

A conceptual critique of parenting research in Hong Kong

Hung-Kit Fok¹ 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, Department of Pediatrics, Kentucky Children's Hospital, University of Kentucky College of Medicine, Lexington, KY, USA

Abstract

Parenting processes have been investigated for over 30 years in Hong Kong. Three conceptual limitations are identified, based on 90 studies selected from the PsycINFO database: lack of investigation of indigenous parenting concepts; lack of investigation of causes, concomitants and consequences of the parenting process; and lack of alternative explanations for results. Suggestions for improvement are also made in each area. Limitations of the present study are discussed.

Keywords: Chinese; conceptual review; Hong Kong; indigenous parenting; parenting.

Introduction

Parenting is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood (1). With particular reference to Hong Kong, the parenting process has been investigated since the 1970s. These studies have not only brought significant conceptual development to the parenting process in Hong Kong but have also greatly benefited the development of parenting programs suited specifically to Hong Kong (2). Nevertheless, although there has been much research into parenting in Hong Kong, no systematic review has been conducted on the conceptual issue of parenting research in Hong Kong (a survey of PsycINFO found no citations through March 2010 when “parenting”, “Hong Kong”, and “review” were used as keywords). Such a review would be important because it would examine the strengths and limitations of the present conceptual

development of Hong Kong parenting research and thus facilitate future development. The review could also initiate new directions of parenting research in Hong Kong.

To fill this research gap, the present study aims to review conceptual issues of Hong Kong parenting research through March 2010. In that month, a PsycINFO search used “parenting” and “Hong Kong” as keywords and identified 90 studies. These included both studies examining parenting phenomena in Hong Kong and studies that used at least one Hong Kong sample. It is noteworthy that the focus of the study was on parenting rather than on general family functioning. From the 90 studies selected, three conceptual limitations were identified. They are systematically presented in the following sections.

Lack of investigation of indigenous parenting concepts

The first limitation of Hong Kong parenting research is that it has not investigated indigenous parenting concepts. Similar to other research topics in social science, the majority of parenting theories (such as Baumrind's conceptualization of parenting style) have been developed in Western culture (3). However, the parenting process might vary across cultures (4). For example, Stewart et al. (4) pointed out that parental warmth is a salient characteristic of functional parenting that correlated well with positive outcomes in Western cultures but poorly with outcomes outside Western cultures. It is important to develop theories and concepts to explain the specifics of the parenting process in Hong Kong.

Numerous studies have been done on the parenting process in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, only six studies have investigated indigenous parenting concepts, e.g., (4), and all have focused on parenting concepts in Confucian thoughts instead of parenting concepts in Buddhist and Taoist thoughts or parenting concepts based on “family handbooks”. For example, Stewart et al. (5) investigated the concept of “guan”, a Chinese parenting concept which means the willingness of parents to be directive, and found that mothers' “guan” predicted self-esteem in their children, whereas fathers' “guan” predicted life satisfaction. Shek (6) identified an indigenous Chinese parental control concept and found that indigenous Chinese parental control was positively related to adolescents' psychological well-being when adolescents' perceived parental psychological control was low. Wong et al. (7) also adopted the concept of “filial piety” (*xiao*) and found that the more adolescents emphasize “filial piety”, the more parental control exerts a positive effect on the quality of the mother-child relationship in Hong Kong families. Recently, Chan et al. (8) found that mothers in Hong Kong who embraced “guan” and “filial piety” reported either an authoritarian or a psychologically controlling parenting style, whereas those

*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

Submitted May 1, 2010. Revised June 15, 2010. Accepted July 2, 2010. Previously published online March 1, 2011.

who embraced "guan" and harmonious social relationships adopted an authoritative parenting style.

The investigation of indigenous parenting concepts is important for two reasons. First, although some researchers "believe in generalizability of parenting concepts across cultures (i.e., universalism of parenting concepts)" (6) and argue that Western concepts of parenting (e.g., psychological control) can be used to understand Chinese parenting behaviors, cross-cultural psychologists argue that parenting processes are different across cultures (4) and suggest that parenting theories developed in the West might not be totally applicable to Hong Kong.

For example, Baumrind (3) separated the authoritative parenting style from the non-authoritative style. In Western cultures, authoritative parenting tends to be more common and is generally associated with the most beneficial child and adolescent outcomes when compared with non-authoritative parenting styles (9). Children and adolescents reared by authoritative parents report better developmental outcomes than those reared by non-authoritative parents, including greater self-esteem, self-control, moral development, social maturity, and school performance (10), and greater psychological well-being, as well as less depression and substance use (11). However, "categorizing parenting style as authoritative and non-authoritative parenting styles might not be a cultural relevant dimension of socialization in Hong Kong" (12). In addition to authoritative and non-authoritative parenting styles, most Hong Kong parents also adopt psychologically controlling parenting styles (8). The associations between parenting style and outcome variables of children, in general, are equivalent to the results obtained in the West, but this is far from conclusive (12).

Because theories from the West cannot be completely generalized to Hong Kong, and because indigenous Hong Kong parenting processes and phenomena cannot be totally explained by Western parenting concepts, cross-cultural psychologists have pointed out the importance of looking at "emic" rather than "etic" parenting concepts, arguing that there is a need to develop theories and conceptualize parenting processes and phenomena indigenously in Hong Kong.

The second reason is that more empirical data is needed to evaluate traditional Chinese cultural beliefs commonly used in Hong Kong parenting research. A significant number of Hong Kong parenting studies cite traditional Chinese cultural beliefs such as "strict fathers, kind mothers" (a) in their introductions to elaborate why it is important to investigate certain research questions in the Hong Kong context and/or (b) in their discussions to provide explanations for the results obtained. However, these studies usually did not provide empirical data or evidence to support the validity and the relevance of traditional Chinese cultural beliefs in Hong Kong. For example, Tam (13) said that "fathers were strict disciplinarians while mothers were nurturing caregivers" in traditional Hong Kong Chinese families, while failing to provide data or recent literature to support the claim.

Hong Kong is a Chinese society but also a highly modernized city with 100-plus years of colonial history. Some traditional Chinese cultural beliefs of parenting might no longer

have a strong impact on everyday parenting in Hong Kong. For example, Shek (14) found that paternal demandingness was higher towards daughters than towards sons, maternal discipline was perceived to be higher towards boys than towards girls, and higher maternal psychological control over sons than over daughters. These findings partly challenge the cultural stereotype of "strict fathers, kind mothers" in Chinese culture. Shek (14) even suggested "the existence of strict mothers, kind fathers rather than strict fathers, kind mothers in the contemporary Chinese culture" (p. 678). He suggested that fathers might be less involved in their children's socialization. Obviously, there is a need to examine the validity and the relevance of traditional Chinese cultural beliefs in the contemporary Hong Kong context. To do so, investigation of indigenous parenting concepts such as "guan" is necessary because these concepts are highly related to traditional Chinese cultural beliefs. For example, in traditional Chinese families, fathers were expected to play the disciplinarian and supervise the children, ensuring that the children behave well. Such an expectation might cause fathers to endorse the belief that parents have to be directive (i.e., "guan") of children's behavior.

There are at least two approaches to investigate indigenous parenting concepts in Hong Kong – bottom-up and top-down. The bottom-up approach means basing conceptualization of indigenous parenting concepts on empirical observation. For example, Shek (6) developed a paternal and maternal control scale based on indigenous Chinese cultural beliefs after empirically reviewing Chinese parenting characteristics; two examples include the demand for absolute obedience of the child, i.e., the saying "fu yao zi si, zi bu neng bu si" (if a father wants the child to die, the child has no choice but to die) and parents' assumed infallibility, i.e., the saying "tian xia wu bu shi zhi fu mu" (there is no faulty parent in this world). Shek (6) found that Chinese parental control characteristics were positively related to parent-child relational qualities and adolescents' psychological well-being under low but not under high parental psychological control conditions. The strength of the bottom-up approach is that it allows the identification of new constructs. One example is Shek's paternal and maternal control based on indigenous Chinese cultural beliefs (6). However, the bottom-up approach cannot ensure that conceptualization of indigenous parenting concepts can be linked to existing theories developed in the West.

The top-down approach means formulating conceptualization of indigenous parenting concepts based on theories and/or existing literature. For example, Wong et al. (7) used Darling and Steinberg's contextual model (15) to justify the investigation of the role of adolescents' "filial piety" in the parent-child relationship. Darling and Steinberg (15) suggested that children's willingness to be socialized by parents could also interact with parental practices, such as concrete behavioral control over children, to determine developmental outcomes. Using the same rationale, Wong et al. (7) conceptualized "filial piety" as an adolescent characteristic referring to how adolescents should behave towards their parents. Wong et al. (7) predicted that adolescents who are more filial might be more willing to be socialized by their parents, thus building a better parent-child relationship. They found that adolescents' "filial

piety" explained unique variances in parent-child relational qualities over the constructs of maternal warmth and control. In addition, the interaction of filial piety with maternal control explained unique variances in perceived maternal support and mother-child conflicts, but not in relationship depth. Compared to the bottom-up approach, the top-down approach is more able to link indigenous parenting concepts to existing literature. However, studies using the top-down approach might not be able to explain certain culture-specific phenomena of parenting.

Investigating indigenous parenting concepts, regardless of the approach, faces several difficulties. One of the difficulties is that investigation of indigenous parenting concepts does not attract attention from Western researchers. As suggested by Fok (2), indigenous parenting concepts are not widely used outside the areas where they are developed. For example, a search for the keyword "guan" in PsycINFO in March 2010 yielded only 22 studies. Of these 22, ten were irrelevant to the concept "guan" (i.e., "Guan" was an author's name rather than the concept). Another seven studies were dissertations. Of the five remaining studies, four used Hong Kong samples, and "guan" was investigated in only three places other than Hong Kong. Lack of attention from Western researchers limits the integration of indigenous parenting concepts with theories developed in the West.

Demonstrating the uniqueness of indigenous parenting concepts is the second difficulty. Similar to other new constructs, indigenous parenting concepts, such as "filial piety" need to show their unique predictability and contributions over and above existing concepts. For example, Wong et al. (7) found that adolescents' "filial piety" explained unique variances in parent-child relational qualities over the constructs of maternal warmth and control. However, demonstrating this was not always easy. "Guan" was an example. Stewart et al. (4) could not show that "guan" was an independent dimension with predictive power on adolescents' well-being beyond that provided by parental warmth and control. The partial overlap between "guan" and parental warmth might be due to methodological limitations, such as a self-reported retrospective measure from single informant, or conceptual correlation of two constructs. If indigenous parenting concepts cannot demonstrate their unique predictability and contributions over and above existing parenting concepts, it is impossible to gain attention from major researchers in parenting research, limiting further development of indigenous parenting concepts.

Although investigation of indigenous parenting concepts is rare in Hong Kong, and research into indigenous parenting concepts faces difficulties, there are potential practical benefits. For example, examining cultural beliefs such as "strict father, kind mother" and relative parenting roles of both parents can give some pointers to the design of parenting programs. Also, indigenous parenting concepts can provide counselors theoretical guidelines for doing family counseling. In addition, there are strong conceptual demands for indigenous parenting concepts; these are needed to explain cultural specific parenting phenomena. Hong Kong researchers should put more effort into investigating indigenous parenting concepts.

Lack of investigation of causes, concomitants and consequences of the parenting

The second conceptual limitation is the lack of investigation of causes, concomitants, and consequences. Nearly all the 90 studies selected focused on parenting process variables (e.g., parenting style, parenting practice, and specific parenting behavior), parent-child relations (e.g., parent-child conflict and parent-child relationship quality), and parenting stress. However, parent-child interaction does not exist in a social vacuum – it influences and is influenced by other family members.

Based on the ecological perspective, there are various variables from micro-systems, meso-systems, exo-systems, and macro-systems that have direct effects on children's outcomes and indirect effects through parenting-concept variables, such as parenting style and parenting practice, in Western literature (16). For example, paternal depression, a micro-system variable, can influence fathers' parenting (17). Interparental conflict, a meso-system variable, can affect the parent-child relationship (18). Parental employment, an exo-system variable, can affect childcare involvement (19). Cultural context, a macro-system variable, can affect adolescents' perception of parenting (7). In other words, the ecological perspective suggests that individual, familial, interpersonal, social, and cultural factors can affect parenting. To conceptualize a comprehensive nomological network of parenting in Hong Kong, causes, concomitants, and consequences of the parenting process from micro-systems, meso-systems, exo-systems, and macro-systems should be investigated simultaneously with parenting-concept variables.

One parenting concomitant often neglected in Hong Kong parenting research is the relationship between father and mother. Among the 90 studies identified, only five included the marital relationship. However, this relationship is the main focus of parenting research in the West. Based on Western literature, the relationship between father and mother has direct and indirect effects on children's outcomes. For example, interparental conflict is correlated with a number of negative developmental outcomes, including child maladjustment, internalizing and externalizing problems, decreased social functioning, reduced cognitive competence, and physiological reactivity, less secure attachment relationships, behavioral problems, poor self-esteem, negative affect such as anxiety, depression, lack of happiness, and academic difficulties throughout childhood (18). The effect of interparental conflict on children's outcomes was also found in mainland Chinese, predicting Chinese children's externalizing and internalizing problem behaviors (20, 21).

Two theories have been developed to explain the effect of interparental conflict on children's development in Western culture. Grych and Fincham (22) proposed the cognitive-contextual framework and suggested that children's perceptions and interpretations of conflict in their parents' relationship play a central role in determining the effect that marital conflict has on children's emotional and behavioral adjustment. In particular, the cognitive-contextual framework suggests that three types of cognition are particularly salient: per-

ceived threat, self-blame, and coping efficacy. Conceptually, perceived threat focuses on specific fears and worries regarding parents getting hurt, parents separating, and the spillover of hostility into the parent-child relationship. Self-blame focuses on attributions regarding the children's responsibility for the conflict and parental distress. Coping efficacy focuses on the children's appraisal of their ability to stop parents' hostile interactions or manage their own distress (23).

The other theory is the emotion security framework (18). Davies and Cummings (18) theorized that "when conflicts are appraised as destructive and reflective of significant marital disharmony, children's negative emotional arousal becomes elevated and they are motivated to act to decrease their feelings of emotional insecurity" (p. 389). They proposed three process components: emotional reactivity, behavioral regulation, and internal representations (18). Emotional reactivity focuses on manifestations of insecurity feeling. Regulation focuses on behavioral manifestations of insecurity by including avoidant and involvement coping behaviors. Internal representations focus on the appraisal manifestations of insecurity by including children's concerns of parental separation and the spillover of hostility into parent-child relationship.

Although there is a significant amount of research and theories in the West investigating interparental relationships, the area is still under-researched and the generalizability of findings and theories to the Hong Kong context is unknown because interparental relationship has not been frequently investigated in Hong Kong parenting research. Hong Kong parenting researchers should conduct research on causes and concomitants of parenting, especially interparental relationships, not only to examine the applicability of findings and theories from the West to Hong Kong but also to contribute to theoretical and empirical development in the area.

There are two major reasons for studying causes and concomitants of parenting in Hong Kong. Theoretically, as mentioned above, parent-child interaction cannot exist in a social vacuum. Causes and concomitants of parenting might shape the parenting-child relationship (23), and the effect of parenting might be moderated by other factors, including causes and concomitants of parenting. Therefore, investigating causes and concomitants of parenting is a necessary step in providing comprehensive understanding of parenting in Hong Kong.

Practically, investigating causes and concomitants of parenting helps develop parenting programs or social practices in family counseling. As Leung and Lam (24) suggest, parenting is "more than a technical exercise of instrumental reasoning" (p. 354). Parenting problems are often a reflection of the inner struggles of parents, rather than a lack of knowledge and skills (25, 26). Based on the ecological perspective, causes and concomitants of parenting, such as interparental conflict as a meso-system variable, or stress arising from a hostile family atmosphere as a micro-system variable, might be struggles for parents. Investigation of causes and concomitants of parenting serves as a theoretical guideline for developing parenting programs or conducting family counseling when parenting problems reflect weaknesses in areas other than parenting skills and knowledge.

In addition to causes and concomitants of parenting, consequences of parenting are also under-researched in Hong Kong. As pointed out by Shek (27), children's outcomes, as consequences of parenting, are often defined in terms of absence of manifested psychological symptoms and problems, such as internalizing problems (e.g., depression and hopelessness) and externalizing problems (e.g., aggression and delinquency). In contrast, fewer studies have examined the impact of parenting on children's outcomes in terms of positive mental health attributes (28) or coping resources (29). Therefore, children's outcomes, defined as both manifested psychological symptoms and problems, and positive mental health attributes should be included in Hong Kong parenting research to examine the various effects of parenting.

There are two approaches to investigate the causes, concomitants, and consequences of parenting. The first approach is theory-driven. For example, Davies et al. (30) adopted a family-system theory and an emotional-security framework to classify families into four types: (a) cohesive families, characterized by warmth, affection, and flexible well-defined boundaries; (b) disengaged families, reflected in high levels of adversity and low levels of support; (c) enmeshed families, evidenced by high levels of discord and weak maintenance of relationship boundaries; and (d) adequate families, defined by elevated parental psychological control within a larger family context of low discord and high warmth. They also found that children in enmeshed and disengaged families exhibited greater signs of insecurity in interparental relationships concurrently, and internalizing and externalizing symptoms both concurrently and one year later when compared with children in cohesive families.

The second approach is phenomena-driven. For example, Yu and Gamble (31) investigated the phenomena in which sibling relationships were negative when marital relationships were poor. They tested the direct and indirect effects of marital relationships on children's sibling-relationship quality through parenting styles and the reciprocal association between sibling-relationship quality and parenting styles. The findings revealed evidence of a direct effect of marital relationships on sibling-relationship quality and bidirectional relationships between sibling relationships and parenting styles.

Nevertheless, connecting causes, concomitants, and consequences to parenting is difficult. This is because such investigation requires researchers to have extensive understanding of both parenting research and literature of causes, concomitants, and consequences. Without comprehensive knowledge in both areas, linking the two lines of research is impossible. However, given the potential theoretical and practical benefits, researchers are encouraged to connect causes, concomitants, and consequences to parenting concepts variables.

Lack of alternative explanations for results

The third limitation is the lack of alternative explanations for the results in Hong Kong parenting research. Of the 90 studies selected, only 33 provided alternative explanations

for the results obtained. For example, Shek (32) used a longitudinal design and investigated the relationships between paternal and maternal psychological control and adolescent psychological well-being. Instead of assuming that paternal and maternal psychological control influenced adolescent psychological well-being, Shek (32) tested the possibility of bidirectional association between two sets of variables and found that the two sets of variables predicted each other over time. Shek (32) also gave two explanations for the low effect sizes for the longitudinal relationships between psychological control and adolescent psychological well-being. One explanation was methodological problems (e.g., poor operationalization of the concepts). The second explanation was that the effect of the psychological control on adolescent psychological well-being was weak in Hong Kong Chinese, as parenting defined in terms of Chinese indigenous concepts had very weak relationships with measures of adolescent psychological well-being.

Giving alternative explanations for the results is important. This is because having only one explanation for results obtained not only limits conceptual development but, sometimes, might be misleading. For example, in Hong Kong parenting research, most researchers assume parenting styles and behaviors are independent variables and children's outcomes are dependent variables. However, as Shek (32) indicated, children's psychological well-being could predict parental psychological control. Shek (32) even argued that poor adolescent mental health is stressful, which would limit an adolescent's sensitivity and response to parents' demands and expectations, therefore contributing to perceived psychological control. Shek's finding is consistent with the ecological perspective (32). His findings showed that parenting style as a meso-system variable and children's psychological well-being as a micro-system variable are interdependent and influence each other. Providing only one explanation for the results, therefore, might mislead readers into thinking that there is no possibility of children's outcomes in shaping parenting.

Giving alternative explanations for the results might be salient for Hong Kong parenting research because most of the studies were cross-sectional in nature and parenting is hard to study by experimental design (2). Results obtained from cross-sectional design have five possibilities: (a) A influences B; (b) B influences A; (c) A and B do not influence each other; (d) A and B influence each other; and (e) the relationship between A and B is spurious (i.e., the relationship is influenced by a third variable). A cross-sectional design can only determine if two variables are correlated [i.e., (c)] but it cannot rule out other possibilities (33, 34). Providing alternative explanations can, at least, supplement the methodological limitations of Hong Kong parenting research partly by ruling out other possibilities theoretically. If this is not feasible, alternative explanations can serve as reminders for the readers that parenting is a long-term, complicated process, and research findings of parenting can be understood in various ways.

There are two approaches to provide multiple explanations for results in Hong Kong parenting research. Considering methodological limitations is the first approach. Each methodology faces its own limitations; for example, cross-

sectional design cannot determine causality (34). When interpreting results obtained from cross-sectional questionnaires, researchers can consider the bidirectional associations among the variables, as Shek (32) did.

Researchers can also provide multiple explanations with conceptual guidance. For example, Mak et al. (35) used data from cross-sectional questionnaires to probe the relationship among sense of coherence (SOC), parental attitudes, and parenting stress for caregiving parents of children with autism. Mak et al. (35) found that among mothers who had high SOC, their children's symptom severity did not lead to a higher level of stress. Mak et al. (35) used the salutogenic view of Antonovsky (36) of stress-coping to explain this result, suggesting that mothers who have high SOC orchestrate different resources to solve their parenting problems and adopt various strategies to manage their stress. Mak et al. (35) provided another explanation, suggesting that the availability of external resources (e.g., services for families and social support) might lessen mothers' burden of parenting, alleviating parenting stress, and leading them to develop higher levels of SOC. When interpreting results obtained, researchers can consider different possibilities suggested by different theories.

Providing alternative explanations for results obtained might be difficult, as researchers are often blinded by the hypothesis they tend to test unless the results obtained are surprising. It is also because researchers, sometimes, overlook the conceptual and methodological limitations of their studies. Moreover, it is impossible to rule out or list all alternative explanations, as the possibility of alternative explanations is unlimited. However, providing alternatives is a significant conceptual breakthrough, as it challenges a sole path of reasoning and encourages multi-paths of reasoning in Hong Kong parenting research. It also helps avoid potential misleading explanations for results in Hong Kong parenting research where choices of methodology are limited.

Conclusions

In the present study, three conceptual limitations of parenting research in Hong Kong and suggestions to address these conceptual limitations have been discussed. However, the present study has its own limitations. First, the limitations mentioned are based only on the 90 studies selected, all found in the PsycINFO database. Most of them come from psychology, social work, and gender studies. Therefore, the limitations mentioned might not be applicable to research from other disciplines such as sociology.

Second, the limitations mentioned are mainly applicable to basic research. It is acknowledged that applied research has also contributed much to parenting research in Hong Kong. Applied parenting research in Hong Kong has often been used to evaluate the effectiveness of parenting programs (37) and to investigate the practical needs of minority groups such as families with disabled children and children with autism (35). Applied parenting research in Hong Kong aims to answer practical research questions which might be simple and do not involve indigenous parenting concepts, causes, concomi-

tants, and consequences. Applied parenting research in Hong Kong might also face additional practical methodological limitations such as sample size. Therefore, the suggestions mentioned here might not be practically relevant to applied parenting research in Hong Kong.

There have been many research outputs on parenting in Hong Kong. However, the field faces three conceptual limitations – namely, lack of investigation of indigenous parenting concepts, lack of investigation of causes, concomitants, and consequences of the parenting process, and lack of alternative explanations for results. In the present study, these limitations and suggestions to address them have been discussed. Although the present study has some drawbacks, it is the first study to discuss the conceptual limitations in the field. The present study can also stimulate future research directions such as indigenous parenting concepts and antecedents of parenting.

Acknowledgements

This paper is part of the PhD thesis of the first author, under the supervision of the second author.

References

- Colman AM. Dictionary of psychology. Oxford: Oxford Press, 2001.
- Fok HK. Parenting research in Hong Kong: a methodological critique. Hong Kong: Private Publication, 2009.
- Baumrind D. Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behaviour. *Genet Psychol Monogr* 1967;75:43–88.
- Stewart SM, Rao N, Bond MH, McBride-Chang C, Fielding R, Kennard BD. Chinese dimensions of parenting: broadening Western predictors and outcomes. *Int J Psychol* 1998;33:345–58.
- Stewart SM, Bond MH, Kennard BD, Ho LM, Zaman RM. Does the Chinese construct of guan export to the West? *Int J Psychol* 2002;37:74–82.
- Shek DT. Perceived parental control based on indigenous Chinese parental control concept in adolescents in Hong Kong. *Am J Fam Ther* 2007;35:123–37.
- Wong MS, Leung AN, McBride-Chang C. Adolescent filial piety as a moderator between perceived maternal control and mother-adolescent relationship quality in Hong Kong. *Soc Dev* 2010;19:187–201.
- Chan SM, Bowes J, Wyver S. Chinese parenting in Hong Kong: links among goals, beliefs and styles. *Early Child Dev Care* 2009;179:849–62.
- Coplan R, Hastings P, Lagace-Seguin D, Moulton C. Authoritative and authoritarian mothers' parenting goals attributions and emotions across different child-rearing contexts. *Parenting Sci Pract* 2002;2:1–26.
- Radziszewska B, Richardson JL, Dent CW, Flay BR. Parenting style and adolescent depressive symptoms, smoking, and academic achievement: ethnic, gender, and SES differences. *J Behav Med* 1996;19:289–305.
- Shah R, Waller G. Parental style and vulnerability to depression: the role of core beliefs. *J Nerv Ment Dis* 2000;188:9–25.
- McBride-Chang C, Chang L. Adolescent-parent relations in Hong Kong: parenting styles, emotional autonomy, and school achievement. *J Genet Psychol* 1998;159:421–36.
- Tam VC. A comparison of fathers' and mothers' contributions in the prediction of academic performance of school-age children in Hong Kong. *Int J Psychol* 2009;44:147–56.
- Shek DT. Perceived parental control and parent-child relational qualities in early adolescents in Hong Kong: parent gender, child gender and grade differences. *Sex Roles* 2008;58:666–81.
- Darling N, Steinberg L. Parenting style as context: an integrative model. *Psychol Bull* 1993;113:487–96.
- Bronfenbrenner U. The ecology of human development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979.
- Wilson S, Durbin CE. Effects of paternal depression on fathers' parenting behaviors: a meta-analytic review. *Clin Psychol Rev* 2010;30:167–80.
- Davies PT, Cummings EM. Marital conflict and child adjustment: an emotional security hypothesis. *Psychol Bull* 1994;116:387–411.
- Costigan C, Cox MJ. Fathers' participation in family research: is there a self-selection bias? *J Fam Psychol* 2001;15:706–20.
- Chang L, Lansford JE, Schwartz D, Farver JM. Marital quality, maternal depressed affect, harsh parenting, and child externalizing in Hong Kong Chinese families. *Int J Behav Dev* 2004;28:311–8.
- Chi L. The role of cognitive appraisals between marital conflict and children's problem behavior: mediator or moderator? *Psychol Dev Educ* 2005;21:30–5.
- Grych JH, Fincham FD. Marital conflict and children's adjustment: a cognitive-contextual framework. *Psychol Bull* 1990;108:267–90.
- Buehler C, Lange G, Franck KL. Adolescents' cognitive and emotional responses to marital hostility. *Child Dev* 2007;78:775–89.
- Leung TT, Lam CM. The warrants of parenting: emotionality and reflexivity in economically disadvantaged families. *J Soc Work Pract* 2009;23:353–67.
- Tam WM, Lam CM, Cheng HM, Ho SC, Ma LC. The promotion of parent education in Hong Kong: a consultancy study final report. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2001.
- Lam CM. In search of the meaning of parent education in the Hong Kong Chinese context. In: Kane MJ, editor. Contemporary issues in parenting. New York: Nova Science, 2005:111–24.
- Shek DT. Intact and non-intact families in Hong Kong: differences in perceived parental control processes, parent-child relational qualities, and adolescent psychological well-being. *J Divorce Remarriage* 2007;47:157–72.
- Diener E. Subjective well-being. *Psychol Bull* 1984;95:542–75.
- Folkman S, Schaefer C, Lazarus RS. Cognitive processes as mediators of stress and coping. In: Hamilton V, Warburton J, editors. Human stress and cognition. New York: Wiley, 1979:265–98.
- Davies PT, Cummings M, Winter MA. Pathways between profiles of family functioning, child security in the interpersonal subsystem, and child psychological problems. *Dev Psychopathol* 2004;16:525–50.
- Yu JJ, Gamble WC. Pathways of influence: marital relationships and their association with parenting styles and sibling relationship quality. *J Child Fam Stud* 2008;17:757–78.
- Shek DT. After-school time and perceived parental control processes, parent-adolescent relational qualities, and psychological well-being in Chinese adolescents in Hong Kong. *Fam Ther* 2007;34:107–26.
- Shek DT. Paternal and maternal influences on family functioning among Hong Kong Chinese families. *J Genet Psychol* 2001;162:56–74.
- Sanson A, Nicholson J, Ungerer J, Zubrick S, Wilson K, Ainley J, Berthelsen D, Bittman M, Broom D, Harrison L, Rodgers

- B, Sawyer M, Silburn S, Strazdins L, Vimpani G, Wake M. Introducing the longitudinal study of Australian children. Melbourne, VIC: Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2002.
35. Mak WW, Ho AH, Law RW. Sense of coherence, parenting attitudes and stress among mothers of children with autism in Hong Kong. *J Appl Res Intellect Disabil* 2007;20:157-67.
36. Antonovsky A. Unraveling the mystery of health: how people manage stress and stay well. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1987.
37. Leung C, Tsang S, Heung K, Yiu I. Effectiveness of parent-child interaction therapy (PCIT) among Chinese families. *Res Soc Work Pract* 2009;19:304-13.