructive to individual psychological well-being. Positive relatedness is able to fulfil the individual need for belongings. However, the mainstream is not able to explain why the locals prefer to work with *peng you*. Therefore, the Chinese perspectives offer further understanding. The Confucian teaching treats *peng you* as an extended family and *tong zhi* (people with the same mind) – who can encourage intellectual inspiration on virtues. The Chinese would feel more comfortable to work with *peng you* because the Confucian education uses *xin* as the governance and quality in the friendship. As a result, both the Confucian and the Daoist teachings show affection to deal with *junzi* – friends who are superior in ethics.

Figure 7. 2: Theoretical Discussion of Peng You



7.1.2 *Xin* (Heart-mind)

Xin 心 is pronounced as *hsin*. According to the “*Shuowen Jiezi*” written by Xu Shen (2006), the early Chinese inscriptions of *xin* are as following:



Based on the above characters, *xin* is symbolized as an organ – the heart of human being and animals (Zhang, 1993) and it is situated in the centre of a body. That is why *xin* is often being directly translated as ‘heart’ in English. The contemporary dictionaries, such as *A Modern Chinese-English Dictionary* (Chen, 2001), *Zhongda Chinese-English dictionary* (Liang and Zheng, 2003) and *Longman concise Chinese-English dictionary* (Chan, 2007), commonly translate *xin* as heart; feeling; centre; intention; mind. From a philological perspective, *xin* is a morpheme, and it can be used to form numerous compounds. For example,

1. *xin zang* 心臟 (*xin* organ) ‘heart organ.’
2. *xin si* 心思 (*xin* thoughts) ‘thoughts; thinking’
3. *xin ling* 心靈 (*xin* spirit) ‘soul.’
4. *xin xing* 心性 (*xin* nature) ‘one’s nature.’
5. *xin qing* 心情 (*xin* feeling) ‘emotion.’
6. *dao de xin* 道德心 (morals *xin*) ‘virtue, morality, ethic.’

The above compounds illustrates that *xin* can be linked to various human aspects, such as ‘heart and feeling’ (refer to 1 and 5); ‘mind and thinking’ (refer to 2); ‘soul and spirit’ (refer to 3); ‘human inner nature’ (refer to 4); and ethical qualities (refer to 6). In Zhang’s (1993) book, titled “*Xin*”, he outlines and explicates the historical transformations of *xin* from an Ancient China, Imperial China to the Contemporary Republic of China. He illustrates that the concept of *xin* bears strong Chinese historical and cultural salience. Following Zhang’s (1993) precedent, Li, et al. (2013) criticize a simple translation of *xin* as follows:

“In English, xin is often translated as ‘heart’ or ‘mind’. This translation fails to transit the full meaning of the word that is deeply rooted in Chinese culture, thereby omitting or obscuring much of xin’s significance in cultural knowledge. In academic scholarship, the over-simplified definition of xin can create difficulties in transmitting Chinese concepts that span many generations in various fields, such as traditional Chinese arts, sports, philosophy and medicine (p.76).

They argue that the word – *xin* is rooted in Chinese culture and it portrays the Chinese important values, beliefs and idiosyncratic cultural essence. Therefore, they demystify *xin* and examine its meaning within the context of *qigong* (a Chinese health maintenance system and healing tradition). By using

natural semantic metalanguage (NSM), they scrutinise *xin* based on the Chinese classical philosophies (mainly The Confucian and the Daoist traditions) and Chinese medicine. Their analysis uncover that *xin* can be related to the eight dimensions: (1) *emotion*; (2) *physical heart*; (3) *mind*; (4) *virtue and vision*; (5) *ability to think and know*; (6) *concentration*; (7) *desire*; and (8) *a way of life and attitude* (pp. 77 – 78).

The findings in Chapter 6 reflect the concept of *xin* plays a significant role in the informants' daily living. They expressed *kai xin gong zuo* and *xin zhong fu you* as important to their lives. These two local expressions contain the Chinese word – *xin*. Therefore, the theoretical analysis below will elucidate these two expressions in accordance with the distinctive contextual meaning(s) of *xin*.

a. Kai Xin Gong Zuo (Happy Work)

As described in section 6.2.3, *kai xin gong zuo* is important to the informants. This expression is made up of two terms: *kai xin* and *gong zuo*. Most dictionaries translate *kai xin* as happy, joyful and having fun; while *gong zuo* means works, jobs or tasks (Chen, 2001; Liang and Zheng, 2003; Chan, 2007). Here, *kai xin* is treated as an adjective to describe *gong zuo* (work). In Chinese, the compound *kai xin* is made of two morphemes, *kai* and *xin*. While *kai* can literally mean 'open', the meaning(s) of *xin* cannot be easily defined. From a philological perspective, *kai xin gong zuo* implies: When the individuals are able to open their *xin* at work, they would feel happy and joyful. Given the concept of *xin* can be associated with different human aspects (Li, et al., 2013), its meanings are to be revealed layer by layer through the following interpretations.

How could the mainstream framework grasp the meaning of *xin*? In the mainstream perspective, the body, heart, mind and soul are four distinctive human elements:

- (1) The body represents physical being;
- (2) The heart is related to feelings and emotions;
- (3) The mind refers to the rational and intellectual aspect of a person (such as knowledge, critical thinking and logics)
- (4) The soul stands for human spirit.

According to the mainstream framework, these four aspects can be interrelated, but yet are separated. Body and mind can exert influence over the heart (feeling and emotion) and soul (spirit) of a person. For example, based on Hedonism, one can obtain happiness from bodily pleasure; and according to Eudaimonia, one would feel spiritually satisfied due to intellectual growth and development. In this

light, Hedonism might conceivably perceive *xin* as ‘heart’ while Eudaimonia could interpret *xin* as ‘soul’. That means, Hedonism would look at *kai xin* as a feeling or an emotion which is directly equivalent to ‘happiness’; whereas Eudaimonia would see *kai xin* as a ‘spiritual fulfilment’.

i. For Interests, Affection, Satisfaction and Creativity

When did the informants open their *xin* in work? The informants felt *kai xin* (happy) when they were able to demonstrate interests, affection, satisfaction and creativity at work. Both Hedonism and Eudaimonia would probably perceive such *kai xin* (happiness) as job satisfaction. In particular, this kind of job satisfaction is derived from interest, affection and creativity at work. In this case, Eudaimonia would categorise such *kai xin* as an intrinsic motivation. According to Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs, intrinsic motivation tends to fulfil one’s esteem and self-actualization needs (the higher order of needs). Individuals would be motivated when they are capable of exercising autonomy and taking control (environment mastery) over their works. An individual’s self-acceptance and personal growth are an intrinsically related to the challenging jobs that are offered to them, hence resulting in the individuals seeking for jobs of that demeanour.

How could the Chinese construe such *kai xin* at work? Do Chinese think body, heart, mind and soul are distinguishable? Does the Chinese word, *xin* implies either heart or mind or spirit? The Chinese perceive that *shen* (body) and *xin* are connected. In Chinese, we call it *shen xin xiang lian* 身心相連 (literally means: body and *xin* are joined). That is to say, physical body and *xin* are interdependent and integrated to become a harmonious whole person. According to the Confucian and the Daoist thoughts, harmony between body and *xin* should always be maintained. In the Chinese perspective, *xin* embodies heart, mind and soul. That means heart, mind and soul are not discrete. Instead, they are interchangeable, and they can all be represented by a single Chinese word – *xin*. Hence, *kai xin* can mean opening one’s heart, mind and soul. On the one hand, *kai xin* is attached to feeling or spiritual attainment, as it is interpreted by Hedonism and Eudaimonia respectively. On the other hand, *kai xin* can have more connotations if one uncovers its meanings based on Chinese philosophical traditions. How would the Confucius look at *kai xin*? Given self is perceived as relational and interdependent in the Confucian framework, *kai xin* would most likely be associated with the social nexus. The findings showed that the informants felt *kai xin* when they were able to work with their *peng you* (friends). Working with friends allows the informants to open up themselves (including their hearts, minds and spirits). In this case, *xin* can be referred as *xin xin* 信心 (belief *xin*) and *cheng xin* 誠心 (honest *xin*). *Xin xin* literally means ‘trust; confidence; faith’; whereas *cheng xin* refers as ‘sincerity’. From this perspective, working with *peng you* guarantee sincerity and confidence (*cheng xin* 誠信) in the workplace. Since the informants were able to trust (*xin* 信) their friends, they felt *kai xin* at work. In such viewpoint, *kai xin* can imply trust and sincerity in social intercourse.

In the Confucian thinking, *kai xin* can also point towards intellectual inspiration. According to the Confucian teaching, people can demonstrate interests, fondness, satisfaction and creativity during the intellectual intercourse with *peng you* (friends). In Chinese, *peng you* can be considered as *tong zhi* 同志 (people with the same mind). The informants felt *kai xin* because they were able to work with *tong zhi*, whose minds (such as interests, goals and thinking) are aligned with theirs. This represents an intellectual alignment. Confucius believes friendship can facilitate intellectual exchange on virtues. One may obtain *zhi* (wisdom) through friends. For instance, innovation and creativity can be stimulated in social discussion. The informants felt *kai xin* because they were allowed to interact intellectually with *peng you*. In that case, they were able to open up their minds and spirits by cultivating virtues at work. Hence, the Confucian thinking emphasizes on *dao de xin* 道德心 (morals *xin*) ‘virtue, morality, ethic’. Under this circumstance, *kai xin* is direct towards virtues and vision (Li, et al., 2013).

What would the Daoists say about *kai xin*? The Daoists believes that *kai xin* arises when one lives in accordance to *dao* (the way of nature). In this view, *xin* can be referred as *xin xing* 心性 (*xin* nature; one’s nature). That means that the individuals are encouraged to open up their *xin* to nature and follow spontaneously with nature. This principle applies to work as well. Laozi treasures *ziran* (nature) and believe *kai xin* comes spontaneously when one is working on what they innately like. The informants (e.g. Betty, Bonnie, Uncle Carl and Doris) felt *kai xin* at work because they were inherently interested in their jobs. Nevertheless, the Daoist do not regard creativity as central to work. The Daoist advocates to *wuwei* (non-assertive action) and perceives that innovation comes spontaneously. Individuals are not encouraged to invent sedulously. It seems that the informants took a different view. They thought *chuang zuo* 創作 (creativity) is important to their works. They seek for *chuang zuo kong jian* 創作空間 (room for creativity) and derive satisfaction from their *chung zuo* (creative works). To the Daoists, these desires and behaviours might be considered as assertive.

ii. Work Hard to Bear Hardship

The subject demonstrated a strong willingness to bear the *xin ku* (hardship) at work. They strived to make their businesses survive in the market. Why did they accept and allow the torments at work? Could the mainstream perspective of well-being understand such work practice? It seems that Hedonism might not understand such assiduous attitude and behaviour. Hedonic approach targets on maximising human pleasure and minimising pain. It tries to seek for happiness and avoid any discomfort. In such perspective, Hedonism might not appreciate the informants’ willingness to bear hardship, because it interprets toils as a kind of suffering which would lower one’s subjective well-being. For Eudaimonia, it assumes humans live for contentment, and therefore they seek for personal growth. It prompts individuals to actualize their potentials actively and take control over their works. The informants did not take an aggressive approach to work. Instead of acquiring a complete mastery

on work, the informants abide any travail. To Eudaimonia, their work style might be interpreted as passive and might possibly lower one's psychological well-being. Hence, Eudaimonia might not apprehend why the subject's accepted the pain at work.

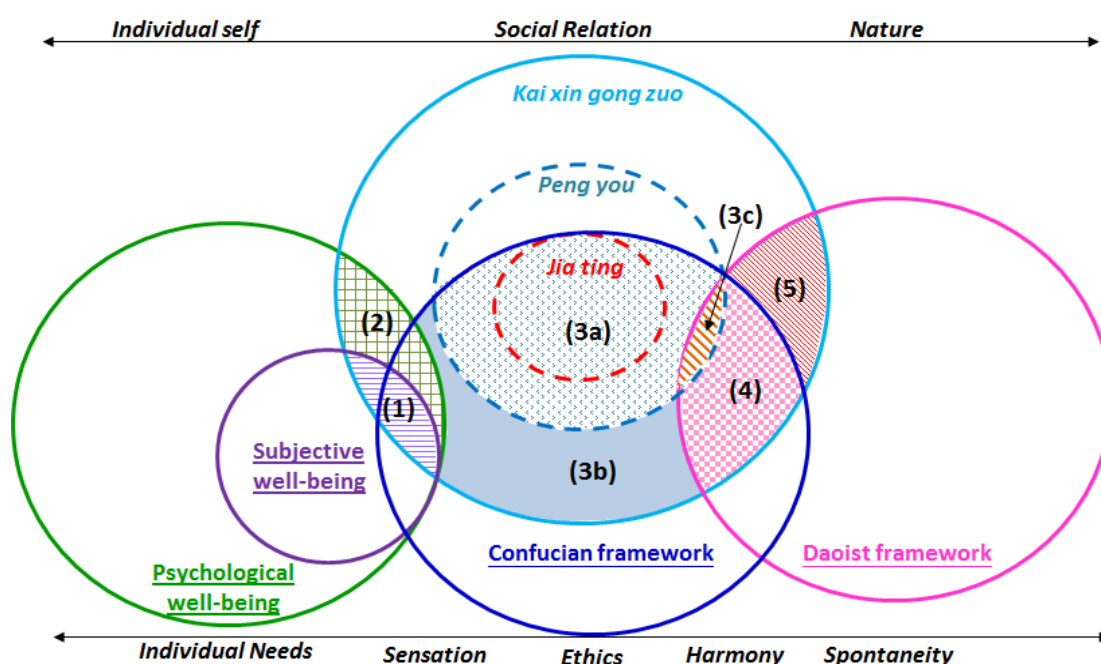
It seems that the mainstream perspective of well-being is unable to justify the subject's perseverance. What would the Confucians and the Daoist say to enlighten one's understanding on the subject? In Chinese, there is a saying: "*chi de ku zhong ku, fang wei ren shang ren*" 吃得苦中苦，方為人上人 (If you wish to be the best man, you must suffer the bitterest of the bitter). This indicates that the Chinese see sufferings as live practices that target on training a person to become stronger and better. In the Confucian teaching, it tends to agree with the above Chinese saying because Confucius emphasises on self-cultivation of *de* (virtues). The Confucians perceive that hardship would facilitate one's development. Mencius once highlights that a person needs to first experience suffering before he/she can be assigned to any great mission (*The Work of Mencius: Kao Tsz II*, 15(2), in Legge, 1949, p.447). In that case, suffering "*stimulates his mind, hardens his nature and supplies his incompleteness*". In other words, suffering can stimulate one's mind, strengthen one's inherent quality and overcome one's weaknesses. That means suffering can build up one's *nai xin* 耐心 (enduring *xin*). *Nai xin* means 'patience' and 'endurance'. Hence, the Confucian teaching treats suffering as an exercise for developing the virtue of endurance. In this perspective, The Confucians would probably recognise the subject's devotion to bear any hardship at work because such work practice would enable individuals to become better and stronger in the future. Hence, their tolerance is an embodiment of *nai xin*. They are trained up to become more patient and wait for a better life in the future.

How would the Daoist look at *xin ku*? The Daoist think *yin* and *yang* do not exist in pure form. Instead, the equilibrium between them should always be maintained. Such harmony is necessary along the natural order of things. Correspondingly, although *kai xin* and *xin ku* are opposite, they need to be on an equal footing. The Daoist perceive *xin ku* arises in order to be in harmony with *kai xin*. In other words, *xin ku* occurs because of the existence of *kai xin*. Individuals have to strike a balance between *kai xin* (*yang*) and *xin ku* (*yin*). That was why the subject accepted *xin ku* and worked hard to bear *xin ku*. To the Daoist, patience to *xin ku* represents compliance to the pattern of the world, so that a sense of balance between *kai xin* and *xin ku* is preserved.

A summary of explaining *kai xin gong zuo* is provided (Appendix D: Table D1). Connections among the four perspectives are shown (Figure 7.3). The Confucians interpret *kai xin* as open *xin* (mind) – People would be able to open up their minds for intellectual inspiration if they are able to work with their *peng you*. The Daoist explain that when individuals are able to work on what they innately like, they would feel *kai xin*. Both Hedonism and Eudaimonia treat *kai xin gong zuo* as job satisfaction. Eudaimonia would even regard such satisfaction is derived from intrinsic motivation, in which

individual growth need is being fulfilled. However, the mainstream is unable to understand why locals are willing to bear hardship in work. Hence, the Confucian and the Daoist frameworks are brought in to explain such phenomenon. The Confucians highlight that endurance is one important work ethic. Therefore, it can be incurred that difficulties in work can aid in training the individuals to become efficient and better at finishing their tasks. Both the Confucians and the Daoists uphold harmony, appreciating hardship at work because a balance between *kai xin* (happiness) and *xin ku* (suffering) is to be preserved.

Figure 7. 3: Theoretical Discussion of Kai Xin Gong Zuo



Similarities and Differences:

- (1) Sensation:** Job satisfaction
- (2) Growth need:** Intrinsic motivation
- (3) Ethics:**
 - 3a: Role obligation (*xin*) and intellectual inspiration on virtues among *peng you*
 - 3b: Endurance
 - 3c: Affection to *junzi*
- (4) Harmony:** Balance between *kai xin* and *xin ku*
- (5) Spontaneity:** Work on what one innately likes

b. Xin zhong fu you (Being rich at heart-mind)

The findings indicate that some of the informants (particularly the youth) look for *xin zhong fu you* 心中富有. This term consists of two phrases: *xin zhong* and *fu you*. *Xin zhong* can be referred as ‘inside the heart-mind’; while *fu you* mean ‘richness’, ‘abundance’ and ‘wealthy’. Hence, *xin zhong fu you* can be literally defined as ‘being rich at heart-mind’. The local youth seeks for ‘being rich at heart-

mind'. How might the mainstream perspective understand this value? According to the mainstream framework, it might mostly interpret richness in heart-mind as happiness (in Hedonism) and spiritual contentment (in Eudaimonia). Happiness is the presence of positive mood; while *eu* and *demonia* in Greek mean good and spirit respectively. Both happiness and Eudaimonia direct towards the emotional and spiritual aspects of an individual. That means *xin zhong fu you* could mean richness in feeling (excitement) in Hedonism; whereas it would mean spiritual fulfilment in Eudaimonia.

The data highlights that some of the local youth would try to being rich at heart-mind by demanding for a real universal suffrage and by participating in the social protests. How could one understand their request and actions through the mainstream framework? It seems that Hedonic approach to well-being might not support any participation in social protests if they would result in pain and disappointment. On the other hand, Eudaimonia understands why individuals could participate in the social protests. Aristotle (1985) perceives that well-being is constituted by being morally good. Therefore, individuals should try to uphold their moral standard in lives. That was why some locals would fight for justice through social protests. Some locals demand the voting right for electing their own Chief Executive, so that they can have a certain degree of democracy over the public governance. Eudaimonia considers their request will probably increase their psychological well-being because they were asking for autonomy and environment mastery.

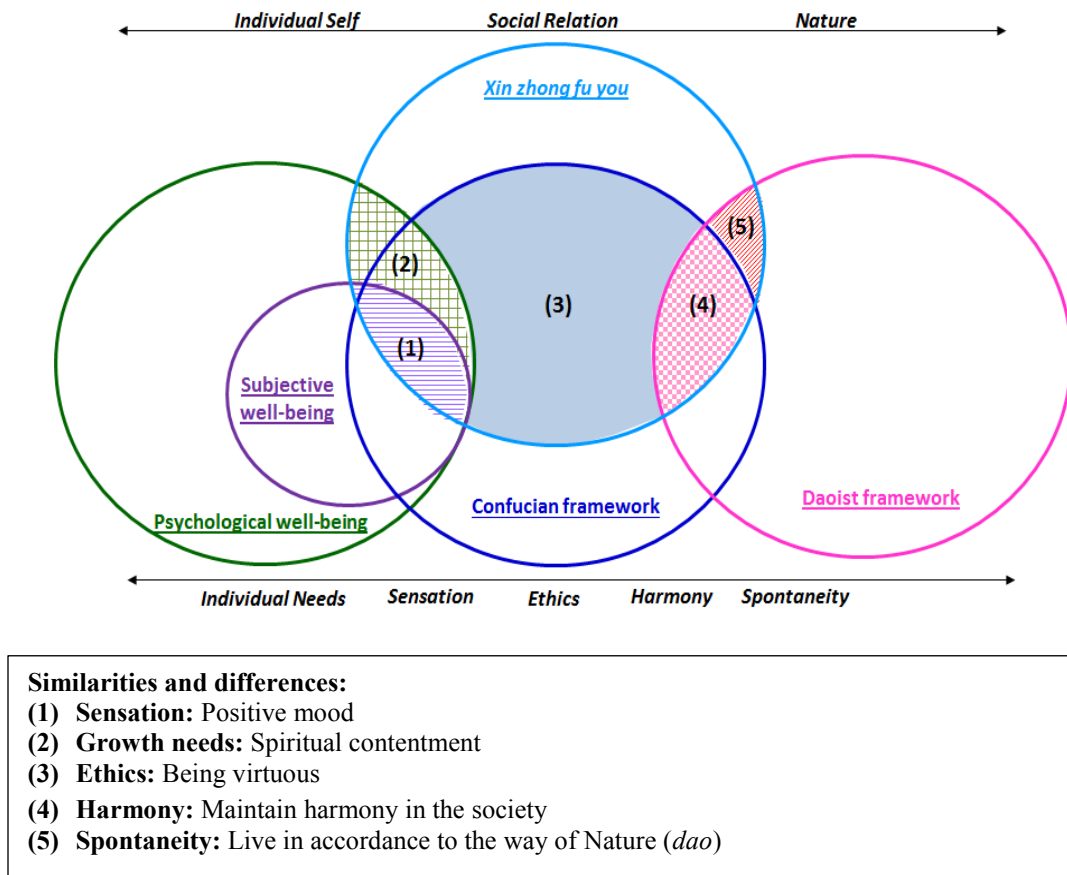
Nonetheless, does the Chinese view *xin zhong fu you* the same as the mainstream? As mentioned, *xin* can mean much more than simply heart and spirit. *Xin* can include heart, mind and soul. That means *xin zhong fu you* can imply emotions, knowledge (mind) and spirit (soul) in abundance. Again, the meaning(s) of *xin* can be further contextualised based on Chinese philosophical traditions. For instance, what would Confucius say about *xin*? In the Confucian teaching, *xin* is particularly linked with *dao de* 道德 (virtues). In this perspective, *xin zhong fu you* can indicate the richness in virtues. Confucius focuses on four main virtues, which are *ren*, *yi*, *li* and *zhi*. In particular, *ren* is the most important virtue among all. Hence, Confucius would likely interpret *xin* as *ren xin* 仁心 (benevolent *xin*) – ‘benevolence’. Given Confucius values *ren xin* (benevolence), how could he promote *ren xin* in the world? He contends for *Wei zheng yi de* 為政以德 (government by means of virtues), especially on *ren zheng* 仁政 (government by benevolence and humanity). He considers that “to establish a righteous government, the ruler and his ministers must act according to what was established in ancient rites because what made a government good was the power of moral virtues rather than the power of cruel and punitive laws. Moral virtues could produce trust and faith in the people, while punitive measures might stop wrongdoing only for a moment” (Yao, 2000, p. 22). Given that the Confucian teaching stresses on *wei zheng yi de*, it is reasonable for the locals to demand a government or a leader who possesses an appropriate degree of virtues. Ling and Shih (1998) critically examine the application of the Confucian tradition in a postcolonial context. They highlight that governance is

developed in accordance with the Confucian approach to leadership, advocating the *Minben Zhengzhi* 民本政治 (“People-Based Government”) – “*The prince (jun) achieves lordly power only through the consent (tong yi) of the people (renmin)*” (p. 61). In the light of such governance, it seems that the Confucians would possibly accept the local demand for the true universal suffrage, if it is a means to demonstrate public consent and trust on the virtuous leader. The true universal suffrage can be seen as a mechanism to reflect and retrieve public consensus on selecting a virtuous leader.

How about the Daoist view? The Daoist view ‘self’ as part of nature, probably relating *xin* with nature – *xin xing* 心性 (*xin* nature) ‘one’s nature’. That means the people would feel *xin zhong fu you* when they live in accordance with the way of nature (*dao*). There is a Chinese compound, *xin dao* 心道 (*xin* the way) – which indicates *xin* as the way of life (Li, et al., 2013). Laozi believes everything comes from the same origin – *dao*. Therefore, all things (including human beings) are on equal footing and should be weighted in the same way. In this light, the Daoist may consider that it is reasonable for the local to ask for a true universal suffrage because each individual should be treated as the same and everyone is deserved to have identical voting rights. Nonetheless, the Daoists encourage one to attain *dao* (the way of nature) by preserving *ziran* (nature, spontaneity). That means, though each and every individual deserved to be treated equally, such human rights are given spontaneously and non-assertively (*wuwei*). Therefore, in this view the Daoists may not support any of the protests because social demonstrations and movements are considered as assertive and intentional activities that may jeopardise the harmony of nature. The Daoist would prefer individuals to defer their responses and follow the natural progress of universal suffrage (*pu xuan*). That was why some of the informants (e.g. Mrs. Cindy and Uncle Carl) would be willing to pocket (accept) the 831 decision first and not agree with the protesters. The Umbrella movement was blamed since it led a social cleavage that has destroyed the harmony of the society.

A summary of the discussion on *xin zhong fu you* (Appendix D: Table D1) compares and contrasts the views from the four frameworks (Figure 7.4). Hedonism interprets *xin zhong fu you* as positive mood (happiness); while Eudaimonia regards it as spiritual contentment, which is derived from fighting for democracy and righteousness in the society. The Confucians would refer *xin* as *ren xin* (benevolence) and explains *xin zhong fu you* as the demand for *wei zheng yi de* (governance by means of virtues) and collective welfare. However, in the Daoist thinking, democracy should be obtained spontaneously, and harmony in the society should always be preserved. That is why the Daoists would not support any of the social protests aimed at universal suffrage.

Figure 7. 4: Theoretical Discussion of Xin Zhong Fu You



7.2 A Possible Dialogue

Up to this point, the local expressions are first interpreted through the mainstream framework of well-being (mainly Hedonism and Eudaimonia) and then through the Chinese perspectives (mainly the Confucian and the Daoist frameworks). Section 7.1 still represents a monologue from each perspective. How could one bring different perspectives together and engage them in discussion? Cheung (2011) took an experiment of theoretical dialogues in her study of the Chinese employees. She brought both western and Chinese conceptual frameworks of self into the analysis and engaged them in conversations. She specified the following advantages of using such theoretical dialogues:

“By engaging them in dialogue, one may be able to see what the common focal points of interest and shared concerns are, what is absent in one which is found in the other, and what is crucial to one but less important to the other.”

The section will adopt Cheung’s (2011) idea of theoretical dialogues. Each perspective (including Hedonic, Eudemonic, and the Confucian and the Daoist frameworks) would initiate a dialogue. Each dialogue begins by highlighting the crucial ideas and concerns of life from a particular framework. Then, space will be provided for other perspectives to speak back as an equal partner, and response to any focal points of interest is raised. A total of four dialogues are created: (1) A dialogue on sensation and desires, which is initiated by Hedonism; (2) A dialogue on individual needs, which is started by

Eudaimonia; (3) A dialogue on relation, ethics and harmony, which is begun by The Confucians and (4) A dialogue on nature, *yin* and *yang* and spontaneity, which is opened up by the Daoist. At last, based on the dialogues being made, the four frameworks are put together into Figure 7.5 to illustrate their interpretations on the notion of *xin* and highlight the similarities and differences among the four perspectives.

7.2.1 Sensation and Desires

Hedonism is the first philosophical perspective discussed in Chapter 3. Hedonism assumes self as the individual and human organism is initially empty. Its core interest is to seek for happiness and pleasure in order to fill up such emptiness. That is why in the previous section, it interprets *xing fu jia ting* as happiness from a family and pleasure from healthiness; *peng you* as happiness from friendship; *kai xin gong zuo* as happy work and *xin zhong fu you* as positive mood. Hedonism highlights that *xin* as ‘heart’ and links *xin* as a site for all *xin qing* 心情 (*xin* feeling) – feelings and emotions (Li, et al., 2013). According to Hedonism, the personal sensation is the only major concern of the life. Hedonism believes that fulfilling personal desires is important to life. In that perspective, *xin* is correlated to the Chinese word – *yu* 慾 (desires). Li, et al. (2013) highlights that:

“The concept of xin also can be illustrated by Chinese character: xin 心 is a radical in the lower part of the word ‘desire’ 慾, which has ‘want’ 欲 on the top of the ‘xin’ 心 implies that desires arise from the Heart” (p.84).

They explained that “*xin* is the origin of desire” (p.84). Hedonism targets on satisfying personal desires in order to gain happiness and pleasure. Among the four frameworks, Hedonism is the least sufficient for understanding the local expressions.

How would Eudaimonia respond to the Hedonic view of life? Eudaimonia would agree with Hedonism’s notion of self, because both of them believes in individual self-whereas others are less important. Therefore, Eudaimonia would recognise the human need for positive sensation and desires. However, Eudaimonia perceives humans have their own potential, and hence they are not initially vacant. It believes that humans should realize their potentials, rather than being slavish adherents of happiness and pleasure. In that case, Eudaimonia perceives that life should be more than happiness.

What about the Chinese perspective on Hedonic happiness? According to *wulun*, the Confucian emphasises on social relations and collective welfare. Hence, Confucius would mostly understand the Hedonic view – one could be able to get happiness from family and friendship. Nevertheless, Confucius would reject any egoist happiness. The Confucian teaching identifies self within the social nexus (Chang and Holt, 1996). It sees self as relational, rather than an individual. In the Confucian

education, the worth and acceptability of self are dependent on one's appropriateness of social behaviours (*yi*). In that case, Confucius would possibly discourage the pursuit of personal joy (sensation), because he believes that private desires would lead to egoism and selfishness. He sees *si xin* 私心 (selfish *xin*) 'selfishness' as a bad and unethical (Li, et al., 2013). He would recommend people to self-cultivate themselves to become *junzi* (virtuous persons). *Junzi* pursues *yi* and does not seek for self-indulgence (Cheung, 2011).

Does Laozi agree with Hedonism? He holds an opposing view of self against Hedonism and Eudaimonia. He perceives self as part of nature (*dao*), because everything comes from *dao*. "He advocates *wuwo* (no self, no I)" (Cheung, 2010, p. 205). That means, the Daoists require people to *wang wo* 忘我 – "forgetting of one's own life/self" (Villaver, 2007, p. 2). Hence, the Daoists do not agree with the individualism in Hedonism and Eudaimonia. Laozi would likely oppose the Hedonic vision that people should focus on sensation – happiness and pleasure, that excessive desires would violate the pattern of nature (*ziran*) and leads to a chaotic life (Cheung, 2010). On the contrary, Laozi encourages *wuwei* – individual should get rid of their own desires. He suggests people be *qing xin gua yu* 清心寡慾 (purify one's *xin* and reduce desires) and live with simplicity and tranquillity. Laozi ascertains that people can be truly happy, once they are able to contain the excessive desires, accept what has been offered to one self by life and to live in accordance with the way of nature.

7.2.2 Human Needs

Eudaimonia is another western philosophical perspective which is discussed in Chapter 3. Similar to Hedonism, Eudaimonia builds on individualism which presumes self as autonomous and independent. In this perspective, an individuals' life goals are based on their own preference and needs. Maslow (1943) organises human needs in a hierarchical order, starting from physical to psychological and spiritual (Appendix D: Figure D2). Alderfer (1969) further develop ERG theory, which classifies human needs into existence, relatedness and growth. A relationship such as *xing fu jia ting* (good family) and *peng you* (friendship), are regarded as social needs. Eudaimonia believes building a complete family can be a life purpose among the locals and such an intention is originated from one's demand for affiliation. In this case, others are positioned as instrumental – a channel for satisfying social needs. Self-actualization is the life goal in Eudaimonia. Therefore, all the six aspects of psychological well-being (autonomy, environmental mastery, life purpose, personal growth, self-acceptance and positive relatedness) are all directed towards self-actualisation. In a Eudemonic approach to life, self-interest is the critical centre of concern.

Although positive belongings are important to life, Eudaimonia never perceives social desire as the most essential. Henceforth, Eudemonic framework fails to explain why locals see family and friendship as the fundamental elements of their livings. Eudaimonia would rather encourage people to

realize their potentials and fulfil their growth needs. According to Fredrick Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory, people would derive satisfaction from motivators – the intrinsic factors of the job itself (Herzberg et al., 1967). For example, personal advancement, achievement, recognition or growth. Eudaimonia views *kai xin gong zuo* as job satisfaction, which is mainly derived from the intrinsic motivation. In particular, Eudaimonia interprets autonomy, environmental mastery and personal growth as predominantly important to the local lives. For instance, Eudaimonia recognizes the local needs for self-control, freedom and advancement on health, as well as work and society. In addition, Eudaimonia would mostly perceive *xin* as 'heart' (feelings) or/and 'soul' (spirit). Given that Eudaimonia is defined as 'good spirit', it would probably link *xin* with mental and spiritual fulfilment. This acts as the reason as to why Maslow (1969) later added 'self-transcendence' as the highest level of need beyond 'self-actualization'. According to Maslow (1993),

“Transcendence refers to the very highest and most inclusive or holistic levels of human consciousness, behaving and relating, as ends rather than as means, to oneself, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos. (Holism in the sense of hierarchical integration is assumed; so also is cognitive and value isomorphism.)” (p.66).

Maslow has included numerous explanations in the writing, *“Various meanings of transcendence”*, such as transcendence in the sense of loss of self-consciousness, self-awareness, self-forgetfulness; being intrinsic to the *Self* itself; time; culture; one's past; ego self and selfishness; mystical experiences; death, pain, sickness and evil; acceptance to the natural world; negatives and space etc. (p.56 – 65). Koltko-Rivera (2006) interprets Maslow's meaning of transcendence as to “seek to further a cause beyond the self and to experience a communication beyond the boundaries of the self through peak experience” (p.303). Rivera further explains peak experience as “amalgamation of mystical experiences and certain experience with nature, aesthetic experiences, sexual experiences, and/or other transpersonal experiences, in which the person experiences a sense of identity that transcends and extends beyond the personal self” (p.303). Gomez and Fisherself (2005) classify transcendence as part of the spiritual well-being and is regarded as a spiritual attainment – the highest level of human needs in Eudaimonia. Is that really what Chinese demand for life? How could other frameworks respond to Eudemonic interpretation of local expressions?

Although Hedonism would agree with Eudaimonia that life should focus on the individual self, Hedonism does not focus on the individual needs. Hedonism concerns more on the sensation i.e. – the ends rather than the means. In other words, as long as the individuals are able to obtain happiness and pleasure in lives, the ways on fulfilling desires are not the focus of the discussion. Hence, Hedonism pays less attention to the factors that are contributing to the growth and the development of self, such as self-sufficiency, self-mastery and self-development. Hedonism regards that all individual needs are simply human desires in lives. Thus, it is neither necessary to differentiate needs into orders nor classify motivation into intrinsic or extrinsic, so long as they all help to gain happiness in lives.

Hedonism considers happiness is the life target – the end state. In other words, in Hedonic perspective, there are no differentiations between happiness and transcendence.

How would Confucius respond to the Eudemonic focus on individual needs? Confucius would most likely agree with Eudaimonia that humans have different kinds of needs, ranging from existence, relatedness to growth. In particular, the Confucius would recognise the importance of social and developmental needs. He realizes the significance of *wulun* (the five cardinal relations) in one's life. His disciple, Mencius, has emphasised the needs for building up positive relations among *wulun*:

“between father and son, there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between old and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity.” (Mencius: Teng Wen Gong I, 4; in Legge, 1985)

Confucius would also agree that individuals should constantly learn and cultivate themselves. That is why he insists:

“Is it not pleasant to learn with a constant perseverance and application?” (Analects: Xue Er: 1; in Legge, 1949, p.137)

Although the Confucian teaching focuses on relations and self-cultivation, its purposes and directions for love and learning are different from the Eudemonic approach. While Eudaimonia regards self-fulfilment as the prime intention for any relationships and growth, Confucius defines self-based on one's concern for other human beings. Unlike Eudaimonia, Confucius never treats others as instrumental. In The Confucian education, others become the major concerns in social connection and ethical training. Instead of putting self as the centre, Confucius establishes self within the social nexus. That means, our relations with others become part of ourselves. That is why much of the Confucian teaching covers how one should cultivate virtues in his or her interactions with others. The Five Constant Virtues (*ren, yi, li, zhi* and *xin*) in the Confucian thinking are associated with social relations (Cheung, 2010). The content of the Confucian self-cultivation is mainly on ethics. The Confucian thinking and its education aims to develop an individual to become *junzi* (virtuous persons), who acts as a moral agent to manifest virtues (*de*). *Junzi* plays his or her appropriate role in the social intercourse with others. Therefore, in the Confucian framework, the others are critical to the formation of self and one's life.

How would the Confucians react to the Eudemonic demand for autonomy and control? In Cheung's (2010) theoretical dialogue on self, she highlights that the Confucians would probably oppose self-autonomy if it is being placed above other people. It is explained that the Confucians regard any

individual who upholds the self-interest higher than others, as *xiaren* (a mean-spirit person). On the contrary, *junzi* is able to get rid of his or her own selfishness (*si xin*) and place others or public interest into priority. Instead of going for self-determining freedom, the Confucian teaching suggests people be bound by virtues and follow *li* (ritual property). Only when *de* (virtues) are deeply rooted in an individual *xin* (heart-mind), he or she would enjoy autonomy by acting according to the heart-mind without violating any virtues (Liu, 2004). In that case, the Confucians take self-autonomy and control as “an ethical achievement” (Cheung, 2010, p.218), rather than self-preference (Wong, 2004).

How would the Daoist reply? Would the Daoists recognise the Eudemonic approach to life? The Daoists teaching does not explicitly discuss individual needs. However, the Daoist would most likely condemn Eudemonic approach to life as overly egoistic and assertive. The Daoist target on living up the way of *dao* (the way of nature) and advice individuals to get rid of their own selves. They encourage people to follow the natural rhythms of lives. Therefore, the pattern of nature receives the elevated attention rather than the individual needs for positive affiliation, growth and development. Although the Daoists do not restrict any individuals from nurturing themselves, they encourage development to be taken spontaneously without sedulity and assiduity. In this case, the Daoist would probably regard Eudemonic self-actualization as overly deliberate, because any aggressive self-determination for growth could violate the way of nature. The Daoists therefore, respect the individual autonomy to live in accordance with the way of nature. It believes freedom and control are given to allow one to live in harmony with nature, rather than persevering self-interest and personal goals.

What about the notion of ‘transcendence’? Is there such a concept in Chinese culture? Transcendence is always brought to interpret the Chinese culture, such as using altruism as transcendence of self (beyond the personal self) to interpret the Confucian virtue of *ren*; taking the Daoist view on *dao* and *ziran* as transcendence of time and space – the mystical and cosmological experience (Gomez and Fisherself, 2005; Hall et al., 1998; Koltko-Rivera. 2006). Nevertheless, in the book, “*Thinking from the Han: Self, truth, and transcendence in Chinese and Western culture*” written by Hall et al. (1998), they illustrate that the concept of transcendence is absent in the Chinese community. He argues:

“there is no effective appeal to transcendence in the mainstream Chinese tradition, neither as a means of shoring up one’s spiritual sensibilities nor of stabilizing the character of one’s social relationships” (p.253).

The Confucian cultivation of *ren* is different from altruism and is explained clearly clarifying that “altruism entails self-abnegation”. Whereas, the cultivation of *ren* entails “the full self-other relationship” (p.259). Altruism presumes there is a need to reduce individual self by overcoming any selfishness and ego. On the contrary, the Confucian virtues of *ren* do not require any deduction of self. They insist that:

“Ren describes a cultivated and mutually beneficial relationship between self and other, and it references a complementary grounded in the specific conditions of one’s cultivated relationship with another person. The cultivation of ren is thus irreducibly other-entailing” (pp. 258 – 259).

Unlike altruism that requires individuals to lose their sense of selves, *ren* could contribute to the personal realization of self and bring in communal harmony. In addition, Hall et al. (1998) elucidated that the Daoist concepts of *dao* and *ziran* bear no transcendent status or pattern. Transcendence could be referred as going beyond either time or space (Maslow, 1993), which indicates that western metaphysical tradition sees the cosmos is being in a single-ordered form, which separates space with time – assuming that the world is a single space; and “time is duration while space is extension” (Hall et al., 1998, p. 250). That is to say, western philosophy suppose that: (1) the world is a single space, (2) things in the world (including time and space) are fixed and limited in nature and (3) anything happens outside such nature is regarded as supernatural. However, Hall et al. (1998) clarify that the Daoist notion of *dao* is not made “in the sense of a single-ordered cosmos”, but rather in the sense of *wan you* 萬有 (all things). *Dao* is the “process of the world itself” (Hall et al., 1998, p. 245) since *dao* produces all things (*Dao De Jing*, 42; in Legge, 1891). In other words, *dao* represents ‘non-being’, which is nameless, formless and even timeless. The Chinese compound, *shijie* 世界 (literally means the boundary of generations), highlights that rather than separating space with time, the Chinese would regard place is time (Hall et al., 1998). That is why *dao* is not equivalent to the western idea of cosmos. In the Daoist tradition, *ziran* (nature, spontaneity) is the way to preserve *dao*. *Ziran* is translated as ‘nature’, which means everything should be attained in their ‘natural state’ (Lai, 2007). In other words, *ziran* is to follow along with the nature, instead of going beyond nature. In The Daoist perspective, *ziran* should never be seen as supernatural. Hence, *dao* and *ziran* are never the same as transcendence of time and space – the mystical and cosmological experience. There is no such a notion of transcendence in the Chinese culture. Hall et al. (1998) condemn “the causal or improper use of the concept of transcendence to articulate the Chinese sensibility” (p.190). Hall et al. criticizes that the scholars often used the term – transcendence, to refer to anything that could not be explained and were classified under the Aristotelian categories. The critique is therefore in line with the postcolonial argument against “essentialism”.

7.2.3 Human Relations

In the following, the dialogues will be initiated by following the Chinese philosophical frameworks. The discussion will be raised by the Confucians and the Daoists. Hence, this is a space where the Chinese are able to “speak back”, with an equal footing to the mainstream frameworks: Hedonism and Eudaimonia. The Confucian tradition is the first Chinese philosophical framework discussed in Chapter 3. Therefore, the coming dialogue will be led by the Confucians.

Among the four philosophical frameworks mentioned, the Confucian framework is regarded as the most relevant perspective that helps to generate an understanding of the local lives. The Confucian framework is highly significant to the locals, because The Confucian thinking portrays the Chinese value on social relations, particularly on *jia ting* (family) and *peng you* (extended family). For illustration, *wulun* (the five cardinal relations) is central to The Confucian teaching. Among *wulun*, three of the relations are governed by a family. In this light, Confucius assumes self is placed within social nexus, particularly in the family. That means the self is formulated only in the social network and interactions with others. Individuals would define themselves based on their relationships with other people. That is why they emphasize on how they speak and treat with others. Hence, the Confucians perceive self is relational and interdependence.

As Confucius positions self as interpersonal, he teaches people to maintain a harmonious relationship with others. He sets a key life goal for the humans – Living in harmony with other people. In The Confucian teaching, this target means living in accordance to *dao* (the way of Heaven). Under this context, *xin* would be connected to *xin dao* 心道 (*xin* the way) – which indicates *xin* as the way of life (Li, et al., 2013). Confucius believes *tian* (the Heaven) creates everything and therefore humans need to live in line with *tian dao* (the way of Heaven). How could one live with *tian dao*? In The Confucian framework, one could live with *dao* by manifesting *de* (virtues). It regards an individual who is able to act and live according to *dao* as a sage (an ideal moral agent). That is why the Confucian teaching focuses on ethics (*de*). The Five Constant Virtues in the Confucian teaching are, *ren* (benevolence); *yi* (appropriateness); *li* (ritual propriety), *zhi* (wisdom) and *xin* (trustworthiness). These five virtues direct and govern individual attitude and behaviours with others. They are the principles and ways for guiding individuals to live harmoniously with others. That is why Confucius accentuates *xin* to *dao de* 道德 (virtues and ethics). He teaches people the way to *xiu xin yang xing* 修心養性 (cultivate *xin* and nurture one's nature is to cultivate virtues and nurture the virtuous nature of humankind). Hence, cultivating and demonstrating virtues in lives (work) is the way to life in the Confucian teaching.

Ethics and social relations are two fundamental elements in the Confucian thinking, and they are closely connected. The Confucian education suggests three main life objectives: (1) *ming de* 明明德 (Illustrate illustrious virtue); (2) *qin min* 親民 (Renovate the people); and (3) *zhi shan* 至善 (The highest excellence). In Chinese, they are called *san gang ling* 三綱領. These three objectives are stated in *The Great Learning* – one of the "Four Books" in The Confucian teaching:

“What the Great Learning teaches, is to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people, and to rest in the highest excellence” (Liji: Da Xue: 2; in Legge, 1985) .

These three objectives help to develop individuals to become virtuous both internally and externally. In Chinese, we use the term, *nei sheng wai wang* 內聖外王. *Nei sheng* 內聖 refers to a self-cultivation

of virtues within an inner self (i.e. an ethical self); whereas *wai wang* 外王 is a demonstration of virtues in the outer world (i.e. social ethics). In other words, the first objective, *ming de* 明明德 (illustrate illustrious virtue) is for the cultivation of ethical self (*nei sheng* 內聖); while the second objective, *qin min* 親民 (renovate the people) is for extension of ethical self to the outer world (*wai wang* 外王). To achieve *nei sheng wai wang*, *The Great Learning* further proposes eight steps. These eight steps include: (1) *ge wu* 格物 (investigation of things); (2) *zhi* 致知 (extension of knowledge); (3) *cheng yi* 誠意 (sincere in thoughts); (4) *zheng xin* 正心 (rectification of mind); (5) *xiu shen* 修身 (cultivation of person); (6) *qi jia* 齊家 (regulate family); (7) *zhi guo* 治國 (order states); (8) *ping tian xia* 平天下 (maintain harmony in the world). The Chinese called the above eight steps as *ba mu* 八目. The first five steps are related to the cultivation of a person; while the last three steps are associated with social relations. It states that the individuals can cultivate themselves by investigating on things, extending their knowledge, being sincere in thoughts and rectifying their *xin*. Mencius specifies the role of *xin*:

“To the mind belongs the office of thinking. By thinking, it gets the right view of things; by neglecting to think, it fails to do this” (Mengzi: Gaozi I: 15; in Legge, 1985) .

Here, *xin* is referred as ‘the mind’. *Xin* is the mind, the office of thinking. Mencius stresses on using the mind to think in order to get the right view of things. Then, what is the meaning of *zheng xin* 正心 (rectification of mind)? *Zheng xin* (rectification of mind) means to correct one’s mind by removing any negative thoughts and unethical intentions, such as desire, terror, a personal favour, sorrow and distress, etc (*Liji: Da Xue*: 9; in Legge, 1985). Rectification of mind is the prerequisite of personal cultivation (*xiu shen* 修身). After the individuals have cultivated themselves, the next three stages emphasise on constructing social relations. It is deemed to be constructed through regulating families, ordering states and maintaining harmony in the world. By following these eight steps, one could initially cultivate and illustrate virtues (*ming ming de* 明明德) within a person and then demonstrate and extend the virtues along with the social nexus in order to renovate others (*qin min* 親民). Ethics are brought from inner self to various social relations under this manner (outer world) and that the ultimate accomplishment of an individual is the achievement of the highest excellence (*zhi shan* 至善), in both personal and social ethics (Appendix D: Figure D3).

How could one achieve the highest excellence (*zhi shan* 至善) in life? In The Confucian teaching, harmony is the way to achieve the highest excellence. Harmony in Chinese is *he* (和). *He* implies the means. *He* (harmony) is a core concept in the Confucian framework, particularly in the *Doctrine of the Mean*. In this doctrine, *zhong yong* 中庸 (“equilibrium” – being balanced and upright”) is the way to achieve harmony (in Li, 2008, p. 425). Harmony should be maintained between *shen* (body) and *xin*. In that case, *xin* is related to *shen xin ping he* 身心平和 (body and *xin* are balanced and harmonised).

Furthermore, harmony is extended to the relations with others. That means, one should always keep up harmonious social relationships. Confucius regards:

“Perfect is the virtue which is according to the Constant Mean” (Analects: Yung Ye, 27; in Legge, 1949, p.194).

The above indicates the importance of acting according to the mean in our daily lives (Ames, 2009). That is why most of the virtues in The Confucian framework stress on inducing harmony within the individual, among others and in the world (Wong, 2011). In the *Five Classics*, it highlights harmony should always be maintained among virtues – This is the way to the highest excellence (in Ames, 2009, p. 86-87). Hence, this is the way to *rendao* (the human way) as well as *tiandao* (the way of Heaven). To summarize, living in accordance to *dao* (the way of Heaven) is an ideal life for the Confucians. This could be attained through (1) self-cultivation of virtues within the inner self, (2) extending virtues to the social relationship (outer world), and (3) maintaining harmony in social lives.

How would the mainstream perspective respond to the Confucian view on social relation? Would the mainstream accept self as relational and interdependent? Both Hedonism and Eudaimonia agrees with Confucius that social relations are critical factors to human life. Hedonism would value happiness derived from the social network; while Eudaimonia would recognize the human need for affiliation. However, neither Hedonism nor Eudaimonia would understand why the Confucians place self within the social nexus. Both Hedonism and Eudaimonia treat self as an individual, independent and autonomous. Given everyone is self-governed, Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs put ‘self or I’ as the focus of life. For instance, self-esteem, self-actualization and self-transcendence are the highest concern in life. Since the mainstream emphasizes on the self-determining freedom to fulfil individual desires and needs, it may probably regard the Confucian view of relational self as irrational and even dangerous. If individuals have to rely on others to realize themselves, they will lose their own sense of control over lives. As a consequence, it would adversely affect their degree of well-being. That is why the conventional approach would probably reject on defining self-based on social relationship with other people.

How would the mainstream look at *tian dao* – The Confucian way of life? Neither Hedonism nor Eudaimonia discusses the notion of *tian dao*. In their analysis of the Chinese and western culture, Hall et al. (1998) identify that *tian* has often been interpreted and grouped by the west counterpart as a ‘transcendent’ category, which is associated with cosmology and mysticism. They clarify that *tian* should not be defined as “Heaven”, “Providence” nor “God” “because these interpretations somehow mislead people towards the western concept of transcendence. They insist that *tian* is distinctively nontranscendent, culturally specific and functional because *tian* facilitates the possibilities of harmony at all aspects. In this light, *tian dao* implies living harmoniously with others by demonstrating *de* (virtues) in the world. Then, what are the mainstream view on virtues and harmony? While Hedonism

provides no discussion on virtues and harmony, Eudaimonia considers virtues as important to life. In his writing – “*Nicomachean Ethics*”, Aristotle (1985) posits that true happiness is attained when one is able to express virtues. Aristotle regards virtues as a state of mind that allows individual to choose a mean – a right desire that is neither too excessive nor deficient. Aristotle inspires individuals to realize their rationality and wisdom in order to distinguish between the right and wrong desires, recognizing that the virtuous training would help the individuals in developing insights for preserving a meaning in their lives. Under this light, Eudaimonia would probably appreciate the Confucian cultivation of virtues.

Although Aristotle’s concept of the mean can be compared to the Confucian notion of harmony, they have different purposes and ways to attain equilibrium in lives. The Confucians maintain harmony in order to live in accordance to *tian dao*, whereas Aristotle preserves a mean in order to realize the human virtuous potentials and gain personal contentment. Confucian attains harmony by promoting both personal as well as social ethics, while Aristotle tends to uphold the mean through exercising individual ethics. Given that Eudaimonia puts the center of interest on individual self, it would certainly agree with Confucius’s idea of *nei sheng* 內聖 (self-cultivation of virtue within the inner self). For example, Maslow’s (1943) higher order of needs (such as gaining esteem, actualizing individual potentials and transcending oneself) are directed towards developing individual capacities to develop personal virtues in lives. Nevertheless, the Eudaimonias puts a little weight on the social ethics and seldom discuss the extending virtues to the community (*wai wang* 外王). Hence, The Eight Steps (*ba mu* 八目) in the Confucian education offers an additional reference for the mainstream, to understand how the Chinese would be able to cultivate an ethical self as well as demonstrate the virtues within the social nexus (including family, country and the world). The Confucian teaching helps to extend the ethics from personal (inner self) to societal level (outer world).

How would the Daoist respond to the Confucian views on life? Laozi would agree that life should live in accordance to *dao*. *Xin* in The Daoist tradition would also refer to *xin dao* (*xin*, the way) – the way of life. However, the Daoist interpretation of *dao* is different from the Confucian *dao*. Laozi concerns more on the way of nature (*dao*), rather than the human way (*rendao*) advocated by Confucius. Laozi encourages individuals to understand the pattern of nature, follow *ziran* (nature) and live in harmony with *wanwu* (ten thousand things in nature). Therefore he stresses on the virtue of naturalness, rather than the human virtues promoted by Confucius. He does not pay much attention to social relations. Although Laozi does not emphasize on social virtues, he upholds equal respect to others. Since *wanwu* are created by *dao*, he believes everything should deserve equal status (Cheung, 2011). That is why respect should be given to others.

The Daoists oppose to any deliberate virtuous trainings because they value *wuwei* (non-assertive action). They would probably regard the Confucian ritual education as artificial and hypocritical (Cheung, 2011). In *Dao De Jing*, Laozi specifies:

“If we could renounce our benevolence and discard our righteousness, the people would again become filial and kindly” (Dao De Jing, 19; in Legge, 1891)

“When we renounce learning we have no troubles” (Dao De Jing, 20; in Legge, 1891)

The above writings highlight that the Laozi disapproves the Confucian social virtues, such as *ren* and *yi*. He does not recognize any cultivation of virtues. Hence, he would probably disagree *san gang ba mu* 三綱八目 raised by the Confucian teaching. Cheung (2011) provides justification on why the Daoist reject any ethical learning and she points out that the Daoist’s concept of *ci* 施 (compassion) is a spontaneous kindness that could be lived up effortlessly. For instance, in the findings, the local parents are willing to look after their children because feeding and teaching their children are regarded as their *tian zhi* (natural duties and responsibilities) (Section 6.2.1).

For the notion of harmony, would Laozi agree with Confucius? Laozi would certainly support harmony in lives. *Dao De Jing* specifies *wanwu* are sustained by two opposite forces: *yin* (darkness) and *yang* (brightness) (in Legge, 1891). *Yin* and *yang* are coexisting and complementary, in which they need to be maintained in a balanced portion. That means, they symbolize the significance of harmony in *wanwu*. In that case, the Daoist would support the Confucian view on maintaining harmony among the four virtues. They would also agree with the Confucians that the way to *zhi shan* 至善 (the highest excellence) is to preserve harmony in the social lives. Nonetheless, the target of harmony is different between the Daoist and the Confucians. The former focuses on harmony with nature, whereas the later pay attention to the harmony with other peoples. The Daoists do not only encourage people to live harmoniously with other human beings but also *wanwu* (everything) in nature.

7.2.4 Nature, Yin / Yang, Spontaneity

The last dialogue is initiated by the Daoist. Laozi, the founder of the Daoist tradition, suggests people aim at living in harmony with *dao* (the way of nature). In order to achieve this life goal, he asks people to *wang wo* 忘我 (forget one’s self). *Wang wo* enables individuals to get rid of any personal desires. Here, *xin* is a way of life (Li et al., 2013). The Daoist view of *xin* would be associated with *xin xing* 心性 (*xin* nature) and *qing xin* 清心 (purify *xin*). *Xin xing* indicates the nature of the *xin*. That means, the Daoists support the people to live in accordance with the way of nature. They encourage individuals to *qing xin*, meaning to keep their minds and thoughts away from any excessive desires and intentions. In The Daoist term, *qing xin* means *xu xin* 虛心 (empty *xin*) or *xin zhai* 心齋 (*xin* fasting). Laozi describes that the sage would empty their minds without desires and follow the governance of the

nature (*Dao De Jing*, 42; in Legge, 1891). Similarly, Zhuangzi (one key follower of The Daoist teaching) illustrates *xu xin* with fasting:

“Such freedom is the fasting of the mind” (Zhuangzi, 4, in Legge, 1891)

Zhuangzi insists that only when individuals are able to restrain their desires like fasting their minds, they will obtain freedom and peace. In other words, The Daoist support *wuwo* 無我 (no self, no I), in which self-individualism, egoless and selfishness should be eliminated. When one becomes *wuwo*, he or she is able to understand, accept and follow on the way in which *dao* (nature) operates.

While *dao* is the source of everything, *wanwu* is coordinated by *yin* and *yang*. That is to say; The Daoist believes every phenomenon has two sides: *yin* and *yang*. Mun (2011) in his book, “*Yin-Yang in Traditional Chinese Thought and its Modern Practices*”, highlights that *yin* and *yang* are embodied in every aspect of our lives. For instance, there are *yin* and *yang* in individual personality and behaviours; in the enterprise’s dealings; in the country’s government policies and in the contemporary financial investment and social ethics. He points out the dynamics of *yin* and *yang* – they are constantly changing and interacting. Hence, The Daoist consider that retaining a balance between *yin* and *yang* are important to life. For instance, The Daoist interpret *xing fu jia ting* as the state where harmony is achieved. Therefore The Daoist regards there are *yin* and *yang* in every domain of human values and practices.

According to The Daoist tradition, one needs to follow *dao* by manifesting *de* (the potency of realizing oneself within nature) (Lai, 2011). *Zhenren* 真人 (real or true persons) are individuals who possess *de* (Morris, 1994). They practically preserve *ziran* and practice *wuwei* in their daily lives. In Section 3.2.2, *ziran* is referred as nature or spontaneity while *wuwei* means non-assertive action. That means, *zhenren* can restrain their control, interference and confrontation against any situations in lives; and accept what life gives to them. In such way, they would live spontaneously and harmoniously with the pattern of nature. That is why The Daoist believe that spontaneity is the vital way to life.

How could the mainstream respond to the Daoist way of life? The mainstream framework may find it difficult to agree with the Daoist style of life. First, the Daoist ideas of *wuwo* (no self) or *wang wo* (forget one’s self) seem to totally contradict with the conventional notion of individual self. Both Hedonism and Eudaimonia target on confirming self by making self as the center of focus in lives. Personal desires and needs are essentials for individuals. That is why Hedonism fulfils self by gaining happiness; while Eudaimonia realizes self by actualizing one’s potentials. In this light, The Daoist view of abandoning self and getting rid of desires are completely unacceptable to the mainstream.

The Daoist preference on following *dao* (the pattern of nature) is distinguished from a Eudemonic belief on rationality and environmental mastery. The Daoist tradition emphasizes on *wuwei* (non-assertive action) and *ziran* (spontaneity), whereas Eudemonic approach perceives humans should have the ability to master the environment (Ryff and Singer, 2008). Eudaimonia encourages individuals to exercise control over their own life in order to achieve self-chosen goals. In that sense, Eudaimonia may regard the Daoist approach as too passive, while the Daoist may consider the mainstream as overly aggressive and egocentric. Hence, the Daoist framework is not matched with the conventional approach to well-being. There is a Chinese saying: *dao bu tong, bu xiang wei mou* 道不同，不相為謀, which means "Those whose courses are different cannot lay plans for one another" (The Analects: Wei Ling Gong, 40 in Legge, 1985). Given the mainstream, to a large extent, is opposite to the Daoist way of life, the conventional advocates and the Daoist can hardly counsel one another.

What about the Confucians? Would they agree with Laozi's style of life? Unlike Laozi, who asks people to forsake self, Confucius encourages self to be defined and developed based on the social bonds. Confucius targets on living harmoniously with other peoples and uses virtues as the basic governance mechanism in social relations. His follower, Mencius once said:

"To nourish the mind, there is nothing better than to make the desires few." (Mengzi: Jin Xin II: 81; in Legge, 1985)

In this case, the Confucians would probably accept the Daoist thought of *qing xin gua yu* (purify *xin* and reduce desires). They would agree with the Daoists that people should eradicate the self-centred thoughts and desires because any *si xin* (selfishness) would be considered as unethical and harmful to others. They believe that by removing egoism, one could be able to retain the intrinsic goodness—the original nature of mankind. Under this circumstance, the Confucians would appreciate Laozi's goal on living with *dao* (the way of nature) because the Daoist naturalistic life approaches could enable the people to live up the innate goodness of human beings.

Although there are no such concepts of *yin* and *yang* in the Confucian tradition, Confucius would mostly accept the importance of balance in the Daoist teaching. Confucius highlights that *he* 和 (harmony) is the way to the highest excellence of life. He suggests people attain harmony within the individual, among relations with others and the world (Wong, 2011). Mun (2011) highlights there are *yin* and *yang* aspects in the Confucian teaching. Among the Four Constant Virtues, *ren* and *zhi* are associated with *yin* while *yi* and *li* are linked with *yang*. For example, *ren* is a cultivation of inner self. Therefore *ren* is related to *yin*; while *li* is a ritual propriety that should be performed in the outer world, thus *li* is linked to *yang*. In the Confucian teaching, one does not only develop *ren* internally but also need to demonstrate *ren* in the outer world through the performance of *li*. In that case, a balance among the four virtues should always be maintained. Indeed, Mun (2011) points out that there are *yin* and *yang* in every virtue. He explained that virtue, by its nature, is supposed to be an inner

characteristic of a person. Therefore, virtue itself represents *yin*. On the contrary, any behaviours that demonstrate virtues are seen as *yang*. Based on such perspective, *zhong* 中 (equilibrium) becomes a rule of thumb for individuals put virtues into practice. People need to reveal both *yin* and *yang* aspects of each virtue. That is to say; they should possess virtues to cultivate inner self (*yin*) and at the same time demonstrate virtues to the outer world through actions (*yang*). Under such circumstance, they need to behave according to the mean and never act in an extreme manner. In this context, the Confucian notion of harmony is similar to the Daoist concept of balance, because both of them insist on upholding the equilibrium in any aspects of lives.

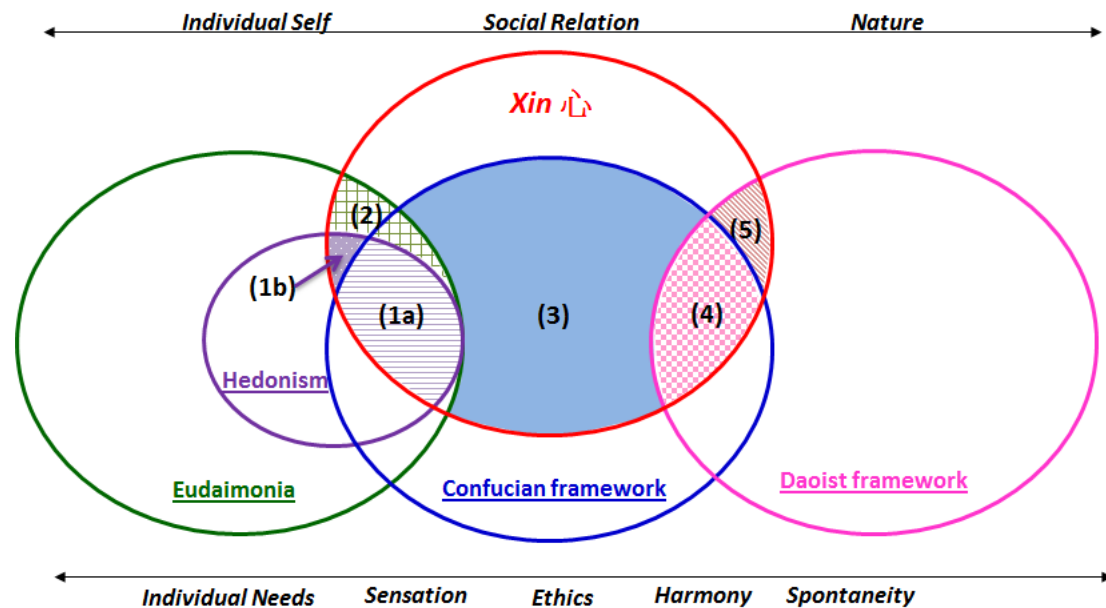
The Confucians may find it hard to recognize the Daoist idea of spontaneity, as the Confucian education consists of *san gang ba mu* 三綱八目 (The Three Objectives; The Eight Steps) that teaches individuals to actively foster both personal as well as social ethics in their own lives. Hence, the Confucians believe in deliberate cultivation and extension of virtues. For instance, the Confucians promote *wei zheng yi de* (government by means of virtues). The Confucians perceive that the virtues are the key governing mechanism in lives. In that circumstance, the Confucians would possibly feel uncomfortable with the Daoist concepts of *wuwei* (non-assertive action) and *ziran* (spontaneity). They would not appreciate the Daoist beauty of *wuwei er zhi* 無為而治 (rule in the way of *wuwei*). If they follow the Daoist thought of abandoning all intended efforts for virtuous training, they may lose their sense of purpose and direction in life.

7.3 Summary

Both Hedonism and Eudaimonia assumes self as independent and autonomous. They perceive that life must be focused on one's own individual self. Hedonism takes sensation (happiness and pleasure) as the centre of life. However, Eudaimonia perceives that life should be more than just happiness. Eudaimonia targets on the individual needs for existence, relatedness and growth. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the highest concern of an individual for life is self-actualization and self-transcendence. For the Confucian framework, it understands the Hedonic demand for happiness and Eudemonic approach for growth and development (self-actualization). However, the Confucians place self within the social nexus and its teaching stresses on ethics. The Confucians believe that living in accordance to *tian dao* (the way of Heaven) is the goal in lives. In order to achieve such a life goal, the Confucian teaching encourages the people to cultivate virtues as well as live harmoniously with other peoples. Lastly, the Daoist framework is fundamentally diverse with the mainstream because of their opposing view on self. The Daoist support *wuwo* (no self, no I) and situate self as part of nature. They aim at living in accordance to *dao* (the way of nature) and maintain balance (harmony) between *yin* and *yang* in lives.

Based on the above theoretical dialogues, each perspective would have their own interpretations on the Chinese notion of *xin*. Figure 7.5 portrays the similarities and differences among the four frameworks. Hedonism refers *xin* as ‘heart’ and associates *xin* with feelings and emotions (心情; *xin* feeling) and desires (心慾; *xin* desire); while Eudaimonia would further view *xin* as ‘soul’ (心靈; *xin* spirit) and links *xin* with spiritual attainment. However, the Chinese notion of *xin* bears much more meaning than mere feelings and spirit. The Chinese perspectives reveal more layers of understanding regarding the indigenous connotations of *xin*. In addition to the meaning of ‘heart’, The Confucians would also look at *xin* as ‘mind’ (心思; *xin* thought). They believe people would open up their *xin* (heart-mind) in the process of self-cultivation of virtues. The Confucians emphasise on *dao de xin* 道德心 (moral *xin*) and relate *xin* to ethics and virtues. That is why the Confucian teaching targets on *zheng xin* 正心 (rectification of mind) and *xiu xin yang xing* 修心養性 (cultivation of *xin* and nurturing one’s nature). The Daoists would view *xin* as *xin xing* 心性 (*xin* nature) and connect *xin* with nature. This indicates The Daoist suggest people open their *xin* (heart-mind) to nature and live spontaneously with nature. Both The Confucian and The Daoist frameworks target on living in harmony with *dao*. In that case, *xin* would mean *xin dao* 心道 – the way of life. Both the Confucians and the Daoist encourage harmony between the body and *xin* (*shen xin ping he* 身心平和); i.e. purifying one’s *xin* and to reduce personal desires (*qing xin gua yu* 清心寡慾). Towards the end, the next chapter draws implications from the data analysis.

Figure 7. 5: *Xin*: A Theoretical Dialogue



Similarities and differences:

(1) 1a – *xin qing* 心情 (*xin* feeling): Emotion; mood; feeling

1b – *xin yu* 心慾 (*xin* desires): Desires

(2) *xin ling* 心靈 (*xin* spirit): Soul

(3) 3a – *xin si* 心思 (*xin* thoughts): Thoughts; thinking; mind

3b – *dao de xin* 道德心 (*morals xin*): Virtues; morality; ethics

→ *zheng xin* 正心 (rectification of mind)

→ *xiu xin yang xing* 修心養性 (cultivate *xin* and nurture one's nature)

(4) 4a – *xin dao* 心道 (*xin* the way): The way of life

4b – *shen xin ping he* 身心平和 (*shen xin* balance harmony): Body and *xin* are balanced and harmonised

4c – *qing xin qua yu* 清心寡慾 (*clean xin* little desires): Purify one's *xin* and reduce desires

(5) *xin xing* 心性 (*xin* nature): Open up *xin* to Nature and follow spontaneously with Nature

Chapter 8 Implications and Conclusion

This thesis has to answer the following research questions:

1. *How does the discourse of well-being emerge and transform in a Chinese context?*
2. *Do members of family business in Hong Kong draw upon the discourse of well-being in their daily practices? If not, what expressions do they use in a given period of time?*

The archaeological examination (chapter 5) scrutinised the (trans)formations of well-being in a Chinese context. The ‘thick description’ (chapters 6 and 7) showed that the research subject did not draw upon the discourse of well-being in their daily lives. Instead, some more salient Chinese expressions, including *jia ting* (family), *peng you* (friends), *kai xin gong zuo* (happy work) and *xin zhong fu you* (being rich at heart-mind) were used. These expressions were interpreted through the framework of well-being, Chinese language and its philosophies. Two Chinese notions, *xing fu* (living well) and *xin* (heart-mind) were further contextualised.

Based on the analysis, this chapter draws implications on theory, methodology and relevant work practices. The contributions of this thesis are also highlighted. This thesis contributes to the theoretical debates on the application of well-being in a Chinese context. The benefits of taking an indigenous perspective to understand a Chinese subject are implied. Concerning methodology, the value of drawing from both archaeology and anthropology is highlighted; the ethics in research is emphasised; and the advantages of formulating a dialogue within ‘thick description’ are explained. The practical implications for business practitioners and researchers are discussed and some suggestions for MNCs to handle the IHRM issues in China are offered. At the end of this chapter, limitations and recommendations for future research are put forward to enhance self-reflexivity.

8.1 Theoretical Implications

Three theoretical implications are derived from the investigation. First, this thesis challenges the assumed universality of well-being. In response to the limitations of well-being, the thesis argues for drawing upon an indigenous language and philosophies to understand a Chinese subject. Second, the thesis highlights the importance of examining change in discourse and generating cross-cultural analyses. Third, the thesis explores conditions of the possibility of founding a theory for a Chinese subject.

a. Challenging Globalisation of Well-being: Exploring its limitations

As discussed in chapter 3, *objectification* and *essentialism* challenged the globalisation of well-being in a Chinese context. An archaeological and anthropological examination was conducted to investigate how the notion of well-being was relevant to a Chinese subject. In other words, some limitations of well-being are explored.

Based on the archaeological and anthropological examination, well-being is shown to have its discursive boundary. The archaeological analysis examines the ontological nature of the notion – Well-being is indeed culturally bound and dynamic. Well-being has its root based on certain European values on happiness. Hence, well-being is less applicable to a Chinese. Well-being and *xing fu* are two distinct concepts and each has its own cultural origin. However, when well-being is being appropriated to a Chinese context, *xing fu* is made as an equivalent to well-being. In that case, a concern of *essentialism* is raised in the well-being discourse.

The anthropological analysis further highlights certain limitations of deploying a mainstream framework of well-being to interpret the data. The framework of well-being is less able to explain the Chinese concepts of *xing fu* and *xin*. For instance, the notion of well-being could hardly explain why the research subject: (1) views family as the most vital element of life; (2) eagers to build up a family; (3) treats feeding family and teaching children as an embodiment of *xing fu*; (4) prefers doing exercises and sleeping well; (5) seeks spiritual peace through rituals; (6) tends to work with friends who are trustworthy; and (7) is willing to bear hardship (Section 7.1.1). These aspects reflect the inherent theoretical restrictions of well-being in terms of making sense of how a Chinese subject may think and behave.

The thesis does not necessarily disregard the notion of well-being. Well-being can be used to explain human behaviour in family businesses (Danes, Zuiker, 1999; Astrachan and Jaskiewicz, 2008; Shepherd, Marchisio and Miles, 2009; Ceja, 2009). Nevertheless, while well-being can be drawn to understand a phenomenon under investigation, one should not overlook its constraints, particularly when the latter may not be immediately noticeable in a cross-cultural management discourse.

Given well-being is made as a universal concept, it is important to examine its usefulness in an international business management context. Researchers such as Banerjee (2003), Xu (2008) and Learmonth (2009) have argued that any attempt of globalising management concepts, grand theories and even language could run a danger of colonisation of the mind. This thesis supports such an argument by unveiling a similar threat – a colonisation of well-being in a Chinese context. The

archaeological examination highlights the moment when a Chinese subject was being dragged into the dominant discourse of well-being, causing a misrepresentation of the subject – Chinese were often marginalised because they were found to have a lower degree of well-being (e.g. Diener et al., 1995; Wang and Wang, 2016); while the indigenous notion of *fu* was made silent in the management discourse. As a consequence, the appropriation of well-being to a Chinese subject can be another example of a subtle colonisation of management ideologies and practices.

Management discourse is rarely drawn by a Chinese subject. For instance, ‘thick description’ (chapter 6) indicates: (1) the term – ‘*well-being*’ has not been spontaneously expressed in any of my field visits; and (2) the research subject neither adopts ‘*management*’ nor ‘*strategy*’ at work. The findings show that management discourse has seldom appeared in the research setting. As shown in the section 6.3, such an absence is often being essentialised as if the Chinese family business (CFB) is having a distinctive managerial mechanism that is different from professional management and business strategy (Redding, 1993; Chen, 1995; Whiteley, 1992; Poutziouris, Wang and Chan, 2002). Accordingly, the thesis illustrates that globalising strategic management can represent domination in a cross-cultural management discourse.

To resist the above dominance, this thesis opens up a discursive space for a Chinese subject to speak in its own terms. Local expressions are therefore put as the centre of concern. These expressions can offer insights related to the local living styles: The research subject tends to *strive to survive* and *move on as life unfolds*. The thesis also demonstrates how the Confucian and Daoist philosophical traditions can add another layer of understanding to the phenomenon under investigation. Yet, in international business management discourse, they are often not presented or not being adopted as equally important as the mainstream framework. Hence, the thesis calls for understanding a Chinese subject based on its indigenous language and philosophies.

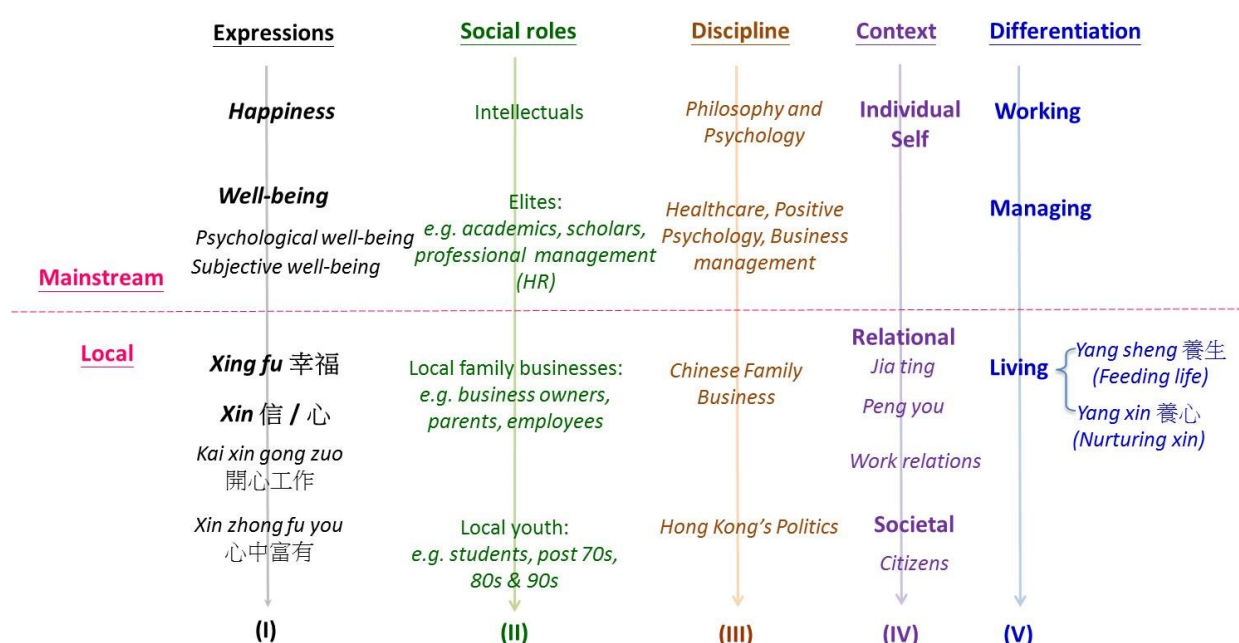
b. Generating Cross-cultural Analyses: Examining Discursive Changes

The discourse of well-being can be dynamic. This thesis highlights that it is worthwhile to examine change in discourse. Discursive change represents history and development of knowledge. The discursive transformation from happiness to well-being indicates how knowledge of well-being is produced and developed. Furthermore, this thesis opens a discursive space to examine some Chinese expressions (such as *xing fu* and *xin*).

As mentioned in chapter 2, the general conceptualisation of well-being is vague (Danna and Griffin, 1999). Well-being is a difficult term to define, because it is a multidimensional concept that encompasses all aspects of human life (Blaxter, 1990; Conceição, and Bandura, 2008). Veenhoven

(2000a; 2000b) criticises that there are too many objects within the discourse of life, such as 'quality-of-life', 'well-being' and 'happiness' etc. These expressions are often denoted with diverse meanings – “sometimes they are used as an umbrella term for all of the value, and the other times to denote special merits” (p. 1) (Veenhoven, 2000b). As a consequence, too many objects are emerged along the discursive transformation and they can cause misunderstanding and confusion. Veenhoven (2000b) and Wong (2011) therefore call for an examination of each discursive object. They encourage researchers to examine the substantive meanings of each individual object and clarify its specific connotations. This thesis may now respond to their call – by opening a discursive space where various expressions can be uncovered and examined. Each expression has its own contextual meanings and therefore an analysis across different cultural expressions is provided (Figure 8.1).

Figure 8. 1: A Cross-cultural Analysis: From Mainstream to Local Expressions



The discourse changes from the mainstream to local expressions (Figure 8.1: Part I). According to Foucault (1979), discourse can be transformative under different “conditions of possibility” (Preface: p. xxiv). His archaeology examines the conditions that give rise to discourse. Figure 8.1 contextualises each expression according to its ‘conditions of possibility’. In other words, the conditions that gave rise to each expression were examined. Each expression was made possible within certain conditions, such as among certain groups of key social players (Figure 8.1: Part II) in a particular discipline of study (Figure 8.1: Part III) and in a specific context (Figure 8.1: Part IV). The archaeology of well-being (chapter 5) demonstrated that: (1) the discourse of happiness was formed by the intellectuals in Philosophy and practiced by the politicians through law and regulations; (2) well-being began in the field of Positive Psychology, and well-being was often constructed by the elites, such as human resource management professionals, managers and academics. The anthropological examination (chapters 6 and 7) showed that: (1) *xing fu* was contextually related to *jia ting* (family) and *peng you*

(friends); (2) *xin* (trust) was important to *peng you*; (3) *kai xin gong zuo* (work happily) was appeared within the work context; and (4) *xin zhong fu you* (being rich at heart-mind) was demanded among the local youth, particularly in the political arena. These expressions are discursive objects. Given each object is made under a unique set of conditions, the analysis implies differentiations among various expressions (Figure 8.1: Part V). For instance, in an organisational context, happiness is referred to an individual pleasure at work (i.e. regarding working); while well-being is regarded an aspect of management (i.e. regarding managing). In contrast, *xing fu* and *xin* are a day-to-day concern of a Chinese subject (i.e. regarding living), particularly on the relational aspects. These disparities do not only imply transformations (movements) within the discourse, but also illustrate some cross-cultural differences between the mainstream and local expressions

The anthropological examination further implies a discursive change within local context – From *yang sheng* (feeding life) to *yang xin* (nurturing heart-mind) (Figure 8.1: Part V). *Xing fu* is usually related to family. Practices such as building a family with children, supporting family and being physically healthy and spiritually peaceful are the embodiments of *xing fu*. These practices define the manner on how the research participants feed themselves and their families. Accordingly, the notion of *xing fu* can be inferred as *yang sheng* (feeding life). In addition to *xing fu*, the findings show two other indigenous expressions: *kai xin gong zuo* and *xin zhong fu you*. These two terms indicate the significance of *xin*. As explained in chapters 6 and 7, *xin* can be referred as heart-mind. The research subject also pays attention to nurturing its heart-mind, which is called *yang xin* in Chinese. Here, a change in local expressions is found: from *xing fu* to *xin*, which indicates that the research subject does not only focus on *yang sheng* (feeding life), but also *yang xin* (nurturing heart-mind). In other words, an examination on discursive transformation does not only uncover intercultural differences, but also reveal intra-differences within the local discourse.

c. Conditions of possibility: Founding a theory for a Chinese subject

In order to avoid the problem of “allochronism” identified by Fabian (1983, p.32), the researcher of this thesis is reluctant to apply any given theory. As discussed in section 3.3 (pp. 42 – 43), Fabian criticises that the positivist approach would require the researchers to employ a given theory for organising an observed phenomenon. In such a way, the theory or the category of the theory is adopted to study the subject. Any aspect of the subject, which is not covered by the theory, might be ignored or treated as unimportant or irrelevant. As a result, the subject is made an object of knowledge for establishing a theory. Fabian (1983) calls such a constitutive phenomenon, “allochronism” – a denial and suppression of the subject’s voice. Therefore, in order to avoid “allochronism”, this thesis does not apply a given theory or model to assess the subject.

Furthermore, this thesis positions itself not for the purpose of constructing any theory. Why not? There are two reasons. First, it is impossible for this thesis to derive a theory of Chinese management/organisation or a Chinese theory of management. The archaeological examination (Chapter 5) diagnoses the problems of objectification and essentialism in the well-being discourse. They indicate that an indigenous subject is still being deprived of its voice in the management discourse. Under such a condition, it is not possible for researchers to found any indigenous concept or/and theory. That is why this thesis does not intend to formulate any theory about a Chinese subject.

The second reason is that this thesis stays consistent with Foucault's (1972) archaeology. Archaeology is to "establish a possibility", not for founding a theory (Foucault, 1972, p. 114 – 115). In his *Order of Things*, Foucault (1970) states that:

"it seems to me (him) that the historical analysis of scientific discourse should ... be subject, not to a theory of the knowing subject ..." (Forward, p. xv).

According to Foucault, rather than generating any theory of the knowing subject, he focuses on discursive practices and transformation. He is not interested in formulating a theory related to human consciousness. Likewise, if one reads Foucault carefully, it is necessary to avoid appropriating Foucault for the purpose of constructing any organisational theory or vice versa – creating organisational theory into Foucault (Knights, 2004). Hence, this thesis does not intend to develop a management theory onto Foucault either.

If this thesis does not aim at theory-building, what are its intention and contribution? Before answering this question, it would be helpful to spell out the contribution of Foucault's archaeology. Foucault (1970) hopes that his work "would be an indispensable step if, one day, a theory of scientific change and epistemological causality was to be constructed" (Forward, p. xiv). His attempt is to shed some light on "the epistemological field" (Preface, p. xxiii) for further discussion. In doing so, he examines "the conditions of possibility" – "rediscover on what basis knowledge and theory became possible" (Preface, p. xxiii). For instance, in *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault (1973) states that:

"The research that I am (he is) undertaking here therefore involves a project that is deliberately both historical and critical ... with determining the condition of possibility of medical experience in modern times" (Preface, p. xix).

By the same token, this thesis intends to study 'the conditions of two possibilities':

- (1) *the conditions that made the discourse of well-being possible in a Chinese context;*
- (2) *the conditions that could make an indigenous voice possible in management discourse.*

The conditions of the first possibility are revealed by way of an archaeological examination; while the conditions of the second possibility are uncovered by way of an anthropological examination and upholding ethics in research. Even though the thesis does not emphasise on theory-building, such an archaeological and anthropological examination begins to shed some light on the conditions of possibility for a Chinese theory.

In the archaeological examination, the problem of essentialism is diagnosed in the well-being discourse. Due to essentialism, the Chinese (*the Other's*) voice is marginalised or almost silent. That means, essentialism is hindering the emergence of any indigenous theory. Hence, one key condition that would make a Chinese theory possible is to first steer away from essentialism. How? Sheridan (1990) remarks that “the interests of the oppressed are best expressed in their own words” (p.221). Therefore, the researcher of this thesis suggests accounting for the subject’s own expressions. Then, in what ways can the subject’s expression become possible? The thesis proposes ethnography. In *The Order of Things*, Foucault (1970) specifically highlights ethnology at the end of his discussion. He considers that ethnology deliberately “seek its object in the area of the unconscious processes that characterize the system of a given culture; in this way it would bring the relation of historicity” (p.414). That means, ethnography requires a researcher to get close with an indigenous subject and to pay attention to local expressions, so as to make an indigenous historicity and authenticity visible. Expressions can consist of any objects or concepts. In Foucault’s (1972) archaeology, objects, enunciative modalities and concepts gave rise to themes and theories. Working along such a sequence, the formation of any indigenous theory could be possible after certain local objects and concepts are formed and transformed. For this reason, this thesis treats ethnography as a crucial condition of possibility of founding any indigenous object and concept before the formation of any indigenous theory. In other words, this ethnography represents an early work that contributes to providing a condition of the possibility of founding a theory of Chinese management/organisation.

Nevertheless, ethnography alone may not be enough, given there is a possibility of “allochronism” (Fabian, 1983) in anthropology, in which the subject’s voice is suppressed. If so, under what conditions could the subject has liberty to express themselves? For Foucault, in order to exercise freedom appropriately, one necessary condition is to care for the self (Bernauer and Rasmussen, 1988; Hahm, 2001). Foucault explains further:

“One cannot care for self without knowledge. The care for self is of course knowledge itself ... but it is also the knowledge of a certain number of rules of conduct or of principles which are at the same time truths and regulations. To care of self is to fit one’s self out with these truths. That is where ethics is linked to the game of truth” (Bernauer and Rasmussen, 1988, p. 5).

According to Foucault, ethics is necessary for the practice of freedom and care for the self (Hahm, 2001). Hence, my thesis proposes that a crucial condition that makes the subject’s voice possible is to

advocate ethics in research. As mentioned in section 4.2.2. (pp. 66 – 68), Xu (2008) suggests replacing ontology with ethics as the first philosophy. Indeed, she proposes three principles in research: (1) “ethics before knowledge”, (2) “justice before power”, and (3) “dialogue before vision” (p.267). The researcher of this thesis follows Xu’s ethical principles (section 8.2, pp. 195 – 196). This thesis is one illustration of how an ethical discursive practice enables a subject to exercise some freedom to speak in its own terms. Hence, ethics is considered a necessary condition for making a Chinese theory possible not now as yet, but in future.

Finally, what are the conditions of possibility of ethics in research? This thesis highlights reflexivity as a condition for ethics. This thesis is an attempt to move from theory to reflexive analysis. By definition, “theory is simply a way of imposing conceptual order on the empirical complexity of the phenomenal world” (Suddaby, 2014, p.407). In Suddaby’s (2014) examination of ‘*Why Theory?*’, he highlights that academics with diverse ontological and epistemological preferences would have different views concerning the roles of theory. For him, debates and tensions over the values of theory are actually productive to knowledge production. His primary concern lies in “the lack of reflexivity with theory”. He encourages research community to have constant reflection on knowledge and its system. This thesis may now respond to his call. Rather than focusing on building a Chinese theory (Tsui, 2004; Child, 2009), this thesis pays close attention to reflexivity. Aligning with Foucault’s (1997a) idea of ‘*governmentality*’, critical self-reflection and transformation would enable the constitution of ethics. In other words, reflexivity could be a condition of the possibility of ethics in research. Following Xu’s (2008) “ethics before knowledge” (p. 267), this thesis illustrates that reflexivity could enable the researcher to stay critical; question the conventional concepts and theories; and generate a contextualised analysis of an indigenous subject. Hence, this thesis is an attempt to show that reflexivity becomes a discursive practice of ethics.

To summarise, the contribution of this thesis does not lie in theory-building, but in epistemological considerations – offering insights to the conditions of the possibility of founding a theory for a Chinese subject. To do so, this thesis uses archaeology as a way of diagnosing a possibility of essentialism in the well-being discourse; while using anthropology as a provisional solution to overcome essentialism. More importantly, ethics is the key for making an indigenous subject’s voice becoming possible in management discourse, while reflexivity is a condition for exercising ethics in research. To that end, the thesis invites further discussion to explore conditions of possibility, so that formation of theory regarding a Chinese subject may be possible in the not too distant future.

8.2 Methodological Considerations

Three implications on methodology are considered. Firstly, the thesis shows how a research can overcome the problem of *essentialism* by drawing upon archaeology and anthropology. The

complimentary value of the two methodologies is demonstrated. Secondly, this thesis upholds ethics in research by doing justice to a Chinese subject. Lastly, this thesis formulates a dialogue within ‘thick description’. By this, the value of ‘thick description’ is recognised and its content is further extended through a dialogue.

a. Archaeology and Anthropology

This thesis demonstrates that archaeology and anthropology can be complementary – While Foucault’s archaeology is able to dissect *essentialism*, anthropology is able to offer a solution to *essentialism*. The literature review (chapters 2 and 3) signposts a possible threat of *essentialism* within the discourses of Chinese family business and well-being. In order to support the above claim, gaining an understanding of *essentialism* is the first step. For that reason, the thesis draws from Foucault’s (1972) *Archaeology of Knowledge* to diagnose *essentialism* in the well-being discourse. As highlighted by Foucault (1972), “discourse produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth” (p.194). Chapter 5 does not only uncover how the discourse of well-being has produced various kinds of objects (such as *subjective well-being*, *psychological well-being* and *quality-of-life*), but also traces how the discourse of well-being produces the practice of *essentialism* as the ritual of truth. That means, chapter 5 provides a picture of the problem, because the archaeological examination traces at which layer of text the discourses of *well-being* and *xing fu* have merged and examines the conditions that gave rise to such an integration (Figure 5.4: 4th layer of text). Foucault’s archaeology indicates how, where and when *essentialism* has occurred in the discourse of well-being. Hence, the thesis demonstrates how Foucault’s archaeology is able to reveal and dissect the problem of *essentialism* within a discourse.

How could researchers avoid *essentialism*? The thesis suggests a plausible way of decolonisation – Rather than dragging a Chinese subject into the dominant discourse of well-being, an interstitial space is released to allow the subject to speak in its own expressions. Yet how could researchers find out the subject’s expressions? This thesis suggests a feasible methodology – using anthropology to study a Chinese subject. Given post-colonial epistemology aims to open a space to recognize any viable alternative knowledge system and local voice, Jack and Westwood (2006) highlight the values of “critically-inspired ideographic methods, for example, critical ethnography” (p. 493). Critical ethnography helps locating research in a particular historical, cultural and institutional context and takes local self-representation as the prime resource that drives research conceptualizations and practice. The thesis demonstrates how critical ethnography can contribute to an understanding of a Chinese subject. By conducting a critical ethnography, the ethnographer was able to get close to her research participants, observe their lives, socially interact with them and even ‘live’ with them. The fieldwork allows the ethnographer to pay attention to the participants’ local expressions (verbal and non-verbal; written and spoken), daily practices, culture, tradition, customs, values and beliefs. That is how some indigenous expressions are found, including *jia ting* (family), *peng you* (friends), *kai xin*

gong zuo (work happily) and *xin zhong fu you* (rich in heart-mind). *Xing fu* and *xin* are even further scrutinised. Consequently, this thesis has illustrated how anthropology can be taken as a methodological solution to avoid *essentialism* in research.

b. Ethics in Research

The thesis advocates ethics in research. To uphold ethics in research, Xu (2008) follows Levinas' solution to a question of knowledge – replacing ontology with ethics as the first philosophy (p. 242). She encourages researchers to engage with a Chinese subject through conversation and treat the subject as their interlocutors so that both “the writer and subject share the same discursive space of theory in dialogue” (p.271). By that, she means one needs to “abandon the “monologue” of the researchers”, “be prepared for a clearing operation with the familiar vocabulary and categories”, and be “sufficiently attentive to other’s (a non-western subject’s) expression” (p.271). The questions of “Who is talking?” and “How does talking take place?” (p.271) should be emphasised. In other words, researchers (who are the key social players in the discourse) need to take up the responsibility of finding ways to address an imbalance of power, such as to welcome expressions from the indigenous communities and place these expressions ahead of the vision of Self (the researcher).

In response to Xu’s (2008) call, this thesis is an attempt to put her ethical considerations in research into practice. Specifically, here are a few steps the author has taken to safeguard the voice of her research subject. First, I am conscious of my pre-understanding and existing knowledge on business management. In chapters 2 and 3, I steer clear of an application of management knowledge to a Chinese context. A critical approach to existing knowledge is necessary (chapter 4). Second, I formulate an alternative and introduce ideas from the Confucian and Daoist thinking to contextualise well-being in a Chinese context (chapter 3). Third, from an archaeological analysis (chapter 5), I gain some in-depth understanding about *essentialism* and carefully proceed by avoiding *essentialism*. By opening up an interstitial space between *well-being* and *xing fu*, an indigenous voice is brought into a shared discursive space where a Chinese subject can be treated on equal footing. Forth, in the ethnography, I engage with the locals through conversations, pay attention to the context and welcome indigenous expressions. Fifth, ‘thick description’ (chapter 6) is used to scrutinise the subject’s lived experience and expressions. Here, the indigenous voice has occupied much space in the text. Finally, I examine the indigenous expressions in context and conduct a cross-cultural examination in such a way that both western and Chinese perspectives are set in dialogue (chapter 7). Because of the above steps, this thesis begins to show what one could do in order to do justice to a Chinese subject. When a Chinese subject is treated equality, a dialogue can be opened.

c. *Dialogue within ‘Thick Description’*

This thesis shows how ‘thick description’ and dialogue can offer further understanding of a Chinese subject. Rather than simply recording what the subject has done, ‘thick description’ comprehends details and interprets the symbolic meanings and implications of the phenomenon under investigation. Such an interpretation is able to provide an understanding of the subject’s expressions. Chapters 6 and 7 offer a ‘thick description’ of the subject’s lived experience. The ‘thick description’ here does not only present findings, but also captures the thoughts, emotions and web of social interactions among the participants within the operating context. As a result, each expression could be further interpreted by entailing its specific intention, contextual meanings and implications. That is how *xing fu* and *xin* have been illuminated within ‘thick description’. Accordingly, ‘thick description’ is able to provide an in-depth understanding of the research subject.

How about the use of dialogues? How could dialogues be beneficial to international business management? Cheung’s (2011) research on dialogues is worthy of note. She finds ways to include both western and non-western perspectives and explains:

“...the new framework developed here advocates not a substitute, but inclusion. To reach a broad understanding of the phenomenon under examination, both western and non-western conceptual frameworks should be engaged in a dialogue” (p.263).

This thesis gives support to Cheung’s (2011) argument. The approach of this thesis enables both western and Chinese perspectives to be in dialogue (chapter 7). The dialogue reflects their similarities and differences and indicates the hybridity of a Chinese subject. Hence, the dialogue serves as enrichment to existing knowledge.

Where could dialogues take place in the discourse? This thesis formulates a dialogue within ‘thick description’. Such a methodological experiment can derive two implications: (1) Dialogues can provide a possible extension to ‘thick description’; while (2) ‘thick description’ can be served as a home for dialogue. One of the possible concerns related to ‘thick description’ is how far it could be manifested within the qualitative research (Ponterotto, 2006). Even though ‘thick description’ has its significant role in ethnography, Geertz (1973) has never mentioned what come next after ‘thick description’. In response to this gap, the thesis has demonstrated how a ‘thick description’ can be extended so that both western and Chinese perspectives are engaged in a dialogue. In other words, creating dialogues on theoretical level could methodologically offer an extension to ‘thick description’. Congruently, ‘thick description’ provides a condition for dialogue. ‘Thick description’ offers an understanding of the subject’s lived experience. This in-depth account of the subject is important because local expressions have to be revealed and contextualised through ‘thick description’ before any cross-cultural dialogues could be formed. This thesis has illustrated that within a ‘thick description’,

both western and Chinese perspectives can be placed in the same discursive space for a dialogue. Hence, ‘thick description’ can become a home for dialogue.

8.3 Work Practices

In the following section, practical implications on international human resource management (IHRM) and management research will be offered to the business practitioners and researchers respectively.

a. To Business Practitioners: Diversity

The thesis reminds business practitioners (such as managers and IHRM professionals) in the multinational corporations (MNCs) to critically examine their management practices in a Chinese context. MNCs are encouraged to “analyse the Western organisation management concepts and methods critically in light of their cultural assumptions and how their core values differ from those in China” (Wang, Wang, Ruona and Rojewski, 2005, p.323). For example, the thesis shows that the concept of well-being is not necessarily significant to the members of Chinese family business (CFB); and the boundary between work and family in CFB is not clear. Hence, the notion of work-family conflicts (WFC) and some global work-family balance (WFB) initiatives may be of little value to a Chinese subject. Xiao and Cooke (2012) draw the similar implication in their investigation on the major sources of work–life conflicts encountered by workers in China. They indicate that:

“Chinese workers are faced with a very different set of incentives and disincentives in their choices regarding work–life, and consequently, work–life balance often becomes, in reality, more like a work–life trade-off ... As Ling and Powell (2001) pointed out, the western (US) perspective of work life conflict (WLC) is not adequate in explaining work–life issues in the Chinese context” (p. 19).

For that reason, business practitioners in MNCs can pay attention to those positive IHRM practices, such as work-life balance initiatives, wellness program, employee assistance program and employee satisfaction survey etc. and evaluate whether these so called ‘best practices’ (Jacques, 1996; Wright et al., 1997; Ballard and Grawitch, 2017; Burke, 2017) are attractive to Chinese employees. In particular, the instruments that are commonly used to measure employee well-being could be less applicable to Chinese workers. Hence, it would be appropriate to critically review any global managerial concepts, theories, models, tools and even practices before applying them to a Chinese context.

This thesis defends against the charge of bringing in ‘[Chinese] context as a post hoc explanation (Child, 2009: 64). Child (2009) argues that:

“the theories applied are a-contextual and therefore, inherently insensitive to context. As a result, empirical research comparing China with other countries has not generally incorporated measurements of the respective contexts in its prior design, but, rather, has brought in context as a post hoc explanation for differences that are found” (p.64).

For Child, applying a-contextual theories is the cause of the charge. To defend against such a charge, the researcher of this ethnography would argue that she has a different set of assumptions regarding theory and context than those in the mainstream functionalist-empiricist-positivist approach, such as Tsui (2006) and Child (2009). In Child’s (2009) epistemology, context is assumed to be one ‘variable’ in theory, and therefore theory can be a-contextual. That is why he accounts for “the configuration of contextual variables that characterize China” (p.59). However, in ethnography, context is everything. Ethnographers treat context as ‘a foundation’ of theory, not ‘a variable’ in theory. Accordingly, organisational theories are inherently culture-bound, because management knowledge is undeniably contextual (Jacques, 1996). In this thesis, the archaeological examination of well-being and xing fu has illustrated that the two concepts are historically and culturally distinctive. In particular, given well-being is based on the European value of happiness, this thesis challenges a certain misappropriation of well-being in a Chinese context. Therefore, in this ethnography, context is central in revealing fundamental differences between well-being and xing fu.

A further defence against Child’s (2009) charge is that ethnographers stay sensitive to language. Although Chinese culture may not be the only explanation for an absence of management discourse in a given context (Child, 2009), this ethnography shows that language in use is not insignificant in organisations. Chia and King (2001) regard language as an organisation and vice versa. They indicate the significance of language in organisational communication and sense-making. Westwood (2001) also highlights that:

“Language and culture are inseparable – if one is lost then so is the other”

In other words, language and culture go hand in hand – if management language is absent in a Chinese context, then so is the management culture which is originated from the West (Jacques, 1996). Similarly, if an indigenous language is present, then so is the local culture. Hence, this ethnography argues that Chinese language and culture can be one explanation for the findings.

The ‘thick description’ implies that indigenous language and culture play a significant role in CFB. The research subject speaks in its own dialect and lives according to its own cultural values and beliefs. For instance, the notion of *xing fu* (living well) highlights the significance of *jia ting* (family) in a Chinese society. That is why the anthropological study shows a familial culture in all the four CFBs. The Confucian value of *zi qiang bu xi* (positive self-striving) enables a Chinese subject to strive for survival; while the Daoist concept of *ziran* (spontaneity) leads the subject to move along as life

unfolds. Hence, the daily practices of a Chinese subject are shaped by its indigenous values. To account for the views of a Chinese employee, a diverse approach in IHRM is recommended. For example, a cafeteria benefit plan could be implemented, because it allows each individual employee to choose from a variety of benefits and formulate a plan that suits his/her own needs. Based on the ‘thick description’, below are some choices of benefits that could be made available to a Chinese employee:

i. Concerning Xing Fu (Living Well)

The ‘thick description’ shows that the research subject values *xing fu*. One of the life missions among the locals is to build up a *xing fu jia ting* – a complete family with children. Therefore, they put effort into getting married and to give birth. In response to the significance of *jia ting*, offering marriage opportunities in the workplace may be valuable to a Chinese employee. For instance, Hitachi in Japan offers free marriage agency service for its staff (Chan, 2008). Employees who are single and would like to enrol in this service can submit their applications with relevant information (such as academic background, family background, hobbies, personalities, weight, height and preferences, etc.) to the Human Resources Management Department. And then, the information will be updated in the internet website called *que qiao* 鹊桥 (Magpie Bridge). Employees who have enrolled for the service, can browse through *que qiao* in their free time. Once they have found the person they would like to date, they can send their requests for dating via *que qiao*. If there is a mutual agreement between both parties, the Human Resources Management Department could arrange a date for them. This is a real life example to illustrate how a company can help its staff to search for their *xing fu* – finding a right partner for life. In other words, it facilitates its staff to *qi jia* (establish a harmonious family).

Supporting family is another embodiment of *xing fu*, which requires individuals to fulfil their familial role obligations. The findings indicate one basic familial duty is *yang jia* (feeding the family), which can include buying a place for the family to live and shaping children to be good. In that case, MNCs can consider supporting their members to accomplish their familial responsibilities – perhaps in terms of purchasing a residential place for living. For example, KPMG and The University of Rochester offer a mortgage housing incentive program to their staff (Petroff, 2014; The University of Rochester, 2017). They partner with some private banks and offer preferential mortgage plans and services to their employees. Since the data demonstrates that while *mai lou* (buying a residential place) is one key concern of the locals, *shang che* (owning one’s own place first) seems to be difficult, especially for the young couples. This kind of mortgage program aims to help “people get on the property ladder early, rather than having to wait a few years” (Martindale, 2015). Hence, this kind of benefit can be specifically designed for a Chinese employee who would like to purchase a residential place for his/her family.

ii. Concerning Xin (Heart-mind)

Xin (heart-mind) is related to *yang xin* (nurturing heart-mind). The research subject seeks to be physically healthy (*jian kang*) and spiritually peaceful (*ping an*). The analysis illustrates that maintaining a harmony between *shen* (body) and *xin* (heart-mind) is important. Hence, a Chinese employee may try to maintain such a balance in lives. For example, participating in regular sports activities, interest classes, entertainments, stress management in the workplace may help a Chinese employee to sustain a balance between physical and spiritual health. In particular, in order to preserve a spiritual peace in lives, many locals nowadays would participate in classes like yoga, tai chi, Chinese painting and calligraphy, etc. Hence, it may be worthwhile for MNCs to provide these activities or services to a Chinese employee.

The ‘thick description’ also shows that a Chinese subject prefers to work with *peng you* (friends). In that case, business practitioners are able to derive benefits from using referrals and word of mouth as their key recruitment and selection methods. Furthermore, the anthropological study shows that the meaning(s) of *xin* (heart-mind) should be specifically contextualised. By offering a cafeteria benefit plan, each Chinese employee can then customise a benefits plan based on his/her *xin yi* 心意 (thoughts and preferences). Hence, a diverse approach can help practitioners to understand on how and when a Chinese employee will feel *kai xin* (happy) and *xin zhong fu you* (rich in heart-mind).

The above work practices are tailor-made in regards to the local expressions – *xing fu* (living well) and *xin* (heart-mind). These practices are designed for *yang sheng* (feeding life) and *yang xin* (nurturing heart-mind). Future research can carry out to examine the details, implementation and effectiveness of the above practices in a Chinese context.

The key practical implication of this thesis is on changing the perspectives in management. Rather than relying on the global ‘best practices’ in IHRM, a diverse management approach that advocate multiple values and perspectives is highlighted. Dialogues between perspectives (such as the management in MNCs and local employees) are encouraged, so as to derive a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

b. To Researchers: Pluralism

This part draws implications on management research practices. Majority of the international management studies remained firmly in the traditional-functionalist-positivism (Jack et al., 2008). As discussed in chapters 2 and 3, a weakness of positivism is that it tends to be unreflective about its

ontology, epistemology and representation. With regards to this shortcoming, Jack and Westwood (2006) recommend management researchers to increase reflexivity by taking a critical perspective. As shown in this thesis, a critical approach that accounts for social structure and change in discourse, can offer insights to functionalist-positivist research. These insights move beyond the explanation offered by a mainstream approach and offer another view of the phenomenon under investigation. To generate knowledge, the thesis therefore calls for more critical management studies (CMS) to be carried out in international business management.

How can CMS be encouraged in research? A fundamental channel to arouse more attention to CMS is through management learning and education. One important job of CMS researchers is to introduce such a perspective and emphasise its importance in teaching to improve curricula (Learmonth, 2017). Yet, the thesis does not aim at narrowing research horizons by substituting positivism with a critical stance. Instead, the author advocates “pluralism”, which is a diverse approach to knowledge taken by Morrell, Learmonth and Heracleous (2015) in their examination of evidence-based management (EBMgt). Morrell and Learmonth (2015) explain that:

“Recognizing difference in intellectual traditions and celebrating their respective contribution is important not because it will lead to the triumph of the humanities over the sciences; rather, because pluralism promotes a balance between them as complementary ways of thinking about the problems facing people in work organisations” (p.529).

Their argument is to encourage researchers to appreciate different ontologies, epistemologies and standpoints, because organisational issues can be understood in various ways and angles.

How can researchers uphold pluralism? Above all, we as researchers need to always maintain an open attitude by accepting knowledge in a variety of approaches. Pluralism is a basis for meaningful dialogue (Morrell and Learmonth, 2015). The dialogue within ‘thick description’ (chapter 7) is an illustration to recognise the value of including multiple perspectives (both western and Chinese perspectives), so as to derive a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Furthermore, researchers who identify themselves as critical thinkers are reminded not only to be critically aware of the dominant works, but also be self-reflexive on their own critical views and practices so that more multi-faceted debates on improving management learning and education can be generated (Ford, Harding and Learmonth, 2010). In general, researchers should preserve intellectual flexibility and critical reflexivity.

8.4 Contribution

This research intends to make three kinds of contribution to international business management. First, the thesis contributes to the literature of well-being by offering a cultural perspective of the notion.

The thesis contributes to the debate related to the significance of well-being in a Chinese context. The archaeological examination opens a discursive space where examining well-being per se is plausible. Such an investigation uncovers an ontological nature of well-being – Well-being is *dynamic* and *culturally distinctive*. Hence, this thesis makes a contribution to knowledge by revealing two additional characteristics of well-being. Accordingly, well-being is culturally rooted based on European value, without any equivalent concept in a Chinese context. The assumed universality of well-being is therefore challenged. A discursive weakness of well-being is also highlighted – it is a culturally bound concept. The examination further reveals the problem of *essentialism* in the well-being discourse when the notion is unintentionally being misappropriated to a Chinese subject. Globalisation of well-being in a Chinese context is shown as another example of a subtle colonisation and marginalisation of the mind. Another theoretical contribution is that this thesis opens a discursive space where a Chinese subject is allowed to express in its own language and practices. Within this space, some more salient Chinese expressions are contextualised and their differences with well-being are unveiled. In this way, the thesis widens the scope of knowledge by bringing in a Chinese perspective into the discursive space.

Second, the thesis gives insights into research methodology. The study offers insights to operationalise both archaeology and anthropology. This research demonstrates how Foucault's (1979) archaeology is able to dissect *essentialism*, while Geertz's (1973) 'thick description' is able to offer a solution to *essentialism*. By drawing from both archaeology and anthropology, a new insight about well-being is derived. This insight could be neglected if only a mainstream approach was followed. Besides, the value of using 'thick description' is demonstrated given it is able to generate an understanding of a phenomenon under investigation. Within 'thick description', local expressions are revealed and an additional source (i.e. Chinese philology and its philosophical traditions) is introduced to interpret the data. Instead of merely discussing well-being – a western perspective, this study offers a Chinese perspective and put the two into a dialogue. By engaging the two perspectives in dialogue, their similarities and differences are examined. Hence, the benefits of following both western and Chinese sources are shown. Such knowledge may help both sides to understand each other better, and shed some light on understanding a Chinese subject. More importantly, the thesis contributes to the epistemology – the conditions of the possibility of formulating any theory for a Chinese subject. Ethics in research is highlighted as a crucial condition.

Third, this thesis contributes to an understanding of a phenomenon from a Chinese perspective, which can help business practitioners and researchers to critically examine the existing management and research practices in a Chinese context. To business practitioners, the study encourages them to review their global management ideologies and examine whether the worldwide managerialist measures and practices are applicable across cultures. To manage employees with various cultural backgrounds, a diverse approach which takes an indigenous perspective into account is suggested. In addition, the

thesis is a critical management study (CMS) on well-being. Such a critical approach can provide an additional understanding of the topic. Therefore, to researchers, the thesis calls for more CMS in order to enhance reflexivity in research. Given the thesis demonstrates that an organisational phenomenon can be understood in multiple ways; the value of pluralism is recognised. Intellectual flexibility is encouraged so that researchers are able to accept, appreciate and demonstrate a variety of approaches to research.

8.5 Limitations and Future Research

The research has five key limitations. These limitations can be served as possible directions for future research. The first limitation is related to the local expressions being revealed. These expressions are derived from a majority of participants, whose age was around 30 to 45 years old. Only a few of them were less than 25 years old or more than 50 years old. In that case, the themes of this study are mainly constructed based on the expressions given by the middle-aged group. The ‘thick description’ indicates that local expressions can vary across generations. For instance, *xin zhong fu you* is particularly raised among the local youth. However, while the study tends to focus on the perspectives of the middle-aged group, alternate views from other age groups are being marginalised. Therefore, future investigations on different generational expressions would help to explore changes within the local discourse. In addition, the expressions are derived from a majority of participants, who are regarded as core members of the business. In Chinese, they are regarded as part of the family. Given the size of the firms is micro-business which usually consists of less than 10 persons, the data collected tends to concentrate on the views of these core family members. The researcher finds it difficult to contact the non-core members because of either they have already left the firms or they were reluctant to talk with the researcher. The researcher considers that gaining rapport from those non-core members may run the risk of losing the trust from the central family members. Therefore, the researcher decides not to emphasize the views of the non-core members. In that case, while the study tends to focus on the views of the central family members, alternate views from non-core members (e.g. Ms. Abegail, Ms. Ally and Ms. Apple in FB 1) are marginalized. Hence, future research on expressions from non-core members would help to explore the dynamics and roles of power in a local context.

The second limitation is related to sampling. The study adopts snowball sampling. One major weakness of snowball sampling is it may result in biased samples (Cohen and Arieli, 2011). That means, the sampling relies on the social network of the researcher, which may post constraint on the variety of participants. For instance, most field sites are restricted to microbusinesses in similar industries. Since majority of the family businesses in Hong Kong are SMEs, this study focuses on microbusinesses. The industries of the four sites are mainly education (FB 1 and FB 2) and retail (FB 3 and 4). Given there are little varieties of companies under study, it may affect the transferability of the study. The thesis may not be able to transfer the findings to different social groups. For instance, the lived experience could be very different for one working for a large multinational corporation versus a

small firm. Future research on different types and sizes of Chinese family businesses (CFBs) are suggested in order to gain an understanding of their practices. As the literature indicates that there is a tendency of partial representations of CFBs in the management discourse, the thesis particularly calls for more critical ethnographies to examine the practices of CFBs.

The third limitation is related to the period that the ethnography was conducted. The period of field visit is between 2012 and 2015 (i.e. most of the data presented is collected two years ago). Although visits were made occasionally during the years of 2016 and 2017, these follow-ups were mainly for clarifying some existing findings, instead of exploring new themes. However, changes in terms of the subject's lived experience have occurred in the recent two years. For instance, Betty and Bonnie decided to close down FB 2 at the end of 2016 because of financial difficulties and additional familial responsibilities. As a result, their lives would not be the same as before. However, due to the time constraint, this ethnography is unable to account for such a change. The thesis suggests conducting an updated or continuous investigation in the future, so that changes in the subject's lived experience can be examined.

The forth limitation is related to the place of research. The study is carried out in Hong Kong. Given China has 34 provinces, it is reasonable to argue that the dialect, culture, practice and living style of the Chinese vary across provinces, cities and districts. These variations would definitely affect how one lives. The lived experience and the views among the locals in Hong Kong could be dissimilar with the Chinese living in other areas. In that case, the analysis and practical implications offered by this study may be less applicable to the family businesses operated in other parts of China. Again, the transferability of the study may be confined to its specific context only. To explore more Chinese expressions, future investigations in various parts of China are encouraged. To add a layer of understanding of the local discourse, comparisons among these expressions are also recommended.

The fifth limitation is related to the dialogue. This study initiated a dialogue on theoretical level only, rather than on an actual level. In that case, a question on whether the theory is closely consistent with the practice is raised – To what extent does the cross-cultural theoretical analysis apply to the real practice? In response, more dialogues are encouraged. The dialogues are not only limited to theoretical level. They can be carried out in actual conversations, such as between the business practitioners in different countries, between the managers and the employees (Cheung, 2011), between the members and non-members of family business, etc... These dialogues may aid in developing mutual respect and understanding between both parties. To enable the two-way communication, each participant should be able to share the same discursive space, be treated as an equal partner and be allowed to speak out his/her opinions. In turns, the thesis calls for a continuous effort to overcome the problems of *objectification* and *essentialism*.

The thesis examines the concept of well-being and other local expressions within the context of Chinese family business in Hong Kong. The theoretical scope is clearly specified. Nevertheless, this study proposes critical examinations on other popular global management concepts such as teamwork, flexibility, sustainability and work-life balance, etc. The author encourages future research to examine these notions per se and investigate their significance across cultures.

A Closing Remark ...

The thesis starts by questioning the implicit universalism of a management concept – well-being. The problems of *objectification* and *essentialism* were suspected in a cross-cultural management discourse. To diagnose and overcome the problems, the thesis proposes taking both Foucault's (1979) archaeology and Geertz's (1973) 'thick description' respectively. The 'thick description' is further extended through a theoretical dialogue between both western and Chinese perspectives. Such a methodology is seldom in use in the management research. However, the thesis has demonstrated that its approach was capable of uncovering further layers of understanding about the phenomenon; these layers would be neglected if the mainstream positivist-functionalist approach was solely followed. Hence, the thesis calls for management diversity in which multiple perspectives and research methods are encouraged to broaden our horizons on various organizational phenomena and issues. Diversity requires business practitioners and researchers to put ethics in practice – accepting and recognising the views of each individual, but at the same time remain reflexive and critical. This is a key condition in which indigenous theories can be made possible in the future.

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Appendix A

Table A1: Methodologies Used by the Articles Reviewed

Year	Author(s)	Methodology	Venue(s)	Time horizons	Type(s) of sampling	Sample size	Response rate	Key informant(s)	Source(s) of data	Data collection method(s)	Level(s) of analysis	Analytical techniques
1989	Davidsson	Quantitative	Sweden	Cross-sectional	Stratified	Telephone Interview (N=439); Paper survey (N=337)	Telephone interview (81%); Paper survey (62%)	Small business owner-managers	Primary	Paper survey and telephone survey	Individual and organizational	Multiple regression
1993	Katz	Quantitative	N/A	Longitudinal (3 studies in 1969 and 1977)	Purposive	N/A	N/A	Self-employed and waged and salaried	Secondary	Secondary data	Individual	Secondary analysis approach
1995	Cooper and Artz	Quantitative	USA	Longitudinal (3-year study)	Simple random	287	N/A	Owners or managers	Primary	Paper survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, corrections, path analysis, ordinary least squares regression
1996	Nerkar, McGrath and Macmillan	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Purposive and snowball	168 project teams	100%	Innovation project teams in 40 firms	Primary	Paper survey	Team	Descriptive statistics, corrections, ordinary least square regression, factor analysis
1996	Shabbir and Gregorio	Qualitative	Pakistan	Cross-sectional	Simple random	33	N/A	Potential or actual women entrepreneurs	Primary	In-depth interview	Individual	Thematic analysis and pattern identification (i.e. develop themes within categories and pattern within variables)
1999	Hornsby, Kuratko and Montagno	Quantitative	USA and Canada	Cross-sectional	Stratified	6 US firms (N=174); 12 Canadian firms (N=353)	95%	Managers	Primary	Paper survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, corrections, mean comparison using t-test
1999	Danes, Zuiker, Kean and Arbuthnot	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Purposive and judgmental	414	N/A	Owner-managers: Business managers and household managers	Primary	Telephone survey	Individual	Corrections, mean comparison using t-test, ordinary least square regression
2001	Karofsky et al.	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Simple random	156	18%	Owners of family businesses	Primary	Paper survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, corrections, stepwise regression

Table A1: Methodologies Used by the Articles Reviewed

Year	Author(s)	Methodology	Venue(s)	Time horizons	Type(s) of sampling	Sample size	Response rate	Key informant(s)	Source(s) of data	Data collection method(s)	Level(s) of analysis	Analytical techniques
2003	Wiklund, Davidsson and Delmar	Quantitative	Sweden	Longitudinal (3 studies over 10 years)	Purposive and judgmental	1248	Study 1 (83%); Study 2 (55%); Study 3 (75%)	Managing directors and majority owners	Primary	Telephone survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, corrections, multiple linear regression
2003	Simona, Houghtonb and Savellia	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Purposive and judgmental	55	90%	Top managers/owners in 61 computer companies	Primary	Paper survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, corrections, regression
2003	Danes and Olsons	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Purposive	391	N/A	Family business owning couples	Primary	Telephone survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, mean comparison using t-test
2003	Smyrnios et al.	Quantitative	USA and Australia	Cross-sectional	Quota	US sample (N=156); Australian sample (N=1320)	US sample (18%); Australian sample (33%)	Business owners	Primary	Paper survey	Individual and familial	Descriptive statistics, mean comparison using t-test, structural equation modeling
2005	Vera and Dean	Qualitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Simple random	10	N/A	Female family business owners	Primary	In-depth structured interview	Individual	Content analysis, pattern and themes identification
2007	Brigham, De Castro and Shepherd	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Purposive	159	22.1%	Owner-managers	Primary	Paper survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, correlations, one way ANOVA, hierarchical regression, logistic regression, factor analysis, cluster analysis
2007	Schjoedt and Shaver	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Purposive and judgmental	1216	Nearly 70%	Entrepreneurs and comparison group	Primary	Paper survey and telephone survey	Individual	2x2 ANOVA, 2X3 ANOVA and 2x3x2 ANOVA
2007	Björnberg and Nicholson	Quantitative	UK	Cross-sectional	Purposive	291	Paper survey (90%)	Staff, faculty, and students from various U.K. institutions of higher education	Primary	Paper survey and online survey	Individual and familial	Descriptive statistics, corrections, mean comparison using t-test, multivariate analysis, exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling
2008	Hmieleski and Corbett	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Simple random	159	19.3%	Entrepreneurs	Primary	Paper survey	Individual and organizational	Descriptive statistics, corrections, mean comparison using t-test, moderated hierarchical regression

Table A1: Methodologies Used by the Articles Reviewed

Year	Author(s)	Methodology	Venue(s)	Time horizons	Type(s) of sampling	Sample size	Response rate	Key informant(s)	Source(s) of data	Data collection method(s)	Level(s) of analysis	Analytical techniques
2008	Bluedorn and Martin	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Stratified	191	21.2%	Entrepreneurs	Primary	Paper survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, corrections, mean comparison using t-test, hierarchical regression
2009	Foo	Quantitative	USA and Singapore	Cross-sectional	Purposive and convenience	Study 1 (N=187); Study 2 (N=66)	20%	Study 1: students; Study 2: entrepreneurs	Primary	Paper survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, correlations, one way ANOVA, mean comparison using t-test, ordered probit analyses, ordinary least square
2009	Schjoedt	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Purposive	547	25%	Entrepreneurs and non-founding top managers	Primary	Paper survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, correlations, ANOVA, mean comparison using t-test, regression
2009	Monsen and Boss	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Purposive and judgmental	1975	70%	Managers and staff in 110 departments	Primary	Paper survey	Individual and organizational	Descriptive statistics, corrections, scale univariate statistics, reliability testing, match-pairs t-tests, exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling
2010	Mahto, Davis, Pearce II and Robinson Jr	Quantitative	USA	Longitudinal (Survey 1 in 1997; Survey 2 in 2002)	Purposive and judgmental	Survey 1 (N=1835); Survey 2: (N=389)	Survey 1 (60.5%); Survey 2 (34%)	Family respondents in top management team	Primary	Paper survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, corrections, path analysis, confirmatory factor analysis
2010	Gielnik, Zacher and Frese	Quantitative	Germany	Cross-sectional	Simple random	84	N/A	Small business owners	Primary	Paper survey and face-to-face interview survey	Individual and organizational	Descriptive statistics, corrections, nonparametric test, path analysis, post-hoc analysis
2011	Lee, Wong, Foo and Leung	Quantitative	Singapore and Malaysia	Cross-sectional	Stratified	4199	44%	Information technology professionals	Primary	Paper survey	Individual and organizational	Descriptive statistics, corrections, ANOVA and regression
2011	Simon and Shrader	Both quantitative and qualitative	USA	Longitudinal	Purposive	55	40.8%	Executives / managers	Primary	Paper survey and qualitative-based interview	Individual and organizational	Descriptive statistics, corrections, regression, content analysis
2011	Patzelt and Shepherd	Quantitative	USA	Cross-sectional	Stratified	2700	71%	US citizens	Primary	Face-to-face interview survey	Individual	Descriptive statistics, corrections, hierarchical regression

Table A2: Research Designs Employed

	<u>Total number of studies</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
<u>Methodology</u>		
Quantitative	23	88%
Qualitative	2	8%
Both quantitative and qualitative	1	4%
<u>Time</u>		
Cross-sectional	21	81%
Longitudinal	5	19%
<u>Venue(s) of study</u>		
America	19	73%
Europe	4	15%
Australia	1	4%
Asia	3	12%
Mixed	4	15%

(Percentages do not sum to 100 because some studies use multiple approaches)

Table A3: Data Collection

	<u>Total number of studies</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
<u>Source(s) of data</u>		
Primary	25	96%
Secondary	1	4%
Both primary and secondary	0	0%
<u>Method of collection</u>		
Paper survey	19	73%
Telephone survey	5	19%
Personal interview survey	2	8%
Online survey	1	4%
Qualitative-based interview/ In-depth interview	3	12%

(Percentages do not sum to 100 because some studies use multiple approaches)

Table A4: Data Analysis

	<u>Total number of studies</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
<u>Level(s) of analysis</u>		
Individual	25	96%
Group		
- Familial	2	8%
- Team	1	4%
Organizational	6	23%
Societal	0	0%
Single level of analysis	18	69%
Multiple levels of analysis	8	31%
<u>Analytical approach</u>		
Quantitative		
- Descriptive statistics	20	77%
- Correlation	18	69%
- Mean comparison using t-test	9	35%
- ANOVA / MANOVA	6	23%
- Regression	14	54%
- Factor analysis	5	19%
- Cluster analysis	1	4%
- Path analysis	3	12%
- Structural equation modeling	3	12%
- Other	5	19%
Qualitative	3	12%
Secondary analysis	1	4%

(Percentages do not sum to 100 because some studies use multiple approaches)

Appendix B

Table B1: Philosophical Perspectives in the Social Sciences

Assumptions	Positivism	Interpretivism	Critical perspective
1. Ontology:			
a. Reality is/are	- objective, 'out there' to be found - perceived through the senses - perceived uniformly by all peoples - governed by universal law - based on integration	- 'subjective', in people's minds - created, not found - interpreted differently by people - objectified through human interaction	- both 'out there' and in people's minds - complex: appearance is not reality - created by people, not by nature - in tension / full of contradictions - based on oppression and exploitation
b. Human beings	- rational individuals - obeying external laws - without free will	- creators of their world - making sense of their world - not restricted by external laws - creating systems of meanings	- creators of their destiny - oppressed, alienated, exploited, restricted - brainwashed, misled, conditioned - hindered from realizing their potential
2. Epistemology:			
a. Science	- based on strict rules and procedures - deductive - relying on sense impression - value free	- agreement with actor's common sense interpretation - inductive - relying on logical consistency and interpretations - not value free	- conditions shape life but can be changed - emancipating, empowering - relying on sense impression and values - temporal and context-bound - not value free
b. Knowledge in the form of	Explanation	Interpretation	Understanding
c. Research aims to	- explain social life - predict course of event - discover the laws of social life - seek out causes	- interpret social life - understand social life - discover people's meanings	- explain, interpret and elucidate - reveal myths and illusions - reveal power and mechanisms - emancipate and empower - identify and challenge/question domination and ideological practices
d. Data	- social facts	- social interaction	- historical, structural and ideological
e. Researcher	- independent observer	- part of what is observed	- engager and actor of reality

(Modified from: Chua, 1986; Harvey and MacDonald, 1993, p.9; Sarantakos, 1998, p. 40)

Table B2: Discursive (Trans)Formation

Discursive Formation			
Definition: “Whenever one can describe, between a number of statement, such system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define regularity (an order, correction, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation ... The conditions to which the elements of this division (object, mode of statement, concepts, thematic choices) are subjected we shall call the rules of formation. The rules of formation are conditions of existence (but also of coexistence, maintenance, modification, and disappearance) in a given discursive division” (p.38).			
Type of formation	Meaning	Ways to account for the formation	
(1) Formation of objects	Examines a question: “what has ruled their existence as objects of discourse?” (p.41)	I. “map the first surface of their emergence” (p.41)	
	“One might say, then, that a discursive formation is defined (as far as its objects are concerned, at least) if one can establish such a group; if one can show how any particular object of discursive finds in its place and law of emergence” (p.44).	II. “describe the authorities of delimitation” (p.41) III. “analyse the grid of specification” (p.42)	
(2) Formation of enunciate modalities	“discover the law operating behind all these diverse statements, and the place from which they come” (p.50).	Ask: I. “Who is speaking?” (p.50) – ‘Who is qualified to speak?’ II. ‘Where is the speaking taking place?’ (p.50). III. ‘How is the discourse made possible?’ (p.50).	
(3) Formation of concepts	Describes the “group of relations that constitutes a system of conceptual formation” (p.60)	Defined through: I. “forms of succession” (p.56) II. “forms of co-existence” (p.57) III. “procedures of intervention” (p.58).	
(4) Formation of strategies	Examine the formations of any ‘themes’ or ‘theories’ (p.64)	I. “Determine the possible points of diffraction of discourse” (p.65) II. study “the economy of the discursive constellation to which it belongs to” (p.67) III. examine how “the determination of the theoretical choices that were actually made is also dependent upon another authority” (p.67).	
Ways of Transformation			
(1) “may undergo a number of intrinsic mutations that are integrated into discursive practice without the general form of regularity being altered” (pp.74-75) Meaning: Although the elements in the discourse may change, the rules and laws of the formation are the same. Thus, the system itself preserves individuality, with the same group of relations being established.		(2) “the discursive practices modify the domains that they related to one another” (p.75). Meaning: The elements in the discourse would be articulated with one another, which lead to changes and modifications on the group of relations that has been established and developed.	
Operated through: I. “a single positivity” (p.171) in each level of events		II. “the analysis of transformations” (p.172)	III. “new rules of formation” (p.173); IV. “the appearance and disappearance of positivities” (p.175).

(Source: Foucault, 1972)

Table B3: Types of Thresholds

Type of Threshold	Description
(1) Threshold of positivity	<i>“The moment at which a discursive practice achieves individuality and autonomy, the moment therefore at which a single system for the formation of statement is put into operation, or the moment at which this system is transformed, might be called the threshold of positivity” (p. 186).</i>
(2) Threshold of epistemologization	<i>“When in the operation of a discursive formation, a group of statement is articulated, claims to validate (even unsuccessfully) norms of verification and coherence, and when it exercises a dominant function (as a model, a critique, or a verification) over knowledge, we will say that the discursive formation crosses a threshold of epistemologization” (pp. 186 – 187).</i>
(3) Threshold of scientificity	<i>“When the epistemological figure thus outlined obeys a number of formal criteria, when its statements comply not only with archaeological rules of formation, but also with certain laws for the construction of propositions, we will say that it has crossed a threshold of scientificity” (p.187).</i>
(4) Threshold of formalization	<i>“And when this scientific discourse is able, in turn, to define the axioms necessary to it, the elements that it uses, the propositional structure that are legitimate to it, and the transformations that it accepts, when it is thus able, taking itself as a starting-point, to deploy the formal edifice that it constitutes, we will say that it has crossed the threshold of formalization” (p.187).</i>

(Source: Foucault, 1972)

Table B4: Profiles of the Informants**a. Profiles of the informants in the four field sites**

Family business	People	Descriptions	Remarks	Interview
FB 1: An education centre	Mrs. Ada	Role: Family worker Age: 40s Education: Bachelor business degree	Ada is referred by Gigi. Ada is a family worker of a family business, owned by her mother. She is married and has a daughter and a son.	✓
	Mrs. Alice	Role: Owner Age: 60s	Alice is the mother of Ada and an owner of FB 1. FB 1 has two branches in the same district and offers educational services, mainly to the primary school and secondary school students.	✓
	Ms. Amy	Role: Teacher Age: 20s	Amy is working as a full-time teacher in FB 1 for several years. She is mainly responsible for the teaching and administration work.	✓
	Mrs. Ann	Role: Teacher Age: 30s	Mrs. Ann is working as a full-time teacher in FB 1 for several years. She is mainly responsible for the teaching and administration work.	✓
	Mrs. Ashley	Role: Employee Age: 40s	Ms. Ashley is working as a full time employee since 2005. She is mainly responsible for pantry work.	✓
	Mrs. Audrey	Role: Teacher Age: 40s Education: Bachelor degree	Mrs. Audrey is working as a full-time teacher in FB 1 for several years. She studied in the same college with Ada's sister, and therefore has a close and long friendship with Ada's family. She is mainly responsible for the teaching and housekeeping in another branch. She is married and has children.	✓
	Ms. Averi	Role: Tutor (part-time) Age: 20s	Ms. Averi is working as part-time tutor in FB 1. She also works for the family business (FB 8) owned by her father.	✓
	Ms. Alysia	Role: Tutor (part-time) Age: 20s	Ms. Alysia is working as a part-time tutor in FB 1. She is a new tutor.	✓
	Ms. Abbey	Role: Tutor (part-time) Age: 40s	Ms. Abbey is working as a part-time tutor in FB 1 for around 6 years.	✓
	Ms. Abegail	Role: Teacher Age: 20s	Ms. Abegail was a full-time teacher in FB 1. She worked there for a few years and has resigned.	
	Ms. Ally	Role: Teacher Age: 20s	Ms. Ally was a full-time teacher in FB 1. She has resigned. She was once referred by Alice's neighbor.	
	Ms. Apple	Role: Tutor (part-time) Age: 40s	Ms. Apple is a new part-time tutor. Due to her poor performance, she was being terminated.	
	Part-time employees		FB 1 employs part-time teaching staff to conducting tutorials. Most of them are university's students or housewives.	

Table B4: Profiles of the Informants**a. Profiles of the informants in the four field sites**

Family business	People	Descriptions	Remarks	Interview
FB 2: A dance studio	Ms. Betty	Role: Owner Age: 30s Education: Master degree in Accountancy	Ms. Betty is the owner of FB 2. She is a ballet dancer. Opening a dance studio is her dream. She initiated to start the business with her close friend, Mrs. Bonnie.	✓
	Mrs. Bonnie	Role: Owner Age: 30s Education: Diploma in Hospitality	Mrs. Bonnie is the owner of FB 2. She has a full-time job as a flight attendant. She is married and has a 3 years old daughter.	✓
	Mr. Bob	Role: Limited partner Age: 50s	Mr. Bob was once Betty's superior. He seldom engages in the operation of FB 2. He mainly offers financial support to Betty.	✓
	Ms. Brenda	Role: Full-time employee Age: 20s	Ms. Brenda was the first full time employees of FB2. She was responsible for teaching, as well as administration work. Her employment ended due to the economic problem of FB 2.	✓
	Mrs. Blossom	Role: Full-time employee Age: 30s	Ms. Blossom was the second full-time employees of FB 2. She was responsible for teaching, as well as administration work. Her employment ended due to the economic problem of FB 2.	✓
	Ms. Bessy	Role: Part-time teacher Age: 30s	Ms. Bessy is Betty's friend. They usually dance together. She teaches the Yoga course.	✓

Family business	People	Descriptions	Remarks	Interview
FB 3: A jade accessory maker	Uncle Carl	Role: Owner Age: 60s Education: Primary school level	Uncle Carl is a jade accessory maker for over 30 years. He has a retail store, selling his products. He also works at home. He is the sole work in the business.	✓
	Auntie Connie	Role: Carl's wife Age: late 50s Education: Primary school level	Auntie Connie is Carl's wife. They have been married for over 20 years. She is a full-time housewife.	✓
	Mr. Carson	Role: Carl's eldest son Age: 30s Education: Secondary school level	Mr Carson is Carl's eldest son. He is working as a driver in a logistic company. He seldom involves in the FB 3.	✓
	Mrs. Cindy	Role: Carl's eldest sister Age: 60s Education: Primary school level	Mrs. Cindy is Carl's sister. She is the wife of Mr. Isaac (FB 10). She often visits Carl and Connie for social chats and family gatherings.	✓

Table B4: Profiles of the informants**a. Profiles of the informants in the four field sites**

Family business	People	Descriptions	Remarks	Interview
FB 4: A fashion business	Ms. Doris	Role: Owner Age: 40s Education: Master degree in Art and Fashion Design	Ms. Doris is a fashion designer. She opens FB 4 with her boss, Dave. She runs a fashion retails store in Central.	✓
	Mr. Dominic	Role: Full-time driver Age: late 40s	Mr. Dominic is the full-time driver of FB 4. He is mainly responsible for the office technical maintenance and logistic arrangement.	✓
	Mr. Dave	Role: Owner Age: 50s	Mr. Dave is Doris's boss. He trusts Doris and relies very much on her to run the business. He is the key financial provider of the business.	✓
	Ms. Daisy	Role: Part-time employee Age: 20s	Ms. Daisy is studying fashion in the Honk Kong Polytechnics University. She is working as a part-time employee in FB 4. When Doris and I are unable look after the retail store, Daisy would work and manage the operation.	✓
	Mr. Daniel	Role: Doris's brother-in-law Age: 40s	Mr. Daniel is Gigi's husband. He often helps Doris in graphic designs.	✓

Table B4: Profiles of the Informants**b. Profiles of Human Resources Professional (HRP)**

HRP	Company	Descriptions	Remarks	Interview
Mr. Peter	A trading MNC	Role: HR director Age: 50s Education: Bachelor degree in Engineering	Mr. Peter works in a trading MNC which its operates across Asia, Europe and Australia. Peter is referred to by my colleague. He was previously an Engineering manager, and had been transferred to the works of training and development since 1992. Now, he is the Group Human Resource Director.	✓
Ms. Paris	Educational Institute	Role: HR Officer Age: 20s Education: Master degree in Project Management	Ms. Paris is working as a HR officer in one educational institute. She was my past students. Her HR work focuses on training and development. Her family runs a family business- a restaurant.	✓
Mrs. Pansy	Banking	Role: Training Officer Age: 30s Education: Bachelor degree in Hospitality	Mrs. Pansy is referred by my colleague. She is a training officer in one international bank.	✓
Ms. Patricia	Accounting and Auditing Firm	Role: HR consultant Age: 30s Education: Master degree in Organisational Psychology	Ms. Patricia is my previous colleague. She is an organisational psychologist. She is responsible for organising training and development for her company.	✓
Ms. Pauline	Consultancy Firm	Role: HR Consultant Age: 40s	Ms. Pauline is referred by Patricia. They worked together as HR consultants before.	✓

Table B4: Profiles of the Informants

c. Profiles of the informants in other companies

Family business	People	Descriptions	Remarks	Interview
FB 5: A logistics company	Mr. Edmond	Role: Managing Director Age: 30s Education: Bachelor business degree from overseas	Mr. Edmond is my contact in church. He was the successor of FB 5. His family business was sold in the early 2012. He is now an employee of a logistic multinational firm, and is responsible for work related to sales and marketing. He is married and has a one-year old child	
	Mrs. Eden	Role: Housewife Age: 30s Education: Full-time PhD student and received her college and university education from overseas	Mrs. Eden is the wife of Edmond. She is currently a full-time PhD student in Hong Kong, and a full-time housewife.	
FB 6: A trading company	Fiona	Role: Employee Age: 30s Education: Received education from overseas	Fiona is referred by my friend. She had lived and studied in Canada for many years. Few years ago, she decided to come back to Hong Kong. She was an English teacher of my friend. Few months ago, she has changed to work for a family business, which is a trading company. Her roles in that trading firm are to improve the efficiency of its business process, offer suggestions for change and manage the change process.	✓
FB 7: A graphic design and illustration business	Mrs. Gigi	Role: Graphic designer and illustrator Age: 40s Education: Bachelor degree in Hong Kong	Mrs. Gig is my close contact. She has started her graphic design business in 2012. While she is running her business, she is also a working as full-time graphic designer in a company.	✓
FB 8: A transportation service company	Ms. Averi	Role: Family worker Age: 20s	FB 8 is a small family business, offering transportation service for some schools. Ms. Averi is a family worker of that family business, which owned by her father. She is responsible for taking care of the school's kids during the transportation.	✓
FB 9: Local Bank (MNC)	Ms. Hestia	Role: Manager Age: 30s	FB 9, a local bank, which is found by a family business. It has become a MNC.	✓
FB 10: A metal work company	Mr. Isaac	Role: Retired owner Age: 70s Education: Up to college level	FB 10 was a metal work company, founded by Mr. Isaac's father. Isaac was the successor of FB 10. He closed the business in 2005.	

Table B5: A Sample of the Field Diary

Date: 14 June 2012

Time: 1:00 – 5:30 pm

Duration: 4.5 hours

Setting: Company visit

Business: Education (FB 1)

People: Ada (full-time family worker) + Amy and Ann (full-time employees) + Abbey and Averi (part-time employees) + Mrs. Alice (the owner of the business/Ada's mother) + several part-time employees

Field notes

Today, I went out for work in the morning and left the office at around 11:45am. As usual, while I was on my way to the FB 2 for the fieldwork, I sent a Whatsapp to Ada, reminding her that I would come for a company visit this afternoon. Then she replied: "I almost forget u come today! Remember please do NOT buy anything if u come this time." Indeed, as a matter of courtesy, I have already bought some cookies as a gift of this visit. However, from her reply, I guess she starts getting familiar with my regular visits. Therefore, I sent a Whatsapp message to her, asking if I can increase my frequency of visits during summer holidays. She then replied "Okay, actually u can come anytime u like. In July and August, we open Mon to Fri from 9:00-7:00pm; In June, 10:00-7:30pm. U can come without prior notice. If u wanna talk to me, u can come after 1:00pm. For this week, u better come in Thurs, coz this week is Exam week. One of the three schools finishes the exam on Thurs, so less crowded." After receiving her reply, I feel more at ease, because her reply shows an indication of rapport and trust over our relationship.

It was a lunch time when I arrived to the centre at around 1pm. Once I got out of the lift, I saw students lining up, preparing to go downstairs. As they have already blocked the entrance of the centre, I stood in front of the lift, showed a smile to them and waited for a while. Then I saw a teacher (who I haven't known her name yet) came out from the centre, walked to the exit next to the centre and led the students to go downstairs. While they were walking down, Mrs. Alice came out. She saw me and gave me a smile as greeting. I approached her with a smile and asked her: "Where are the students going?". Then she answered me: "They have just finished their lunch and now they need to go to another centre for tutorials". Without knowing that a teacher has just come out and was leading the students to go down, Mrs. Alice questioned why the students went down without waiting for any teachers to lead them. I immediately told her: "I saw a teacher came out already and she has gone to the front of the queue. She is now leading the students to go downstairs". Mrs. Alice responded: "Oh, really? A teacher has come out already! Let me take a look!". Then she immediately went to the front of the queue and had a check to make sure there was a teacher there. As Mrs. Alice had gone downstairs for a check, I went to the centre.

As I entered the centre, I saw Ada, sitting in the reception. I went to the reception and said 'hi' to her. I told her that I have already bought some cookies before I received her message. She replied with smile: "It's ok, you can go into the classroom and bring the cookies to the staff." I put down my bag in the reception and went to the classroom C with Ada. When we arrived the classroom C, there were three teachers inside (including Amy, Ann and Averi). Ada told them my name and gave them the cookies that I have bought to them. After introducing my name, she turned to me and said "Alright, you can introduce yourself and chat with them freely." Then she left the classroom and went back to the reception.

I'm always cautious to the possibility that the other non-family employees may perceive I'm a spy or another power broker. With this caution in mind, after Ada has left, I told the teachers that my presence was solely for the purpose of my PhD study. Then we chatted for a few minute, in which they asked me things related to my work and study. Since it was an exam period, the lesson started earlier at 2pm. I stayed in the classroom C to observe the class operation.

Ms. Ann's tutorial in classroom C (general operation)

In classroom C, Ann was responsible for taking care a group of students (I guess they were in primary 5 or 6), while there was a part-time teacher (Abbey) who was responsible for teaching another group of students (I guess they were in primary 3 or 4). Similar to Amy's class that I observed last time, students would start the tutorial by working on their homework. Once they finished an assignment, they would put it in the middle of the table and waited for Ann and Abbey to check for correctness. When they have finished all the assignments, Ann and Abbey would give further exercises to them as revisions for the exam. When students finish their exercises, they would again put them in the middle of the table and wait for the teachers to mark them. Therefore, during the tutorial, Ann and Abbey were keep checking the assignments / marking exercises. Whenever there are serious mistakes in the student's answer, they would teach him/her individually until he/she understands the appropriate approach to tackle the question. If there are no big mistakes, they would give back the marked script to the student and ask him/her to make corrections to those minor errors.

Maintaining discipline

Students would call the teachers as "Miss (the last name of the teacher)", instead of calling their first names / nick names. There are 4 big benches in classroom C. Most students would sit in the same bench with their teachers. Only those who regarded as 'naughty' and 'lazy' were assigned by Ann or Abbey to sit in another

two benches where they were being separated from the majority. Ann and Abbey would sometimes verbally warn those students who do not pay attention in doing their works: “你再唔專心做,就坐過去!”。 Similar to Amy, Ann and Abbey emphasized on efficiency, effectiveness and tidiness. I often heard Ann and Abbey, instructed the students with their authoritative tone, saying: “你好快 d 做啦 wor!” , “改左正先啦!” , “考試唔好錯就得啦”。 Ann would also required the students to be tidy, such as she asked a student to tidy up his table: “執番乾淨 d 野!”; she scolded a student as he put everything in one file without any systematic categorization: “點解你個 file 咁亂家,咁我點同你跟呀!”。 In response, the students showed respect to Ann and Abbey and followed their instructions, e.g. one student asked Ann, about which exercise she should attempt first. Ms. C responded by saying “你改左正先, 改完正就做邊份都得!”。

Although Ann tried to maintain an authoritative image, she would sometime chat with the students in a warm atmosphere. For instance, there was an occasion when Ann knew she has mistakenly scolded a student. She then said to that student jokingly: “我唔好意思,我知唔關你事,你俾我鬧下啦!”。 Another example is on one occasion when she made jests in class, she said “等你地喺繁忙嘅做卷生活中,有 d 野調劑下”。

Ann demanded students to help each others in class. In class, she would ask for assistance from a student to help her with the photo-copying and stapling. She also dislikes those students who would laugh at others' mistakes. For instance, there was one occasion that a student laughed at his classmate since his classmate has made a mistake in his assignment. Ann saw that student, laughed at the other student. She immediately scolded that student, saying “笑咩笑? 最憎人幸災樂禍家啦!”。

Similar to Amy, Ann and Abbey would maintain a reinforcement system. Whenever students managed to finish their works with high accuracy, they would reward them with some snacks, such as biscuits and candies. They have said: “做得快同啱嘅,就有野食”。 In contrast, whenever students performed badly, they would give them more exercises as punishment. They normally says :”做唔好,就做多份先走!”。

Ada's sharing of an incident happened

While I was observing their lesson, Ada came in and told me that a government official will come and have an official check up. She commented that “最恐怖係咁 . . . 成日擔驚受怕, 要等佢黎 ...”。

Mrs. Ashley: Pantry work and clerical works

Today, I was sitting in a left upper corner, next to the photo-copier and an open cabinet that stores the stationery. Sometimes, students approached to the cabinet next to me and took some recycled papers for calculation. The photo-coping machine and the automatic electronic stapler were not working properly. Averi (a part-time teaching staff) has once came the photo-copier and said to the machine, “你乖乖啲呀!”。 A student who has helped Amy for photo-copying has commented: “好野! X Miss, 完成左啦, 無 jam 紙呀!”。 Therefore, when the staff or students came to have the photo-copying or use the automatic electronic stapler, I would try to offer some assistance to them.

While I was observing the lesson, Mrs. Alice came to the classroom and asked Mrs. Ashley to tidy up the used papers which were placed next to the photo-copier machine. I initiated to offer a helping hand and Mrs. Alice and Ashley accepted my assistance. While I was tidying up the used paper, I chatted with Ashley. She has been a full-time non-family worker in this company since 2005. She is mainly responsible for pantry works and clerical assistance. She is usually responsible for preparing food for the students and bringing them from the schools to the center. I asked her why she joined the company. She answered: “因為以前個阿姐走, 所以咪介紹我入黎, X 太好好人”。 Then I asked her where she is living, she responded with a smile: “住喺附近, 所以咪隨傳隨到囉!”。 I wondered whether her smile and response “所以咪隨傳隨到囉” bears any negative connotation?

Mrs. Alice (the owner's story of the Past)

At the beginning of the tutorial, Mrs. Alice would usually walk around to oversee the operation of each class and arrange students to the appropriate classrooms. For instance, a student came into the classroom C and asked Ms. Amy which class he should attend today. Then Ms. Amy answered him: “今日坐喺邊? 要問 Mrs. Alice 喎!”。

Occasionally, Mrs. Alice would chat with the students and motivate them to work harder by saying “努力, 快 d!”。 While I was helping Ashley to tidy up the used paper, Mrs. Alice chatted with the students next to me. She told the students with a proud tone and face, saying: “我哋 96 年就開業,你哋都未出世呀! 以前第一年 d 學生, 有幾個過左去英國讀醫啦”。 Then I responded “你一定好安慰!”。 Mrs. Alice kept on with her story: “以前 d 學生資質好 d... 以家嘅 d 懶。” Then Amy responded, “以前教 d 野都深 d 啦!”

Diary: My personal interpretations and critical reflections after the visit

This time, I had chance to get involved in some ad hoc administrative tasks. The staff and owners started getting familiar with my regularly visit and I started feeling I'm being part of the company.

Date: 2 Nov 2012

Time: 2:00 – 7:00 pm

Duration: 5 hours

Setting: Company visit

Business: Education (FB 1)

People: Ada (full-time family worker) + Amy and Ann (full-time employees) + Abegail (resigned full time employee) + Abbey and Averil (part-time employees) + Mrs. Alice (the owner of the business/Ada's mother) + several part-time employees

Field notes

Short chat with Ms Abegail

As usual, I go for a company visit on every Friday's afternoon. Today, I arrived to the building of the center at around 1:45pm. When I headed to the entrance of the building, I met a familiar face – a lady, with a white face and a medium hairstyle, was standing there. I was quite sure that this “familiar face” is one of the teachers of FB 1, but I could not remember her name. As a matter of courtesy, we smiled at each other and said “hi”. With my curiosity, I stopped at the entrance and asked her why she was standing here. She answered with her gentle soft voice: “I’m waiting for the school bus. I need to pick up several primary school students and bring them up to the center... Actually, this group of student would normally go to the center by themselves. However, in this semester, there is a primary one student in this group... so it would be safer for us to come down and pick up them... just in case they may get lost given they are still very young”. I said “yes” and nodded my head to indicate an agreement. After the greeting, instead of going upstairs to the center, I thought this was a nice opportunity to stay with her and have a chat. Therefore, I asked her if I could stay and observe the ways she picked up the kids. She showed a warm smile and nodded her head as a sign of “yes” and “welcome”. To avoid misunderstanding, I first introduced myself and clarified why I was here. After I have introduced myself, she responded: “我見過你家啦 (I have met you before)”. I responded: “O, really? You also look familiar. How should I call you?” She answered: “My name is Abegail”. After she has told me her name, I immediately recognized that she is “Ms Abegail”, one of the full-time teachers I met in June 2012. I haven't met her since our first encounter in June. When I first met her in June, she had a long hair. But now, she has cut her hair and maybe that's why I couldn't recognize her straight away. Once I recognized her, I responded immediately: “O, yes, I remembered you. Why haven't I met you in the center for several months?” After I have asked this question, she looked a bit embarrassed and responded: “Yes, em ... may be because I normally stay in another center (i.e. Centre 2)...” Even though I don't understand why she feels hesitant to my question, I immediately changed to another topic and asked her about her normal work duties. She went on and said: “This semester, I'm responsible for teaching a group of primary three students ... In the morning, I would normally correct students' works and print out some exercises for the coming lessons.” Then I asked her how she found this job. She replied: “Through jump (i.e. an online recruitment website offered by Ming Pao newspaper)”. While we were chatting, a student, came in with his casual wear. I recognized that student is a nephew of Ms. Amy (one of the full-time teacher) here. When Ms. Abegail saw him, she asked him “Don't you need to go to school today?” That student answered: “No, today's a school holiday” and then he went into the building and went upstairs to the center. Afterwards, the school bus came and Ms. Abegail and I picked up five students to the center. After watching those students went into the center, Ms. Abegail said good-bye to me as she needed to go back to center 2.

That was a short conversation with Ms Abegail. I wondered: “Why did she feel embarrassed when I ask her the reasons for not seeing her for several months?”, “Why did her reaction seems a bit different from last time?”, “Did I ask any inappropriate questions?”, “Has any special incidents happened to her within these few months?”...

Critical incident: Government official checkup again!

When I got into the centre, I saw Ms. Ada was standing in front of the reception. I wondered why she would stand in the reception today, because usually she would stay in the classroom 3 to have her lunch or chat with others. Although I was eager to chat with her, I decided not to disturb her at that moment because she was busy in governing the discipline of the centre and most importantly, assigning students to the appropriate teacher / table. As a result, we smiled to each other as greeting. Then, I approached to classroom 3 straight away.

As usual, I sat down to the table next to the photo-copier. There were two part-time teachers (Ms. Averil and Ms. Abbey) inside the room. Ms. Averil was doing the photo-copying, while Ms. Abbey was correcting the students' worksheets. Then a boy, at around primary 5-6 level, came into the center. Ms. Averil saw that student and felt surprised. She immediately complained to Ms. Amy who has just picked up another group of students and arrived to the center. She complained to Ms. Amy: “佢又突然返左黎啦! (Again, he comes up suddenly)”. By that time, I realized that this boy was supposed to attend the class on tomorrow, instead of today. Ms. Amy approached to him and said angrily: “你又做咩突然返黎呀? 唔可以唔講聲就返黎家喇!無預野俾你做喇! (Why do you come back? You can't come back to the center without any advance notice! ((We) haven't prepared any work for you!))” That student responded: “I don't know! Today, my mum told me to come back (for tutorial)”. While Ms. Amy kept saying to him “唔可以唔講聲就返黎家喇!無預野俾你做喇! (You can't come back to the center without any advance notice! (We) haven't prepared any work for you!))”, she took out some mathematics exercises to him. Ms. Amy assigned him to sit at the same table as mine and asked him to finish the

exercises. After giving him the exercises, Ms. Amy took her belongings. Seeing Ms. Amy's intention to leave, he immediately asked: "Where are you going, Ms. Amy? Will you stay in the centre today?" With a weird face and tone, Ms. Amy simply gave a very general answer: "Er... 我有野做呀! (Er... I have something to do!)"

I wondered why Ms. Amy needs to leave the center. At first, I thought may be she need to take a day leave for today. While I was wondering, Ms. Ann and Mrs Alice came into the classroom 3. They were discussing the students' arrangement for today. Mrs. Alice told one part-time teacher, Ms. Abbey to move to the table, which was previously used by Ms. Amy. Then, Ms. Ann assigned a new student (a girl) to Ms. Abbey. That new student was previously in Ms. Amy's group and she asked Ms. Abbey unhappily: "Can I go back to Ms Amy's class?". Ms. Abbey told Ms. Ann her request. Then Ms. Ann told that student: "You can either go to my class or Ms Abbey's class. Which one would you like to choose?" That student replied: "Neither one. I just want to go back to Ms Amy's class." Ms. Ann responded: "無家啦! 你問 Mrs. Alice lor (No, otherwise, you need to ask Mrs Alice)." That student showed an unhappy face and did not repeat her request anymore. I understand why Ms. Ann told the student to ask Mrs. Alice, because everyone in the centre shows high respect to Mrs Alice. All staff, students, parents and even I show our respect to Mrs. Alice by accepting her decisions, following her instructions, talking with her in a polite manner and listening to her patiently. Therefore, in dealing with troubles related to the class arrangement, the teachers would always refer to Mrs. Alice, knowing that by referring to Mrs. Alice, the students / parents would immediately accept the arrangement.

Then Ms. Ann moved Ms. Averi's files to classroom 4. When Ms. Averi came with her group of primary one school kids, she was surprised that her file was disappeared. She immediately went to the reception and asked Ms. Ann. Ms Ann told her that today, she needed to move to classroom 4. I realize that today the class arrangements seem quite abnormal, especially when Ms. Amy and her group of students were not in the center. Besides, Ms Ann and Mrs. Alice were behaving alertly, as they were busy in walking around the centre to make sure the performance of each group runs smoothly. At that time, all teachers are concentrating on the lessons and Mrs. Alice is busy with the class arrangement. Since I always try to avoid creating any interruptions, I did not ask the staff for why today's arrangement seems abnormal. While I was wondering what's happening, I suddenly realized that I haven't seen Ms. Ada today. Later, a boy asked Mrs. Alice for Ms. Ada. Mrs. Alice answered with a sweet smile: "佢要揸女去面試 (She needs to bring her daughter for an interview)". Whenever Mrs. Alice mentioned her grandchildren, she would always wear a sweet and happy face.

At around 4pm, Ms. Amy came to classroom 3 to have photo-copy. I took the chance to ask her why the classroom arrangement seems different. She was quite cautious at that time and simply replied me: "唔知呢... 今日好少人, 因為有 d(人)去左旅行 (I don't know... Today, there are very few students, because some of them has gone for a picnic)". Since her facial expression and tone showed that she's hesitation in answering my question, I did not keep on asking further. However, I recognized her cautiousness and I know that her answer did not give me a full picture about what's happening.

At around 4:30pm, Ms. Ada came back. She immediately came to classroom 3 to arrange works for her students (i.e. those students whose have sat in the same table as mine). Given she was quite busy at that moment, I did not disturb her. While she has finished distributing the assignments to the students, she approached me and whispered: "你知唔知咩事呀? (Do you know what's happening?)" I replied, "唔知呀! 點解今日咁少人 0 既!?" (Why is there such a small amount of student today?). With the presence of her students at the same table, she paused for while. Her facial expression shows she could not give me a full answer at that moment. Therefore, she replied the same way as Ms. Amy did.

At around 5:30pm, she finished her class and her students left the center. She then sat next to me and told me the whole story:

"今個禮拜又有人嚟巡查。我幾驚呀...佢入到黎就俾個証我睇, 我個刻無諗得咁多...叫佢地嚟出邊等一等, 跟住叫 d miss 帶住 d 學生走去另外一個 centre ... 好彩前幾個月前因為有人投訴, 佢地黎 check 過一次, 所以唔係第一次, 都有 d 經驗..."

Then, I asked: "What's your plan, then?"

Ms. Ada replied: "有 d 野真係命命整定喎,唔係因為之前 check 完一次, 今次都唔會有 d 經驗...有 d 事真係整定家, 不過, 好彩, 可能以前都試過, 試過最壞, 最差情況, 所以今次都會預左最差先.....我哋有相熟嘅地產, 咁即日睇鋪頭...咁岩又有一個鋪, 之前佢都係做補習社,所以有曬枱椅, 白板, 連水機都有, 咁咪即刻租住先...唔知係咪業主好等錢洗, 本身佢想賣喎, 都油緊油, 租一兩個月, 佢都肯。結果宜家, 保險 d, 租到六月, 之後暑假就完左個學期, 會少人 d, 宜家收晒生, 唔 c u t 得, 點同 d 家長交待呀..."

After she told me the whole story, I understood why Mrs. Alice and Ms. Ann remained very watchful today. It is understandable why the staff has hesitation to let others know the current situation of the centre. While Ms. Ada was telling me the whole story, Ms. Amy and Mrs. Alice came. We then discuss the issues in a low voice:

Ms. Amy told Ms. Ada: "Ms. Averi went to that new location and she (pointing to that student who was previously

in Ms's Amy class) just kept requesting to go back to my (Ms Amy's) class”

Ms. Ada replied “She just wants to be with her classmates. But her parents are too troublesome, we better keep her in this center.”

Then, Mrs. Alice smiled and teased at themselves: “哈...宜家(我地)好似做賊咁...(Ha... now it seems (we) were thieves)”

While I show concern and pity about their difficulties, I appreciate their attitude in handling the situation. Although the staff and management in the centre are aware with the problem, they never feel overly worried. They could try their best to handle such challenge and feel positively and at ease about the future of the business.

Discussion on work-life balance

After the discussion about the recent critical incident of the center, Ms. Ada had a social chat with me. She asked about my research progress and the details of my topic. In our discussion, she responded:

“係呀，外國人講嘅平行同呢度睇嘅平行係唔同。外國人返 4 日工 jar ma...不過，可能呢度睇返工嘅生活...其實，講求平行嘅人可能已經有一定嘅錢，所以先可以追求生活。d 草根階層都唔會講咩平行...不過，亦都好視乎唔同嘅人，好似呢度咁，(職員)都可以分唔同種類：有管理，有打工，打工又可以分：full time 同 part-time；有 degree 同無 degree；阿姐同教書嘅...唔同人要嘅野都唔同，好似 Ms. Amy 咁，佢無讀大學，但係佢除左教呢度，仲有教琴，每日呢度 7 點鐘放左工就去教琴家啦，日日都教成 9 點幾家，星期六就全日教琴，返好長時間，不過，佢又 o k 㗎，兩份加埋都有 2 萬幾蚊家，佢又唔覺辛苦㗎，都慣啦...比起下底(center 2) d 中學老師，有 degree，不過，佢地就要求高 d，想要嘅野都唔同...又好似其他 full-time，呢度本身有 4 個(including Ms. Amy, Ms. Ann, Ms. Abegail and Ms Ally), Ms Abegail 同 Ms Ally 都走 1 u，唔做 1 a，可能佢地想試下出邊 d 工㗎，Mrs Abegail 走左幾個月，但係最近幾個月仲未搵到工，所以返黎幫下手...嘩，好夜啦㗎，你仲唔走?”

Then I replied her: “Yes, it's already 7pm, I should leave.” I picked my bag and said good-bye to her. With the conversation with Ms. Ada, I finally understand why Ms. Abegail felt uneasy when I asked her the question related to why I did not meet her in the last few months. I thought it would be useful to ask Ms. Abegail and Ms. Amy further about their working lives.

Diary: My personal interpretations and critical reflections after the visit

With today's visit, it further indicates that 'well-being' can be an embodied form of knowledge within the context of FB 1. The staff and management there seldom explicitly express their status / experience of 'well-being'. Instead of voicing out their experience of 'well-being' verbally, they would implicitly express it through their bodies, such as gesture, facial expression, the use of "pause" in conversations, the ways they 'live up' / 'act upon' with their working lives, and the implicit working atmosphere and culture within FB 1. This observation is aligned with the following argument made by Kupers's (2005; pp.224-225):

“Accordingly, the experience of well-being is based on daily dealings within the ‘in-corporate’ environment of organizing with its various kinds of tacit knowledge or implicit knowing. Without the bodily sense of the situation we would not know where we are, or what we are doing; in this way our bodies respectively embodiment ‘are’ our situation, they ‘do’ our living (Gendlin, 1992), hence ‘are’ the essential media for our well-being. Following Merleau-Ponty we can recognize that experience of well-being is built upon an original, pre-reflective, ambiguous ‘ground’ which is the world-horizon; and any reflection is always an abstract derivative of this primordial, lived experience. Furthermore, this embodied ‘foundation’ is also the base for all social communication through the language, the ‘living present’ in speech as expressive medium of inter-relational communication (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 197).”

“It is through the body that any and all comprehension, expression and sharing about wellbeing of ourselves and of others are possible “

“.... Making sense’ of embodied wellbeing implies ‘enlivening the senses’. Moreover, members of organisations experience wellbeing while being situated spontaneously and pre-reflectively, in accordance with their bodies.”

“With an intentionality and responsiveness of the bodily ‘consciousness’ the member within ‘in-corporations’ does not feel only ‘I think’, but also ‘I can’ or ‘I relate to’.

In other words: the atmosphere within organisations—and from which well-being emerges— takes places not only by what people think about it, but primarily what they ‘live through’ with their ‘operative intentionality’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: xviii) and in a responsive order (Gendin, 1997). The ‘body’ responds to meaningful questions, problems and challenges posed to it through a situational context, in which the body itself takes part. With this understanding of practical action, there is a close link between what we aim at and what is given,

between intention, responsiveness and the well-being situation, which implicitly include emotional and aesthetic dimension (Bradburn, 1969; Küpers, 2002)."

"Everyday practices constitute local ways of well-be(com)ing. This implies multiple processes of well-being as different local patterns of possibilities in ongoing relations and situated demands which may cross all levels (e.g., individual, collective, organizational). The practical intentionality and responsiveness of our embodied actions and the perceptions involved are largely habitual; learnt within a specific environment and a community. Therefore, to participate in a practice is to learn the 'logic' of that practice, kept within a habitus, which produces historical anchors and ensures the correctness of practices and their constancy over time which are more reliably than formal and explicit rules ever can. Embodied habitual knowledge and learning are like a non-conceptual, pre-linguistic 'silent practice' that is implicit in actions."

Reference:

Kuper, W. (2005). Phenomenology and integral phenomenology of embodied well-be(com)ing in organizations. *Culture and Organization*, 11(3), pp. 221-232.

Follow-up:

- The lives of Ms. Amy
- The situation of Ms Abigail

Table B6: Problems in the Transcription

Problems	Description	Solutions
Alteration of data	Before the first meeting with the transcriber, I asked the transcriber to transcribe a 15-minute interview as a tester to access her quality of transcription. In the trial transcription, the transcriber tended to 'tidy up' the discussion by herself. For example, she altered the testimonies of the interviewees to make the conversation flows more logical.	Poland (1995) suggested that it is vital to fully inform the transcriber the nature and purpose of the research in the initial stage of transcription. Actions taken: • I immediately arranged a first meeting with the transcriber to clarify the background of my research and the requirement of the transcription. • I specified to her the importance of verbatim record. I also went through a section of the audio record with her and demonstrate in details about the notation system, requirements and standards of the transcription. • For illustration, I gave her few of the transcriptions. The transcriptions do not only provide a sample of reference to the transcriber. They also serve to ensure that the researcher has a good grasp of the data.
Run-on sentences	There are a number of run-on sentences in the interviews	The transcriber needs to decide where to start and end the sentences (Poland, 1995). However, incorrect judgement can change the interpretation of the data. Actions taken: • The transcriber was asked to highlight those run-on sentences in each transcription. • The run-on sentences were reviewed carefully and discussed in the meetings to decide the most appropriate treatment.
Difficulty in recognizing participants	Since some interviews are conducted in a group, the transcriber found it difficult to recognise and identify the voice of each participant.	Provide information that would help the transcriber to get familiar with the setting of the interview before the transcription. Actions taken: • For each interview, I would list the number of participants, their names and basic background. • Short description about the context and general content of each interview were given. • In case, the transcriber is still unsure about who is doing the talking, she would highlight that part in her transcription. • Discussions were made in our regular meetings.

Table B7: Advantages of Thematic Analysis

Advantages of thematic analysis	
-	Flexibility
-	Relatively easy and quick method to learn, and do.
-	Accessible to researchers with little or no experience of qualitative research.
-	Results are generally accessible to educated general public.
-	Useful method for working within participatory research paradigm, with participants as collaborators.
-	Can usefully summarise key features of a large body of data, and / or offer a ‘thick description’ of the data set.
-	Can highlight similarities and differences across the data set.
-	Can generate unanticipated insights
-	Allow for social as well as psychological interpretations of data
-	Can be useful for producing qualitative analyses suited to informing policy development.

(Source: Braun and Clarke, 2006)

Table B8: Steps of Thematic Analysis

[illegible]

(Source: Braun and Clarke, 2006)

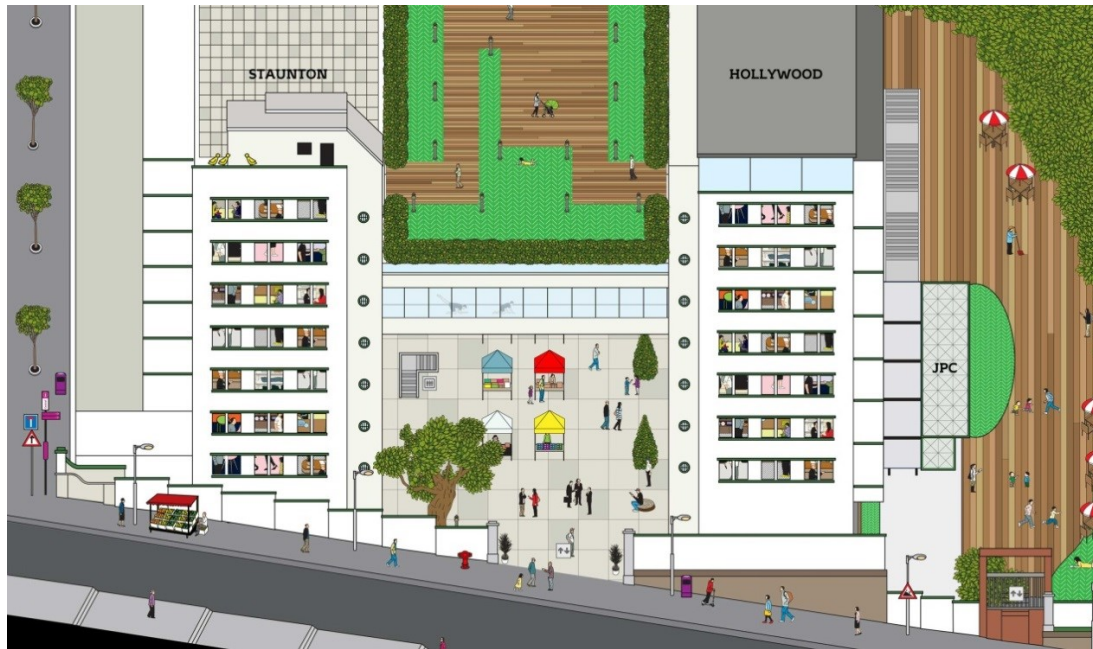
Table B9: Simplified Notation System

Feature	Transcription symbols	Explanations and Examples
Pauses	...	Use series of dots to denote short pauses E.g. I think ... is also important.
	... (long pause)	Use series of dots and (long pause) to indicate long pause of 4 or more seconds E.g. Em ... (long pause) may be you are right!
Interruption	-	Use a hyphen to show someone's speech is broken off midsentence E.g. What do you -
Emphasis	Capital letters	Use capital letters to denote strong emphasis E.g. WHAT?
Garbled speech	()	Use empty bracket to indicate the transcriber's inability to hear what was said E.g. Yes, I like () because of you.
	[?/?]	Use square brackets and question mark to flag words that are not clear and are based on guessing. E.g. At that time, Harry just [doubled? / glossed?]
Non-verbal expressions	{expressions}	Indicate expressions in the curly brackets. E.g. You are right {laugh}!

(Adapted from Poland, 1995 and Silverman, 2001)

Appendix C

Figure C1: Floor Plan of PMQ



(Source: PMQ. (2015, 4 June). Floor Plan: Explore PMQ. Retrieve from:
<http://www.pmq.org.hk/the-site/floor-plan/>)

Figure C2: A Music Box with a *Xing Fu* Rabbit



Figure C3: Yellow Ribbon



Table C1: Living Well in Family Business

Thick description					
<u>Local terms of living well</u>	<u>Embodiment of living well</u>				
	Daily practices	Work practices: From managing to living			
		FB 1	FB 2	FB 3	FB 4
<i>Xing fu jia ting</i> 幸福家庭		(1) <u>Familial culture: Blurring the boundary between business and family</u>			
➤ <i>Wan zheng</i> (完整)	Build a family with children	<i>Work like a family</i>	<i>My own baby</i>	<i>Home office</i>	<i>Family helper</i>
➤ <i>Yang jia</i> (養家)	Support family: - Buy one's own place - shape <i>quai</i> 乖 (good) children	<i>Emphasise on comprehensive development for the children</i>		<i>Craftsmanship for a living</i>	----
➤ <i>Jian kang</i> (健康)	Physical exercises and good sleep	<i>Health – a key topic of social chats</i>	---	<i>Avoid the wife to get hurt in craftsmanship</i>	---
➤ <i>Ping jing</i> (平靜) ➤ <i>An xin</i> (安心)	Rituals and gestures	(2) <u>Move on as life unfolds</u> ➔ <i>Jian bu xing bu</i> (See one step, take one step) ➔ <i>No strategy</i>			
		<i>Value tai ping</i> (Peace and stability)	<i>Prefer to have no monetary pressure</i>	<i>Value ping wen</i> (Peace and stability)	<i>Want to be relax</i>
		---	<i>Ancestors worship at the opening</i>	<i>Selling symbolic accessories</i>	---
		<i>Act ... right timing</i>	<i>Jian bu xing bu</i>	<i>No perfect plan</i>	<i>Keep going until opportunities arise</i>

Thick description

<u>Local terms of living well</u>	<u>Embodiment of living well</u>				
	Daily practices	Work practices: From managing to living			
		FB 1	FB 2	FB 3	FB 4
<i>Peng you</i> (朋友)		(3) <u>Absence of / Resistance to management</u>			
➤ <i>Xin</i> (信)	Trust and work with friends	- Hire <i>shu ren</i> ; <i>Zi dong bo</i> (work automatically)	<i>Rely on zi ji ren</i>	<i>Take care shi fu and shi mu</i>	<i>Work wholeheartedly</i>
		Management: <i>No need</i>	Management: <i>Troublesome</i>	---	Management: <i>A challenge</i>
<i>Kai xin gong zuo</i> (開心工作)		(4) <u>Strive to survive</u>			
➤ <i>You xing qu</i> (有興趣)		- persistently being able to maintain existence in the market - trying to handle most of the tasks by themselves - working hard with heart and mind			
➤ <i>Zhong yi</i> (鍾意)					
➤ <i>You man zu gan</i> (有滿足感)					
➤ <i>Chuang zuo</i> (創作)					
➤ Contrast with <i>xin ku</i> (辛苦)	Work hard to bear <i>xin ku</i> 辛苦 (hardship)	<i>Liu de qing shan zai, na pa mei chai shao</i> (Strive to maintain existence in the market)	<i>Shou zhu xian</i> (Hold on to survive)	<i>One man band; Zi ji zuo</i> (Do it by oneself)	<i>Work as part of self; Gong fu and xin ji</i> (Work hard with heart and mind)
<i>Xin zhong fu you</i> (心中富有)		---			
➤ <i>Wo yao zheng pu xuan</i> (我要真普選)	Social protests	---	---	---	---

Appendix D

Table D1: Interpretations from Hedonism, Eudaimonia, the Confucian and Daoist Frameworks

Themes / Findings	Hedonism	Eudaimonia	The Confucian Framework	The Daoist Framework
(1) <i>Xing fu jia ting</i> 幸福家庭 (Good family)	- Derive happiness from familial lives	- Fulfil social needs - Contribute to positive relatedness	- Perceive family as the most fundamental to one's life - Among <i>wulun</i> , three of the relations are belonged to the family	- Family is originated from <i>dao</i> (the Nature)
<i>Completeness: Build a family with children</i>	- No discussion	- Can be seen as a life purpose - Does not discuss why building a family is important	- <i>Qi jia</i> (establish a harmonious family) is a life mission of an individual	- Family is formed due to people following the pattern of nature - A family is built to balance <i>yin</i> and <i>yang</i> - Marriage and having children should be taken place spontaneously
<i>Role obligations: Support family</i>	- No discussion	- Satisfy one's physiological and social needs - No clues on why role obligations are essential	- Family is the key platform for cultivating virtues - According to <i>yi</i> and <i>li</i> , feeding and teaching are the ritualised duties of parents	- Parents are encouraged to take up their <i>tian zhi</i> (bourdon duties) - According to <i>wuwei</i> , it does not support any deliberate control over the development of children
<i>Healthiness: Physical exercises and good sleep</i>	- Obtain pleasure from being physically healthy - Avoid any pain and illness	- Satisfy one's physiological and safety needs - Represent environmental mastery on physical health - Does not explain the ways to healthiness	- Health is part of <i>wufu</i> - Promote archery and riding chariots as exercises - Emphasise the importance of sleeping peacefully - Harmony between <i>shen</i> and <i>xin</i>	- Harmony is the way to stay healthy - Balance between <i>yin</i> and <i>yang</i> should always be maintained - Doing exercises (<i>dong</i>) and sleeping (<i>jing</i>) are mutually supportive to healthiness
<i>Spiritual peace: Rituals and gestures</i>	- No discussion on spiritual peace – a well-balanced spiritual state	- Regard spiritual peace as a safety need - Does not appreciate any local rituals and decoration, given these practices may undermine human potentials and self-governance	- According to <i>zhong yong</i> , harmony between physical and spiritual aspects of lives should be maintained - Seek spiritual peace through <i>li</i> (rituals)	- Harmony between <i>yang</i> (body) and <i>yin</i> (<i>xin</i>) should be maintained - Discard any assertive rituals and behaviours

Themes / Findings	Hedonism	Eudaimonia	Confucian	Daoist
(2) <i>Peng you</i> 朋友 (Friends)	- Happiness from friendship	- Fulfil social needs - Contribute to positive relatedness	- <i>Peng you</i> are the extended family - <i>Peng you</i> are <i>tong zhi</i> (people with the same mind) - The role of <i>peng you</i> (especially for <i>junzi</i>) is to exchange views on virtues	- Not much discussion on <i>peng you</i>
<i>Trust and work with friends</i>	- No discussion on trust	- No discussion on trust	- <i>Xin</i> is the basic governance of friendship - Due to <i>xin</i> , people would be comfortable to work with friends - <i>Zhong cheng</i> (loyalty and sincerity) is a way to build <i>xin</i>	- No discussion on trust - Prefer to work with <i>junzi</i>
(3) <i>Kai xin gong zuo</i> 開心工作 (Happy work)	- Happiness from work	- Job satisfaction	- <i>Kai xin</i> is due to being able to work with <i>tong zhi</i>	- <i>Kai xin</i> is due to the affection of <i>junzi</i>
<i>For interests, affection, satisfaction and creativity</i>	- No discussion on what constitute such happiness	- Gain satisfaction due to intrinsic motivation ✓ Fulfil the growth needs ✓ Allow autonomy and environmental mastery over work ✓ Increase self-acceptance and personal growth	- Able to obtain <i>zhi</i> (wisdom) from <i>peng you</i> - Able to open up one's mind and spirit through intellectual inspiration with <i>peng you</i>	- Able to work on what one innately likes - Not encourage to invent sedulously due to <i>wuwei</i> - Believe innovation should come spontaneously
<i>Work hard to bear hardship</i>	- Interpret <i>xin ku</i> as a suffering - Does not understand local assiduous attitude and behaviours	- Interpret such tolerance as a passive response - Does not understand why local accept the pain in work	- Treats suffering as an exercise for cultivating endurance - Hardship facilitate one's strength and growth	- <i>Xin ku</i> arises in order to be in harmony with <i>kai xin</i> - Patience to <i>xin ku</i> represents compliance to the pattern of the world - Balance between <i>kai xin</i> (<i>yang</i>) and <i>xin ku</i> (<i>yin</i>) should always be preserved
(4) <i>Xin zhong fu you</i> 心中富有 (Being rich at heart-mind)	- Positive mood	- Good spirit	- <i>Xin</i> is particularly linked with <i>dao de</i> 道德 (virtues) - Richness in virtues	- Relate <i>xin</i> with nature – <i>xin xing</i> 心性 (one's nature) - Rich in heart-mind when one lives in accordance to the way of nature (<i>dao</i>)

Figure D1: Confucian Perspective on Self

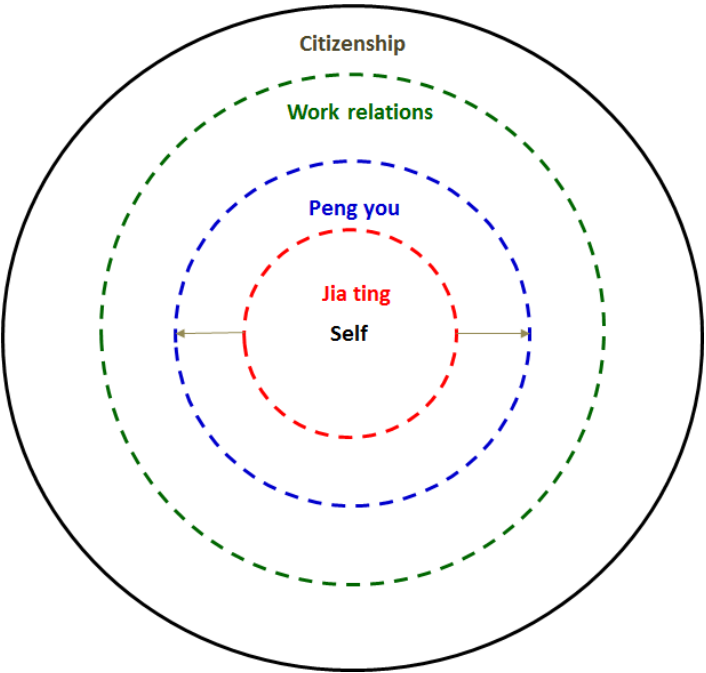


Figure D2: A Mainstream Perspectives on Human Needs

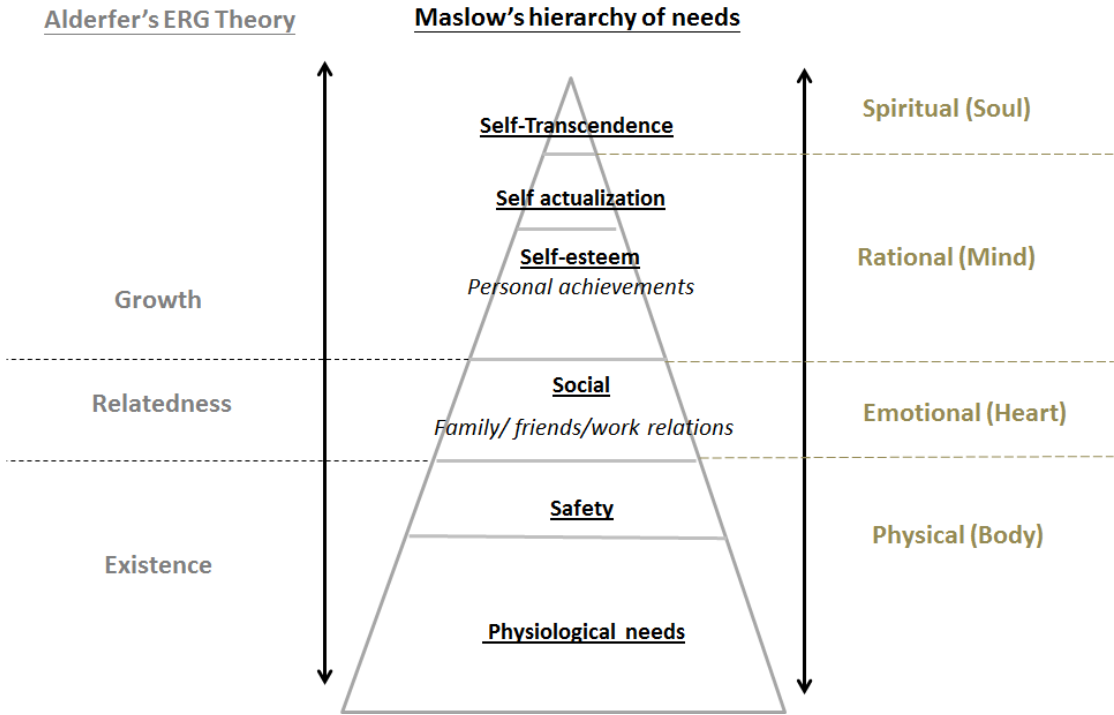


Figure D3: Confucian *San Gang Ba Mu*

