

Expecting my child to become “dragon” – development of the Chinese Parental Expectation on Child’s Future Scale

Janet T.Y. Leung¹ and Daniel T.L. Shek^{1-4,*}

¹ Department of Applied Social Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, P.R. China

² Public Policy Research Institute, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, P.R. China

³ Kiang Wu Nursing College of Macau, Macau, P.R. China

⁴ Division of Adolescent Medicine, Kentucky Children’s Hospital, University of Kentucky, Lexington, USA

Abstract

This paper describes a study in which an assessment tool of parental expectation on child’s future was developed. Based on focus group interviews of parents and adolescents in Hong Kong, five dimensions of parental expectation on child’s future were identified, including “educational achievement”, “self-reliance”, “occupation”, “family obligation”, and “conduct”. In conjunction with the Chinese literature on parental expectations, the Chinese Parental Expectation on Child’s Future Scale was developed. To assess the content validity of the measure, a panel of experts was invited to determine the relevance, clarity, and representativeness of the developed items and the views of the experts were used to further modify the scale. This study is a pioneer attempt to assess parental expectation on child’s future in different Chinese contexts.

Keywords: children’s future; Chinese; content validity; focus group; parental expectation.

Introduction

Parental expectations have been regarded as one of the most important family factors that influence the academic achievement and development of adolescents (1, 2). Eccles et al. (3) identified that expectations for their children’s success and confidence in their children’s abilities may influence children’s motivation. There was evidence that parental expectation was an important factor that predicted the cognitive and psychological competence of their children (4–8).

In the Chinese community, parental expectations on child’s future play a high value in the socialization of their children. There is a popular Chinese maxim of “*wang zi cheng long*” (expecting the son to become dragon) that truly reflects the essence of parental expectations on child’s future, with the dragon symbolizing “supremacy” in Chinese culture.

Parental expectations on child’s future are deeply shaped by Confucian philosophy in Chinese culture. The importance of education and scholarship, as well as emphasis of effort, are central features in Confucian thoughts. Apart from serving the instrumental purpose of climbing up the social ladder, education possesses special meaning for the fulfillment of two fundamental Chinese values: human malleability and self-improvement (9). Children are socialized with the saying like “*wan ban jie xia pin, wei you du shu gao*” (all jobs are low in status, except study which is the highest). Among the Chinese beliefs on education, effort is greatly emphasized in Chinese culture. The Chinese sayings of “*qin you gong, xi wu yi*” (reward lies ahead of diligence but nothing is gained by indolence) and “*qin neng bu zhou*” (diligence is a means by which one makes up for one’s dullness) reflect the importance of effort in Chinese beliefs.

Apart from education, family obligation is also an important feature embedded in Chinese culture that should be noted. In the Chinese tradition, Confucianism shapes the development of families and provides both structural and functional implications on family processes and parent-child relationships. Parents are expected to have clear expectations of their children, with emphasis on societal and cultural inclinations prior to fulfillment of individual needs. Responding to the ideal of collectivism, parents have the responsibility to nurture and prepare their children to reach the socialized goals. The collective orientation on socialization affects the conceptualization of parenting styles and practice (10, 11). Children, socialized with Confucian thoughts on filial piety (*Xiao*), are expected to fulfill the expectations of parents, gain pride to the families, and reduce stresses and anxieties of parents. De Vos (12) suggested that duties and roles in one’s family and clan constituted to the Chinese achievement goals, and that individuals should pay any price for benefits of the family. Hence, the content of socialization is not individualistically but collectively defined (12).

Moreover, development of moral character is another important feature rooted in Confucian philosophy. Virtue (*de*) is regarded as “moral-making property” of a person [(13), p. 17]. The Way of Heaven leads human beings into truth, goodness, and perfection through moral virtue, that is, the Way of human beings. Human beings should cultivate their character sincerely and perform good deeds earnestly for the pursuit of “*chun-tzu*” (man of virtue or noble character). The moral

*Corresponding author: Professor Daniel T.L. Shek, PhD, FHKPS, BBS, JP, Chair Professor of Applied Social Sciences, Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, Department of Applied Social Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Room HJ407, Core H, Hungghom, Hong Kong, P.R. China
E-mail: danielshek@inet.polyu.edu.hk

Received October 10, 2010; accepted December 10, 2010

discourse is the pursuit of humaneness, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom in human life (13).

Though the concept of parental expectation on child's future is distinctive and important in understanding family beliefs and processes in the Chinese context, relevant research in this area is minimal. Computer searches in November 2010 based on different databases including PsycINFO, Social Work Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts, and ERIC for the period of 1980–2010 using the term of “parental expectation” as the search term showed that there were only 1311, 37, 181, and 285 citations, respectively. The number of citations dropped to 21, 0, two, seven, respectively when searching publications on parental expectations with relevance to child's future. The results further dropped to four, 0, two, two, respectively in the studies of Chinese communities based on the search terms “parental expectations”, “child's future”, and “Chinese”.

The severe lack of research on parental expectations on child's future may be due to the difficulties of theorization and conceptualization of belief systems, the cultural-specificity of belief systems, as well as the lack of measurement tools in measuring parental beliefs and expectations (14). Sigel and McGillicuddy-De Lisi (15) commented that “a clear conception of beliefs [for parents] and theoretical explanations of how and why beliefs are effective are lacking” and literature on beliefs “is superficial, poorly defined, and while often in face validity, it is sorely lacking in providing information about construct and content validity” (p. 497). This criticism is still valid after a decade. Leung (16) also suggested that “there is a dearth of theorizing and data on the beliefs systems of Chinese” (p. 262).

In reviewing the research on parental expectation on child's future, three observations were identified. First, research on the relevant area focused only on the dimension of education. It was found that parents' expected completion of schooling of children was the sole indicator in most research concerning parental expectations (4, 17–20). Other dimensions such as occupation, economic standard, family obligations, moral character etc. in parental expectations of child's future were ignored in the existing studies.

Second, the majority of research on understanding the domains and aspects of parental expectations were qualitative in nature. In her qualitative study of parental expectations in Chinese immigrant families in Canada, Li (2) uncovered a folk theory grounded in Chinese immigrant families that parental expectations emphasized school achievement, science-related career aspirations, moral character and cultural integration in response to acculturative struggles. Shek and Chan (21), in their qualitative study on parental perceptions of attributes of the ideal child in Hong Kong, found that Chinese parents stressed the importance of “family-related” attributes that consisted of good parent-child relations and fulfilling family obligations; “academic-related” attributes that contained good academic achievement and high education attainment; “conduct-related” attributes of good character and compliance with the law (p. 300). Though the related qualitative studies can give us insightful ideas on parental expectations on their children, development of an objective measurement tool to assess parental expectation on child's future is indispensable.

Third, it is noteworthy that domains and themes of parental expectations are different between the Chinese community and the Western world, which implies that an indigenous Chinese conception of parental expectations is needed. In her qualitative study of the childrearing beliefs of 48 Chinese and 50 European American mothers, Chao (11) discovered that Chinese parents valued the importance of education, obedience and parental respect, good personality and adaptability, good character, morals and ethics, importance of independence and self-reliance, and maintaining Chinese culture as their childrearing goals, whereas European Americans emphasized building self-esteem and self-confidence of children, stressing independence and individualism, providing a good environment for learning and exploration as their main childrearing values. Similar findings were obtained from Padmawidjaja and Chao (22) who found that there was ethnic group difference on Confucian goals and child-centered goals reported by Chinese American parents and European American parents. The difference implies that cultural specificity was manifested in the conception of parental expectations.

Academically, it is essential to develop a measurement tool to assess parental expectations on child's future due to three reasons. First, as the concepts and theories related to parental expectations on child's future are under-developed, development of an objective assessment tool in this area would contribute to the theorization and conceptualization of the concept. Second, the scale helps us to understand family beliefs of Chinese people under the influence of Confucian philosophy, which may be different from that of Western societies. Third, parental expectations on children's development determine parental childrearing goals and parenting practices (11). With reference to Chao's (11) findings that there were thematic differences of childrearing beliefs and socialization goals in Chinese and Western cultures, understanding of parental expectations on child's future is important for us to learn more of the family processes in the Chinese context (23, 24).

The ideas of Confucian thoughts and qualitative studies on parental expectations on child's development (2, 11, 21) bring us insights on the domains of parental expectations on child's future in Chinese context. In short, congruent with Confucian ideas and research findings, there are three domains of attributes, namely “education attainment”, “family obligations”, and “moral character”, related to parental expectations on child's future that are worth to be explored. Other attributes such as occupation, self-reliance, adaptability, and cultural integration may also be relevant to the construct. These domains were further explored in this study.

Methods

Participants and procedure

Regarding the development of an assessment tool on parental expectation on child's future, two stages of research were involved. First, focus group interviews with Chinese parents and adolescents were

carried out. Second, experts were invited to assess the content validity of the scale and examine whether the items could be modified.

Focus group interviews with Chinese parents and adolescents

With the very limited literature on parental expectations on child's future in the Chinese context, it is essential to understand the phenomenon directly from the stakeholders. The process is of special importance for an indigenous study where cultural specificity is emphasized. Qualitative study allows researchers to grasp the native meanings and characteristics of the phenomenon, so as to make indigenous conceptualization of the phenomenon possible (24). In this study, two focus groups of parents and adolescents were arranged and interviewed separately.

Parents and adolescents were recruited from two children and youth service units in Hong Kong. The adolescent group consisted of two boys and six girls, with age ranged from 12 to 16 ($M=14.13$, $SD=1.25$). One of them came from single parent families and others from intact families. The family size ranged from three to six persons ($M=4.25$, $SD=1.16$). Four of them were experiencing economic disadvantage. Written consent from parents was obtained for the adolescents to join the focus group. The adolescents were requested to voice out their ideas on expectations of their parents on their future.

The parent group consisted of seven parents (one father and six mothers) with at least one child aged between 11 and 15 years. The age ranged from 40 to 52 years ($M=46.0$, $SD=4.32$). Their children studied in Secondary 2 to Secondary 4. There were three intact families, two divorced families, and two widowed families. There were four parents experiencing economic disadvantage. Written consent from parents was obtained. Also, the parents were requested to voice their expectations on their child's future. The first author conducted both interviews and the processes were audio recorded. The focus group interviews of adolescents and parents lasted for 1 h and 1 h and 15 min, respectively.

Content validation by experts

While focus groups could yield rich information for the construction of the scale on parental expectation on child's future, content validation of the measure is important to see whether the measure is valid. In this study, content validity was determined by the judgments of experts and researchers to assess whether the elements or items were relevant to and covered the relevant facets of the construct (25). In this study, experts who had more than 5 years of experiences in providing social work or counseling services for adolescents and families or had substantial knowledge on parent education and parent-adolescent relationships were invited to participate in the content validation process. There were 15 experts involved in total. They were all social workers, with 14 currently working in children and youth services and family services, and one a full-time PhD student. Regarding their experiences, one had worked as a social worker for 5 to 10 years, eight for 10 to 15 years, three for 16 to 20 years, and three for more than 20 years. Regarding their educational levels, one was a PhD student, 10 had a Master degree and four had a Bachelor degree. They were requested to examine (a) relevance of the test items to the construct or subscales measured in the instruments; (b) clarity (i.e., whether the wordings and phases were clear and concise), and (c) representativeness of the items to a particular content domain (i.e., how far the domains cover all the facets of the targeted constructs).

A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the views of the experts. The experts were informed of the definitions, related

literature, domains of the construct, as well as the assessment instrument. They were requested to fill in the questionnaire with their judgment of the content validity of the instruments. Regarding "relevance" of the test items for the construct, a four-point rating scale (1=irrelevant, 2=unable to assess the relevance without item revision or item is in need of revision that or otherwise it would no longer be relevant, 3=relevant but needs minor amendment, 4=relevant) was used on measuring how far each item is relevant to the content domain. Justifications were requested for items that are considered irrelevant, and recommendations for modifications of items that needed revision were also requested. Regarding "clarity" of the items, a four-point Likert scale (1=very unclear, 2=unclear, 3=clear, 4=very clear) was used to see whether the wordings and phases were concise and clearly presented. Again, recommendations for modifications of the wordings and phases were requested in case an item was perceived as unclearly presented. For "representativeness" of items to the domains, a four-point Likert scale (1=very inadequate, 2=inadequate, 3=adequate, 4=very adequate) was used to evaluate how far the items cover the facets of the domains. Recommendations were asked if the aspects were considered under-represented. Overall, the representativeness of the domains to the targeted construct was also evaluated by a four-point Likert scale. An open-ended question was used to examine the overall representativeness of the domains in covering the facets of the targeted construct.

Results

Focus group interviews with Chinese parents and adolescents

The content of the interview was fully transcribed by the first author. Pattern coding was carried out with the transcripts of parent focus group and adolescent focus group. Miles and Huberman (26) suggested that pattern coding is "a way of grouping those summaries into a small number of sets, themes, or constructs...it's an analogue to the cluster-analytic and factor-analytic devices use in statistical analysis" (p. 69). In analyzing the narratives of the two focus groups, analyses showed that five categories of responses (educational achievement, self-reliance, occupation, family obligation, and conduct) emerged from the data. Table 1 lists the domains and themes of parental expectation on child's future.

Comparatively, adolescents were more ready to suggest parental expectation on the education aspect than parents, especially on the completion of schooling. Adolescents clearly stated that parents expected them to study in universities. On the other hand, only one parent had the suggestion, though parents expressed that they would save for their children to study in universities. The unpredictability and uncontrollability of the outcomes may constrain parents' suggestion from expecting their children to enter universities.

Similarly, adolescents were more ready to suggest parental expectation on family obligation, such as earning adequately to support the families and taking care of parents. In contrast, parents mentioned less on this domain.

Both parents and adolescents suggested self-reliance was an important attribute on parental expectation on child's future. The domain was also salient in families with economic disadvantage.

Table 1 Domains and themes of parental expectations on child's future emerged from focus groups of adolescents and parents.

Domain	Themes	Examples of narratives	No. of participants mentioned (numbers in parentheses are those experiencing economic disadvantage)
Educational achievement	Entering university	It is good if he [my son] can read in university, as this is one of the achievements in his future. ... Having a Bachelor degree, or a university degree, would be important to earn a living, and find a job. (C, father, 48 years old, paragraph 49p)	Adolescent: 4(3) Parent: 1(0)
	Fulfilling responsibility in studying	I think that once he [my son] tries his best, he can study as much as he wants. (L, 42, mother, paragraph 51p)	Parent: 2(0)
	Diverse development	The minimum requirement is to complete the 3, 3, 4 level to Form 6. She [my daughter] should try her best to fulfill her responsibility. (Y, mother, 50 years old, paragraph 79p) Other than academic result, [parents] hoped that I can learn other things... I can have diverse development. (M, female, 14 years old, F. 3, paragraph 225a)	Adolescent: 1(1) Parent: 1(0)
	Earn adequately to support oneself	It's not a problem if she [my daughter] fails in her study. If she has second interest, she can have other roads to choose. (Y, mother, 50 years old, paragraph 81p) When I grow up, I need not strive. (F, male, 15 years old, F. 2, paragraph 45a) But one day I could not take care of him (my son). Thus, he must be self-reliant. (C, father, 48 years old, paragraph 91p)	Adolescent: 3(2) Parent: 4(2)
Occupation	Have good and stable income	[My son] has a flat to accommodate, not to be very rich, but at least does not bother for two meals, adequate for himself. (T, mother, 44 years old, paragraph 164p)	Adolescent: 2(1) Parent: 1(1)
	Decent job	[My parents want me to] have good salary in the future. (H, male, 14 years old, F. 3, paragraph 46a)	Adolescent: 2(1) Parent: 1(1)
	Less hard work	My parents want me to study more, and have stable salary. (D, female, 14 years old, F. 3, paragraph 47a)	Adolescent: 1(0) Adolescent: 2(2)
	Climbing up the social ladder	[My parents expect me not to be] in lower class. (S, female, 14 years old, F. 2, paragraph 86a) Don't stay in this [social] class. I think that my situation is not good. I hope that he (my son) would be better. (T, mother, 44 years old, paragraph 160p).	Adolescent: 3(2) Parent: 1(1)
Good attitudes towards work	Fit one's interest	After studying in Form 4, he is still in fond of aeroplane. Because he has such interest, he would think of his career. I had similar experience when I started working, I chose my job according to my interest. And from the interest I developed my career. (C, father, 48 years old, paragraph 119p)	Parent: 1(0)
	Good attitudes towards work	The most important [attribute] is hard work. Children nowadays are not willing to work hard... If you don't work hard, you can say nothing... If you are willing to work hard, you will easily find a suitable job. (L, mother, 42 years old, paragraphs 138p and 140p)	Parent: 2(0)
	Have good prospect	If she [my daughter] strives hard even in difficult environment, and continues for advancement, she definitely has good prospect. (Y, mother, 50 years old, paragraph 168p)	Parent: 1(1)
	Earn adequately for the family	I hope that he [my son] can have his own career, and has his own aspiration. (T, mother, 44 years old, paragraph 160p) [My parents expect me to] earn adequately to "rear" the whole family. (H, male, 14 years old, F. 3, paragraph 67a) [My parents expect that I] can "rear" father and mother. (F, male, 15 years old, F. 2, paragraph 75a) [I expect that] one can support the whole family, not only can support oneself, support oneself is not enough. One should support the whole family, every generation needs to support the next generation. (G, mother, 40 years old, paragraph 109p)	Adolescent: 4(2) Parent: 1(1)

(Table 1 continued)

Domain	Themes	Examples of narratives	No. of participants mentioned (numbers in parentheses are those experiencing economic disadvantage)
Conduct	Take care of parents	If you earn money in the future and you should not neglect them [your parents]. (M, female, 14 years old, F, 3, paragraph 62a) [You] ought not kick your father and mother out from your home. (F, male, 15 years old, F, 2, paragraph 63a) [You] ought not kick your father and mother into elderly hostel. (M, female, 14 years old, F, 3, paragraph 65a)	Adolescent: 2(1)
	Avoid breaking law and misconduct	[My parents expect me] not to go into a wrong track. (K, female, 16 years old, F, 3, paragraph 102a) Mother expects me more on the conduct, she expects me to go step by step in the future. (S, female, 14 years old, F, 2, paragraph 213a) At least [my son] would not do indecent deeds, that is, do not go into the wrong track, or go astray. (C, father, 48 years old, paragraph 45p)	Adolescent: 3(2) Parent: 6(4)
	Be a good person	What I expect her is life attitude...I have taught her to be kind to others, and not to be idle. (M, mother, 46 years old, paragraph 112p)	Parent: 1(1)

On domain of occupational aspirations, adolescents tended to focus on instrumental themes such as income, occupational status, content etc, whereas parents focused on the attitudinal themes such as attitudes to work, interest and prospects of work etc.

Finally, parents focused much on the domain of conduct in attributing parental expectation on child's future, especially on law-abiding theme. Adolescents also mentioned the theme as parental expectation, but less salient as parents.

Based on the focus group findings, a scale of parental expectation on child's future was developed according to the domains and themes suggested in the focus groups (Table 2).

Content validation by experts

The evaluation of content validity of the measure was performed using two analytical strategies: (a) calculation of content validity index (CVI) on aspects of relevance, clarity and representativeness, and (b) analysis of feedback and recommendations of the experts for the improvement of the items and the scale.

On calculation of CVI, the method suggested by Rubio et al. (27) was used. The method was to first compute CVI of each item by counting the number of experts who rated positively (three or four) the evaluating aspect of the item and then dividing the number by total number of experts. This provided the proportion of experts that considered the item as content valid. The CVI for the measure was estimated by calculating the average CVI across the items. A CVI of 0.80 was recommended as indicator for content validity for new measures (28).

Besides CVI, experts were asked to give feedbacks on the justifications of the "poorly designed" items, as well as recommendations for improvement of the items and the scales. Analysis of content was made to understand the feedback of the scales. Regarding the relevance of the measurement tool on parental expectations on child's future, it was found that the items and the scale showed good content validity. All items have CVI_(relevance) over 0.80. The CVI_(relevance) of each item ranged from 0.87 to 1.0. There are 15 items with CVI of 1.0, suggesting that all experts agreed that the items are content relevant (rating three and four in relevance). The overall CVI_(relevance) was 0.97, which suggested a good content validity judged by the experts.

For clarity of the items of the scale, it was found that, except Item 3 (I let my child decide how long he/she wants to study) and Item 4 (I have clear expectation on my child's academic achievement), all items had CVI_(clarity) of over 0.80. The overall CVI_(clarity) is 0.90, which showed good content validity of the scale in the aspect of clarity. The CVI_(clarity) of each item ranged from 0.73 to 1.0. For CVI_(clarity) of Item 3 and Item 4 were both 0.73, which suggested a modification of the items may be necessary.

The experts were requested to rate the representativeness of the subscale and the scale as a whole, that is, to assess the degree to which the domains are proportional to the facets of the construct. Again, the CVI_(representativeness) of each domain was calculated and the overall CVI_(representativeness) was obtained

Table 2 The original scale of Chinese parental expectation on child's future and modified scale according to the results of content validation by experts.

Original scale of Chinese parental expectation on child's future	Modified scale of Chinese parental expectation on child's future
1. I expect my child can complete university course.	1. I expect my child can complete university course.
2. I expect my child has good academic performance.	2. I expect my child has good academic result.
3. I let my child decide how long he/she wants to study.	3. I let my child decide his/her educational attainment.
4. I have clear expectation on my child's academic achievement.	4. I have clear expectation on my child's academic performance.
5. I always remind my child to be self-reliant in the future.	5. I expect that my child can learn a specific skill.
6. I expect my child does not need to receive financial assistance from the Government.	6. I always remind my child to be self-reliant in the future.
7. I hope that my child can be the top among others in the future.	7. I expect that my child does not need to receive financial assistance from the Government.
8. The way out of child's future is to find a good job.	8. I expect that my child does not rely on me for financial support when he/she grows up
9. I hope that my child can find a job so that he/she can depart from the status we are situated.	9. I hope that my child can be the top among others in his/her career.
10. I expect my child has good salary in the future.	10. The way out of child's future is to find a good job.
11. I hope that the future job of my child can make him/her free from anxiety of daily necessities.	11. I hope that my child can find a job so that he/she can depart from the status we are situated.
12. I expect my child can have a good career.	12. I expect my child has good salary in the future.
13. My child can do whatever he/she wants, I have no expectation on his/her career.	13. I hope that the future job of my child can make him/her free from anxiety of daily necessities.
14. I hope that the future job of my child fits his/her interest.	14. My child can do whatever he/she wants, I have no expectation on his/her career.
15. I expect my child will rear me in the future.	15. I hope that the future job of my child fits his/her interest.
16. I expect my child can rear his/her whole family.	16. I expect my child will rear me in the future.
17. I expect my child will take care of me in the future.	17. I expect my child can rear his/her future family.
18. I always remind my child not to act indecently in the future.	18. I expect my child will take care of me in the future.
19. My child act step by step in the future is more important than earning money.	19. I hope that my child can create a new family.
20. As I cannot control the future development of my child, I do not have any expectations on my child's future.	20. I always remind my child not to act indecently in the future.
	21. I hope that my child acts step by step, without unrealistic expectation in the future
	22. I always remind my child to contribute to the society in the future.
	23. As I cannot control the future development of my child, I do not have any expectations on my child's future.

from averaging the CVI of the domains. It was found that the domains of educational achievement, self-reliance, occupation, and family obligation generally showed good validity with $CVI_{(representativeness)} > 0.80$. However, the domains of conduct and overall comment had $CVI_{(representativeness)}$ of 0.73 only, suggesting that there may be under-representation/over-representation of the domains. Furthermore, the calculated overall $CVI_{(representativeness)}$ and the $CVI_{(representativeness)}$ of the scale rated by experts were 0.82 and 0.80, respectively, suggesting that the scale of parental expectations on child's future obtained an acceptable degree of representativeness of the measured construct. Table 3 illustrates the overall CVI of the measure on the aspects of relevance, clarity, and representativeness.

Apart from the ratings of degree of relevance, clarity, and representativeness of the items, the experts suggested some recommendations for the improvement of the items. They also gave feedback on whether the domains and constructs were over-represented or under-represented, as well as recommendations for improvement of representativeness of the

scale. The suggestions on modifications of the scale on parental expectations on child's future are illustrated in Table 4. The modified scale of parental expectation on child's future is presented in Table 2.

Discussion

With reference to the limited literature on the theoretical conceptualization of parental expectation on child's future, the paper presents pioneer findings on the conceptualization of the construct as well as evidence of content validity of the measure.

The findings suggest that the domains and themes of parental expectations on child's future go beyond merely completion of schooling. The findings also tally with Confucian thoughts and findings of qualitative research relevant on parental expectation on child's development (2, 11, 21), with family, academic, and conduct-related attributes as major domains in attributing the construct. Moreover, the domains

Table 3 Overall CVI on the measure on aspects of relevance, clarity and representativeness.

Aspects	Overall CVI
Relevance	0.97
Clarity	0.90
Representativeness	0.82 [calculated under Rubio's et al. (27) suggestion] 0.80 (rated by experts)

of occupation and self-reliance are salient attributes of the concept. The Chinese parental expectations on child's future reflect both cultural and practical values. The cultural value refers to the high respect for education and scholarship, emphasis on effort, family obligation and filial piety, moral character and personality, which are rooted in Confucian thoughts. The practical value lies in the belief that good educational attainment and occupation imply good future prospect and economic success in the highly competitive metropolitan environment. The "insider" perspective enriched our understandings on Chinese family beliefs on their children.

However, in contrast to the findings that parents focused more on the moralistic perspective such as obedience to the law, fulfillment of responsibility in studying, and good work attitudes, adolescents were more ready to express parental expectations from a more direct, concrete, instrumental, and

observable perspective, such as entering universities, jobs with good salary and better status, earn adequately to support the families etc. This reflects the cultural emphasis of moralistic sentiment as an important parental role on socialization of children in the Chinese community. As mentioned before, under the influence of the ideal of collectivism in Chinese culture, parents have the responsibility to nurture their children to reach the socialized goals of becoming persons with good characters and being contributive to the society. Thus, the societal and cultural inclinations of parent's socialization goals are salient.

The content validation by experts showed that the measure had good content validity in aspects of relevance, clarity, and representativeness. This step was important as it ensured that the items developed were valid from the perspectives of the judges. Modification of the items based on the views of the judges further improved the validity of the measure.

There are two implications of the present studies. First, the study helps us to conceptualize and measure the construct of parental expectations on child's future which deepens our understanding of family beliefs on child development. As "mental steps leading to intended actions" [(29), p. 346], family beliefs have great impact on parenting practices that further affect child developmental outcomes. The domains and themes of parental expectation derived from the focus groups and experts will help to fill the conceptual gap on understanding parental expectations and family beliefs. Second,

Table 4 Modifications of the scale on parental expectation on child's future.

Item no.	Item	Problems and suggestions made	Modifications suggested
2	I expect my child has good academic performance	"Good academic performance" was vague as performance can be interpreted in different aspects of results, participation, conduct, behaviors etc	Use the term "good academic result"
3	I let my child decide how long he/she wants to study	"How long he/she wants to study" is difficult to be understood	Use a more straight forward phase like "I let my child decide his/her educational attainment"
4	I have clear expectation on my child's academic achievement	The terms "child's academic achievement" and "clear expectations" needed further clarifications	Change the term "child's academic achievement" into "academic performance"
7	I hope that my child can be the top among others in the future	The term "be the top among others" would be related to aspects other than job/career	Change the term "be the top among others" into "be the top among others on the career"
12	I expect my child can have a good career	Overlap with the idea of Item 7	Delete Item 12
16	I expect my child can rear his/her whole family	The phase "rear his/her family" does not indicate whether the family is the child's future family or family of origin	Change the phase from "his/her family" to "his/her future family"
19	My child act step by step in the future is more important than earning money	It is misleading to compare "act step by step" with "earning money"	Change the item into "I hope that my child acts step by step, without unrealistic expectation in the future"
		Items on diverse development and skill acquisition were important but was ignored	Add an item "I expect that my child can learn a specific work skill"
		The theme of self-reliance needs to be expanded to include "independence from parent's support"	Add an item "I expect that my child does not rely on me for financial support when he/she grows up"
		The domain of family obligation should be expanded to include more family aspects of "marriage", "creation of new family" etc	Add an item "I hope that my child can create a new family"

formulation and development of an indigenous measurement tool contributes to the exploration of indigenous Chinese concepts as well as construction of family models applicable to the Chinese context. Adopting an ecological perspective that ideological values, norms, and institutional patterns of a particular culture serve as “blueprints” for the ecology of human development [(30), p. 423], parental expectations and practices of Chinese people are inevitably influenced by Chinese philosophies and culture, and are distinctive from Western culture where individuality, independence, and autonomy are stressed. Thus, development of an indigenous measurement tool will “open up new paths to a deeper understanding of the Chinese cultural, social, and psychological processes and patterns” [(24), p. 182].

There are several limitations in the present findings. First, qualitative findings based on the focus groups may have the inherent limitation of generalizability. Second, the parent sample was mainly confined to mothers. This would bring overrepresentation of maternal perception of the construct and underrepresentation of the paternal views. Third, the use of focus group may result in bias as participants may prefer to give socially desirable views in the presence of other people. It was found that the domains of conduct and moral standards were highlighted in the interviews, whereas expectations of fulfillment of instrumental needs such as wealth or prestige were mentioned less in parent’s groups. Fourth, as the findings presented in the study were based on adolescents and parents in Hong Kong, there is a need to assess the generalizability of the findings in different Chinese communities, such as Mainland China.

Despite the above limitations, this study can be considered as pioneering in exploring the concept of parental expectation on child’s future as well as the development of a measure that is indigenous in the Chinese context. The measure was based on qualitative data of parents and adolescents and validated by a panel of experts. With reference to Leung’s (16) criticism that there was a dearth of theorizing and data on the beliefs systems of Chinese people, this study can be regarded as a positive response.

Conflict of interest statement

Authors’ conflict of interest disclosure: The authors stated that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Research funding: None declared.

Employment or leadership: None declared.

Honorarium: None declared.

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