INTRODUCTION

Acculturation is defined as cultural changes produced by continuous contact between distinct cultural groups. These changes occur in multiple domains, including behaviors (e.g., language use, social contacts), identity, and values (Berry et al. 1987).

Baumrind’s dimensions of parenting style are used frequently as descriptions of individual differences in parenting within child development research (Chao, 2001). The components for determining parenting style are usually based on the demandingness-responsiveness ratio that expresses support and control.

- Authoritative parenting style (“Just Right”): High demandingness and high responsiveness
- Authoritarian parenting style (“Too Hard”): High demandingness and low responsiveness
- Permissive parenting style (“Too Soft”): Low demandingness and high responsiveness

Chinese parenting is rooted in values and practices significantly influenced by Confucian tradition, and distinct from Western societies. The principle precepts of the Confucian are: obeying and honoring parents, maintenance of interpersonal harmony, and unique perspectives on morals, social expectations, and achievement motivation beginning early in life. Therefore, generally Chinese parenting ideals value collectivism, parental control, and emotional restraint, while Western parenting emphasizes individualism, independence building, and parental warmth (Chao, 1994).

HYPOTHESES

- Chinese immigrant mothers would show higher levels of affiliation with Chinese culture than with Israeli culture.
- Chinese immigrant mothers would embrace aspects of authoritative parenting based on Confucian culture but also become more authoritative, and less authoritarian.

PARTICIPANTS

- 20 Chinese immigrant mothers of 1-16 years-old children.
- All are married to Israeli-born men.
- They had resided in Israel for at least 1 year.
- All participants had attained at least a college level.
- None of them had their family of origin (parents or siblings) living in Israel.

MEASURES

- Demographic questionnaire.
  - Israeli language, identity and behavior scales \( \alpha > .85 \)
  - Chinese language, identity and behavior scales \( \alpha > .705 \)
- Parenting Style and Dimension Questionnaire (PSDQ, Clyde CR, et al., 1995).
  - Internal reliabilities for overall authoritative and authoritarian parenting style are 0.878 and 0.874 respectively.
  - Internal reliabilities for subscales of authoritative (i.e., warmth, reasoning, democratic participation and good natured): \( \alpha > .68 \).
  - Internal reliabilities for subscales of authoritarian (verbal hostility, corporal punishment, Non-reasoning and directiveness factors): \( \alpha > .63 \).
  - Internal reliabilities for subscales of permissive parenting were very low (0.116-0.473) and thus not included in further analyses.

RESULTS

1. The acculturation of Chinese immigrant mothers
- Chinese immigrant mothers took more pride in being Chinese rather than Israeli.
- In general, Chinese immigrant mothers adhered to Chinese cultural practices more than to Israeli practice in almost every respect.
- There was no significant association between their overall acculturation in Israel with how long they had been living in Israel, their education level, age and number of children.

2. The Chinese immigrant mothers’ parenting style
- Chinese immigrant mothers reported being more authoritative than authoritarian parenting style \( (p<0.01) \).

3. The associations between acculturation and parenting style
- The stronger the Chinese immigrant mothers’ affiliation with Chinese identity, the higher their level of reported authoritative parenting style \( (r=0.476, p<0.05) \), particularly democratic participation \( (r=0.483, p<0.05) \), warmth and involvement \( (r=0.484, p<0.05) \).
- The stronger the Chinese immigrant mothers’ affiliation with Israeli identity, the lower their level of reported authoritative parenting style \( (r=-0.464, p<0.05) \).

CONCLUSIONS

- Despite Chinese immigrant mothers’ strong affiliation with Chinese identity, their actual parenting practice appeared to have changed from traditional Chinese practice to authoritative style.
- Our finding underscored the important impact of acculturation on Chinese immigrant mothers’ parenting in the context of Israel cultures.

STRENGTH, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- This is the first study proving unique insights into Chinese immigrant parents’ acculturation and parenting practice in Israel.
- In PSDQ, the permissive parenting has very low internal reliability, indicating that permissiveness is an unreliable construct with Chinese samples in Israel, and we should further study Chinese specific parenting style in the Israeli cultural context.
- This study is limited by small samples and the sole use of self-report data, so the further study will use multi-method assessment including observational methodologies, such as interview.

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