



Research Paper

An exploration of the cultural adaptation of marriage and love between Chinese and African in Guangzhou

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ABSTRACT

The increasing love and marriage between African people and Chinese people have drawn the extensive attention of the masses, and, the scholars around China. In fact, what has been implied in this phenomenon refers much to the inter-ethnic theories that are composed of assimilation theory, structural theory, exchange theory, and, cultural adaptation theory. On the basis of the affective and pragmatic needs to be met between the lovers bound by African business men and Chinese women, African business men tend to follow the rules of adhesive adaptation in their communication with and adaptation to their couples, while Chinese women choose to make concession, which has given rise to different adaptation outcomes in different respects. With respect to their behaviors, Chinese and African lovers or couples are able to make compromise for each other to lead a harmonious life characterized with their co-existence. In terms of their minds, they try their best to keep the original independence of their own core culture. In the light of their beliefs, they stick to their strong wiliness of resisting against the assimilation of Chinese women to get to the consistence of their beliefs. Thus, it can be concluded that the mutual adaptation to the culture of each other in the love and marriage between Chinese people and African people is the inevitable outcome caused by the interaction of the social factors, ethnic traits, individual minds, and psychological factors between them when they have to be faced with the tremendous pressures from their love and marriage.

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INTRODUCTION

From the closing years of 20th century downward, the successive and sustainable promotion of opening and reform, the rapid economic increase, the rise of foreign trade, and, in particular, the proposition of one belt and one road in China have attracted an increasing number of African people to settle, to live, and, to do business in Guangzhou Province. According to the official data delivered in December 2019, the number of African people who have come to live in Guangzhou for more than half a year is about 13,000. They are from African countries such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast etc., and the most of them comes from

Nigeria. In this context, the love and marriage between African people and Chinese people begins to crop up in groups. It has been supposed in the studies of Chinese scholar that the number of the Sino-African lovers and couples in Guangzhou is at least 400 and stays on the increase year after year (Gordon et al., 2017). Although there is no exact statistic data at present, the correlative issues regarding the entry-exit, marital registration, and, cultural discrepancies in this respect, has caught the extensive attentions that have been paid to by people of all walks in Chinese society. In this case, how is the present adaptation status quo of Chinese-African love and marriage

going on? What factors are likely to affect their love and marriage? This study aims to make a relevant exploration of it.

A REVIEW OF PREVIOUS AND PRESENT STUDIES

Studies directed at Africans living in China have been primarily focused on the researching topics such as their social behaviors and the construction of their identities (Yucheng, 2013; Yucheng and Heqing, 2016; Tao, 2012), their social relationships and adaptation (Tao, 2009; Lin et al., 2015; Tao and Qingqing, 2017; Tao, 2009; Niudong, 2015; Liang, 2015), social governance and practice (Tao, 2015; Zhigang and Desheng, 2009; Yucheng and Manli, 2019; Tao, 2018). However, fewer scholars have referred to the love and marriage between Chinese people and American people even in their latest studies. As shown in the findings of recent investigation, most the Chinese-African lovers or couples in China choose to accept the adaptations rule of differed incorporation to the effect that they can deepen their friendship with their relatives and friends in the participation of their religious activities, family gatherings, and, outdoor activities to acquire their dignity, their safety, and, their sense of belongings in their non-mainstream groups (Yangzhou, 2016). What has been noticed in the studies of scholars is the anxiety and plight of Chinese women in Chinese-American love and marriage and the increasing dropouts in the education of their children by pointing it out that it is the inevitable question that has to be thought of and faced with in the autonomous development and improvement of Chinese society in terms of enabling this relatively disadvantageous group to obtain a better growth and lead a better life in China (Liang and Qingpeng, 2017). It has been proposed in the studies of Gordon that there are a variety of uncertain factors showing up from the mutual prejudice and mutual discrimination between African Negro men and Chinese women to their eventual love and marriage (Gordon et al., 2017).

The theoretical studies of Chinese-African love and marriage, such as the trans-ethnic group marriage and trans-ethnic marriage, often appear in the correlative findings of a good many foreign scholars in the form of assimilation theories, structural theories, exchange theories, as well as, cross-cultural adaptation theories. According to the earlier scholars in the field of assimilation, trans-ethnic marriage is the product of cultural assimilation. The more marriages exist in two ethnic groups, the more harmonious their relation will be. Simpson and Yinger (1985) have taken the trans-ethnic marriage rate as a very sensitive index valuable for the assessment of the social distance and ethnic harmony between either two of the American races and ethnic groups in their studies. Gordon (1964) has summarized the assimilation concept in a systematic fashion and regarded trans-ethnic marriage as one of the most important fold for

the studies and assessments of the harmony between either two of those ethnic groups. Subsequently, with the continuous development and improvement of cultural pluralism, the assimilation theories come out in a natural way. In the minds of the new assimilation scholars, trans-ethnic marriage will not eliminate the inter-ethnic difference but the generation of new cultural forms in their mutual permeation because the assimilating process is not unilateral but bilateral. Both the minority ethnic group and the mainstream ethnic group have the same needs of accepting being assimilated, the same desire of getting very close to the former, and the hope of accepting those who are in need of assimilation. For the sake of this inclination, the structuralists have come up with this social structural model, holding that the objective factors such as social structures have provided a wide variety of good opportunities for inter-ethnic communication. Those objective factors are made up of the size of the minority ethnic groups, the number of those at appropriate age of marriage, the environmental diversity of those minority ethnic groups, and, the social distance and physical distance between different ethnic groups. It has been indicated in the exchange theories proposed by Davis and Merton that the truth or essence of marriage between the minority ethnic group and the mainstream members of the society, is, to make best use of their superior social and economic position to exchange the higher social or ethnic position of the latter owing to their knowing that hypergamy is supposed to be accepted as “a form of institutionalized intermarriage whereby the men of a higher caste-group may marry women of a lower group, but not vice versa” (Davis, 1941; Merton, 1941). The commonest inter-racial marriage in America is that between Negro husband and white wife, the latter use her beautiful skin to improve her economic position by means of marriage, namely, hypergamy (Rong Ma, 2004). In line with the cross-cultural adaptation theory developed by Berry, it has been pointed out that the contact and communication between either two of groups are inclined to give rise to the psychological changes and cultural changes of the groups either in a collective fashion or in an individual fashion and the acculturation rules taken in the continuous contact between two or two more ethnic groups have been considered as assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization (John, 2020).

On the whole, it has been found that the classic assimilation theories have placed a very great emphasis on the unilaterality of cultural assimilation in a blind fashion although they are inclined to be characterized with an apparent racial stance that makes it impossible to get accustomed to a lot of unpredictable environmental changes. In a comparative sense, new assimilationism is more suitable for the explanation to be made to not only the actual cultural integrations and variations in migrated countries but also the issues of the exotic emigration exemplified in a country with unified minorities as what

happens in China. The structural theories focus more on the great impact social factors have on the marriage showing among exotic ethnic groups but fail to hybridize them to have a very good understanding of the outcome caused by their interaction. The exchange theories often take African Americans as the researching subjects of their studies, emphasize more on the exchange between the economic position and social or racial identities in an excessive fashion, and, turn a deaf ear to the fact that the marital relationship is based on the bilateral affirmation and the bilateral affective acceptance in an inevitable fashion. This will be bound to weaken the explicability for the rest of exotic marriage. In a relative sense, the cross-cultural adaptation theories turn out to be more feasible except for what needs to be improved.

This study will make a practical investigation into the cultural adaptation and psychological traits of the Chinese-African lovers or couples living in Guangzhou, and, make a major analysis of their adaptation rules, their adaptation respects such as behavioral respects, psychological respects, as well as belief respects, and, their adaptation effects, finding that African lovers or couples prefer to the rules of adhesive adaptation ¹while Chinese lovers or couples tend to choose concession.

RESEARCH METHODS AND SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Based on the investigative data collected from July, 2017 to December 2019, this study makes its investigative subjects ranging from those who have taken their wedding credentials in Guangzhou or those who lived with their girlfriends over there for more than half a year including African overseas students, commercial groups, servants' groups except for diplomatic workers, and, their Chinese spouses. The places for the field trips are located in the areas such as Xiaobei, Dashaotou, and, southern building in Yuexiu district, Sanyuanli and Tongdewei in Baiyun District, and, western village in Liwan district around Guangzhou. The researching methods are composed of the participation and observation, structural interview, and in-depth interviews, interviewing 29 Chinese-African lovers or couples, collecting correlative data of more than one hundred African people, and, asking several intimate Chinese friends of African people for the attitudes they have held toward and the comments they have made on Chinese-African love and marriage to enrich the data of their individual cases in a conducive fashion.

The 29 interviewed Chinese-African lovers or couples live and work in Xiaobei, western village, Jinshazhou, Sanyuanli, Tongdewei, and Huadu in Guangzhou, and, Yanbu a neighboring area in the suburbs of Guangzhou. Those areas

are built with commercial wholesaling centers, the official building where many Africans work together, as well as, the residential quarters with very beautiful living environment. Although those residential quarters are a little far from the center of the city, the rents here are lower than those in the city apart from the relatively relaxing monitoring management and the convenient transportation system. In general, those African lovers or couples are from Nigeria, Cameroon, Burundi, Angola, the Democratic Public of the Congo etc., and, the Chinese lovers or couples are from Guangzhou prefecture, Zhaoqing prefecture, Yangjiang prefecture, Maoming prefecture, Guangxi province, Hunan province etc., four of whom are Guangzhou residential citizens and the rest are not. All interviewed male subjects of those Chinese-African lovers or couples are from Africa and the female ones of them from China but a particular couple of them are exceptional. Some of the interviewed female Chinese-African couples work in small foreign trade enterprises and most of them graduate from college or secondary schools, few of them graduating from university. This makes it very difficult for most of them to find a well-paid job in Guangzhou. Most of those Chinese-African lovers or couples are Christians (Table 1).

It is globalization that brings Guangzhou an increasing number of Africans who have been working on foreign trade, and, overseas students are no more than one of their official identities because their real identities are business men. Most of them are male and they often travel to and fro between Guangzhou and their African motherlands, delivering all the Chinese goods they have purchased to sell in Africa to make a profit. Some of them have lived in Guangzhou for a very long time to save their transportation and time cost, to collect commercial information, and, to purchase goods for the maximization of their profits. Therefore, African business men are likely to get in touch with a variety of Chinese business women working in the area of foreign trade and become the business partners or workmates of those female foreign Chinese traders. In their long-term contacts, they have associated their work with their lives, fallen in love with each other, and, finally become trans-racial lovers or couples. Given the expiration of the visas of African business men and the very rigid management of Chinese government, the marital identities of those Chinese-African lovers or couples, are generally not admitted in Chinese official Authorities even though they have held a religious wedding ceremony.

Miss Mai met her husband who came from the Democratic Public of the Congo Gungi when they studied computer science at university. He loved her at first sight and went after her. In her mind, her husband is a very diligent person. He made

¹Refers to a particular adaptation model in which part of new culture and the social relationship of the visiting members are placed above the traditional culture and social networks of those emigrants rather than made to replace or revise any central parts of their culture.

Table 1: The Information about the Interviewed Chinese-African lovers or couples

Husband	Nationalities	Education	Careers	Beliefs	Wife	Nationalities	Education	Careers	Beliefs	Children
Paul	Nigeria	undergraduate	Business man	Christian	Miss Li	Maoming	college	Business	Christian	0
Prince	Nigeria	undergraduate	Business man	Christian	Miss Zhang Li	Nanning Guangxi	undergraduate	Business	Christian	1son
Arsenal	Nigeria	middle school	Business man	Christian	Miss Mo	Zhaoqing	secondary	Business	Christian	1son
Chino	Nigeria	undergraduate	Business man	Christian	Wen Jia	Yangjiang	college	Business	Christian	0
Darman	Nigeria	undergraduate	Business man	Christian	Li Na	Yangchun	undergraduate	Business	Christian	1son
Eyki	Nigeria	undergraduate	Business man/priest	Christian	Miss Wen	Guangzhou	college	Business	Christian	1daughter2sons
Yugoma	Nigeria	undergraduate	Business man	Christian	Miss Yin	Yanbian Jinin	college	Foreign	Christian	1daughter
Shensai	Nigeria	high school	Business man	Christian	Miss Huang	Maoming	college	Business	Christian	0
Kensita	Nigeria	college	Business man	Christian	Yin Jing	Qingyuan	secondary	Business	Christian	0
Nady	Nigeria	high school	Business man	Christian	Linda	Guangxi	college	Business	Atheism	0
Vincent	Nigeria	high school	Business man	Christian	Miss Zhong	Guilin Guangxi	undergraduate	Business	Christian	1son
Elie	Nigeria	undergraduate	Business man/priest	Christian	Miss Chen	Henang	high school	Housewife	Christian	1son
Martin	Nigeria	undergraduate	Business man	Christian	Xiao Lin	Zhanjiang	middle school	Business	Christian	0
Kevin	Cameroun	undergraduate	Primary football teacher	Christian	Miss Cui	Tianshui Gansu	college	Company	Atheism	1daughter
Nacow	Cameroun	postgraduate	students	Christian	Xiao Rong	Inner Mogonia	undergraduate	students	Atheism	0
Xiao Fei	Cameroun	undergraduate	Student/Business man	Christian	Xiao Nie	Shangxi	college	Foreign	Atheism	0
Bonavi	Burundi	undergraduate	Student/Business man	Christian	Laura	Shantou	undergraduate	Foreign	Atheism	0
Ayoub	Burundi	undergraduate	Student/Business man	Christian	Miss Liang	Sihui Guangdong	college	Business	Atheism	0
Eunest	Burundi	postgraduate	Student/Business man	Christian	Xiao Yu	Jiangsu	undergraduate	Business	Atheism	0
Cochin	Tanzania	undergraduate	students	Islamic	Xiao He	Qinghai	undergraduate	students	Islamic	0
Joseph	Tanzania	undergraduate	English Teacher	Islamic	Miss Gu	Hainin Zhejiang	college	Housewife	Islamic	1son
Tether	The	undergraduate	students	Christian	Xiao Su	Guangzhou	college	Foreign	Christian	0
Ama	Angola	undergraduate	students	Christian	NaNa	Guangdong	undergraduate	students	Atheism	0
Frank	Ghana	undergraduate	Restaurant Boss	Christian	Min Ting	Guangzhou	undergraduate	Restaurant	Christian	1daughter1son
Romeo	Togo	undergraduate	Business man	Christian	Lisa	Hunnan	high school	Foreign	Atheism	0
David	Ethiopia	postgraduate	Student/Business man	Ethiopian	Alice	Guangzhou	undergraduate	Business	Atheism	0
Su Yuan	Sudan	undergraduate	students	Islamic	Xiao Yi	Shanwei	postgraduate	students	Atheism	0
Gunji	The	undergraduate	Business man	Christian	Miss Mai	Yangjiang	undergraduate	Business	Christian	2daughters1son
Mr. Xiao	Loudi	secondary	unemployed	Atheism	Qiu Gu	Republic of	Basic	Freelancer	Christian	1son

great efforts to do business over his overseas studies in China. After they fell in love with each other, they did business together and ran a store specialized in the sales of African wax clothing in Yueyang Commercial Centre. After their marriage, she ran their store as she took care of their two young daughters while her husband spent most his time doing business outside. According to Miss Mai, had not met her husband, she would had worked in the computer companies to make a living as the rest of girls in her class did in IT industry. At present, she and her husband run their own store and do their own business as most bosses do. The great efforts they have made for a good many years have enabled them to buy their house and cars in Guangzhou and realized their dreams of leading a rich life in Chinese big cities as what many an exotic people has been dreaming about.

Prince and brilliant Miss Zhang both work on foreign trade. Since she became his girlfriend, they seldom went to intermediary stores. After she got in contact with suppliers online, she asked him to place their orders in the factory to make more profits. At the same time, he also introduced his clients to his wife, asked her to go to the factory

with those clients and shared with one another the commission they brought in this process.

Miss Liang who came from a village of Fuoshan prefecture, was once an grass-rooted employee of a small foreign trade company. In her work, she met Ayub a business man who came from Bundi. Later on, Syub has achieved greater and greater success in his business when he ran a foreign trade store that sold home textiles and men's clothes. Thus, Miss Liang became the boss of that store in a natural way and her income and lives were improving a lot in an apparent way.

At a time, Gordon expounded the assimilation theories in a systematic fashion and made it fall into three phases. After the successful completion of the structural assimilation in the second phase, trans-ethnic marriage will take shape in a normal fashion. However, the genuine structural assimilation hasn't cropped up among those Africans who have lived in Guangzhou, for they have failed to achieve the same economic position as the mainstream social members of local society. Instead, the love and marriage for an aim of exchange seem to turn up over there but this exchange is not equaled with what has been dealt with in the classic exchange theories which is extensively used in making an analysis of the marital model between American whites and

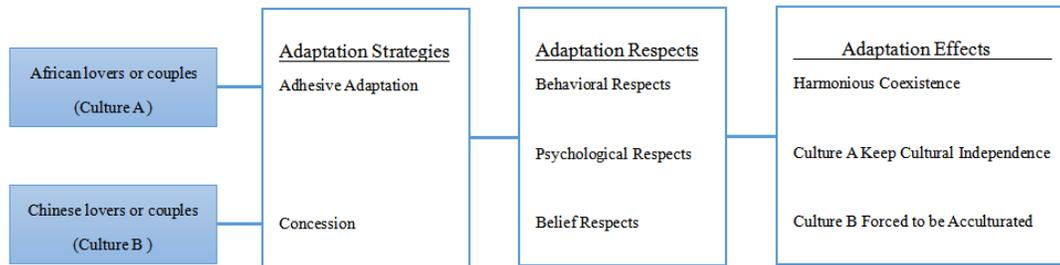


Figure 1: The Analytical framework of the cultural adaptation between Chinese-African lovers or couples.

Negroes to the effect that it is the white women who have tried their best to improve their economic position via their beautiful skin in exchange for a wealthy marriage. In fact, the exchanges as have been exemplified in the Chinese-American love and marriage in Guangzhou lie much in the exchange for their cooperation. To be specific, it is those African businessmen who need their Chinese lovers or couples to provide them with the convenience they need in their work and lives ranging from purchasing goods and renting a house to contacting suppliers and arranging or organizing outside sales. However, what their Chinese lovers or couples need is to lead a better life and acquire a true love. Even though it is difficult for us to make a judgment of the extent to which the love and marriage between African businessmen and their Chinese lovers or couples is directed at a utilitarian purpose, true love is bound to crop up in their long-term cooperation and communication. So to speak, this love and marriage between them is characterized with the combination between pragmatism and their mutual affective needs to be met in an appropriate fashion.

THE ANALYSES OF THE CULTURAL ADAPTATION BETWEEN CHINESE-AMERICAN LOVES OR COUPLES

In the constant contact between Chinese-African lovers or couples, it is inevitable for them to be faced with the problems underlying their cultural adaptation in an appropriate fashion. African lovers or couples in their Chinese-African love and marriage tend to follow the rules of adhesive adaptation while their Chinese counterparts choose to make concession for their lovers or spouses. African lovers or couples choose to know and accept some of Chinese culture and behavioral modes by the means of their limited and utensil-oriented adaptation, but at the same time keep a very strong and sustainable acknowledgement of their original culture. The intrinsic components of the love and marriage between Chinese people and African people are inclined to be attached to the traditional culture and social network between them rather than be replaced or revised by the central nutrients of their culture in accordance with the present adaptation findings that the adhesive adaptation has been conceptualized as a

very particular adaptation mode of the theoretical frameworks of cultural adaptation where the crucial aspects of the new culture of the social and cultural adaptation in a given society, and the social relations members of the host society have been added to the organic system of the cultural modes and social networks of immigrants in a logical fashion “without replacing or modifying any significant part of the old” (Kim and Hurh, 1984). This gives rise to the stratification of the adaptation traits into behavioral respects, psychological respects, and belief respects, different respects leading to correspondent outcomes. In terms of the behavioral respects, those African lovers or couples learn Chinese languages to have a good understanding of some Chinese cultures conducive for their development to enable them to finish their cultural adaptation in a rapid fashion, while their Chinese lovers or couples choose to make some appropriate adjustments to make way to their harmonious co-existence. In the light of their psychological respects, African lovers or couples tend more to keep their strong recognition of their original cultures with regard to their ethnic sentiments and conceptual values, but, their Chinese lovers or couples hold more tolerant attitudes towards them. In the case of their belief respects, African lovers or couples catch hold of their own religious beliefs and are reluctant to make any changes, while their Chinese lovers or couples choose to make concession and keep consistence with them (Figure 1).

Behavioral respects

The appearance of Chinese-African love and marriage is characterized with the mutual acceptance and tolerance between Chinese culture and African culture in their constant interaction. Compared with those visitors or travelling African business men, those Africans who have been connected with the stable and harmonious love and marriage with their Chinese lovers or couples tend to have a much better and profounder understanding of the China, for in most cases, they have to get far away from their African friends and get close to those of their Chinese lovers or couples to understand their contextual culture and even Chinese culture. Those Africans from different cultural

contexts are inclined to contact with their Chinese lovers or couples with the help of the perception, cognition, as well as, experiences that have been implanted into their minds owing to the impact the environment they have lived have on the changes of their thoughts and behaviors as what has been exemplified in the choice and use of their language, their customs and living styles.

With regard to the choice and use of their language, for the sake of their convenient lives, most African lovers and couples all hold that it is of great importance for them to learn Chinese language and they can communicate with others in simple Chinese language even when their Chinese reading ability is rather limited to the extent that they are able to recognize few daily Chinese characters. Among those interviewed African lovers or couples, only one of them has a very good understanding of the flexible use of Chinese language. Suppose their Chinese lovers or couples are not good at English, those African lovers or couples tend to try their best to speak Chinese with them and teach them English in a patient way. Some interviewed Chinese lovers or couples admit that they have learned English from their African lovers or couples in most cases. They will not even know the simple English expressions like "How Are You?" unless they find foreign boyfriends. If their Chinese lovers or couples are good at English, they will not make much greater progress in the improvement of their Chinese even though they have lived in China for a couple of years. An example in this respect, is, exemplified in the living experiences of Chinese-African couples who have been running a western African restaurant in China for over ten years and failed to make great progress in their Chinese. That is because their four family members speak English in their daily lives and they seldom speak Chinese before his wife speak with their son and daughter in Cantonese.

Miss Yin belongs to southern Korean ethnic group and comes from Yanbian prefecture of Jilin Province. She has known her Nigerian husband Yugoma for almost five years. He has learned from her not only good Chinese but also a little southern Korean language. Her relatives often view him as African Baozheng, a good image of ancient Chinese worthwhile judge.

While the author of this paper was visiting Miss Liang, she was discussing with her Burundi husband Ayub about some business issues in Chinese. Although his Chinese carries African accent, it sounds very fluent. She said to the author that "her husband has learned Chinese at Guangzhou University. Moreover, I don't like to speak English. I speak Chinese with him on a daily basis. I speak English when I have to. It is for this reason that he speaks good Chinese. After all, our business is stable at present. We will not leave Guangzhou in a few years, so he must know Chinese to help us expand our business."

Miss Mai coming from Jiangyang prefecture of Guangdong Province has known her African couple who is from The Democratic Republic of Congo for ten years. She can speak with Cogon clients in Lingala, a major ethnic language in Congo. At the same time, her spouse is very good at Chinese. She says that her spouse acknowledges some Chinese notions conducive for them to deal with a number of matters and he is better at using chopsticks than a good many Chinese people.

In terms of social mores, it can be demonstrated in wedding ceremony that if they are better off, Chinese-African lovers will hold secular ceremony in addition to religious ceremony. In general, their ceremony will be held in local hotels in Guangzhou. The wedding procedures are generally similar to what they are in China. At wedding banquet, Chinese brides often wear white wedding dress while African bridegroom black or white suits, some of them even wearing Chinese costumes. Their wedding ceremony is generally held by priests, and they are declaring their wedding oaths, exchanging their wedding rings, kissing their bridegrooms, and drinking their toasts to their guests, those guests showing their congratulations to them. Most of those guests are composed of their religious friends and some of them are the relatives or friends of the Chinese brides. For the sake of the long distance, the parents of African bridegrooms fail to be present at their wedding ceremonies. In additions, those guests don't need to give those bridges and bridegrooms their monetary gifts. This is quite different from local wedding ceremonies held in China.

Miss Yin comes from Yanbian prefecture of Jilin Province. They hold their wedding ceremony in a hotel located in Guangzhou. At that time, they prepared eight tables of wedding dinner for most of their business partners and their religious friends. Everybody was very happy on that day. She was very content with it. The only pity was that their parents were unable to be present at their wedding ceremonies for the sake of the time and distance that had prevented them from doing so. However, after marriage, Martin and I went to our hometowns to show our homage to our parents.

As for the regular festivals, taking Chinese spring festival for example, now that those Chinese-African couples are busy with their foreign trade business, those businesses will be put to a stop for about one week. They will make use of this period to hold a family union with their African family members and spend their pleasant hours over there. If they are free, African husbands will also go to the hometowns of their wives to spend some time with their family members, perform their duties as husbands, and incorporate

themselves into Chinese culture.

In line with their daily social etiquettes, African couples have changed most in their way they greet others. Based on the introduction given by interviewed African couples, African husbands often greet others by face to face kiss to show their friendliness or hospitality regardless of their sexes while in China, their Chinese wives are unable to accept those intimate actions. For the sake of showing their respect for their Chinese wives, they are willing to change their greeting ways by shaking hands with others or giving their verbal greetings like saying "hello" to them in a polite way.

As far as their living styles are concerned with, those African husbands don't refuse Chinese food. They prefer to choose the cooking styles such as donburi and green salads as their family food and are also willing to try some Cantonese food. They are not keen on seafood except for baked fishes. While eating outside, Lanzhou Beef noodle is their favorite food. Elie coming from Nigeria says that Chinese food is very delicious and his favorite food is the beef donburi available in Lanzhou Beef Noodle Snacks. Those local citizens in Guangzhou like to take different seafood such as scallop. They want to try those foods but don't take an interest in them.

With respect to their regular schedules, African husbands like to go out in the morning and go home in the evening to search for various goods while their Chinese wives stay at their stores to do their business and take care of their children. This is quite similar to many Chinese families.

In an overall sense, in terms of their behavioral respects, African husbands have generally been aware of the importance role Chinese language has been playing in their work and lives. They are willing to learn Chinese and even Cantonese dialects like Chaoshan dialect on account of their very strong capacity in language adaptation. In a relative sense, they are also used to Chinese social mores and living styles. At the same time, their Chinese wives are also willing to make some concessions or adjustments to get access to their harmonious behaviors. However, the adaptation of their African husbands is based more on a utensil-oriented measurement.

Psychological respects

In the case of their psychological respects, African lovers or couples often try their best to protect their own ethnic identification and valuable notions that have been characterized with adhesion in their adaptation process. That is because a good many African lovers or couples have lived in Guangdong for many years and developed an amount of capacity for Chinese learning but judging from the profound participation in Chinese society in a genuine sense in their minds and emotions, they need to do something more. In general, they have a very strong dignity and sense of pride and make efforts to protect their own

original valuable notions and cultural identification particularly exemplified in the consistence between the polygamous notions rooted in a very profound fashion in African culture and the monogamous notions and present Chinese institution (Liang and Qingpeng, 2017) with knowing in a clear fashion this is the potential causes for the possible unhappiness in their future marriage. Chinese lovers or couples prefer to tolerate and accept something for their African lovers or couples. Among those interviewees, while referring to the comments that have to be made on or the attitudes they have to hold towards Africa or African people, their Chinese lovers or Chinese couples often choose positive and affirmative words while their counterparts may point out that some uncivilized behaviors of Chinese people for example picking their noses and that Chinese business men are very slippery and treacherous.

Boniva comes from Burundi. I think it is good for me to have a black skin. Africa will become the center of the world. All the resource that make China, America, and, Europe become stronger and stronger are likely to be acquired from Africa. You may continue to make use of our resources to feed your people. This is very amazing.

Shensai comes from Nigeria. It has been said that in China, it the women that takes charge of their family property. He thinks this is very incredible and unusual in their culture. For him, it is men who are supposed to manage their family. Even if their wives make money, they have to hand in their money and ask their husbands to be in charge of it.

Xiaosu comes from Guangzhou and become the girlfriend of Tether coming from The Democratic Republic of Congo. Xiaosu often quarrels with him because of his frequent chats with other girls. He thinks that he ought to have his privacy and he just chats with other girls on the phone while she minds him to do so a lot. Once, she found he was making a visual conversation with a girl and took away her cellphone. He didn't get his cellphone back the next day until he made an apology to her. Long time ago, a Chinese girl invited him to have a drink and after that they went to the hotel. In fact, he did not like this girl and he was drunk. When he knew this, she quarreled with me for a long time and began to watch his cellphone. For him, he was not her slave and she was not entitled to have a very tight control of him.

When the author of this viewer met Xiaosu again, she told her that she quarreled with him again. Several days, he did something that showed disrespect for her and this made her irritated a lot. She felt they would split up because of their different living habits and conceptual

discrepancies. The frequent quarrels made them exhausted, wondering how long they will continue. His chats with other girls made her upset, then he came to apology for her, and finally she forgave him. But he continued to chat with other girls. The moment she had the opportunity to get his cellphone, he got rid of them immediately. She loved him very much but he was more and more indifferent for her. When she gave him a call, he often said that he was busy with something. She said that she really wanted to leave him but was afraid of splitting up with him because she missed him a lot.

Lina comes from Yangchun prefecture in Guangdong province. She became very gloomy for one year she has contacted the author of this paper. She told this author that she met her husband Damman in the church and admired him a lot for his handsome appearance. However, when she fell in love with her, she found that he had loved several girls at the same time. Although Damman confessed to God, he never corrected his mistakes from the bottom of her heart. After knowing him for three months, she got pregnant and then took their wedding certificate in China. Unfortunately, the birth of their son failed to stop his husband from having affairs with other women and seldom gave money to support her and her son. They lived in different places long before and in effect he had a wife in his hometown. He left China in 2017 and didn't return China. Their marriage went to the edge of divorce. At current, she runs a flower store and does some insurance business. Occasionally, she also purchased goods with African clients. For the sake of her business, she sent her son to live in her hometown.

In addition, since the personal lives of African people has given Chinese people a very negative impression, several interviewed have shown their dissatisfaction with the unpunctuality and the way to get in touch with opposite gender, saying that they are not the best ones suitable for love and marriage. Therefore, Chinese people have been lost in the observation and examination for their love and marriage with African people, for they need to get over the difficulties they have in reducing the cultural differences between them, bearing the opposition and estrangement of the friends and relative around them, and, having perceptive ambivalences for their love and marriage with African people. To a great extent, they think it is an embarrassing thing to marry African people and have children with them. The unbalanced perception of those marriages, the social identities as strangers to Guangzhou, and, their limited friends and social networks over there make them get far away from precious social contact with their friends and relatives, and, go into the same social

group whose members are likely share with them the same living experiences to get free from the possible discomforts the sense of unbalanced maladjustments tend to bring them. It has been found in the investigation that there is an agency named Nigerian-Chinese Family Association in Guangzhou. Those Chinese-African families often hold some gatherings in the form of outgoing, picnics, and, sightseeing, and those activities have served as the major sources for the emotional dependence and social networks of those Chinese-African families.

Belief respects

The persistence in the religious beliefs of African lovers or couples matters most for the continuation of the love and marriage between them, for their children are not necessarily the most important ties for the protection and promotion of their love and marriage and their common religious beliefs are inclined to be the most effective adhesive factors for those. Churches are not only the places to transmit religious teachings but also those that are likely to associate their emotions and spirits. The African people living in Guangzhou often have their own religious beliefs, their religious lives having a very great impact on their lives, especially on their marriage and families. When African religious disciples meet their Chinese lovers or couples, what is bound to happen to them is the mutual acceptance and tolerance of their religious beliefs. Most Africans with a very strong sense of religious beliefs will try their best to make their Chinese lovers or couples become Christians or Muslims. On account of the influence of those African lovers or couples, Chinese lovers or couples in Chinese-African love and marriage begin to worship Jesus Christ or Allah, make it a necessity for them to wear a scarf, and, transmit their religious values into the minds of those around them. A good many interviewed Chinese-African lovers or couples often have the same religious beliefs. This comes from the influence of their Chinese-African lovers or couples. The same religious beliefs have eliminated some living differences caused by the cultural context, language barriers etc. between them, and made them inclined to live a harmonious life together. A Nigerian priest set up a Christian family church in Guangzhou in 1997 in the hope of taking care of the Nigerians who have been far away from their home town, and making them the messengers of gospel transmission. So far, a great many Chinese lovers or couples and business partners of African disciples have joined this church. They will transmit those gospels into the Chinese people around them in an active fashion on a daily basis. Due to the biblical influence, some women in Chinese-African families tend to be subjected and modest to their husbands (Jingpeng and Ma, 2017).

Eyki is priest coming from Nigeria and his Chinese wife Miss Wen is also a priest. He indicates that

biblical disciplinarian Jesus Christ acts as the head of each individual; a husband the head of his wife; God that of Christ. In a family, even if the wife earns more money than her husband and has a stronger ability than him, he remains the leader of their family. Even when his wife is better than him, she is supposed to listen to his suggestions. When she was young, she has worked as sale promotion at Guangzhou Foreign Trades Exchange Conference and got in touch with an African business man. It was this business man who introduced her into Victory Church where she fell in love with Eyki. Now, they had three children. She put it that she is very busy with her work, her family and the care about her three children apart from the affairs of the church under the guidance of God. In a comparative sense, her husband has been spending most of his time doing business and making money outside. For their family, they don't have enough time to get together. Miss Mai, working in the church also, has to share with her husband the expenditure of their family in addition to doing her house work and taking care of their children. Her husband is busy with their business on a daily basis, often going home very late. She thinks based on the tolerance and mutual understanding between her and her husband, she doesn't mind what is going on in her family and is willing to give appropriate sacrifice and taking more responsibility for their family.

Adhering to the Christian spirits that love is tolerance...women ought to subject to her husband and her husband her head...marriage is supposed to be cooperative. Among the interviewed Chinese-African families, the husbands are dominant. African lovers or couples are the major bread-winners of their families, and, their Chinese spouses are in charge of their house work and the education of their children, and at the same time performing their own occupational duties. When they have disputes, their husbands make the decisions. Their husbands are dominant in their families, are endowed with dominant rights, and required their wives to make some sacrifices by submitting to their husbands and being in the charge of their husbands. Therefore, the essence of the powder arrangement of those families under the decoration of religious coats follows the family model of making husbands as subjects and wives objects.

Eli is a priest coming from Nigeria. His wife comes from Henan province. He holds that it is God who makes them husbands and wives. This devout husband often shares with his wife his religious beliefs and marries her less than a year. He claims that it is God who makes them do a very good business in Guangzhou, making his wife become

permanent citizen in Guangzhou, and his son going to public school over there without paying extra sponsoring money. He thinks that it is God who makes them buy a house and a car, find a good wife, have a good son, and lead a good life in Guangzhou.

Miss Yin thinks that she is a Christian devout disciple by herself. She held their wedding ceremony with her wife on Christmas in Guangzhou in 2015. She says that they have many conflicts in their lives but since they have believed in Christian, they choose to pray before God or take the suggestions of their priests to alleviate their conflicts when they have contradictions.

Lina comes from Yangchun prefecture in Guangdong province. She chooses to live in different places with her husbands because of their poor conjugal relationship. Their separation makes her gloomy but she refuses to go to psychiatrist. She goes to church and pray for their happiness, listening to the suggestion of the priests, sharing with her religious friends her emotions, and, claiming that the power of God makes her mind peaceful in a gradual fashion. At a witnessing ritual, she share with her religious friends and shows her gratitude to God for her husband giving her a sum of money a few days ago to ask her to buy some clothes for her and their son because it is getting cold. At the pray, God let his husband know he has to do something for their family. She seldom smiles those days, but she knows that she has to change and believes that God will help her get free from the shadow of life.

It can be seen from those cases that now that African lovers or couples try to persuade their Chinese lover or couples to believe in Christian Chinese-African families, they try their best to enable their Chinese lovers or couples to have something in common with them in the same religious beliefs to reduce the difference of their lives caused by their different cultural backgrounds.

However, at the new age of Chinese society, the valuable notions of equality between men and women have been rooted in the minds of more and more people in their love and marriage, especially in the fostering and opening cities like Guangzhou, and the family positions of women are not inferior to men. In effects, what they do need is to show more respect and equality for each other in an adjustable fashion. What those Chinese-African families have been characterized with is to persuade their Chinese wives into believing their religious beliefs together, and, integrating their values and notions through religious similarity to change the original marital values and marital notions to acculturate their beliefs and values for the aim of making them submissive to their husbands and restrict their actions, voluntary to spend most of their time and energy

on their families or even to give their asymmetrical sacrifices over there.

In addition, it is needed to be pointed that the religious teachings of some religions including Christians require the disciples to follow monogamy but not all African Christian disciples can do so even though they are active in religious activities and devout in religious rituals. For example, the African husband of Lina is African Christian disciple who will not miss any opportunities to share his religious teachings with those around him and take part in religious gatherings.

However, he is not faithful to her wife and goes after more than one extra-marriage lovers. This shows that not all Christian disciples are able to make what they know in consistent with what they do. In addition, the redemption mentioned in Christian makes those Christian believe that all the sins they have committed are likely to be offered the opportunities to be forgiven. It has been mentioned in Bible-John-1 that if we confess our sins, God will forgive us and purify all our injustices. This makes some unfaithful Christian disciples to regard confession as the means to get free from the punishment they deserve. Therefore, it can be seen that religious beliefs cannot guarantee the happiness and sweetness of China-African families.

Therefore, on the whole, the acquisition of Chinese language tend to do good to the changes of those African lovers or couples to have a good understanding of the valuable notions of the social mores and living styles of Chinese people while their ethnic emotions, valuable notions, as well as, religious beliefs have been kept in an intentional fashion for adhesive adaptation. Their Chinese lovers or couples often choose to tolerate and compromise in many a fold. So to speak, the cultural adaptation between Chinese-African lovers or couples is accomplished by interaction between the limited utensil-oriented adaptation and the conception of their Chinese lovers or couples.

THE ANALYSES OF THE INFLUENTIAL FACTORS

The adaptation traits as exemplified in the behavioral respects, psychological respects and belief respects, are, the inevitable effects that have been made in the hybridized interaction of either two of the factors related to the social traits, ethnic traits, individual traits and psychological traits, which makes it more and more difficult for the genuine realization of the love and marriage between Chinese people and African people.

Social traits

On the one hand, the relatively rigid emigration policy and international marriage policy has brought some uncertainty for Chinese-African love and marriage. The condition China provides the foreign applicants of husband-wife gatherings

for permanent residence is that they are required to marry Chinese permanent residential citizens or foreign permanent residential citizens for five years, live in China for 5 years in a continuous fashion, spend no less than 9 months every year over there, and have stable residential places and living cost (State Council of China, 2004). As a matter of fact, most African lovers or couples in Guangzhou hold trading visa or travelling visa. The expiration of the former is in general three to six months while the latter no more than 90 days. The further signature of the visa is very complicated and expensive. This directly gives rise to many African lovers or couples whose visa expires but they are unable to apply for husband-wife gathering permanent residential rights. They cannot but live in Guangzhou in an illegal fashion. Once the police find out their illegal residence, they have to be forced to go back to their motherland. In the process of investigation, it has been told that since the African lovers or couples have been forced to go back home, their Chinese lovers or couples have to run their business and take care of their mixed children. The choice those Chinese lovers or couples cannot but make is either to leave their motherland in a concessional way and go to Africa with their husbands, or to live independently to support their separated families.

On the other hands, the extent to which mainstream society in China accept African people is also an important social factors that have a very great important on Chinese-African love and marriage. The mainstream values that have been characterized with tolerance and diversity are more favorable for the generation and development of Chinese-African love and marriage. On the contrary, the social atmosphere filled with prejudice and discrimination tends to reduce the probability for Chinese-African love and marriage. Chinese people have made some very negative comments on Africans, which leads to the phenomenon that many Chinese people hold a conservative or even exclusive attitude towards Chinese-African love and marriage in a popular fashion. For African lovers or couples, this, to some extent, stimulates their identification with their original culture from the perspective of psychology, for the very good maintenance of the identification with their original culture is inclined to reduce the negative impact those prejudices and discriminations they have suffered from the mainstream Chinese society and protect themselves in a psychological fashion. On the parts of Chinese lovers or couples, they are likely to be placed on the state of being examined or get away from their previous friends or relatives to get free from the negative comments mainstream society will make on them, and, incorporate themselves into the same groups in an active fashion.

Ethnic traits

The factors of ethnic traits including physical factors, cultural factors, and, population factors, are also likely to

have a certain impact on Chinese-African love and marriage. Firstly, the physical traits of African people are apt to be recognized and give Chinese people a very deep impression. Chinese people are likely to be affected in a slight fashion in terms of their attitudes, emotions, and, minds on account of the differential extent their physical attributes are different from those foreigners who have the same or similar color or appearances with Chinese people who tend to view them as pagans or the other and stretch the distance from them in a physical way or in a psychological way. Secondly, the similarity and difference between Chinese cultural and African culture are also the crucial factors that are inclined to affect the acculturation of them. China is quite different from African countries in the light of the language, social mores, religions, and as such over there. African lovers or couples try to maintain their independence in a strategic fashion in accordance with their intentional protection of their ethnic identification, valuable notions, and beliefs on the basis of their limited utensil-oriented cultural adaptation. At the same time, the concessions their Chinese lovers or couples have made tend to make their Chinese lovers or couples acculturated in their beliefs. Thirdly, the population of African people and their sexual rates in Guangzhou are also an indispensable fold. There are more male Africans than female Africans in Guangzhou as it has been discovered that “while a significant minority of traders in Guangzhou are female, African logistics agents are overwhelmingly male” (Gordon et al., 2017). Therefore, African men are willing to choose Chinese lovers or couples on account of their emotional and social needs to be met in an appropriate fashion.

Individual traits

The individual traits of Chinese-African lovers or couples are generally composed of their family background, their educational background, the career, their income, etc., which cannot be neglected while choosing lovers or couples as their lifelong spouses. Those individual traits are the direct factors that determine whether they choose trans-ethnic love or marriage while the factors of the social traits and ethnic traits have an indirect impact on their individual traits. Among those 29 interviewed couples, almost all of those Chinese lovers or partners are not the permanent citizen except for of them, for they are from the smaller cities located in their hometown. The education they have received is often no more than college education, which makes it very difficult for them to find a well-paid job. Moreover, as strangers to this city, they also have to adapt to this city and the strong sense of estrangement the life of this city has brought for them. The relatively economic inferiority of those Chinese women and the lack of stable social contacts in Guangzhou due to their estranged social identity throw them into the domination of African men in Chinese-African love and marriage. Therefore, it is not

difficult for those Chinese women to meet those well-paid African business men in their daily lives, to get in contact with them, and, even to fall in love with them.

Psychological traits

The factors of psychological traits of those African people are also a very important dimension. Firstly, it has been manifested in the deliberation and perception of the overall sense of distance in Guangzhou as exemplified in their satisfaction with and their willingness to live in the residential places. From 2003 downward till present, the African residential areas in Guangzhou city is centralized around Xiaobei, Hongqiao, etc., or about ten kilometers around there (Liang and Qingpeng, 2017). Apart from the opportunities available for them to do their business and make money, the opening and tolerant culture and good educational resources in Guangzhou are also crucial attractions that make them stay and live over there to seek for a better development. Secondly, racial choices or ethnic choices have great impact on Chinese-African love and marriage. In most cases, the individuals have an apparent or ambiguous serialization about the racial background of those people they are willing to love or marry, for this notion has been reflected in the factual effects that have been made in the choice of the trans-ethnic love and marriage in an inevitable fashion. Finally, the strong sense of exchange of individuals has a lot to do with their willingness for trans-ethnic love and marriage. Those Chinese women who do not have a very good economic income are likely to choose to love or even marry African business men to highlight their social positions in their motherlands, and willing to make more concessions in the process of their mutual adaptations.

CONCLUSION

In an original sense, love and marriage between two unmarried subjects, is a very personal matter for each individual. However, when they are from different counties and races, it is not a matter of personal interaction but a complicated topic in the case of cultural adaptation related to the cultural differences between them, the language acquisition and application in their language learning practices and processes, the ethnic identification of them, the psychological structure of them etc. In a conceptual sense, adaptation refers to the adjustments of the attitudes and behaviors of a lot of emigrants or immigrants to keep and improve their living conditions and keep in consistence with their new environments. To this extent, adaptation is supposed to be referred as a broad concept that is characterized with the diverse model and combinative status quos like acculturation, assimilation, segregation, diverse culture, adhesion etc. In the contacting process

between Chinese-African lovers or couples, African lovers or couples choose adhesive adaptation strategy in terms of their adaptation strategies. Herein, it has to be made clear that adhesive adaptation does not mean autonomous adaptation in a strict sense. It is the product of the complicated impact of various structural factors like the institutional factors in Chinese society, the stereotypes or prejudices the mainstream social members of Chinese society have imposed upon the ethnic groups of African people in an intrinsic fashion, or the adaptation capacity of African people exemplified in their different culture, social mores, and languages. Of course, the population and sexual ratios of African people in Guangzhou have great impact on the adaptability of African lovers or couples to different extent. Chinese lovers or couples are likely to choose Chinese-African love and marriage as a result of their personal traits such as their family background, educational background, career, income etc., and some psychological traits relevant to some exchanging awareness. Furthermore, those Chinese lovers or couples have to make some conceptions for or give way for their African lovers or couples to keep the stable marital relationships and the harmonious atmosphere of their families, or, they are even forced to accept reverse acculturation. With respect to their adaptation, their adaptability lies much in their behavioral respects, psychological respects, and belief respects. In the case of the adaptation outcome, Chinese-African lovers or couples choose to make some adjustments to adapt to each other for the aim of achieving their cultural co-existence. In line with their psychological respects, African lovers or couples have a very central identification with their original culture while their Chinese lovers or couples tend to be tolerant enough to protect the cultural independence of their African lovers or couples. With regard to their belief respects, African lovers or couples have a very strong and sustainable inheritance in identifying with their religious beliefs, while their Chinese lovers have to make some concessions to show their respect for the religious beliefs of their African lovers or couples.

Briefly, for the present Chinese-African lovers or couples in Guangzhou, even if they are willing to make some behavioral adjustments for each other, they have to be faced with various tests and limits of their Chinese friends and relatives, social opinions, and, social institution, which have increased their tremendous psychological pressures. In particular, the invisibility and exclusivity of their interpersonal communication community is quite likely to throw them into the danger of their simplified social communication, their inadequate incorporation into mainstream Chinese society, and, their estrangement from mainstream society, which will give rise to greater social problems. Therefore, it is very necessary for us to show our concern for the status quos and cultural adaptation of Chinese-African love and marriage.

In addition, in the context of the special family ground relevant to trans-ethnic love and marriage, the socialization

of the Chinese-African mixed children is a very great challenge for them as what has been epitomized in their sense of social identification including the identification with their countries, their races, their politics, and their cultures, their applications of the languages crucial in their social communication, their behavioral codes, and their social incorporations. All those problems need to be concerned and solved in an immediate fashion. For the sake of the limited textual spaces of this article, the mentioned problems could not be dealt with here but will be explored in further studies in the future.

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