# Examining Child Welfare Outcomes for Asian-Canadian Children and Families: A Mixed Methods Study

Barbara Lee

BA, BSW, MSW, RSW, PhD

November 3, 2016

**CSWE Transforming Child Welfare Dissertation
Child Welfare Track Meeting**
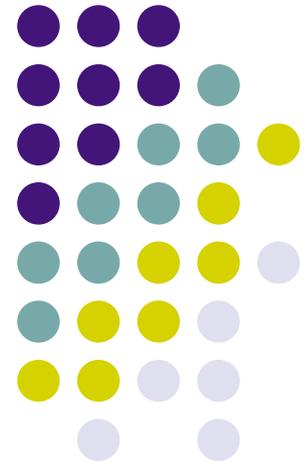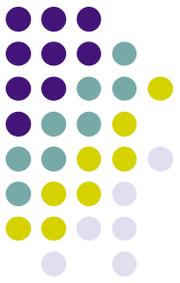
Overview

- Research Background and Rationale

- Methodology

- Research Findings

- Implications for Research, Theory, and Practice

Asian-Canadian Children and Families
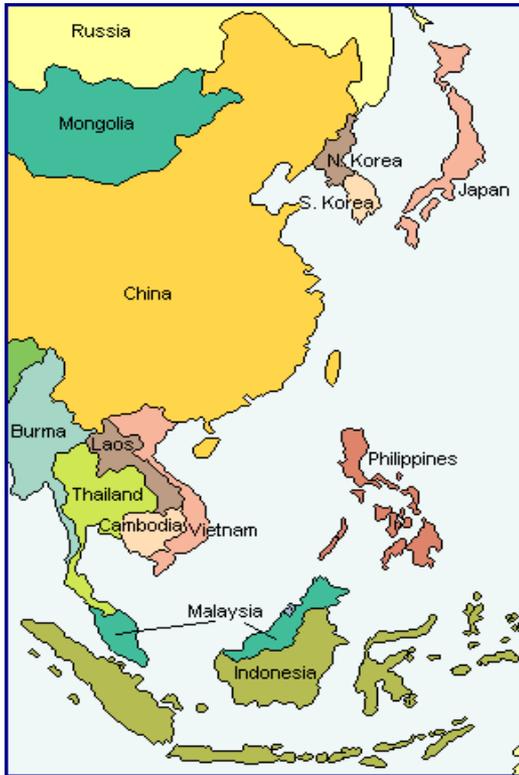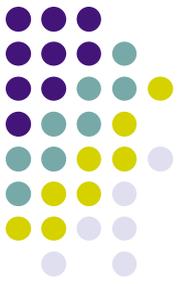
East/ Southeast Asian origins

- Chinese
- Filipino
- **Indo-Chinese origins** →
- Indonesian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Malay
- Mongolian
- Taiwanese
- Tibetan
- Asian, n.i.e.
- East/Southeast Asian, n.i.e.

Indo-Chinese origins

- Burmese
- Cambodian
- Laotian
- Thai
- Vietnamese

n.i.e. abbreviation for not included elsewhere.
Note: Adapted from "Ethnic origin," by Statistics Canada, 1999, *1996 Census dictionary – Final edition-reference cat. no. 92-351-UIE*, Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada, Last updated March 21, 2005.
http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/92-351-u/92-351-u1996000-eng.htm

3

A Growing Population

- Asians are the largest and fastest growing ethnic minorities in Canada and the US
  (Statistics Canada, 2010; US Census Bureau, 2010)

- In Canada, the top source country is the Philippines (13.1%) followed by China (10.4%) (National Household Survey, 2011)

- Diversity in backgrounds and needs

Note: The year 2006 was the last Canadian Census that included data regarding immigration and ethno-cultural diversity. The Statistics Canada long-form questionnaire was replaced in 2011 by the National Household Survey to collect data regarding immigration and ethno-cultural diversity.

Gaps in Child Welfare Research and Knowledge
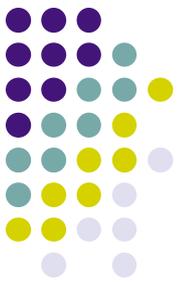
- Very **little attention** has been given to Asian children and families involved in the child welfare system and social services
 (Behl, Crouch, May, Valente, & Conyngham, 2001; Fong & Mokuau, 1994)

- **Ignores the real and relevant issues** in the Asian communities (Kim & Keefe, 2010; Leong & Lau, 2001)

- Understanding Asian children and families is important in **preventing harm and supporting well-being**

Theoretical Frameworks

- Decision-making Ecology
  (Baumann, Dalgleish, Fluke, & Kern, 2011; Baumann, Kern, & Fluke, 1997)

- General Assessment and Decision-making Model (Delgleish, 2003, 2006)

- Culture and Child Maltreatment Decision-Making Model (Terao, Borrego, & Urquiza, 2001)

- Theoretical Framework of Child Maltreatment Among Asian Americans (Zhai & Gao, 2009)

Child Welfare Concepts
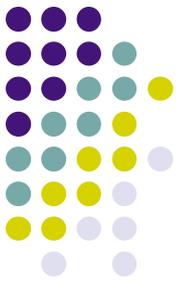
Disproportionality

Asian Child Welfare Population

VS.

General **Asian** Population

Disparity

Asian Child Welfare Population

VS.

White Child Welfare Population

Mix Methods Research Design
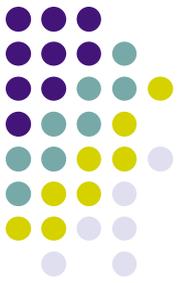
R Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Physical Abuse among Asian Families in the Canadian Child Welfare System

BARBARA LEE, WENDY RHA, and BARBARA FALLON
*Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto,
Toronto, Ontario, Canada*

Focus Groups

OCANDS**

* Trocmé, Fallon, MacLaurin, Sinha, Black, et al. (2008)

** Trocmé, Fallon, Shlonsky

8

# Asian-Canadian Households are Under-represented Compared to White-Canadian Households in the Child Welfare System
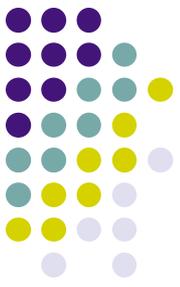
Ethnicity	Canadian Child Population[c]		Child Maltreatment Investigations in CIS-2008[d]		Rate per 1,000[e]
	N	%	N	%	
All Children<16	6,022,005	100	221,560	100	39.2
Asian-Canadian[a]	430,072	7.1	5,988	2.5	13.9
White-Canadian[b]	4,245,555	70.5	153,337	65.4	36.1

[a] Asian-Canadian refers to visible minority populations including Chinese, Filipino, Southeast Asian, Korean, and Japanese based on the Census definitions (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 97-562-XCB2006008).

[b] White-Canadian refers to "not a visible minority" and excludes Aboriginal populations based on the Census definitions (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 97-562-XCB2006008 and Statistics Canada catalogue no. 97-558-XCB2006013).

[c] Estimate based on the 2006 Census of Population for children 15 years and under (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 97-551-XCB2006011).

[d] Estimate based on CIS-2008 all of Canada weighted sample for children 15 years and under.

[e] Rate of child maltreatment investigations in the Canadian child welfare system per 1000 children in population.

"Close-knit" Family Dynamics Inhibit Child Welfare Involvement
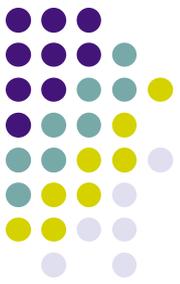
"…[Asian] *family and children are not encouraged to speak about private family matters so then the only time we do get involved is when an incident has already happened. So we are not getting in at the early help stages*."

Substantiated Investigations involving Physical Abuse for Asian-Canadian vs. White-Canadian Households
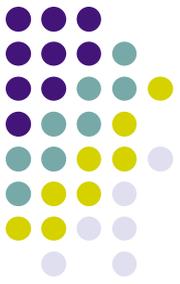
Population-Based Disparity Ratio (PDI) — 0.92

Census Child Population

Decision-Based Disparity Ratio (DDI) — 2.36

Investigations in Child Welfare

Maltreatment-Based Disparity Ratio (MDI) — 1.26

Physical Abuse Investigations in Child Welfare

11

Asian-Canadian Households More Likely to Close After Investigation
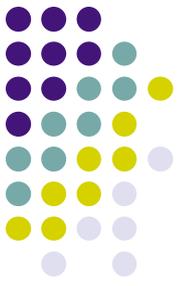
CIS-2008
(N=3,202)

Logistic Regression	Odds Ratio	P-Value
Model 1: Asian Ethnicity	3.49	<0.001***
Model 3: Asian Ethnicity + Child Demographic & Household Composition	3.39	<0.001***
Model 5: Asian Ethnicity + Case Characteristics	2.15	0.001
Model 7: Asian Ethnicity + Clinical Concerns	2.80	<0.001***
Final Model	**1.99**	**0.005**

Child Welfare Service Should be Based on the Client's Need
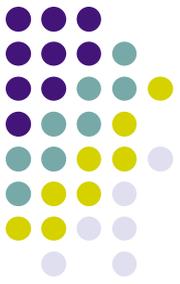
"*We're not transferring them to ongoing service because we don't have a full depth and breadth of understanding of the family. To me, that's about language barriers and cultural barriers.*"

Asian Children and Families Received Ongoing CPS for Longer
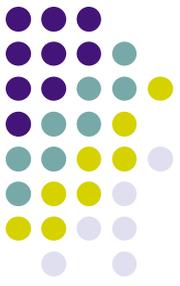
OCANDS
(N=1,988)

Asian
- Median Days = **339**

White
- Median Days = **301**

Asian Households Less Likely to be Re-Investigated
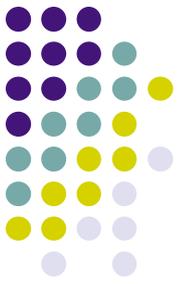
OCANDS
(N=6,675)

Logistic Regression	Odds Ratio	P-Value
Model 1: Asian Ethnicity	0.39	<0.001***
Model 3: Asian Ethnicity + Child Demographic & Household Composition	0.40	<0.001***
Model 5: Asian Ethnicity + Case Characteristics	0.46	<0.001***
Model 7: Asian Ethnicity + Clinical Concerns	0.44	<0.001***
Final Model	**0.49**	**<0.001***

Research Summary

- Asian families are **disproportionately** under-represented in the child welfare system

- **Disparities** in child welfare involvement between Asian and White children and families along the continuum of child welfare services and decisions

- Child welfare workers and community service professionals provided **cultural and structural context** for child welfare services and decisions
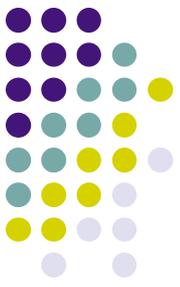
Limitations

- Examined only child maltreatment investigations
- Asian category
  - Immigration status not available
- Key factors not available
  - Community characteristics
  - Organizational factors
  - Poverty
- Missing are the voices and perspectives of caregivers, children, other professionals

Implications and Recommendations

Research

1. More research on Asian population in child welfare
2. Available data regarding ethnicity, race, and immigration
3. Ethno-racial categories need to be defined
4. Available discrete categories of Asian groups
5. Consider individual, organizational, and external factors
6. Use advanced statistical strategies
7. Qualitative or mixed methods, and with different perspectives

Implications and Recommendations
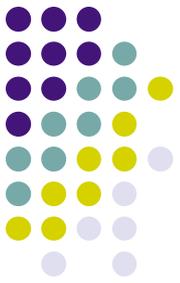
Theory

1. PDI and DDI should be presented together

2. MDI should be used for populations with predominant specific maltreatment concern

3. *Child Maltreatment Decision-making Model* should also consider maltreatment type and severity

4. The *Decision-making Ecology* can be strengthened by considering client factors

5. Longitudinal perspectives should be considered in theory development

Implications and Recommendations
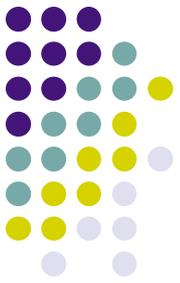
Practice

1. Evidence-informed practices are needed
2. Attention to mental health concerns among Asian-Canadian children and families
3. Community engagement and outreach with Asian communities
4. Cross-cultural training for child welfare workers to promote cultural sensitivity and awareness in organizations

References
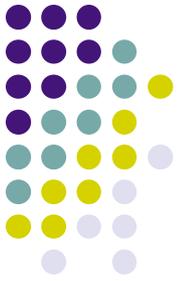
- Baumann, D. J., Dalgleish, L., Fluke, J., & Kern, H. (2011). *The decision-making ecology.* Washington, DC: American Humane Association.
- Baumann, D., Kern, H., & Fluke, J. (1997). Foundations of the decision-making ecology and overview. In Kern, H., Baumann, D. J., & Fluke, J. (Eds.). *Worker Improvements to the Decision and Outcome Model (WISDOM): The child welfare decision enhancement project.* The Children's Bureau, Washington, D.C.
- Behl, L. E., Crouch, J. L., May, P. F., Valente, A. L., & Conyngham, H. A. (2001). Ethnicity in child maltreatment research: A content analysis. *Child Welfare, 6*(2), 143-147. doi: 10.1177/1077559501006002006
- Fong, R., & Mokuau, N. (1994). Not simply "Asian Americans": Periodical literature review on Asians and Pacific Islanders. *Social Work, 39*(3), 298–305.
- Kim, W., & Keefe, R. H. (2010). Barriers to healthcare among Asian Americans. *Social Work in Public Health, 25*, 286-295. doi: 10.1080/19371910903240704
- Dalgleish, L. I. (2003). Risk, needs and consequences. In M.C. Calder (Ed.) *Assessments in childcare: A comprehensive guide to frameworks and their use.* (pp. 86-99). Dorset, UK: Russell House Publishing.
- Fluke, J., Harden, B. J., Jenkins, M., & Ruehrdanz, A. (2010). *Research synthesis on child welfare disproportionality and disparities*. American Humane Association. Retrieved from http://www.cssp.org/ publications/child-welfare/alliance/Disparities-and-Disproportionality-in-Child-Welfare_An-Analysis-of-the-Research-December-2011.pdf#page=11
- Lee, Barbara. "Examining Child Welfare Outcomes for Asian-Canadian Children and Families: A Mixed Methods Study." PhD Dissertation, University of Toronto, 2016.
- Lee, B., Rha, W., & Fallon, B. (2014). Physical abuse and Asian families in the Canadian child welfare system. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma*, *23*(5), 532-551. doi: 10.1080/10926771.2014.904462
- Leong, F. T. L., & Lau, A. S. L. (2001). Barriers to providing effective mental health services to Asian Americans. *Mental Health Services Research, 3*(4), 201-214. doi: 10.1023/A:1013177014788
- Statistics Canada. (2010). *Visible minority groups, percentage change (2001 to 2006), for Canada, provinces and territories* (table). *Canadian Statistics*. Last updated October 6, 2010. http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-11.pdf
- Terao, S. Y., Borrego, J. Jr., & Urquiza, A. J. (2001). A reporting and response model for culture and child maltreatment. *Child Maltreatment, 6*(2), 158-168. doi: 10.1177/1359105310384297
- Trocmé, N., Fallon, B., MacLaurin, B., Sinha, V., Black, T., et al. (2010). Methodology. In *Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect – 2008: Major Findings*. PHAC: Ottawa.
- Zhai, F. & Gao, Q. (2009). Child maltreatment among Asian Americans: Characteristics and explanatory framework. *Child Maltreatment, 14*(2), 207-224. doi: 10.1177/1077559508326286
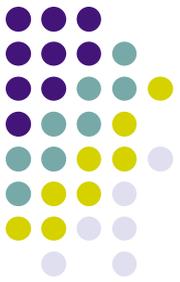
Acknowledgements

Thesis Supervisor:

Dr. Esme Fuller-Thomson (University of Toronto)

Thesis Committee Members:

Dr. Barbara Fallon (University of Toronto)

Dr. Nico Trocmé (McGill University)

Dr. Tara Black (University of Toronto)

Thesis Appraisers:

Dr. Bryn King (University of Toronto)

Dr. Alan Leschied (Western University)

Thank You!
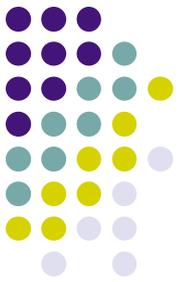
Barbara Lee

Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work
University of Toronto
email: barbara.lee@utoronto.ca

School of Social Work
Carleton University
email: barbara.lee@carleton.ca

School of Social Work
University of British Columbia
(*Effective May 1, 2017*)
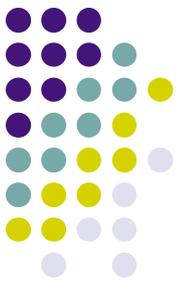
Dissertation Publications

- Lee, B. (2016). *Examining Child Welfare Outcomes for Asian-Canadian Children and Families: A Mixed Methods Study*. Proquest Dissertation and Theses.

- Lee, B., Fuller Thomson, E., Black, T., Fallon, B., & Trocmé, N. (under revisions). Examining child welfare decisions and services for Asian-Canadian versus White-Canadian households in the child welfare system. *Child Maltreatment.*

- Lee, B., Fuller Thomson, E., Fallon, B., & Trocmé, N., & Black, T. (under revisions). Asian-Canadian families involved in the Canadian child welfare system: A mixed methods study. *Child Abuse and Neglect.*

- Lee, B., Fuller Thomson, E., Trocmé, N., Fallon, B., & Black, T. (2016). Delineating disproportionality and disparity of Asian-Canadian versus White-Canadian households in the child welfare system. *Child and Youth Service Review*. 70(2016), 383-393. doi: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2016.10.023