

*Family Relationships and Obligation: A Conceptual Analysis and Empirical Study of Chinese Families*

Principle investigator: Dr. Xiaoying Qi

Abstract

Obligation of various sorts underlies all social relationships. Even the most instrumental and therefore socially attenuated relationships, such as those that arise out of market exchanges, include an element of obligation and the sense of moral norms through which it operates. The focus of the present project is concerned with how individuals in urban settings relate to other individuals through a sense of shared sociality and obligation that in fact underpins the sense of self in sentient agency.

The project is designed to qualitatively analyze the nature of obligation in family relationships in Chinese society and the changes it is presently undergoing. In order to achieve a comprehensive sense of expectations of obligation among Chinese individuals within the context of family relationships the study shall take a comparative perspective by acquiring data from different sources.