

# The affective dimensions of child-raising in cross-national families in Singapore

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Studies surrounding the global circuits of migration have traced an increase in marriage migration and the formation of cross-national families. Contemporary scholarship on cross-national marriages has given attention to marriage migrants' constraints as a result of intertwining social, economic, political and legal disadvantages. In a study of 65 cross-national families across a range of socio-economic classes, this paper focuses on the affective dimensions of child-raising in Singapore. While a conventional class analysis focuses on the financial or material affordances of parenting practices, this paper illuminates how feelings and expectations towards parenting are embedded in class, cultural differences and inequalities for a number of spouses. As affect is a generative framework that extends beyond emotions and is not separable from wider discourses about class, cross-national marriages and ideologies about parenting, this paper discusses how resultant *ways* of feeling may present emotional dissonances for spouses, especially for those who have left-behind children or children from previous relationships. This paper shows how struggles and investments in parenting are not only undergirded by ideals of 'good' (middle-class) parenting and traditional gender roles and expectations, extended family members also have a critical role to play in establishing parenting competencies for the spouses in cross-national marriages.