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Developmentally inappropriate practice? : westernized barriers to the parenting value filial piety

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DEVELOPMENTALLY INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE? WESTERNIZED BARRIERS TO
THE INCLUSION OF THE PARENTING VALUE FILIAL PIETY.

by

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Ryerson University, Toronto 2006

A Major Research Project

Presented to Ryerson University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

In the program of

Early Childhood Studies

Toronto, Ontario Canada 2008

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Abstract

Developmentally inappropriate practice? Westernized barriers to the inclusion of the parenting value filial piety.

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Master of Arts Early Childhood Studies, 2008

Ryerson University

A sociocultural study hypothesised Chinese parents in Canada would express values informed by filial piety. The extent to which filial piety characteristics informed parenting values, the extent to which family characteristics related to parenting values and the extent to which families felt their values were reflected in Canadian parenting literature were explored. Questions were asked to highlight the problematic nature of Developmentally Appropriate Practice's universalistic approach to development.

Survey research involved 30 participants' questionnaire responses. Results were mixed. Parents expressed an independent orientation regarding goals; whereas, values were consistent with filial piety. Agreement with parenting literature was marginal. More research is needed to examine whether a hegemonic ideology contributes to Chinese parents goals; Chinese parents reported values informed by filial piety. No previous studies were found specifically investigating Canadian parents of Chinese origin. Potential benefits include identifying barriers to partnership and opportunities to develop awareness of global parenting goals.

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Much Gratitude,

Lisa



Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1 Research problem..... | 1 |
| 1.2 Significance of the study..... | 2 |
| 1.3 Purpose of study..... | 3 |
| 1.4 Research questions..... | 4 |
| 2. Definition of terms..... | 4 |
| 3. Literature Review | 5 |
| Implications of Western Assumptions Regarding Childrearing Beliefs and Practices | 6 |
| Competing Values, Filial Piety in an Autonomous Environment. | 7 |
| 4. Methodology | 9 |
| 4.1 Research Design..... | 9 |
| 4.3 Data Collection | 10 |
| 4.3.1 Procedures | 10 |
| 4.3.2. Research Instruments | 11 |
| 4.4 Data Analysis..... | 14 |
| 5. Validity and Reliability..... | 16 |
| 6. Ethics and Human Relations..... | 17 |
| 7. Results..... | 18 |
| 7.1 Demographic Information..... | 18 |
| 7.1.2 Age: | 18 |
| 7.1.3 Gender: | 18 |
| 7.1.4 Marital Status: | 18 |
| 7.1.6 Residence/ Citizenship: | 19 |
| 7.1.8 Number of Adults Living in the Home: | 19 |
| 7.1.9 Number of Adults Working Outside of the Home: | 20 |
| 7.1.10 Languages Spoken in the Home: | 20 |
| 7.1.11 Programs, Classes and Activities Outside of the Home: | 20 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 7.1.12 Parenting Literature: | 21 |
| 7.2 Question 1: Filial Piety | 22 |
| 7.3 Question 2: Family Background and Filial Piety Values..... | 25 |
| 7.4 Question 3: Parenting Literature | 29 |
| 8. Discussion and Conclusion..... | 31 |
| 8.1 Implications..... | 36 |
| 8.2 Limitations of Study | 38 |
| 8.3 Further Research | 39 |
| Appendix A: Parenting Values Questionnaire..... | 42 |
| Appendix B: Consent to solicit OEYC clients..... | 48 |
| Appendix C: Survey Cover Letter | 50 |
| Appendix D: Consent Form..... | 52 |
| References..... | 56 |

1. Introduction

1.1 Research problem

A substantial body of research on developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) has revealed the exclusionary nature of the framework (Brennan, 2007; McMullen & Alat, 2002; O'Brien, 2000). Although intended to develop best practices in early childhood programs, the theory behind DAP only considers culture as one of many aspects to be considered with regard to child development, when in fact it is central to the construction of competence and an individual's perception of the world (Bernhard, Gonzalez-Mena, Chang, O'Loughlin, Eggers-Pierola, Roberts Fiati & Corson, 1998). Further to this point, DAP discusses knowledge of child development from a Western perspective which is not suitable in the context of all cultures. Implementing the principles of DAP is problematic because assuming one knowledge over all others leads to the exclusion of certain populations. "When the cultural beliefs and practices of one group are obscured in scientific claims regarding how all children should optimally learn and develop, psychology becomes a guise for dominant ideology" (Lubeck, 1996, p. 156).

In Western society, knowledge of child development is valued over a parent's knowledge of their individual child; when their knowledge or beliefs about child development conflicts with Western norms, parents' knowledge and abilities are devalued within the North American system. An example of this hegemony is evident in the Western cultural and structural values reflected in mainstream parenting literature. These materials assume an individualistic orientation regarding the construction of competence. The underlying assumption in these documents is the promotion of independence. This orientation is so ingrained in Western culture it is assumed in subtle ways. For example the term competence is used synonymously with independence by the Merriam Webster on-line dictionary (www.merriam-webster.com, 2008).

Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni and Maynard (2003) explain, "Core theories in developmental psychology are universalistic in their intentions, they in fact presuppose the independent pathway of development" (p. 461).

Materials reflecting the aforementioned goal are directly translated into a number of languages which demonstrates a misguided belief that inclusionary practice exists even though the messages disseminated often conflict with the parenting goals of the intended audience.

1.2 Significance of the study

The appropriateness of DAP warranted further investigation as it has become a phrase synonymous with quality even though many Early Childhood Practitioners (ECP) are unaware of its contentious nature. This is reiterated in research conducted by McMullen and Alat (2002) revealing that quality of education and care provided in early childhood settings was positively related to teacher qualifications. Specifically, they identified a clear correlation between the level of education of an ECP and the use of developmentally appropriate philosophy. This is of particular concern as the authors question DAP's suitability when addressing the uniqueness of all children, particularly those whose families embrace the value of filial piety. Filial piety is a moral value strongly associated with the socialization goals of families from an interrelated orientation; it is informed by Confucianism and associated with obedience and respect for one's parent's ancestors and traditions.

This study aimed to investigate if Canadian families of Chinese origin embrace values associated with filial piety. The study also attempted to determine to what extent family characteristics relate to parenting values and finally, to identify if Chinese families felt Canadian parenting literature reinforced their beliefs and family values. This is significant because

families embracing filial piety may construe many aspects of independence as undesirable and, therefore, socialize their children according to the filial belief in obedience and respect for elders.

Both Early Childhood Practitioners and families embracing the values associated with filial piety would benefit from this study because it raises issues underlying assumptions about inclusive practice. For example, if the messages intended to support parents raising children assume all families have the same goals, is it inclusive? This study discusses the need to heighten ECPs' awareness of diverse parenting goals.

1.3 Purpose of study

The intent of this study was to identify and describe parenting values associated with filial piety. It was also the purpose of this study to investigate Chinese parents' level of agreement with messages of parenting goals found in parenting literature to highlight the importance of considering culture as central to our knowledge of child development. This issue was explored through a sociocultural theoretical framework. Implications of this study for families were twofold; first to voice Chinese parents' perceptions of appropriate child-rearing priorities and values and second, to identify if there were contradictions between the parenting goals associated with filial piety and an orientation toward autonomy which is represented in Canadian parenting literature.

Implications for Early Childhood Practitioners include developing a culturally inclusive atmosphere which embraces multiple understandings of parenting; in addition, creating awareness of the challenges faced by children trying to belong in two distinct value systems. Early Childhood Practitioners need to be aware of the stress these opposing positions may place on children within their home and educational environments.

1.4 Research questions

This quantitative study hypothesised that Chinese participants would communicate embracing relatedness values associated with filial piety. This was based on observable behaviours linked to the belief in filial piety researched by Keller et al. (2007) and Rao, McHale and Pearson (2003). This study also theorized that Chinese parents would not feel their values were reflected in Canadian parenting literature.

The following questions were explored,

1. To what extent do the characteristics associated with filial piety inform parenting values of Chinese parents raising children in Canada?
2. To what extent do family characteristics related to parenting values?
3. To what extent do families feel their values are reflected in Canadian parenting literature?

2. Definition of terms

For the purpose of this study the following terms are defined accordingly:

Relatedness/ Interdependence: refers to an orientation toward communal goals, responsibility and group cohesiveness.

Filial Piety: a moral value strongly associated with the socialization goals of families from an interrelated orientation; it is associated with obedience and respect for one's parent's ancestors and traditions.

Individualism: an orientation which stresses the views, rights, actions, initiative, interests and autonomy of individuals as being of paramount importance.

Autonomy: The pursuit of individualism characterized by self-governance, free will and moral independence.

Westernized: Often associated with capitalism, democracy and the pursuit of individualism.

Possessing traits or qualities associated with North American and/ or European regions.

Inclusion: a system that in both its design and its effect continually strives to ensure that each member has access to and is enabled to participate in the community, to be part of the community in positive and reinforcing ways and whose identity is reflected in the operations of the community (adapted from: EEANS, 2007).

Independence: act of exerting independence, refers to self-reliance, self-determination and the expression of freedom.

Obedience: implies unquestioning compliance with the expectations or requests of parents or elders in a position of authority.

3. Literature Review

In the study by McMullen and Alat (2002) stronger DAP beliefs were observed in ECPs with a higher level of education, regardless of specialization. The link between the use of DAP and level of education was explained to be because DAP is widely accepted as reflecting 'best practices' within the field of early childhood education. The significance of these findings is the predominant use of a philosophy which is not inclusive of all children. In a complementary study conducted by Edwards (2005), findings indicated that early childhood educators reported having DAP "drummed into them" (p.73), feeling it was the only available option. Participants, all holding a university degree in early childhood education, reported relying heavily on normative developmental theory initially; however, as they gained experience and exposure to a variety of children they found the framework limiting. Emphasis on children's developmental

potential was described as conflicting with their understanding of DAP; therefore, experienced teachers demonstrated a conceptualization of development from a socio-cultural perspective.

Implications of Western Assumptions Regarding Childrearing Beliefs and Practices

Parental knowledge and beliefs are devalued in Canadian early learning environments. This is reflected in the systemic barriers to parent participation which are evident in Ontario schools; some of which are documented in a 2001 research study conducted by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). The document highlights factors keeping parents on the margins of schools,

Traditional models, where educators view parents from a position of superior knowledge and professional status, remain the predominant form...This concept, also known as the 'deficit model,' keeps parents at distance much like the unequal relationship between doctor and patient. (Moore, & Lasky, 2001, p.3)

This hegemonic situation is of particular interest in a climate where early childhood programs seek to be inclusive of all children and families yet do not have the necessary tools.

The creation of curriculum is a human endeavour, and like all human endeavours [it] involves the cultural values, beliefs, assumptions, theories and languages of its developers in its very construction. (Edwards, 2003, p.251)

This creates a practical dilemma for teachers and Early Childhood Practitioners seeking to be inclusive of family values and children's lived experiences because the current infrastructure does not support a lateral relationship or partnership with families. However, "awareness is building regarding how different cultural groups construct knowledge, values, and perspectives of the world based on their physical and social circumstance" (Cannella & Reiff 1994, p. 40). This is the thought behind a qualitative case study conducted by Brennan (2007).

The study employed a sociocultural framework to argue current Western cultural and structural arrangements of child care impeded, rather than promoted, the implementation of sociocultural-based curricula because they were individualised and separatist in nature. Findings in this study indicated that teachers were given an impossible task when asked to promote community connectedness because the structure of care separated children from their communities; and argued that traditional ways of socialisation were inadequate, yet acknowledging there were no new concepts to aid in understanding the meaning of families and children in a changing global society.

Burman (1994) describes this contradiction as,

... Tensions between the priority accorded to individual development...in its positive hue, individualism carries connotations of self-reliance, self-improvement, independence of thought and non-conformity. But it is also associated with self-interest, competition and abdication of personal responsibilities in favour of economic forces. (p.167)

Competing Values, Filial Piety in an Autonomous Environment.

Within many Chinese families the goal of filial piety is a virtue emphasized with greater importance than in Western cultures. Research by Pearson and Rao (2003) indicates that this value has a direct relationship to socialization goals and therefore child-rearing practices. In a study of mothers and children from the United Kingdom and Hong Kong researchers found that Chinese mothers were more likely to socialize their children based on the principles of filial piety and academic achievement which were associated with authoritarian parenting practices. Xiao (1999) argued that socialization goals not only inform parenting practices but also shape a

child's value system and behaviour which could create barriers to social mobility within individualized societies.

Chinese culture is informed by Confucianism, which is characterised by group cohesiveness and social order. In a study of 1575 Americans and 992 urban Chinese adults, researchers found that the more one adheres to filial piety the more likely they are to stress the importance of obedience (Xiao, 1999). In the Chinese sample age and class strongly influenced the importance of obedience whereas in the American sample the only demographic variable that positively influenced the importance of obedience was race; indicating that African Americans and Hispanic Americans were more likely than Caucasians to place importance on obedience. The study also documented that the presence of multiple children in Chinese families was negatively related to family values surrounding independence. The study discussed a modern perception in China that children are spoiled which was defined by perceived over-protection and over-care. It was also revealed that a more independent orientation was present in families with one child and this was linked to the parental concern that their child would not be successful (Xiao, 1999).

Similarly, Keller et al. (2007) define relatedness as the informant of Chinese parenting ideologies; they describe parents perceiving their role as that of a trainer. In their study of mothers with 3 month old infants from Beijing and Taiyuan, China and Los Angeles, California USA researchers found American mothering style was consistent with the promotion of autonomy; whereas, Chinese mothers were oriented toward relatedness. This was demonstrated in their expressed parenting ideologies and verbal and non-verbal interactions with their infants. Chinese mothers emphasized the importance of a close relationship and moral values whereas American mother's described an orientation toward personal attributes and mental agency.

Chinese mothers' non-verbal actions included more body contact whereas the American mothers were more likely to involve their infants in object stimulation. The authors note, "Body contact has been repeatedly related to a developmental pathway towards relatedness, whereas object stimulation has been linked to the development of autonomy (p.215). Keller et al. (2007) highlight the differences in value orientation between Chinese mothers' parenting behaviours compared with their American counterparts. Given the fact Chinese mothers' parenting behaviours differ based on their related orientation, would their paradoxical style be devalued when considered from a Western standard, highlighting the importance of object stimulation; an insignificant practice within Chinese culture? "An early orientation to the non-social world of things and objects further stresses independence from social relationships" (Greenfield et al., 2003, p.470). This statement would seem to highlight the possibility of a value conflict for Chinese parents.

Inclusive literature and practice could be more adeptly perused by including families past experiences, based on the awareness that experience and culture are informants of parenting goals and priorities.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The research design utilized for this study was cross-sectional, it looked at attitudes and goals of the participants at one point in time. It was the most appropriate way of collecting information to answer all of the research questions involved in this project. A quantitative survey was created consisting 26 close ended questions. The type of survey employed was a parenting questionnaire (Appendix A) which was divided into three sections, demographic

information, parenting literature and family goals. This research design was implemented to give an overall picture of the parenting goals and values of Chinese parents in Canada.

4.2 Sampling

Participants were selected based on volunteer participation. The researcher obtained consent to solicit clients (Appendix B) from the Executive Director of an Ontario Early Years Centre in North West Mississauga. After consent was granted, Chinese families attending the centre in were invited to participate in the questionnaire and were given information regarding the study via a survey cover letter (Appendix C) which was distributed by staff at the centre. The target population of interest were Chinese parents living in an urban Canadian setting with at least one child under the age of six. Given the limitations in identifying specific numbers in the target population unsystematic nonprobability sampling was employed; the study obtained a subgroup or sample which was representative of the target population but was limited to convenience sampling. It should be noted that the centre is located in a newly developed area with single family homes as the only available housing option; which may suggest all participants are from middle class backgrounds.

4.3 Data Collection

4.3.1 Procedures

Participants were invited to take part in the 26 item questionnaire and were informed of the intent of the research via the survey cover letter. Informed subjects indicated they were willing to participate and were provided with the Parenting Values Survey consent form (Appendix D). Participants read, signed and dated the consent forms along with the researcher and were given the survey to complete. Once the survey was completed participants selected a children's book to thank them for their participation in the study. Questionnaires were coded with a subject number and data was entered to a web based electronic version of the

questionnaire on Survey Monkey where answers were collated to determine the frequency distribution of scores.

4.3.2. Research Instruments

The questionnaire was created to investigate three specific questions; first, if Chinese parents in Canada embrace values, behaviours and attitudes associated with filial piety and a relatedness orientation. Second to identify to what extent family characteristics relate to parenting values and third, to determine whether Chinese parents felt their values were reflected in Canadian parenting literature. Rank order questions were necessary to collect a number of answers representative of a relatedness and independence orientation and to compel participants to seriously consider their priorities when answering. Items representing filial piety and an independence orientation were selected based on previous literature by Keller et al. (2007), Pearson and Rao (2003) and Rao, McHale and Pearson (2003). Sample rank order questions related to parenting values were also modified, from Schaefer and Edgerton (1985).

Each of the studies referenced identified items directly linked to specific socialization goals, discourse styles and child-rearing/ parenting practices. These items were identified in the aforementioned research through interviews and observations of Chinese parents with children from birth to age six; which is consistent with the subject sample involved in the current study. In the research cited, responses and behaviours were labelled with an autonomous or related orientation.

Replies were assigned ordinal values. Each aspect or characteristic was assigned a score from 1 to 5 (question 22 from 1 to 4), a higher score reflected an orientation toward values associated with filial piety whereas a lower score identified an independent orientation. For example question 22 listed body contact and physical assistance as aspects associated with filial

piety and listed following your child's cues and allowing children to do for themselves as aspects associated with an independence orientation.

Mean filial piety and independence scores for all participants were then broken down into three categories, *important characteristics/behaviours*, *importance of activities* and finally *importance of learning*. Separating responses by category was done to compare overall mean filial piety and independence scores to categorical mean scores. This was done to establish if Chinese parents had consistent responses across categories to obtain a more complete picture.

In the category *characteristics/behaviours*, body contact and physical assistance were representative of filial piety and following your child's cues and allowing children to do for themselves were associated with an independent orientation.

In the category *importance of activities*, spending time with family, eating with assistance and obeying parents were agents of filial piety whereas playing with other children away from family and eating independently were typical of an autonomous orientation.

In the final category, *important items for children to learn*, keeping clothes clean, being polite to adults and obeying parents and teachers were among other items representative of a related orientation. Learning associated with an independence orientation in this category included, thinking for him/herself, being responsible for his/her work and being kind and considerate (see Appendix A for full list of items).

To address the second research question relating family characteristics to parenting values, demographic information was collected including age, gender, marital status, completed education, residence or citizenship, number of dependent children, number of adults living in the home, number of adults working outside of the home, languages spoken in the home and programs and activities through which family members take part in the community.

Demographic information also provided insight into answers assembled in the rank order and rating scale questions; for example considering the effects of the number of children in the family, and the number of generations the family has been in Canada to provide context for a relatedness or independence orientation. Both factors were significant in research by Xiao (1999) and Rao, McHale and Pearson (2003).

Xiao (1999) found that a greater number of children in the family were negatively associated with valuing independence. While Rao et al. (2003) reported, "Traditional Chinese child-rearing beliefs [are] less pronounced in Chinese immigrant populations" (p.479). This information suggested that the questionnaire would expect a more independent orientation from participants based on the greater number of generations the family had lived in Canada.

To answer research question three rating scale questions were designed utilizing the research of Keller et al. (2007), Pearson and Rao (2003) and Rao, McHale and Pearson (2003). Multiple questions were asked to confirm agreement or disagreement with parenting messages in Canadian literature. This question design was important because participants were obliged to select their level of agreement. Similar questions were asked to identify consistency in answers rather than relying on a single response to represent a specific values or degree of belief in parenting literature.

Questions 13 to 21 were statements pertaining to parenting styles which may or may not be reflected in Canadian parenting literature. Participants were asked to answer by selecting one response, either, strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree. Answers representing agreement with parenting literature were assigned a score of one or two and were typical of an independence orientation. Answers associated with disagreement with parenting literature and consistent with filial piety were scored with three or four. For example question 13 asked, "Do

you agree with most of the messages in the parenting literature you have read?” Strongly disagree was assigned a value of four, disagree was assigned a value of three, agree was assigned a value of two and strongly agree was assigned a value of one. Question 16 then asked participants if they felt the literature they had read contradicted their parenting goals and knowledge. For this question strongly disagree and disagree were assigned scores of one and two, where as agree and strongly agree were assigned scores of three and four. Opposing responses for these two questions would indicate consistency in the respondents’ answers.

Question 19 was omitted from the literature scores because responses could be interpreted in multiple ways so the question may have led to scepticism regarding the analysis of scores.

Non-responses regarding parenting literature questions were assigned a zero score and were not included in the calculation of mean scores.

As mentioned, questions were linked or associated to enable the researcher to cross-reference answers and identify inconsistencies. All respondents answered related questions consistently in section two of the questionnaire.

4.4 Data Analysis

The study analyzed data collected to determine the frequency distribution of scores for parenting values and to score agreement or disagreement with Canadian parenting literature. All responses were then analyzed as a single group to determine mean scores for data in each of the questions asked in the questionnaire.

The first research question asked “to what extent do the characteristics associated with filial piety inform parenting values of Chinese parents raising children in Canada?” The answer

to this question was determined by assigning ordinal measurement to the rank order questions in section 3 of the questionnaire, specifically questions 22 to 26.

Items in questions 22 through 26 (Appendix D) were given a numerical value associated with either a related or independent orientation to identify possible inconsistencies and give an overall impression regarding values associated with filial piety for each respondent.

Filial piety was scored between 1.9 and 4; this was established by tabulating the answers to 11 items representative of relatedness orientation from rank order questions 22 to 26. The sum of all respondents scores were then divided by 11. To determine independence scores 13 items, characteristic of an autonomous orientation, from the rank order questions 22 to 26 were tabulated and divided by 13 to establish a score between 1.6 and 4.2.

Non-responses were assigned a zero score and were not included in the calculation of mean scores. For this reason respondent number 10 was omitted from the calculation of mean scores for this question. A paired 2 tail t-test was used for all categories other than *activities* as well as for overall scores to determine if the difference in mean scores was significantly different.

Demographic information was collected and reported using descriptive statistics. Frequency of demographic information was reported in percentages.

To answer the third research question, which was the level of agreement with Canadian parenting literature; scores were tabulated for survey questions 13 to 21. However, question number 19 was omitted because it could be interpreted in different ways and did not lend itself to the validity of analysis.

The range of total raw scores for the 8 survey items were between 8 and 32. The lowest possible score for each question being one and the highest possible score for each question being

four. Those scores were then divided by the eight questions to obtain a numerical value between 1 and 4. An overall score of 1 to 2.12 indicated agreement with parenting literature, a score of 2.13 to 2.9 indicated neutral feelings regarding messages in literature whereas a score of 3 to 4 revealed disagreement with the messages in Canadian parenting literature. As was the case in question one, non-responses were assigned a zero score and were not included in the overall calculation of mean scores.

5. Validity and Reliability

Possible threats to the reliability of this study included participants attempting to answer to please or support the research hypothesis. To control for this possibility multiple questions pertaining to each variable were used. For example, in section 2: Parenting Literature, question 13 asks, "Do you agree with most of the messages in the parenting literature you have read?", similarly questions number 15 asks, "Do you feel the parenting literature you have read reflects your parenting goals?" The participants' answers were aggregated to form an overall mean score insuring that they were consistent and coherent (Bryman, & Teevan, 2005). Specific questions were also compared to insure answers were consistent. For example, the answers to questions 13 and 15 demonstrated that the measurement was accurate as the responses to each question were relatively consistent (q.13, 86.2% responded agree, q.15, 72.5% answered agree and 17.2% answered strongly agree).

Face validity of the study was established by insuring that the survey questions reflected the dimensions of filial piety identified in the research cited in this study. The construct validity of this measure was estimated by deducing the hypothesis based on theory researched, mentioned in section 1.4, regarding the topic of developmentally appropriate practice, Western values of independence and an orientation toward filial piety (Bryman, & Teevan, 2005).

6. Ethics and Human Relations

Participants may have experienced minimal risk as disclosure of parenting values may have caused minimal stress. The study attempted to avoid this stress by providing participants with the intended use of information and assurances that participants will not be linked to the answers they have provided. These assurances are stated in both the survey cover letter and the consent form. Threats posed by participating in this study were minimal. Perceived threats may have included loss of participation in Early Years programs or a negative relationship with Ryerson University or the researcher. To reassure participants none of the aforementioned would occur the cover letter and consent forms both stated that participation at the recruitment site (Ontario Early Years Centre), or with the university or the researcher would not be effected by their refusal or participation in the proposed research.

The attached consent letter informs participants that their participation is voluntary and they have the right to ask questions, refuse to answer questions or withdraw at any time. The purpose of the study was also disclosed, a sample question was provided and privacy and confidentiality was assured. The informed consent letter had a designated area requiring signatures by both participants and the researcher. A consent form for the use of the Ontario Early Years site and solicitation of program participants also designated an area requiring signatures of both the Executive Director of the program and the researcher.

A children's book was given to all participants as a token gift to thank them for their participation in the survey. This was not perceived as an incentive to participate as the material benefit did not warrant participation. The Ryerson research ethics board approved the project on July 15, 2008 (Appendix E).

Data from this study will be saved for a period of one year at which time it will be destroyed by the researcher. Details of this study will be available at the Ryerson library upon final submission and approval by the program director.

7. Results

7.1 Demographic Information

This section will report on each demographic variable with mean scores from participants as a group.

7.1.2 Age:

Ten percent (n=3) of the study participants were between the ages of 24 to 29. Fifty percent (n=15) of participants were between the ages of 30 to 35. 23.3 percent (n=7) of participants were between the ages of 36 and 41 and 16.7 percent (n=5) of participants were between the ages of 42 and 47.

7.1.3 Gender:

The research participants were comprised of 93.3 percent females (n=28) and 6.7% (n=2) males. Interestingly both of the male participants fell into the 42 to 47 age category. Both males also reported having a graduate degree, 2 adults in the home and being the first generation of their family in Canada. Both participants' homes also spoke languages other than English home.

7.1.4 Marital Status:

Similar to the responses to gender, 96.7 percent (n=29) of subjects poled reported being married. The remaining 3.3 percent (n=1) checked off single status on the questionnaire. The large number of married participants significantly limits the results of this research as the subjects are not representative of a wide cross section of the population.

7.1.5 Completed Education:

As reported by Keller et al. (2007) education is a powerful determinant of parenting strategies. For this reason information was collected on the educational background of the participants.

From the sample collected 86.6 percent (n=26) of respondents reported having completed an undergraduate degree or higher. The composition of this total consisted of 60 percent (n=18) of participants had completed an undergraduate degree, 23.3 percent (n=7) had completed a graduate degree and 3.3 percent (n=1) completed a doctoral degree. The remaining 13.3 percent (n=4) of subjects had a post secondary diploma or certificate.

7.1.6 Residence/ Citizenship:

Interestingly 73.3 percent (n=22) of respondents was a first generation Chinese resident or citizen in Canada however; none of the participants required an interpreter to complete the questionnaire. Second generation Chinese in Canada represented 23.3 percent of respondents and 3.3 percent (n=1) of subjects were third generation Chinese in Canada.

7.1.7 Number of Dependent Children:

All survey respondents reported having one or two children. All subjects reported having children under the age of six. 43.3 percent (n=13) participants had one child and 56.7 percent (n=17) participants had 2 children.

7.1.8 Number of Adults Living in the Home:

Eighty percent (n=24) of respondents reported having two adults in the home. Only 3.3 percent (n=1) of participants reported having more than two adults in the home while 13.3 percent (n=4) reported four adults in the home and 3.3 percent (n=1) reported five or more adults living in the family home.

7.1.9 Number of Adults Working Outside of the Home:

Forty percent (n=12) of participants reported one adult working outside of the home, 56.7 percent (n=17) of respondents reported two adults working outside of the home and 3.3 percent (n=1) respondent reported four adults working outside of the home.

7.1.10 Languages Spoken in the Home:

33.4 percent (n=10) of respondents reported speaking one language in the home, 16.7 percent (n=5) of these subjects reported Mandarin, 13.3 percent (n=4) of these subjects did not specify a dialect, they simply reported Chinese, 3.3 percent (n=1) of these subjects reported English as the only language spoken in the home. 46.6 percent (n=14) of respondents reported speaking two languages in the home all of which reported English as one of the two languages. Twenty percent of respondents (n=6) reported speaking three languages in the home all of these subjects also reported English as one of the three languages spoken in the home.

7.1.11 Programs, Classes and Activities Outside of the Home:

Figure 7.1 highlights respondents' participation in the community through their children's activities. 20 percent (n=6) of participants reported attending library programs exclusively, while 6.6 percent (n=2) reported only attending community centre programs. 20 percent (n=6) of respondents reported attending both library and community centre based programs. Other activities reported included, preschool, an Early Years Hub, bible study, private lessons for music, art and dance lessons and community organized activities and ceremonies. 3.3 percent (n=1) reported attending library and other programs whereas 13.3 percent (n=4) of participants reported attending library, community centre and other programs. 36.6 percent (n=11) of respondents did not report any activities outside of the early years centre they were recruited from.

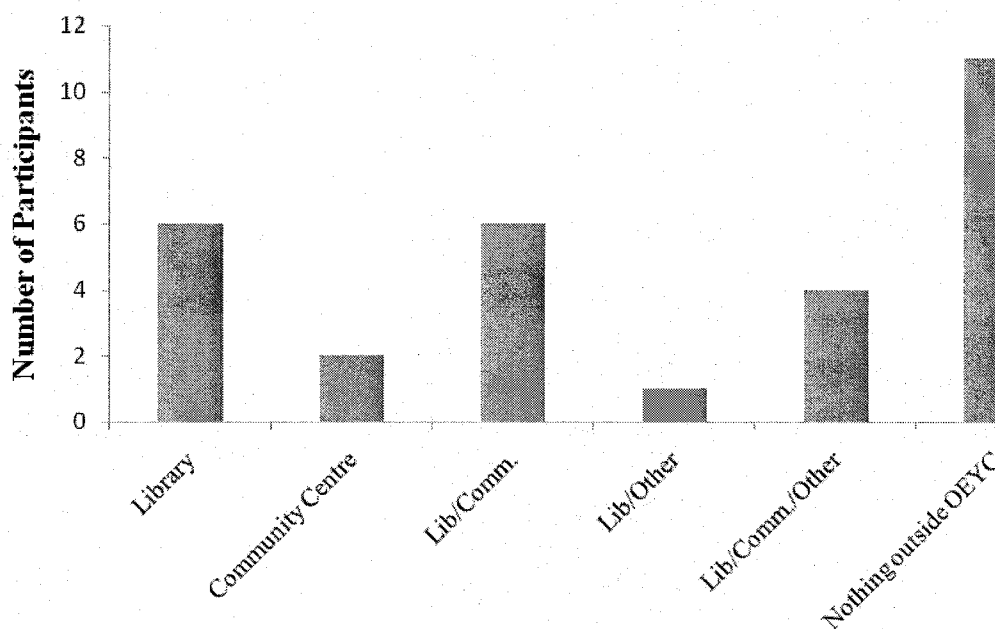


Fig.7.1 Programs respondents reported participating in
 Note: OEYC (Ontario Early Years Centre)

7.1.12 Parenting Literature:

Participants were asked if they read parenting literature from the internet, handouts from workshops, books, pamphlets or magazines. 93.3 percent (n=28) of respondents reported reading parenting literature. Only 6.7 percent (n=2) of participants reported they did not read parenting literature. The participants that did not report reading parenting literature did not complete section two of the questionnaire; however, they did skip to section three, parenting values, and completed the rank order questions regarding characteristics/behaviours, activities and learning.

The questions in section two of the questionnaire relating to agreement or disagreement with parenting literature were dependent on respondents reading a form of parenting literature. When establishing a mean score for research question two, agreement and disagreement with parenting literature, non-responses to questions were assigned a 0 score and were not used to establish mean.

7.2 Question 1: Filial Piety

To what extent do the characteristics associated with filial piety inform parenting values of Chinese parents raising children in Canada?

This study hypothesized that Chinese participants would have a higher overall score representing a belief in filial piety and an overall lower score representing belief in independence. This hypothesis was based on research cited from other studies exploring relatedness versus independent orientation and values (Keller, et al, 2007; Nuyen, 2004; Rao et al., 2003; Xiao, 1999). Results of this study were contrary to prior research findings which described filial piety as the informant of parenting behaviours, expectations and goals of Chinese parents (Keller et al., 2007). As demonstrated in figure 7.2, participants in this study scored higher on values associated with an independence orientation.

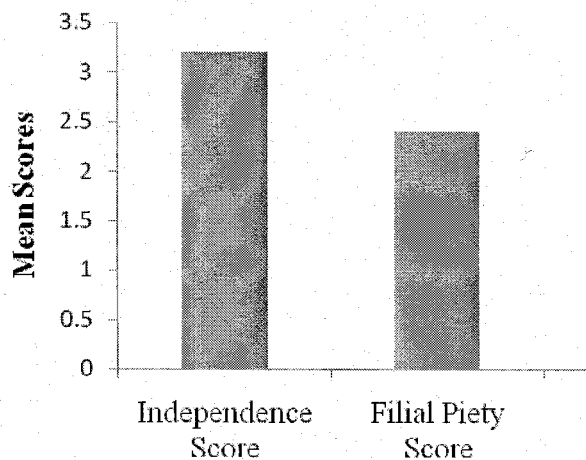


Fig. 7.2 Question 1: Mean Independence and Filial Piety Scores

The findings indicated that seven (25 percent) of the 28 participants scored higher for beliefs representative of filial piety. The difference between collective mean scores for filial piety and independence were 0.9. Findings indicate that participants scored higher for an independence orientation ($m=3.2$) compared to filial piety ($m=2.4$). The difference between the scores was significant ($t=6.18$, $p<0.01$).

To develop a deeper understanding of the data collected, rank order questions were then sub-divided into three categories present in section three of the questionnaire, *characteristics/behaviours*, *activities* and *learning*. The analysis of categorical scores to follow will provided additional insight into the data collected.

7.2.2 Characteristics/Behaviours

The section parenting *characteristics or behaviours* was the only section where respondents had a higher mean score for a filial piety orientation as seen in figure 7.3. The difference is insignificant, 0.02. Two of the participants did not complete the *characteristics/behaviours* portion of the questionnaire so mean scores have been established utilizing the answers from the other 28 participants.

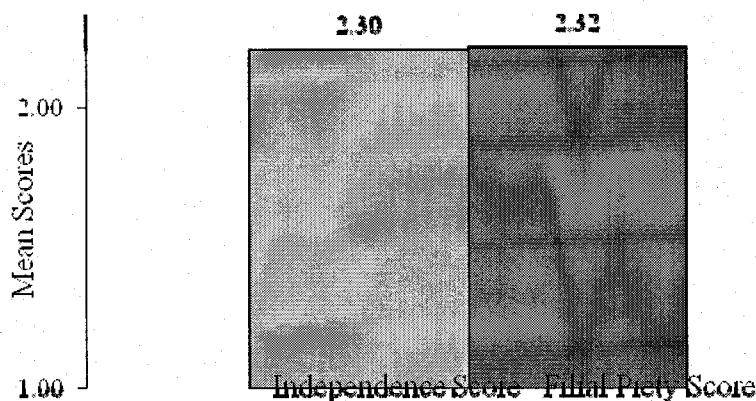


Figure 7.3 Question 1: Parenting Goals, Characteristics/behaviours Mean Scores

Twelve participants (42.9%) scored higher for filial piety than independence values while another five participants (17.9%) scored even for both orientations in this category. Eleven respondents (39.3 %) scored higher for an independence orientation. Filial parenting behaviours listed in this category included body contact and giving physical assistance.

7.2.3 Importance of Activities

In the category importance of activities responses were split. Fifty percent (n=15) of respondents scored higher for filial piety than an independence orientation. Figure 7.4 shows the mean score for filial piety was 3.0 and the mean score for independence was 3.03.

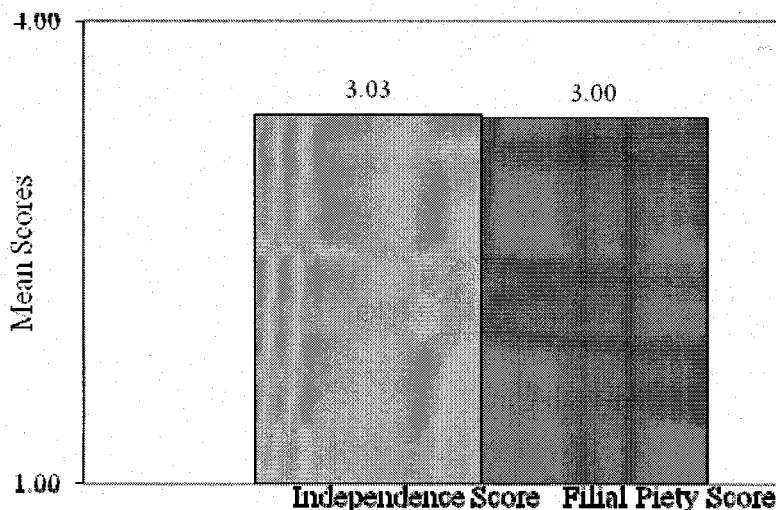


Fig. 7.4 Question 1: Parenting Goals, Importance of Activity Mean Scores

7.2.4 Importance of Learning

In the category importance of learning respondents were more inclined toward items representing an independent orientation. In this category four respondents (13.3 percent) scored equal for filial piety and an independence orientation and two respondents (6.7 percent) scored higher for filial piety than for independence. Subjects assigned rank order to a list of skills that were important for their child(ren) to learn. Some of the items to be ranked ordered included, to think for themselves, to keep their clothes clean, to be curious about many things and to be polite to adults. Figure 7.5 demonstrates the difference between mean filial piety and independence scores in this category was greater than both of the other categories combined. Finding indicate that participants scored higher in independence ($m=3.6$) compared to filial piety ($m=2.2$). The difference between scores is significantly different ($t=7.6$, $p, 0.01$).

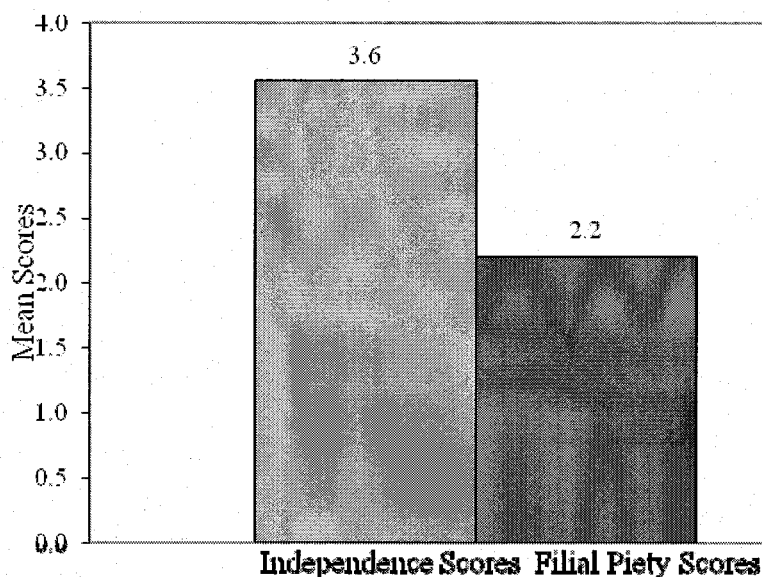


Fig.7.5 Question 1: Parenting Goals, Important for Child to Learn Mean Scores

In summary, for question one overall mean scores and mean scores from the two categories, activities important for children and items important for children to learn were indicative of an independence orientation. The only category with a higher mean score associated with filial piety or a relatedness orientation was parenting characteristics, however it should be noted that the difference was minimal ($n=.02$).

7.3 Question 2: Family Background and Filial Piety Values

The demographic information reported by respondents provided interesting information which may help to contextualize some of the research findings but they also provide some interesting questions for future research. This section will explore pertinent demographic results, in order of appearance, as they relate to filial piety and alternatively an independence orientation.

Age:

This study showed that younger participants scored higher in their belief in filial piety. Of the seven participants (24.1 percent of total respondents) scoring for belief in filial piety over an independent orientation three participants were in the age range of 24 to 29 (42.9 percent of

total higher filial scores), three participants were in the majority age range of 30 to 35 (42.9 percent of total higher filial scores) and one respondent was in the 36 to 41 age range (14.2 percent of total higher filial scores). Figure 7.6 Compares participants' filial piety and independence orientation by categorical age.

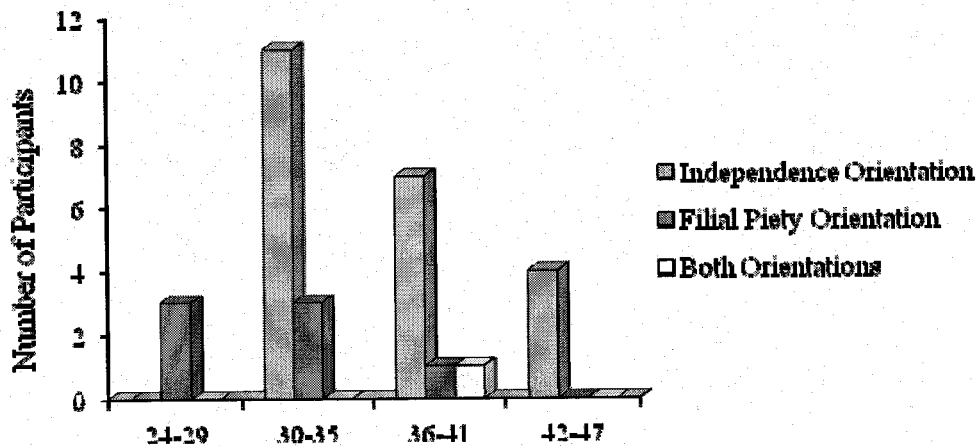


Fig.7.6 Participants' Independence/ Filial Piety orientation scores by age category

The findings are contrary to research which suggests that the younger the parent the less likely they are to regard obedience as a desirable trait in children (Xiao, 1999).

Gender:

Research by Xiao (1999) indicates that gender does not appear to have a direct influence of childrearing values in China. This study was unable to establish this because of the homogeneity of the sample. The sample consisted of 28 women (93.3 percent) and two men (6.7 percent). This may be due to the fact subjects were in an early learning centre where adult participants are predominantly female.

Marital Status:

All but one participant (3.3 percent) was married and filial piety scores varied among all participants. Therefore analysis was not done.

Education:

Xiao (1999) argues,

More years of schooling increase one's ability to do independent thinking and make one value more independent thinking. Thus, educated individuals, having been taught to think for themselves, desire children also to behave according to internal standards instead of externally imposed rules. (p.652)

The data collected for this study supports Xiao's (1999) assertion. As figure 7.7 demonstrates the composition of respondents consisted of 60 percent (n=18) of participants having completed an undergraduate degree, 23.3 percent (n=7) had completed a graduate degree and 3.3 percent (n=1) completed a doctoral degree. The remaining 13.3 percent (n=4) of subjects had a post secondary diploma or certificate. This may help to explain why 22 subjects (73.3 percent) had higher independence scores, than filial piety scores.

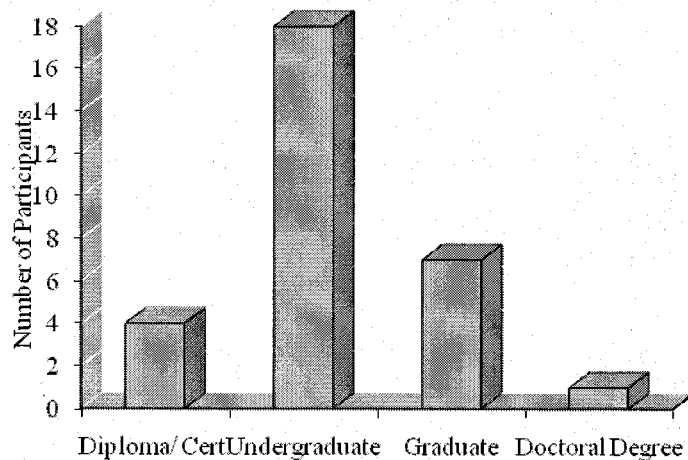


Fig.7.7 Level of Education Attained for 30 Participants

Residence and Citizenship:

Rao, McHale and Pearson (2003) explain that although values including filial piety are still prevalent in modern day China, they are less pronounced in Chinese immigrant populations.

However this study has demonstrated that values associated with an independent orientation are prevalent among the majority of participants regardless of the number of generations they have

been in Canada. Of the four participants with higher filial piety scores two reported first generation in Canada and two reported second generation in Canada.

Number of Adults Living in the Home:

Figure 7.8 demonstrates the results of this section. Participants living arrangements are consistent with an independent orientation where it is typically expected that parents assume sole primary care for children. Within a relatedness orientation one aspect of filial piety can be translated as the assumption that parents socialize their children to know it will be their duty to care for them in their old age (Rao et al., 2003).

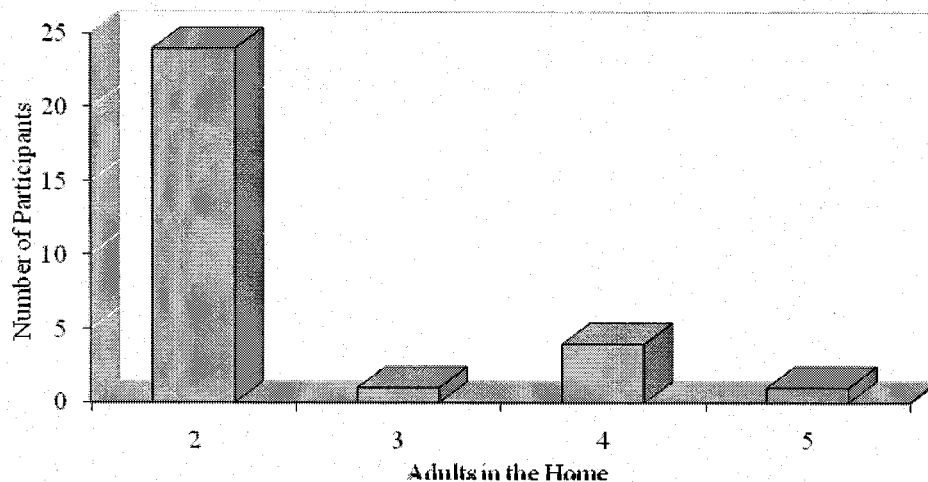


Fig.7.8 Number of Adults Living in the Home

Languages Spoken in the Home:

29 out of 30 respondents (96.6 percent) spoke languages other than English or French in the home. These findings may suggest the importance of cultural preservation to respondents, which, contradicts the respondents' overall independence scores.

7.4 Question 3: Parenting Literature

To what extent do families feel their values are reflected in Canadian parenting literature?

This study hypothesized that Chinese participants would have a higher overall score based on rating scale responses from 8 items. The highest possible score for this series of questions was 4 and the lowest possible score was 1. A score of 3 to 4 revealed disagreement with the messages in Canadian parenting literature and conversely an overall score of 1 to 2.12 indicated agreement with parenting literature, a score of 2.13 to 2.9 indicated neutral feelings regarding messages in literature.

This study hypothesised that participants embracing a filial piety orientation would disagree with many of the messages found in Canadian parenting literature. This hypothesis was based on research examining cultural parenting and value differences. However, this belief was based on the assumption that Chinese parents would have a value system more in line with filial piety than an independent orientation.

Research by Stewart and Bond (2002) suggests that Confucian parenting is based on a different script than that described in Western ideals of parenting practice so we have assumed that Chinese parents would disagree with many of the messages in parenting literature.

The mean score for agreement with parenting literature was 1.9. Figures 7.9 and 7.10 indicate individual agreement/ disagreement with parenting literature scores and collective group scores. Nineteen participants were in agreement with parenting literature with scores between 1 to 2.12, 10 participants had neutral scores between 2.13 to 2.9 and one participant did not respond.

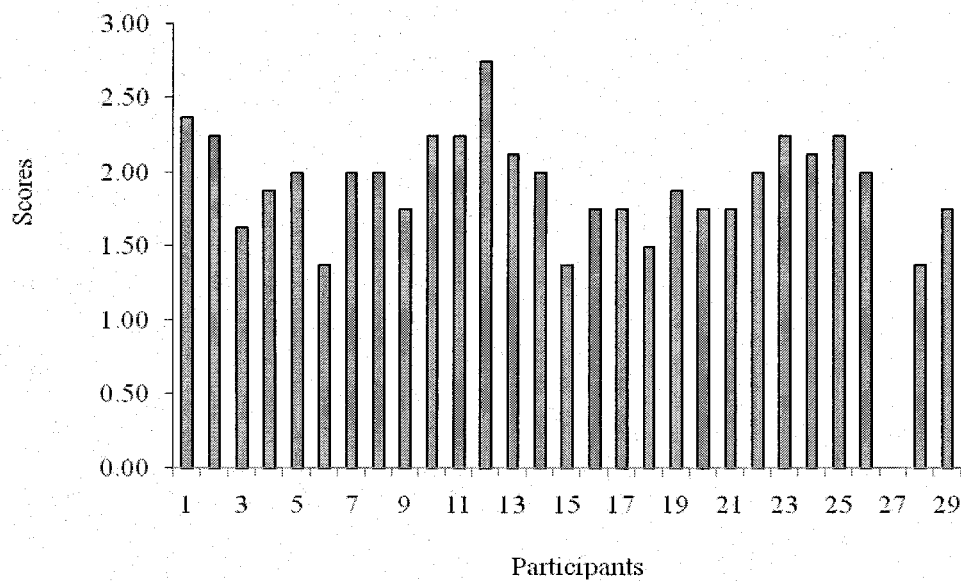


Fig. 7.9 Research Question 3: Individual Mean Scores Parenting Literature
 Note: Scores of 1.0-2.13 =agree with literature, 2.13-2.9=neutral, 3-4 disagree

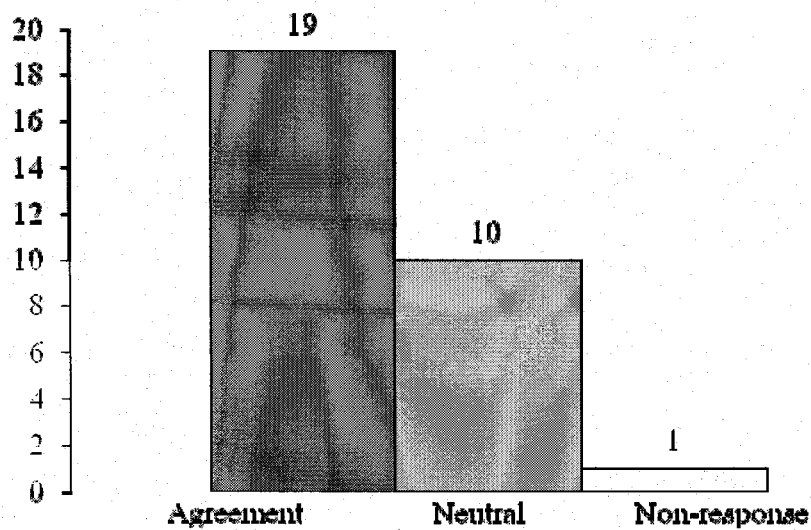


Fig. 7.10 Research Question 2:, Number of Participants in Agreement/ Disagreement with Messages in Canadian Parenting Literature

8. Discussion and Conclusion

The objectives of this study were to identify whether parenting values and goals of Chinese parents in Canada were informed by filial piety, as well as to determine to what extent family characteristics relate to parenting values and finally to identify if Chinese parents agreed with parenting values and behaviours encouraged in Canadian parenting literature.

A sample of 30 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation Chinese parents in Canada reported on the value of items used to measure filial piety and beliefs associated with an independent orientation. The study expected to find that Chinese parents would have high scores associated with an orientation toward filial piety. The study also theorized that scores for values representative of filial piety would be highest in first generation parents in Canada. Overall the study did not support either assertion. None of the research findings suggested there was any significant influence relating to respondents number of generations in Canada. When total filial and independence scores were further broken down into three categories it was identified that parenting characteristics/ behaviours were more consistent with a belief in filial piety; scores associated with parenting actions were slightly more in line with an independent orientation, however, scores associated with children's learning were strongly representative of an independent orientation. It should be noted that all categorical differences other than in the category *learning* were minimal. The contradiction in the findings are consistent with research conducted by Keller et al. (2007) which highlights the fact that parenting ideas and theories are not always translated into action. This may explain the discrepancy between filial values and parents' desire for children to learn skills representative of an independent orientation.

Keller et al. (2007) explain that educated middle class families, like the respondents from this study, may hold values associated with a traditionally related model while following

behaviours expected in an autonomous cultural model. Rao et al. (2003) describe the contemporary interpretation of filial piety being more representative of a generalizable notion of regard for tradition and customs. This may be explained by globalization and the importance of economic independence within the responsibilities of filial tradition and beliefs. Nuyen (2004) explains,

The filial person's respect for the way of the fathers does not take away the motivation and does not leave him or her bereft of resources, to engage critically the traditional viewpoints...in the age of globalization, to be filial is to bring one's tradition to bear in all our negotiations with other traditions, to attain a 'fusion of horizons. (p.438)

Pearson and Rao (2003) explain that parenting values and beliefs may have a greater impact on child development than actual parenting practices. This makes the varied scores between things parents want their children to learn and characteristics, behaviours and activities significant.

The findings related to question one would seem to suggest that although parents maybe more aligned with values indicative of an independence orientation many participants are likely to embrace parenting characteristics/behaviours representative of filial piety and heavily emphasize the need for their child(ren) to learn behaviours consistent with an independent orientation. This would suggest that parents are influenced by the cultural value of filial piety but recognized the importance of their children learning behaviours associated with an independent orientation. Perhaps this is so children will embrace cultural values while learning how to navigate social relationships in Canadian society which is informed by independent values. This is consistent with previous research which found, "Chinese [parents'] overwhelming preference of independence may very well reflect contemporary Chinese concern about children's ability to be self-reliant" (Xiao, 1999).

Another possible explanation for higher independence scores can be found in research conducted by Xiao (1999) which highlights the fact that obedience, which is associated with filial piety, is a behaviour Chinese parents are less concerned with because obedience is assumed and expected not strived for. Obedience to ones parents is an unspoken expectation which is communicated from generation to generation through parenting characteristics, behaviours and activities which was found to be consistent with the results of this study. Rao et al. (2003) explain, "The meaning and form of parental control is different in Chinese and [Western] families and maintains that the context and manner in which parental will is exercised is very important" (p.486). Nuyen (2004) explains that the idea of filial piety refers to a need to stand within tradition in order to seek wisdom and knowledge. Further to this, authoritarian parenting practices often associated with filial piety occur in a loving context in Chinese families and cannot be interpreted in a Western context (Rao et al., 2003). Data from a study conducted by Keller et al. (2007) reveals that Chinese middle class mothers do not hold a cultural model of parenting that simply combines autonomy as it is defined in the Western independent model and relatedness as it is defined in the interdependent model.

In this study one of the most notable differences was in filial scores regarding behaviours parents wanted their children to learn. This does not detract from findings indicating higher filial scores in the characteristics/behaviours category, as Stewart and Bond (2002) explain, "parental practices or behaviours would not necessarily have the same meaning in different cultures" (383). Keller et al. (2007) report that "the nature of the individual's behaviour is not seen as an expression of individual traits and mental states but rather as a reflection of how the behaviour fits the interpersonal standard" (p.210).

Xiao (1999) indicates independence is not the opposite of obedience in Chinese; the term relates to being self-sufficient or self-reliant. The difference is not in the behaviour but in the use of the term, many of the behaviours associated with an autonomous orientation are desirable in Chinese culture, however, the roots or values informing behaviours are very different from those found in Western societies. Rao et al. (2003) explain that the methods parents use to guide children's behaviour is culturally determined, based on cultural values and goals. Styles are related to behaviours in a broad range of situations and create an atmosphere whereas practices occur within a defined specific context and are related to situation-specific behaviours, therefore practices would likely have different meanings for different social groups (Stewart & Bond, 2002).

This was demonstrated in research by Rao et al. (2003) which indicated that authoritarian parenting style was negatively related to academic achievement in Western students, however, it was not in their Chinese counterparts (Rao et al., 2003). Keller et al. (2007) argue, "one to one correspondence between beliefs and behaviours is too simplistic in that it does not consider the 'mental steps' leading to the expression of intended action" (p. 216). Pearson and Rao (2003) explain that the cultural translation of parenting styles and control varies in both psychological and behavioural dimensions. This argument can be utilized to explain respondents' agreement with messages they have read in Canadian parenting literature.

As mentioned, this study also aimed to identify if Chinese parents in Canada agreed with parenting messages found in Canadian parenting literature. The study further hypothesized that scores would reflect greater disagreement in first generation Chinese parents. Findings from this study would suggest that parents agree with Canadian parenting literature, however, not overwhelmingly. Findings did not indicate differences between individual mean scores and

respondents' number of generations in Canada. The mean score for agreement with parenting literature was 1.9 out of a possible 4 suggesting participants did not overwhelmingly agree with the messages found in the Canadian parenting literature they have read. However, respondents were in overall agreement with parenting messages and this could be attributed to the variance in filial and independence scores present when the overall score was scrutinized separately by characters/behaviours, actions and conduct parents wanted their children to learn.

When compared, these results demonstrated that parents' scores were significantly related to independence but specifically with regard to parenting activities and behaviours they wanted their children to learn. Similarly to results from question one, there was no notable differences in scores among first, second or third generation participants.

Childrearing in Canada is based on an autonomous model; the mixed results of this study regarding agreement and disagreement with parenting literature may be due to parents' values being informed by filial piety while they attribute importance to many of the skills necessary in an autonomous society. Hegemony, which was discussed in the literature reviewed for this report is also a likely contributing factor to high independence scores regarding behaviours Chinese parents want their children to learn, particularly since other scores associated with values were more in line with relatedness beliefs. Apple (2004) explains that, "hegemony acts to saturate our consciousness" (par.4). The reason hegemony is effective at defending the status quo is because it is invisible, accepted as commonsense and no one, including the oppressed can imagine a feasible alternative within Canadian society. Apple (2004) goes on to say,

Rather than relying on coercion, [hegemony] relies on winning consent to prevailing order by forming an ideological umbrella under which different groups who usually might not totally agree with each other can stand. The groups are offered a compromise

and feel as if their concerns are being listened to while the dominant groups still maintain their leadership of general social tendencies. (par. 4)

Pearson and Rao (2003) support this theory in their study of parenting practices and socialization goals. They reported that parents intentionally raise their children to exhibit the qualities which are valued and will help them be successful in the society in which they live. Consequently Chinese parents must first learn to be filial, in other words, to immerse themselves in their own culture and tradition because that is their context for learning. Only after this has happened can individuals learn to interpret different information and deepen understanding (Nuyen, 2004).

It would seem that the findings of all research questions are congruent. Participants reported their characteristics/behaviours were informed by filial piety, however, parenting behaviours and things they wanted their children to learn were representative of an independent orientation. Respondents also expressed agreement with parenting messages in Canadian literature.

Harmony exists in these findings as it is filial to care for the family and contribute to peace and prosperity in the community. This is further explained by Nuyen (2004), “the individual person must aim, beyond the person, at “regulating the family,” then beyond the family, at promoting harmony in the community, and then beyond one’s community at contributing to peace and prosperity of one’s country” (p.447).

8.1 Implications

The implications of this study are significant for Early Childhood Practitioners and the families they work with. McMullen and Alat (2002) point to the fact that developmentally appropriate practice does not acknowledge the unique capabilities of individual children and ultimately fails to promote healthy self-identity. It can be assumed that messages about

parenting would have a similar effect on parents embracing a relatedness orientation since it is not consistent with behaviours and values representative of an independent orientation.

This study has revealed that parents may express values and goals associated with filial piety; however, they socialize their children toward an autonomous orientation through behaviours they want their children to learn. This is presumably so they will be successful in Western culture. The importance of identifying and adapting early childhood teaching practices is discussed by Lubeck (1996). She comments on the deconstruction of development and teacher preparation,

Teacher preparation, like education generally, involves learning to think critically and to interrogate the assumptions that underlie any and all knowledge claims, in particular regarding their usefulness in the creation of a more equitable society. It is by becoming “reflective practitioners” (Bowman, 1989; Schon, 1983); that teachers learn to tailor their practice to the diverse needs of children in a pluralistic society. (p.149)

Early Childhood Practitioners need to release assumptions regarding conceived appropriate developmental skills and behaviours. This needs to happen in order to create a culturally inclusive atmosphere which embraces multiple understandings of parenting for true inclusion to exist. For example, ECPs raised in an individualistic society need to understand that their values and priorities surrounding children’s learning and the development of skills may not be shared by a child’s family or extended community. Instead of expecting families to change their beliefs, ECPs need to find a way adjust their practice and become inclusive of diverse goals and expectations.

This is of paramount importance considering research has identified a clear correlation between the level of education of an ECP and the use of developmentally appropriate philosophy

(McMullen and Alat, 2002). Future research may seek to determine if there is a link between teachers' expectations of children and families and the overall learning priorities Chinese parents express for their children while living in Canada.

Another implication of this study not specifically explored in the research is the need to study the challenges faced by children trying to belong in two distinct value systems. Early Childhood Practitioners need to be aware of the stress opposing positions may place on children within their home and educational environments as they try to navigate two separate value systems. Results of this study seem to suggest Chinese parents have assigned priority to trying to help their children be successful by teaching behaviours representative of an autonomous orientation through their filial value system.

8.2 Limitations of Study

Interpretation of these findings must be considered with regard to the subject sample. As discussed in section 4.2, selection was limited with regard to ascertaining specific numbers regarding the target population. The target population was further narrowed in order to make the findings more generalizable, however, convenient sampling was utilized. The sample was skewed toward more female participants with an overall higher level of education and number of married respondents. Of the 30 respondents 2 were male, 29 were married and the educational attainment of the participants was unusually high with 26 subjects reportedly holding an undergraduate degree or higher. Research has suggested that family size can impact the parent child relationship and that the more children in the family negatively related to valuing independence (Xiao, 1999). This hypothesis could not be tested in the current study as all participants' families were limited to one or two children.

Another possible limitation to this study is the research instrument. There are many more items in the subcategory “learning” than the other subcategories – therefore this makes it a more sensitive instrument and enables “learning” to obtain more variation. With the other subcategories, characteristics and activity, their limited 4 or 5 items is too small to show differences.

8.3 Further Research

The quantitative research design employed for this study has provided an overall landscape picture which has identified interesting features. The sample size was minimal yet significant; future research may aim to determine if findings are significant within a larger sample size. Further qualitative research would aid in providing more background information through participant interviews, focus groups and observations. These methodologies would allow for greater detail and therefore provide contextual information regarding responses. For example demographic information suggested that 29 participants spoke languages other than English in the home which is suggestive of cultural preservation through language. However, the majority of respondents had higher independence scores in all categories except *characteristics/behaviours*. Future research may aim to explore this contradiction by collecting more information from respondents.

The voice of participants would act to further validate the current findings of this study. The parents’ own words would add face validity and credibility to the findings of the current data. Interviews, focus groups and observations would provide responses which are longer and more detailed in scope. Patton (2002) explains that qualitative research “permit[s] one to understand the world as seen by the respondents” (p.21).

Further research regarding ECP training and practice is necessary to explore ways to eliminate inequalities present in relationships with children and their parents. A possible solution may be found in the concept of critical pedagogy.

Critical pedagogy is a progressive teaching approach which questions and challenges the status quo; this is done in an attempt to challenge domination and improve relationships to enact social justice (Apple, 2004). When put into action this concept would create structural systemic changes that would be implemented so that equality of all citizens would not be dependent on the good will of others.

The results of this study also pointed to the fact that Chinese parents do not hold a cultural model of parenting that simply combines autonomy as it is defined in the Western independent model and relatedness as it is defined in the interdependent model.

This study was conducted with the intention of promoting awareness of the need for more inclusive practice with diverse families with young children, particularly for families of Chinese heritage.

Underlying tensions exist between marginalized populations and the dominant culture, however, it is far too simplistic to imply there is a dichotomy between Eastern and Western cultures. For example the contradictory findings of this study support the idea that a new culture emerges when Chinese families maintain their heritage while incorporating Westernized practices. This has become the lived experience of families in the wake of globalization.

Perhaps shifting focus away from common assumptions made based on competing independence and relatedness paradigms research should focus on how immigrant families maintain their cultural values while adapting to life in Canada. This may provide insight into practical ways Early Childhood Practitioners can best support diverse families and children.

Appendix A: Parenting Values Questionnaire

Parenting Values

Section 1: Demographic Information

Please circle one answer only.

1. Age:

17 & Under,
18-23
24-29
30-35
36-41
42-47
48 & Over

2. Gender

Male Female

3. Marital Status

Single Married Common Law Divorced Widowed

4. Completed Education

Some high school
High school
Diploma or certificate program
Apprenticeship
Undergraduate degree
Graduate degree
Doctoral degree

5. Residence or Citizenship

1st Generation Chinese
2nd Generation Chinese
3rd Generation Chinese
4th Generation Chinese

6. Number of dependent children

1, age__
2, ages __, __
3, ages __, __, __
4, ages __, __, __
5 or more, ages __, __, __, __, __

7. Number of adults living in the home

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more

8. Number of adults working outside of the home _____

9. Languages spoken in the home _____, _____, _____

10. Please list a few of the programs, classes and activities all of the members of the home participate in

Library Programs
Early Years Centres
Community Centre Programs
Others: Please Specify

Section 2: Parenting Literature

11. Do you read any of the following parenting resource literature? Internet, handouts from workshops, books, pamphlets or magazines

Yes no

12. Which resources do you use most often?

Please rank the order of your answers using 1 for most often and 5 for least often:

1. For most often
2. For second most often
3. For third most often
4. For fourth most often
5. For fifth most often

___ Internet
___ Handouts from workshops
___ Books
___ Pamphlets
___ Magazines

13. Do you agree with most of the messages in the parenting literature you have read? Please circle one answer only.

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

14. Do you feel the messages and advice in the parenting literature you have read helps you to parent your child(ren)?

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

15. Do you feel the parenting literature you have read reflects your parenting goals?

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

16. Do you feel the parenting literature you have read contradicts your parenting goals and knowledge?

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

17. Do you feel the parenting literature you have read disrespects your parenting goals and knowledge?

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

18. Do you feel the parenting literature you have read emphasises the importance of children demonstrating respect for their elders?

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

19. Do you feel the parenting literature you have read emphasises the importance of children becoming independent?

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

20. Do you feel the parenting literature you have read emphasises the importance of parents assisting children with personal care routines such as eating and dressing?

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

21. Do you feel the parenting literature you have read emphasises the importance of children demonstrating respect for their parents?

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

Section 3: Family Goals

The following set of statements describes parenting behaviours most parents feel are important when raising child(ren). Please rank order the importance of each item to you as a parent.

1. For most important
2. For second most important
3. For third most important
4. For fourth most important
5. For fifth most important

Example: Order the importance of each activity in your life:

- 4 Working
- 5 Eating
- 3 Sleeping
- 2 Socializing
- 1 Reading

22. Order the importance of the following characteristics/behaviours:

- ☐ body contact (example: hug)
- ☐ giving physical assistance (example: feeding)
- ☐ following our child's cues (example: rubbing their eyes)
- ☐ allowing children to do for themselves (example: feeding themselves)

The following set of statements describes childhood activities most parents feel are important for their child(ren). Please rank order the importance of each item to you as a parent.

1. For most important
2. For second most important
3. For third most important
4. For fourth most important
5. For fifth most important

23. Order the importance of each activity for your child(ren):

- ☐ playing with other children, away from family members
- ☐ spending time with family members
- ☐ eating with assistance from family members
- ☐ eating independently
- ☐ to obey parents

The following are three sets of statements describing something most parents feel is important for their child(ren) to learn. With each set, please rank order the importance of each item to you for your child.

1. For most important
2. For second most important
3. For third most important
4. For fourth most important
5. For fifth most important

24. Order the importance of the following items you feel are important for your child to learn:

- ☐ To think for him/herself
- ☐ To keep him/herself and his/her clothes clean
- ☐ To be curious about many things
- ☐ To be polite to adults
- ☐ To be kind to other children

25. Order the importance of the following items you feel are important for your child to learn:

- ☐ To obey parents and teachers
- ☐ To be responsible for his/her own work
- ☐ To be kind and considerate
- ☐ To keep things neat and in order
- ☐ To use imagination

26. Order the importance of the following items you feel are important for your child to learn:

- ☐ Interest in how and why things happen
- ☐ Ability to get along with people
- ☐ Being a good student
- ☐ Ability to look after him/herself
- ☐ Good manners

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your answers are anonymous. Please take your time and insure that you answer all 26 questions.

Survey Tool: Electronic Questionnaire

Some items modified from Schaefer, E., & Edgerton, M. (1985). Parental and child correlates of parental modernity.

Appendix B: Consent to solicit OEYC clients

July 14, 2008

Ms. Wolter,

As a community partner invested in supporting families I would like to invite you to support a research study pertinent to your work with families in your community. I am requesting your permission to recruit participants from the Mississauga West Ontario Early Years site to answer an online survey. The following letter will explain the purpose and procedure of the research I am proposing. I am seeking to use the Brittany Glen Ontario Early Years Centre as a point of contact to solicit parent participation. The accompanying letter to parents and consent form are intended to clarify the limited role of the Brittany Glen Ontario Early Years Centre.

One way Early Childhood Practitioners strive to help parents attain their individualized parenting goals is by publishing parenting literature which provides suggestions and strategies for engaging young child(ren). It is important that this literature communicates messages that reflect parenting aims in order to be helpful. Parent responses to this survey can greatly enhance our understanding of diverse parenting goals and whether or not current parenting literature supports various families' objectives.

I am conducting this research to explore a variety of parenting values and priorities. The parenting population being investigated for this study are Chinese parents living in Canada. I want to measure the extent to which parenting literature supports Chinese parental values and concerns. I also want to measure whether or not Chinese parents feel literature is written with their values in mind.

Participation in this research is voluntary. Confidentiality is assured, subjects would be identified and invited to participate through the Brittany Glen Ontario Early Years Centre. Once participants have consented to participate they will complete an electronic survey.

Please feel free to express any concerns regarding this research to me at the e-mail address provided below, or my research advisor Dr. Patricia Corson Ed. D. in the Master of Early Childhood Studies program at Ryerson University at the number provided or the Ryerson University Ethics Review Board. If you have any questions about the research now please ask.

If you have questions later about the research, you may contact:

Lisa Phyllis, Investigator
l8wilson@ryerson.ca
416-675-6622 ext.2581

Patricia Corson
MAECS MRP Advisor
pcorson@ryerson.ca
416-979-5000 ext.7637

Ryerson University Research Ethics Board
c/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation
Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3
416-979-5042

I would greatly appreciate your participation in this research and assure you the imposition to the Brittany Glen Ontario Early Years centre and staff would be minimal.

Sincerely,

Lisa Phyllis

MAECS Student, Ryerson University

l8wilson@ryerson.ca

Modified from: (Creswell, 2008, p.405)

Executive Director Signature

Researcher Signature

Date

Appendix C: Survey Cover Letter

July 14, 2008

Dear Parents,

As parents of young children you have values which are important to you. These values inform how you parent and create priorities for you and your children. One way Early Childhood Practitioners strive to provide support to help you to meet those goals is by publishing parenting literature which provides suggestions and strategies for engaging your child(ren). It is important that this literature communicates messages that reflect your parenting aims in order to be helpful to you and your family. Your responses to this survey can greatly enhance our understanding of your goals and whether or not current parenting literature is supporting your concerns.

As a student, to complete the requirements of the Master of Arts Early Childhood Studies at Ryerson University, I am conducting this research to explore a variety of parenting values and priorities. I want to measure the extent to which parenting literature supports your parental values and concerns. I also want to measure whether or not you feel parenting literature is written with your values in mind. The parenting population being investigated for this study are Chinese parents living in Canada.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your confidentiality is assured and you have the right to refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from this research at anytime. Completion of the electronic survey can commence once a consent letter has been signed by you. This letter will supply me with your consent to compile your answers with that of the other participants. Your name will not be linked to your questionnaire responses. Please be assured that the use of this data will be limited to this research, as authorized by Ryerson University, although results may ultimately be presented in formats other than this major research project. You have the right to express concerns to me at the e-mail address provided below, my research advisor Dr. Patricia Corson Ed. D. in the Master of Early Childhood Studies program at Ryerson University at the number provided or the Ryerson University Ethics Review Board.

I would greatly appreciate your participation in this research. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Once you have signed the consent form, please obtain the web address from Karen Nish to complete your survey. Please complete the survey by July 18, 2008.

To thank you for your contribution to this important research you will receive a children's book to share with your family. Thank you for your time and opinion.

Sincerely,

Lisa Phyllis

MAECS Student, Ryerson University

l8wilson@ryerson.ca

Appendix D: Consent Form

Developmentally inappropriate practice? Westernized barriers to the inclusion of the parenting value filial piety.

The following information is provided to help you decide whether you wish to participate in the present study.

Investigators:

The research you are being asked to volunteer to participate in is being conducted by Lisa Phyllis BA ECE. This research is being done by the investigator to complete the requirements of the Master of Arts in Early Childhood Studies program at Ryerson University. The research supervisor for this research is Patricia Corson B.Ed., M.Ed., Ed.D.

Purpose:

This study is intended to identify parenting goals within the Chinese community and to determine whether or not those values are reflected in Canadian parenting literature. A minimum of 30 Chinese parents are being recruited voluntarily from the Mississauga West Ontario Early Years Centre to participate.

Description of the Study:

Prior to completing the online questionnaire Karen Nish, OEYC Supervisor, will ask you to sign this consent form, once this has been done you will receive the survey cover letter. After reading the cover letter, Karen will provide you with the web address you will need to complete the questionnaire. You have the option of completing the questionnaire at the centre or at a separate location. A Cantonese and Mandarin speaking staff member is available on site for participants requiring an interpreter. When you next return to the early years centre you will receive a children's book from Karen to thank you for your participation. The information participants provide will be collected using a brief online questionnaire which participants will likely complete within 10 minutes. The questionnaire used in this study is not experimental in nature. The only experimental aspect of this study is the gathering of information for the purpose of analysis.

Questions include:

- Please list the languages spoken in your home.
- Order the importance of the following items you feel are important for your child to learn:
 1. For most important
 2. For second most important
 3. For third most important
 4. For fourth most important
 5. For fifth most important

| |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">___ Interest in how and why things happen___ Ability to get along with people___ Being a good student___ Ability to look after him/herself___ Good manners |
|--|

The questionnaires will be collected, coded and themes will be identified. Information will be analysed to identify whether or not parenting priorities of Chinese parents in Ontario are reflected in mainstream Canadian parenting literature.

Findings:

Please do not hesitate to ask questions about the study before participating or during the study. I would be happy to share the findings with you after the research is completed. A copy of the completed research will be on file at the Early Years Centre and a link will be sent via email to all participants enabling them to view the document online once it is available.

Risks or Discomforts:

Participants may experience minimal risk as disclosure of parenting values may cause minimal stress. The study has attempted to avoid this stress by proving participants with the intended use of information and assurances that participants will not be linked to the answers they have provided.

Benefits of the Study:

Both Early Childhood Practitioners and families may potentially benefit from this study as it seeks to identify barriers to partnership while providing the opportunities to develop a relationship based on mutual respect and a heightened awareness of global parenting goals. The expected benefits associated with your participation are informing Early Childhood Practitioners of Chinese parenting goals and values to better provide support and solutions which support the family keeping those values in mind.

The study cannot guarantee, however, that you will receive any benefits from participating in this study.

Confidentiality:

The online questionnaire you are being asked to complete is password protected and has an encryption security feature referred to as secure sockets layer (SSL). These features will prevent potential access to information from anyone other than the researcher. Your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and only the researcher will know your name. All questionnaires will be collected together and your answers will not be linked to you by name. The researcher will not know which survey you have completed. A soft copy of the data will be stored in the researcher's home computer, which is password protected, for a period of one year.

Incentives to Participate:

A soft cover children's book will be offered to participants as a token gift to thank them for their participation in the survey.

Voluntary Nature of Participation:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision of whether or not to participate will not influence your future relations with the Mississauga West Ontario Early Years Centre or Ryerson University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to stop your participation at any time without penalty.

At any particular point in the study, you may refuse to answer any particular question or stop participation altogether.

Questions about the Study:

If you have any questions about the research now please ask. If you have questions later about the research, you may contact:

Lisa Phyllis, Investigator

l8wilson@ryerson.ca

416-675-6622 ext.2581

or

Patricia Corson

MAECS MRP Advisor

pcorson@ryerson.ca

416-979-5000 ext.7637

If you have questions regarding your rights as a human subject and participant in this study, you may contact:

Ryerson University Research Ethics Board

c/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation

Ryerson University

350 Victoria Street

Toronto, ON M5B 2K3

416-979-5042

Agreement:

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this agreement and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to be in the study and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this agreement.

You have been told that by signing this consent agreement you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

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