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The meaning and correlates of psychological control in Chinese and American families

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The meaning and correlates of psychological control in Chinese and American families

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Psychology

by

Joe Yi Joey Fung

2012
Parental use of psychological control has gained attention as a risk factor for child behavioral and emotional problems in the Western context. However, the literature on cultural differences in the implications of psychological control on child development has largely been inconsistent. This dissertation encompasses three studies and examines cultural variations in parental beliefs, socialization goals, parental control strategies, and pathways to child adjustment.

In Study 1, we examine cultural differences in maternal beliefs about normative child development, priorities in socialization goals, and their relations to childrearing strategies among a sample of 160 Hong Kong mothers and 160 European American mothers. Findings show that
parental control strategies are motivated by different developmental goals and beliefs for child
development depending on the cultural context.

In Study 2, we conducted ethnographic interviews with 19 Hong Kong Chinese parents
and described a set of parent behaviors that invoke *relational induction*, in which parents
highlight the responsibility of each family member and the impact of child’s behaviors on the
rest of the family. These practices may be considered forms of “psychological control” since
they leverage awareness of parental negative affect; but they may also be construed as an
indigenous form of parenting. Findings suggest that the use of control strategies is motivated by
the goal to cultivate interpersonal sensitivity and obligations to the family within the child.

In Study 3, we investigated associations between relational induction and more hostile
forms of psychological control in a sample of 165 Hong Kong and 96 European American
parents. We argued that relational induction (guilt induction, reciprocity, love withdrawal and
social comparison) may represent a separate subset of psychological control strategies. Indeed,
we found support that psychological control and relational induction was more strongly
associated with each other among European American compared to Hong Kong parents.
Parental rejection fully mediated the relationship between the two forms of parental control and
child behavior problems across groups; psychological control for Hong Kong families and
relational induction for European American families. The findings suggest that there are
distinguishable forms of psychological control that may have distinctive implications for child
adjustment depending on the cultural context. Taken together, the findings in this dissertation
support a more nuanced view that the associations between some forms of parenting and child
well-being may be culturally relative.
The dissertation of Joe Yi Joey Fung is approved.

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2012
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. General Introduction ........................................................................................................... 1

II. Paper 1 ............................................................................................................................... 5
   A. Abstract ................................................................................................................. 6
   B. Introduction ........................................................................................................... 7
   C. Method .................................................................................................................. 12
   D. Results ................................................................................................................... 15
   E. Discussion .............................................................................................................. 18
   F. References .............................................................................................................. 25
   G. Table 1 ................................................................................................................... 31
   K. Figure 1 ................................................................................................................. 32

III. Paper 2 ............................................................................................................................. 33
   A. Abstract ................................................................................................................. 34
   B. Introduction ........................................................................................................... 35
   C. Method .................................................................................................................. 42
   D. Results ................................................................................................................... 45
   E. Discussion .............................................................................................................. 54
   F. References .............................................................................................................. 59
   G. Table 1 ................................................................................................................... 64
   H. Table 2 ................................................................................................................... 65
   I. Appendix A ............................................................................................................. 66
   J. Appendix B .............................................................................................................. 73
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

How parents oversee and regulate the behavior and activities of their children and adolescents has long been a focus of parenting research. The general rubric of parental control has often been used to describe such parenting behaviors and styles. Two aspects of parental control have generally been conceptualized, namely, parental behavioral control and psychological control. Behavioral control refers to parental attempts to monitor, supervise, and manage children’s behaviors. It is generally concerned with the presence of rules and regulations to structure children’s activities, as well as parents’ awareness, supervision, and management of children’s whereabouts, activities, and companions (Brown, Mounts, Lamborn, & Steinberg 1993; Grolnick, 2003). Behavioral control is generally viewed as adaptive and is commonly associated with positive child outcomes, including lower levels of aggressive and delinquent behaviors (e.g., Barber, 2002, Steinberg, 1990). In contrast, permissiveness or excessive behavioral control in the form of punitive or power-assertive discipline is usually related to child conduct problems (Patterson, 1995; Coie & Dodge, 1998). Furthermore, exertion of behavioral control in domains considered personal (e.g., friends, music, hairstyle) versus conventional (e.g., language, manners) or prudential (e.g., safety, health, morality) is associated with child internalizing symptoms (Smetana & Daddis, 2002; Hasebe, Nucci & Nucci, 2004). When behavioral control extends into the personal sphere it may be experienced as intrusive or rather than legitimate or protective.

This distinction is related to the second widely studied facet of parental control, psychological control which refers to a type of coercive control whereby parents intrude into the emotions, thinking process and self-expression of the child (Barber, 1994). Prime examples of these behaviors include invalidating the child’s feelings, constraining verbal expression,
threatening to withdraw their love and evoking shame and guilt in the child if he or she did not behave as expected. This class of parenting practices refers to methods that capitalize on manipulating the relationship between the parent and the child to achieve control over child conduct. Such behaviors are typically regarded as a negative form of parental control that interfere the development of a sense of independence, identity, and personal integrity of the child (Barber & Harmon, 2002). Previous studies have suggested that psychologically controlling parenting is particularly predictive of children’s internalized forms of problems such as depression, withdrawal, and loneliness (see Barber, 2002 for a review). However, whether the effects of psychological control vary according to the cultural context remains a matter of some controversy.

It has been argued that psychological models of parenting have largely been ensconced within an independent cultural worldview (e.g., Chao, 1994; Rothbaum, Weisz, Potts, Miyake, & Morelli, 2000). Most of the existing research on parental control has been conducted in Western cultural contexts where autonomy, assertiveness, and independence are emphasized as desired endpoints of child development. However across cultures, parents may differ in the expectations and goals they adopt concerning children's development (LeVine, 2003) and these concerns likely dictate their use of childrearing practices to help children achieve these valued goals (Whiting & Edwards, 1988). Recent research has drawn on the importance of parents’ cultural belief systems as an important source of parenting practices (Harkness & Super, 1996; Goodnow, 2002). Implicit beliefs and ideas parents hold about the ideal child influence the ways in which parents interact with their children (e.g., Miller, 1988), as outlined in Study 1.

Given that differences in parenting practices across cultures are based on different developmental goals and priorities for child development (Greenfield & Suzuki, 1998), scholars
have argued that the meaning of parental control strategies may differ for East Asian and Asian American families compared to European American families (e.g., Chao & Tseng, 2002). However, a review of empirical research offers a mixed picture of how parental psychological control might be linked with child outcomes in different cultures; some studies have found predicted negative associations between psychological control and child well-being across cultures (e.g., Barber, Stolz, & Olsen, 2006; Barber et al., 2002); and some studies have found evidence that culture moderates the association between psychological control and child maladjustment (e.g., Rudy & Halgunseth, 2005; Olsen et al., 2002). This inconsistency in findings may be in part a result of differences in the conceptualization and measurement of parental psychological control, as outlined in Study 3 of this dissertation. The series of studies in this dissertation proposal extend research on culture and parental psychological control in a number of ways. We elucidated a set of indigenous parental strategies of psychological control and examined developmental outcomes of it within and across a Western and non-Western context.

In Study 1 we examined the relationship between parental beliefs, priorities in socialization goals, and parenting styles among 160 mothers in Hong Kong Chinese and European American families. We were particularly interested in examining beliefs held by parents in an Eastern culture versus a Western culture concerning optimal child rearing. We hypothesized that Hong Kong Chinese mothers would prioritize relational socialization goals whereas European American mothers would prioritize autonomous socialization goals. We also hypothesized that culture would moderate the relationship between reported socialization goals and parenting styles.
In Study 2 we took an emic approach to describe a set of indigenous disciplinary approaches that may be classified as psychological control but that Chinese parents frequently use to encourage perspective-taking and empathy in their children. Nineteen Hong Kong Chinese parents with children between 5-8 years old engaged in a 2-hour semi-structured interview about qualities they want to see in their child, as well as their beliefs, values, and behaviors associated with child misbehaviors. Parent reports of socialization strategies were coded to identify central features of behaviors among Chinese parents. In addition, the socialization strategies were examined as a function of the parents’ stated socialization goals as well as ideas held about normative child development.

Finally, in Study 3 we built on the previous two studies in an examination of two forms of parental psychological control and how they relate to child behavior problems in a sample of 165 Hong Kong Chinese and 96 European American parents. We hypothesized that hostile psychological control and relational induction represent as a unitary construct for European Americans but as distinct constructs for Hong Kong parents. We also hypothesized that parental rejection may mediate the relationship between the two forms of psychological control and child outcomes. These meditational pathways may explain the inconsistent findings as to whether the effects of psychological control on child development differ across cultures.

In sum, this dissertation examined cultural variations in parental beliefs and motivations, childrearing practices, and mechanisms to child emotional and social adjustment in two different cultural groups. These studies extend existing research on parental psychological control and contribute to the understanding of the role of culture, parental control and child behavior problems.
Study 1

Maternal beliefs, socialization goals and childrearing strategies
in Hong Kong and the United States
Abstract

The current study investigates cultural differences in maternal beliefs about normative child development, priorities in socialization goals, and their relations to childrearing strategies among a sample of mothers from Hong Kong (n= 160) and the United States (n= 160). Results suggest that mothers endorse greater use of parenting styles and prioritization of socialization goals that are consistent with emic values. Multi-group path analyses reveal both universal as well as more culture-specific associations between maternal beliefs and childrearing styles. Specifically, priorities in the development of moral education and self-esteem were differentially related to indigenous Chinese parenting styles of training and shaming for European American mothers versus Hong Kong mothers. Findings suggest that control strategies that are indigenous to Chinese culture may be motivated by different developmental goals and beliefs for child development for different cultures.
Culture constitutes the context within which parents develop their expectations about child development and beliefs about the socialization practices necessary to achieve valued goals for their children. Super and Harkness’s concept of ethnotheories highlights the importance of the implicit beliefs and ideas parents hold about the ideal child and the effective rearing techniques needed to achieve this ideal (Harkness & Super, 1996). Parents across cultures may be found to differ in their expectations for various competencies at various ages (LeVine, 2003), as well as in their definitions of optimal developmental endpoints (Lightfoot & Valsiner, 1992). These parental beliefs and goals are seen as influencing the way parents understand the behavior of their children, parent-child interaction, and how they structure their children’s environment and daily routines (Miller, 1988; Ashmore & Brodzinslky, 1986; McGillicuddy-DeLisi, 1982; Whiting & Edwards, 1988).

Parental expectations encompass ideas about when children acquire specific competencies (e.g., appropriate manners, cognitive skills, social understanding) or the development of more global characteristics (e.g., independence, self-esteem, moral character). Studying variation in beliefs about what typical development should look like during specific periods can shed light on broader cultural priorities and values. For example, Hess and colleagues (1980) compared U.S. and Japanese parental expectations about their four-year-old children’s mastery of different skills. They found that Anglo mothers expect children to develop verbal assertiveness and social initiation with peers at a relatively earlier age, whereas Japanese mothers expected earlier mastery of skills concerned with emotional maturity, compliance, and social courtesy. Depending on the cultural socialization goals, parenting practices are manifest accordingly. If the socialization goal was to develop the child’s self-exploration and confidence, a parent might express interest in the child’s play and reinforce initiative and creativity. On the
other hand, if academic achievement is regarded as the primary goal, the parent may spend more time on incidental teaching and structuring formal learning activities outside of school (Ho & Willms, 1996; Schneider & Lee, 1990).

Parental ethnotheories are also reflected in daily activities and roles taken on by children across cultures. For example, Harkness and Super (1992) examined parents’ goals, beliefs, and practices among European American mothers in Cambridge and Kipsigis mothers in Kokwet. Kokwet mothers were observed to place greater emphasis on the development of responsibility and obedience in the child. Accordingly, children aged 3-6 years were found to spend nearly a quarter of their time doing household chores, such as cooking and taking care of animals and younger siblings. In contrast, U.S. parents showed more concern for the development of cognitive capacities and self-reliance. Accordingly, U.S. children were found to spend over half their waking time engaged in activities involving play, TV, and books and less than 1% of their time doing household chores. The proportion of time that children spend in various activities is in part a reflection of caregivers’ beliefs concerning how the child should develop and how routines should be structured within the local environmental constraints.

Many observed differences in parental ethnotheories have been organized around the broad cultural dimensions of individualism/independence and collectivism/interdependence (Keller et al., 2006; Greenfield et al., 2003; Super & Harkness, 1996). Individualistic cultures, such as that in the U.S., tend to subscribe to the ideal of an independent self, stressing the importance of self-maximization, creativity, assertiveness, and autonomy, thus tending to value emotional expression as an assertion of the self and an affirmation of the uniqueness of the individual (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). As such, European American socialization strategies often appear to focus on encouraging the expression of mental states and the personal qualities
that support self-enhancement and self-maximization (Kagitcibasi, 1996; Rothbaum, Morelli, Pott, & Liu-Constant, 2000). Accordingly, in the European American context, optimal caregiving in the early years involves responding to the child’s expressed wishes and behavioral cues about their internal states, and in giving the child choices in daily activities (Kuchner & Freedman, 1981; Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998). Beyond infancy, European American parents aim to cultivate and protect self-esteem (Chao, 1995) and focus on the child’s personal attributes, preferences, and judgments when talking to their children (Miller, Wiley, Fung, & Liang, 1997; Mullen & Yi, 1995; Wang, Leichtman, & Davies, 2000). Parents in individualistic cultures overall are less likely to value prolonged physical closeness with their growing children and more likely to express concern that their children become self-sufficient (Harkness, Super, & Keefer, 1992).

In contrast, collectivistic cultures, such as those of many East Asian countries, have been broadly viewed as interdependent and where individuals see themselves as fundamentally connected with others. Accordingly, social relationships, roles, norms, and group harmony play a larger role than do personal beliefs and needs in determining one’s behavior (e.g. Triandis, 1988; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In order to maintain harmonious relations, socialization strategies focus attention to expectations associated with social roles, the control and regulation of personal attributes and desires, and harmonic integration into the family or social unit (e.g. Greenfield et al., 2003; Keller, 2003; Weisz, Rothbaum, & Blackburn, 1984). Parents from East Asian cultures have traditionally tended to remain in relatively close physical proximity to their children and encourage to conformity to social norms, regulation of impulses, and deference to authority (LeVine et al., 1994; Triandis et al., 1988: Rothbaum, Morelli, Pott, & Liu-Constant, 2000).
Confucianism provides the foundation for socialization and parent-child relationships in many East Asian cultures. Under the doctrine of filial piety, children are taught to obey their parents who are responsible for teaching and discipline (e.g., Ho, 1986). Consistent with this notion, Chen et al. (1998) found that Chinese parents engaged in more control strategies and were less likely than Canadian parents to perceive the importance of positive affect for child social and cognitive development. Mothers who strongly value conformity in children tend to be more restrictive, less warm, and less likely to ask children questions compared with mothers who value self-direction in children (Luster, Roades, & Haas, 1989). Among East Asian parents, the parental duty to teach often involves highlighting child failures or transgressions to signal where greater effort is needed. In contrast, European American parents are more likely to attend to and acknowledge children’s successes in order to promote and maintain self-esteem (Miller, Wiley, Fung, & Liang, 1997).

In these ways, parents in different cultures hold different beliefs about optimal child rearing (Super & Harkness, 1986; Whiting & Edwards, 1988). However, even if parents from two cultures share a childrearing goal, the actual childrearing practice believed to best encourage development toward that goal in one cultural group may differ from that of another group. For example, Chao (1995) compared childrearing beliefs among immigrant Chinese and European American mothers. She found that while both groups of mothers stressed the importance of showing loving to children, the ways in which love was expressed varied across cultural groups. Whereas Chinese mothers emphasized the importance of fostering a closeness and dependency in the parent-child relationship, European American mothers stressed the importance of cultivating the child’s self-esteem. Consistent with the cultural models of interdependence and independence, Chinese mothers seem to be motivated toward relational goals and instilling
harmonious relationships within the family, while European American mothers were motivated toward individualistic goals. Similarly, Greenfield and colleagues (2003) posited that both the independent and interdependent developmental pathways lead to common universal tasks of human development, such as relationship formation or relationship acquisition, but the two paths emphasize a different optimal balance between autonomy and relatedness.

Given that parenting behaviors are situated within cultural contexts that shape parents’ ideas and beliefs regarding their roles and responsibilities as parents, scholars have argued that the Western parenting typologies fail to capture some unique characteristics of Chinese parenting and thus the need to describe indigenous conceptualizations of parenting contracts. For example, Chao (1994) described Chinese training ideologies which emphasize the responsibility of parents to socialize their children through close monitoring, firm control, and continual governance. Training emphasizes the development of self-discipline and respect for authority, but lacks the harsh, punitive connotations that are usually associated with authoritarian parenting styles in the United States. Similarly, Fung (1999) described shaming as a routine disciplinary practice among Taiwanese parents involving explicit induction of shame, reference to the relational consequences of the child’s transgression, threats of ostracism, or social comparison to more well-behaved children. In line with an interdependent emphasis on maintaining harmony in relationships, shame is a central emotion that can help guide behavior within interactions across social settings. Fung (1999) suggests that shaming serves to foster the development of children’s awareness and sensitivity to moral values and social rules, an important socialization goal given the interdependent orientation of Asian cultures.

The central aim of this study was to elucidate how culture may influence the relationship between parental beliefs, priorities in socialization goals, and parenting styles among mothers in
Hong Kong Chinese and European American families. We were particularly interested in examining parenting styles that reflect indigenous Chinese notions of parental control as well as those that are typically conceptualized as adaptive in the Western context. Thus, two research questions guided the study design and data analyses. First, we examined whether parenting styles and parents’ beliefs about child development differed between Chinese and European American mothers. We hypothesized that Chinese mothers would prioritize relational socialization goals (such as raising children to get along with other people) whereas European American mothers would prioritize autonomous socialization goals (such as the promoting children’s self-esteem). Furthermore, we predicted that Chinese mothers would endorse greater use of indigenous parenting styles related to Training and Shaming compared to the European American mothers. Second, we sought to determine if culture moderated the relationship between reported socialization goals and parenting styles. We anticipated that childrearing goals would organize parenting styles consistent with cultural mores.

Method

Participants

The 320 mothers in the present study were drawn from a larger study of 1,076 mothers of preschool age children in recruited from preschools in Hong Kong and the United States. Since there was an imbalance sample size between participants in Hong Kong (n = 916) and the United States (n = 160), we drew a random sample of Hong Kong mothers matched on target child gender and age to U.S. mothers. The mean age of the target child was 49.14 months ($SD = 9.52$) in the Hong Kong sample and 49.13 months ($SD = 9.53$) in the U.S. sample. The target children included 86 boys and 74 girls from each country. The interview instrument included several
measures with previously established reliability, as well as newly developed scales to assess salient aspects of parental ethnotheories.

**Measures**

**Parenting Style.** Parenting style was examined using a measure from a previous cultural study that contains items and subscales indigenous to Chinese culture as well as those that have been shown to represent meaningful typologies of parenting style in Western cultural contexts (Lieber, Fung, Leung, & Leung, 2006) and include aspects of style related to: Training, Shaming, Autonomy, and Authoritative. **Training** was assessed with 9 items emphasizing parents’ responsibility to teach children appropriate behaviors which motivates high levels of parental involvement and concern (e.g., “In order for a child to learn, parents should continuously monitor and correct his/her behavior”). **Shaming** was measured with 8 items focused on use of shame as a tool in controlling child behavior or as a motivational explanation for parents’ disciplinary practices (e.g., “Children should be made to feel ashamed when they disobey a rule”). **Autonomy** was measured with 12 items that emphasize parents’ need to encourage and support children’s exploration, learning, personal expression, and autonomous decision-making (e.g., “Parents should stimulate exploring and learning”). **Authoritative** was assessed with 13 items focused on parents’ awareness and respect for their children’s ideas and emotions, engagement of open communication with children, and firm and consistent enforcement of rule and standards for behaviors (e.g. “Children should be encouraged and assisted to openly express or articulate a full range of emotions”).

The items were rated on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1= Strongly disagree to 6 = Strongly agree. Published internal consistency coefficients for Chinese samples were $\alpha = .82$, .69, .67, and 74 for the Training, Shaming, Autonomy, and Authoritative sub-scales.
respectively (Lieber et al., 2006). Internal consistency in the current study was adequate for the subscales of Training ($\alpha = .73$ for HK; .75 for the U.S.), Shaming ($\alpha = .67$ for HK; .73 for the U.S.), Autonomy ($\alpha = .63$ for HK; .60 for the U.S.), and Authoritative ($\alpha = .65$, for HK; .66 for the U.S.).

**Socialization goals.** To assess maternal socialization goals, mothers were presented with a list of eight childrearing goals and were asked to rank order them based on relative importance. These goals tap multiple domains of child development and included: *Raising a healthy child, Providing the material things that my child needs, Teaching my child right from wrong, Providing a happy childhood, Promoting self-esteem, Raising my child to get along with other people, Raising my child to do well in school,* and *Preparing my child to face misfortunes in late life.* Because of our substantive interest in the developmental goals that are consistent with the cultural pathways of interdependence and independence, we focused on three goals that represent: moral education (Teaching my child right from wrong), self-maximization (Promoting self-esteem), and relationship harmony (Raising my child to get along with other people). Scores were based on the mothers’ importance ranking for each childrearing goal (1= the least important; 9= the most important).

**Maternal beliefs about child development.** Maternal expectations for child behavior were represented through an instrument that presented mothers with five scenarios depicting child misbehaviors (e.g., “My child is mean or rude to another child”). Mothers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree that the described behavior is typical of children of the preschool age range (1= Strongly disagree; 6= Strongly agree). A mean score of these typicality ratings was then used as an index of mothers’ ideals about child behavioral development,
specifically their view of misbehaviors as benign or developmentally typical of preschool aged children ($\alpha = .81$, for HK; .78 for the U.S.).

**Results**

*Initial Analyses Exploring Group Differences*

Table 1 displays means and standard deviations for all study measures for the samples from mothers in Hong Kong and the United States. As hypothesized, group differences emerged for measures of parenting styles, maternal expectations, and relative emphasis or prioritization of socialization goals. Hong Kong mothers reported significantly greater use of indigenous Chinese childrearing practices of training ($F(1, 318) = 267.03, p < .001$) and shaming ($F(1, 318) = 231.69, p < .001$) than did American mothers. On the other hand, American mothers reported significantly greater encouragement of autonomy ($F(1, 318) = 114.82, p < .001$) and authoritative ($F(1, 318) = 14.20, p < .01$) than did Hong Kong mothers.

In terms of maternal expectations about normative child development, Hong Kong mothers were more likely than American mothers to rate misbehavior as developmentally atypical for preschoolers ($F(1, 318) = 98.64, p < .01$). Group differences also emerged regarding mothers’ prioritization of socialization goals. Mothers in the United States ranked the goal of “Promoting self-esteem” significantly higher ($\chi^2(1) = 11.98, p < .01$) than did mothers in Hong Kong. On the other hand, Hong Kong mothers ranked the goal of “Getting along with people” significantly higher than American mothers ($\chi^2(1) = 4.69, p < .01$). There was no significant group difference in the goal of “Teaching my child right from wrong.”

*Path Analyses*
A multiple-group path analytic model was employed to determine whether the hypothesized relationships among the model variables were equivalent between Hong Kong and European American families. Models were fit using the Mplus statistical program, version 4.0 (Muthén & Muthén, 2001). Multiple-group path analyses compared two nested models (i.e., unconstrained and constrained models) (Byrne, 1994). In the constrained path model, all model parameters are estimated to be the same for both groups, whereas the unconstrained path model allows all model parameters to be estimated freely for each group. These constraints enable us to identify any statistically significant differences in the magnitudes of path parameters across groups. The “model test” command was used to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the unconstrained and the constrained models for each path, that is, if there is any statistically group difference between Hong Kong and European American families. The change in $\chi^2$ relative to the change in degrees of freedom indicates whether the constrained model has statistically significantly poorer fit than the unconstrained model (Byrne, 1994). In other words, a significant chi-square value suggests that there is a statistically significant group difference for that path, and having an unconstrained path would significantly improve the fit of the model. Overall model was assessed by examining the Comparative Fit indices (CFI) and Root Mean Squared Error Approximation (RMSEA). A good fit is indicated by CFI value of greater than .90 (Byrne, 1994) and the RMSEA value of less than .05 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

The model estimated in Figure 1 shows significant main effects of priorities in socialization goals on parenting styles. An emphasis on the goal of ‘Teaching my child right from wrong’ was negatively associated with Autonomy ($\beta = -.14, p < .05$) and Authoritative ($\beta = -.12, p < .05$) parenting styles. Furthermore, mothers’ viewing child misbehavior as benign or
developmentally typical was negatively associated with the goal of “Promoting self-esteem” ($\beta = -0.16, p < .05$) and Training ($\beta = -0.20, p < .05$).

Beyond overall main effects, the model also indicated group differences in the relationship between priorities in socialization goals and indigenous Chinese parenting styles. First, the interaction between culture and “Teaching my child right from wrong” was significantly associated with parenting styles of Training ($\chi^2(1) = 8.06, p < .01$) and Shaming ($\chi^2(1) = 4.29, p < .05$). Specifically, prioritizing ‘Teaching my child right from wrong’ was positively associated with Training ($\beta = 0.27, p < .01$) for the European American mothers, but the relationship was not significant for mothers in Hong Kong. Similarly, a prioritization on ‘Teaching my child right from wrong’ was positively associated with Shaming ($\beta = 0.32, p < .01$) for the European American mothers, but was not associated with Shaming among mothers in Hong Kong.

Furthermore, there was a significant interaction effect between culture and “Promoting self-esteem” in predicting parenting style of Training ($\chi^2(1) = 4.42, p < .05$) and Shaming ($\chi^2(1) = 3.87, p < .05$). High rankings on the goal of ‘Promotion of self-esteem’ was negatively associated with Training ($\beta = -0.17, p < .05$) and Shaming ($\beta = -0.20, p < .01$) for European American mothers, but the association was not significant for mothers in Hong Kong. Finally, culture moderated the relationship between mothers’ beliefs about an ideal child and Shaming ($\chi^2(1) = 8.04, p < .01$) in that the association between mothers’ typicality ratings for child misbehaviors and parenting style of Shaming was negative for the US mothers ($\beta = -0.14, p < .05$) but positive for Hong Kong mothers ($\beta = 0.16, p < .05$).

Lastly, we noted that the associations among the parenting styles and among the socialization goals were different between Chinese and American mothers. Culture moderated the relationship between Training and Autonomy ($\chi^2(1) = 9.43, p < .001$) and Training and
Authoritative ($\chi^2(1)= 5.63, p< .05$) parenting styles. Whereas parenting style of Training was robustly associated with Autonomy ($\beta = .30, p < .01$) and Authoritative ($\beta = .31, p < .01$) parenting styles for mothers in Hong Kong, the relationship was not significant for mothers in the US. In addition, relations between the socialization goals of ‘Teaching my child right from wrong’ and ‘Promotion of self-esteem’ ($\chi^2(1)= 5.30, p< .05$) and “Promotion of Self-esteem” and “Getting along with people” ($\chi^2(1)= 7.08, p< .01$) differed between Hong Kong and US mothers. Ranking of the goal of ‘Teaching my child right from wrong’ was negatively associated with ranking the goal of ‘Promotion of self-esteem’ for U.S. mothers ($\beta = -.21, p < .01$), but the relationship was not significant for Hong Kong mothers. On the other hand, rankings for the goals of ‘Promotion of self-esteem’ and ‘Getting along with people’ were negatively associated for Hong Kong mothers ($\beta = -.24, p < .01$), but this relationship was not significant for US mothers.

Discussion

We examined cultural differences in parental styles, goals, and expectations about child development, as well as the extent to which culture moderates the relationships between parental beliefs, socialization goals, and parenting styles. As expected, Hong Kong mothers endorsed higher levels of indigenous Chinese parenting styles related to Training and Shaming and lower levels of the parenting style promoting Autonomy and Authoritative than did European American mothers. Furthermore, compared to European American mothers, Hong Kong mothers were less likely to view a range of child misbehaviors as developmentally typical and were more highly invested in socialization goals pertinent to upholding relationship harmony, while the promotion of self-esteem was seen as less important. The results are consistent with the prediction that a relative priority was placed on affiliative competence in interdependent Chinese cultures,
whereas self-maximization goals were emphasized more among European American mothers in an independent cultural context. This supports the notion that there are two pathways to child socialization in Eastern and Western cultures organized by interdependence and independence values, respectively (Greenfield et al., 2003).

We also examined the relationships between and among maternal beliefs, socialization goals, and parenting styles and explored whether these links may be moderated by culture. We did not find cultural differences in the links between prototypically Western styles of parenting and socialization goals. However, there was some evidence that socialization goals were differentially linked to endorsement of indigenous Chinese parenting styles depending on the cultural group. Prioritizing moral development was related to greater endorsement of training and shaming styles of parenting for European Americans but these associations were not apparent among Hong Kong mothers. Our descriptive findings suggest that most Hong Kong mothers endorsed high reliance on these parenting styles regardless of their stated priorities in socialization goals. The relatively low variability in training parenting styles among Hong Kong mothers may also explain the lack of significant covariation between these styles and socialization goals. When European American mothers prioritized moral education above other goals they also tended to endorse greater use of shaming and training. On the other hand, European Americans endorsed lower use of training and shaming when they prioritized children’s self-esteem. This association was negative and not significant for Hong Kong mothers.

While these differential associations by cultural group may be attributable to the ubiquity of training among Hong Kong mothers, the findings may also support the interpretation that the meaning of parental control strategies differs across cultural contexts. In the American context,
parental practices of inducing guilt or negative affect to modify children’s behavior and high levels of monitoring and directiveness may subserve goals centered on moral development but may be at odds with the goal of helping children cultivate a positive self-image. However, in Hong Kong, use of these parenting strategies may not be seen as threatening the development of children’s self-esteem.

In examining the relations between parenting styles, training was positively associated with promoting child autonomy and authoritative parenting for Hong Kong mothers but these relations were not observed among European Americans. This is consistent with previous work that suggests that training may have different cultural and conceptual meanings for different cultural groups (Chao, 2000), particularly when practiced in different contexts. While authoritative and training styles are both assessed along two dimensions (parental demandingness and responsiveness), Chao (1994) argued that there are distinct differences in how they are defined in different cultures. For example, responsiveness among European American parents is often described as being sensitive to the expressed wishes and feelings of the child. However, in interdependent cultures responsiveness may be best understood in terms of parents ability to anticipate what their child needs in a particular circumstance (Rothbaum et al., 2000). Thus, facets of high parental control inherent in training may be consistent with respecting children’s agency in Chinese cultures in ways not found in American culture.

Shaped in part by Confucian principles upon which familial and parent-child relationships are built in many East Asian cultures, parental control is considered as important avenue through which love and concern are expressed (Pomerantz & Wang, 2009). As such, the concept of training represents an indigenous Chinese form of parental responsiveness and means both “to govern” as well as “to love.” Results from our study also suggest that among Hong
Kong mothers there is indeed some overlap between training and autonomy/authoritative parenting in that they may both convey high levels of parental care, support and involvement. This is consistent with other studies suggesting that training is consistent with the authoritative parenting style in Asian cultural contexts (Stewart et al., 1999; Stewart, Bond, Kennard, Ho, & Zaman, 2002). Overall, parenting styles can only be understood as meaningful and predictive with reference to the cultural context in which they are enacted. That is, while responsiveness in parenting may be a common concept across culture, particular descriptions of responsiveness do not capture the same salient features from one culture to another.

Cultural group differences also emerge when investigating the relationship between mothers’ beliefs about normative behavioral development and childrearing strategies. In particular, viewing child misbehavior as benign or developmentally typical was linked to less shaming among European Americans, but to more shaming among Hong Kong mothers. This finding suggests that caregiver psychology or motivation may be an important cultural determinant behind the use of shaming techniques. Shaming is generally considered a negative form of parenting in the Western context since it is believed to interfere with the development of a sense of independence, self-esteem and personal autonomy of the child (Barber, 1994). As such, when European American mothers view misbehavior as atypical, they may then endorse more shaming, a more culturally aberrant form of socialization.

On the other hand, shame socialization in Chinese contexts is a more culturally sanctioned style of parenting motivated by the parents’ intention to foster the child’s awareness of moral values and sensitivity to social rules, a key socialization goal in interdependence Asian cultures (Fung, 1999). Practices of shame socialization among Chinese mothers may be delivered in purposeful rather than hostile fashion to nurture the child toward a cultural ideal of
social responsibility. Chinese mothers who view misbehaviors as more normative and inevitable in young children may feel that shame socialization is all the more important in cultivating good character. Differences in cultural beliefs behind the use of shame tactics may explain previous findings regarding cultural variations in child adjustment correlates of shame socialization (e.g., Olsen et al., 2002; Rudy & Halgunseth, 2005). When shaming techniques are organized by maternal beliefs and ideas that child’s misbehaviors are developmentally typical, the negative child emotional and behavioral outcomes that are typically associated with shaming may be attenuated.

Another area of cultural difference suggested that a relative priority in teaching the child right from wrong was negatively associated with the promotion of self-esteem for American mothers, but this association was not significant for Chinese mothers. As discussed earlier, the notion of building children’s self-esteem appears to be important to European American parents and reflects the independent view of the self. Consistent with previous research (Chao, 1995; Miller, 2001), European American mothers believe that it is important to help the child feel good about themselves, bolster their confidence, and see themselves as valued individuals. Consistent with the adult literature on self-enhancement, European American mothers tend to narrate their child’s transgressions in a more positive light, reframe their shortcomings as strengths, and actively seek opportunities to praise their child (Miller, 1996; Miller et al., 1997). Unlike the promotion of self-esteem which is child-centered, educating children about moral values emphasizes social contracts, and evaluation of proper and just conduct. The inverse relationship among European American mothers may indicate that mothers view the two goals in opposition; in that mothers believe that developing a sense of social and moral responsibility may
compromise the child’s ability to feel good about themselves or develop their sense of individuality.

Beyond these selected patterns of cultural differences, it is worth noting that there are many commonalities in associations between socialization goals and parenting approaches. When mothers from across groups valued teaching children right from wrong, they tended to be less committed to autonomy-focused and authoritative parenting styles. Likewise, there was some common ground in the relations between mother’s beliefs about typical child development and their socialization goals and parenting strategies. Mothers who felt that misbehaviors such as talking back or aggression with peers were highly typical of preschool aged children were less likely to prioritize goals of the promotion of self-esteem. This increased acceptance of early childhood social transgressions was also related to lower endorsement of training.

Finally, the limitations of the current study warrant attention. First, because the study was cross-sectional we cannot draw inferences about causation or prospective prediction. It is plausible that mothers may justify their parenting styles by constructing a set of childrearing goals that appear consonant with their interactions with their child. Longitudinal study is needed to determine these relations across time and to understand how parenting goals are manifest across child development in cultural context. Second, although we found significant interaction effects, most of them correspond to small to medium effect sizes, and the path analytic model explained small amounts of variation in parenting style. As such, replication is needed to support our conclusions about purported relationship between parental beliefs, socialization goals and parenting styles. Third, as mentioned earlier in the section, the restricted variability and presence of ceiling effects among the responses of Chinese mothers on some of the indigenous Chinese parenting styles may account for the lack of association between childrearing
strategies and priorities in socialization goals. Finally, our study relied on self-report questionnaires based only on mother report to measure parental belief and expectations about optimal child development. It is unclear how endorsement of these styles may pertain to observable differences in everyday parenting practices. The impact of fathers’ parenting beliefs and attitudes on child development needs to be explored in future research.

Nonetheless, our findings do suggest the importance of examining the larger cultural and societal context, including maternal motivations and beliefs, in which maternal behaviors occur when anticipating their effects of child development. Variations in parenting styles between Hong Kong Chinese and European American cultures appear to be derived in part from different values and traditions that contextualize parent-child interactions. Furthermore, indigenous Chinese forms of parenting such as training and shaming may mean something different for Hong Kong than for European American mothers, in that they may be driven by different socialization goals and can best be understood with reference to their particular socio-cultural history and context. Finally, despite the instances where cultural differences in associations were noted, there were many similarities in associations between parental beliefs, socialization goals and parenting styles across the three cultural groups. As such, these data suggest that the study of parenting styles and effectiveness across culture must anticipate both universal and more culture-specific patterns.
References


Table 1
Descriptive Statistics and Cultural Differences for Main Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hong Kong (n= 160)</th>
<th>United States (n= 160)</th>
<th>F (1, 318)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Childrearing style</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>5.00 (.46)</td>
<td>3.90 (.68)</td>
<td>267.03**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaming</td>
<td>3.49 (.60)</td>
<td>2.44 (.62)</td>
<td>231.69**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>4.33 (.47)</td>
<td>4.88 (.43)</td>
<td>114.82**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>4.73 (.48)</td>
<td>4.93 (.52)</td>
<td>14.20**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parental expectations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative behavior</td>
<td>2.41 (.92)</td>
<td>3.57 (1.09)</td>
<td>98.64**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socialization goals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right from Wrong</td>
<td>6.76 (1.21)</td>
<td>6.66 (1.42)</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote Self-esteem</td>
<td>4.66 (1.41)</td>
<td>7.10 (1.35)</td>
<td>11.98**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get along with people</td>
<td>6.14 (1.11)</td>
<td>5.53 (1.35)</td>
<td>4.69**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p < .001; pairwise comparisons significant at p < .003 (alpha level adjusted to account for multiple tests of statistical significance)

* $\chi^2$ statistics obtained from performing the Kruskal-Wallis test.
Figure 1. Multigroup Path Analytic Model.
Study 2

Socialization goals and psychological control among Hong Kong Chinese parents:

Introducing relational induction
Abstract

We examined socialization goals and parental behaviors among 19 Hong Kong Chinese parents whose children were between 5 to 8 years old. Each participant engaged in a 2-hour semi-structured interview about qualities they want to see in their child, as well as their beliefs, values, and behaviors associated with a range of child (mis)behaviors. Based on parents’ narratives, we described a set of disciplinary strategies, *relational induction*, whereby parents stress filial sacrifice, emphasize the importance of intra-familial obligations, and call children’s attention to parents’ own feelings. Second, we examine the control strategies as a function of “Situation” (whether the event takes place in public or private) and “Rationale” (reasons parents provide for why they intervene). We found that Chinese parents tend to use more controlling strategies when the child behavior undermines family hierarchy or interpersonal harmony. While practices commonly used among Chinese parents might be considered forms of “psychological control” since they leverage awareness of parental negative affect, they are meant to foster adherence to societal norms and to promote sensitivity to the perceptions of others. These findings offer support for understanding parental strategies from an *emic* perspective, and also suggest important future directions in understanding cultural relativism of parental control.
Parental use of psychological control has gained attention as a risk factor for child behavioral and emotional problems (e.g., Barber & Olsen, 1997). Researchers have described psychological control as a type of coercive control whereby parents intrude into the emotions, thinking process and self-expression of the child (Barber, 1996). Prime examples of these behaviors are guilt induction and love withdrawal, which are thought to thwart the development of emotional autonomy in children. Previous studies have suggested that psychologically controlling parenting is a predictor of child delinquent behaviors, depression, and other internalizing symptoms (Barber, 1996, 2002).

However, the notion that certain types of parental control are uniformly deleterious to child well-being has been criticized as an ethnocentric view of parenting (e.g., Chao, 1994). Much of the existing research on parenting and child development has been conducted in Western cultural contexts where autonomy, assertiveness, and independence are emphasized as desired endpoints of child development (Greenfield et al., 2003). Open self-expression and the verbalization of internal states are generally encouraged among children in independent Western cultures. Interdependent traditions prominent in many East Asian cultures more often value emotional restraint and moderation and self-control (e.g., Matsumoto, Yoo, Fontaine, et al., 2008; Kim & Sherman, 2007; Camras, Chen, Bakeman, Norris, & Cain, 2006). Children in East Asian cultural contexts may be socialized to regulate their personal desires and to inhibit individual self-expression for the purposes of preserving relationships and maintaining family and social order (Eisenberg, Zhou, Liew, Champion, & Pidada, 2006; Kim & Markus, 1999). Psychological control is thought to be harmful as it intrudes into children’s emotional autonomy and individuation, a highly prioritized socialization goal in the Western cultures. However, this
may not apply in contexts where parenting behaviors are shaped by alternative cultural beliefs and socialization goals.

Important socialization goals within the Chinese culture relate to filial piety and other cardinal Confucian values. Filial piety entails a system of age veneration and patriarchy where children are taught to respect, honor and obey their parents. Children are expected to fulfill obligations to their families in return for their parents’ sacrifices in caregiving (e.g., Ho., 1986, 1996). As such, loyalty to family and respect for elders are strongly valued as socialization goals. Despite rapid modernization and accompanying social change (Chen et al., 2010), recent studies continue to find that Chinese mothers are more motivated toward Confucian goals and instilling harmonious relationships within the family, while European American mothers are more motivated toward individual goals of independence and self-expression (Chao, 1995; Padmawidjaja & Chao, 2010). Wu (1981) described two distinct ways in which Chinese parents may instill the ethic of filial piety in their children. One avenue is by establishing “the maintenance of parental authority and children’s obedience through harsh discipline” (Wu, 1981, p. 151). Through this process, children learn to respect hierarchy within the social world and carry out appropriate conduct in intergenerational interactions. The second avenue toward cultivating filial piety is through “the inducement of physical and emotional closeness so that a lifelong bond is assured” (p. 151). This is achieved through physical caregiving and emotional intimacy between parent and child, as well the overt demonstration of parents’ willingness to sacrifice themselves for their children’s schooling and well-being. The combined strategy is realized when Chinese parents are able to place exacting demands on children’s conduct by virtue of the close emotional ties that have been established.
The main goal of this study is to take an emic perspective and describe a set of parent behaviors that invoke relational induction, which may manifest in ways that overlap with psychological control as construed in Western contexts, but which are motivated by indigenous childrearing goals within the Chinese culture. Barber asserts that a key feature of psychological control is “the manipulation of the love relationship between the parent and the child as a means of controlling child behavior” (Barber, 1996, p. 3297). As such, there is clear overlap with the normative socialization processes that Chinese parents use in instilling filial piety in their children. Conceptually, relational induction is similar to psychological control in that both are attempts to affect the child’s behavior by influencing how the child feels and thinks. However, relational induction stands in contrast to psychological control in that the goal is primarily to elicit and cultivate empathy, sensitivity and perspective-taking in the child, and the achievement of self-regulation. In this respect, relational induction is similar to inductive discipline (Krevans & Gibbs, 1996), in that both involve parents focusing on the consequence of the child’s action for others. However, unlike inductive discipline, relational induction also emphasizes parental expectations of the child and highlights how the child is causing the parents to experience negative feelings that can be only alleviated by complying to parental wishes (Hoffman, 1963; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Sears et al., 1957). The first aim of the present study is to elaborate a set of practices observed in Chinese families that align with the concept of relational control, and to determine the aspects that coincide with Western descriptions of psychological control and elucidate aspects that are distinct and indigenous to the Chinese context.

As measured in the extant literature psychological control includes guilt induction (evoking guilt and empathy in child by pointing out the consequences and emotional impact the behavior has on other people) and love withdrawal (discipline based on the notion that parental
love and acceptance is contingent upon good behaviors), both of which falls within the repertoire of relational induction strategies in our conceptualization. Yet, measures of psychological control also encompass hostile parental behaviors that manipulate children’s feelings in other ways, including showing disinterest in what the child has to say, discounting what the child is thinking or feeling, or blaming the child for problems (Barber, 1996). Relational induction, in contrast, does not encompass these behaviors but is circumscribed to practices that alert the child to the impact of their behaviors on others, including the parent. Such behaviors may derive potency from invoking negative affect in the child by design, but they can be distinguished from hostility. Examples of such practices in Chinese families may include the emphasizing family structure and the responsibilities and obligations of each family member, contrasting the misbehaving child against salient models of good conduct, and pointing out the ill effects of the child’s behavior on other people (Fung, 1999).

Relational induction should also be distinguishable from power assertion defined as strong actions to change the child’s behavior or in reaction to noncompliance that establish the parent as the ultimate authority figure with little or no explanation. Parents may use tactics such as spanking, hitting, yelling, and name-calling (Straus & Stewart, 1994; Vissing, Straus, Gelles, & Harrop, 1991; Kuczynski & Kochanska, 1990) and are considered inflexible and overly demanding (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Power assertion differs from relational induction in that the latter contains a certain level of warmth and functions to encourage social perspective taking and to cultivate empathy in child. Furthermore, relational induction should be readily distinguishable from Western concepts allied with authoritative parenting which is defined by the combination of high levels of parental responsiveness and high levels of demandingness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Authoritative parenting practices include warm behaviors such as
expressing love and praise, affirming the child’s qualities, and strategies that encourage child independence such as, maintaining open communication and establishing expectations without being overly intrusive or restrictive (Baumrind, 1991, 1968). Unlike authoritative parenting, relational induction functions by inducing negative affect in the child, often through alerting as the child to the possibility or occurrence of parents’ negative emotional states. In this manner, relational induction serves to foster the development of the child’s awareness and sensitivity to moral values and social rules, as well as interpersonal attunement skills, such as empathy or perspective-taking.

This study is in the tradition of other investigations of indigenous forms of parental control. For example, (Chao 1994, 2001) discussed the importance of culture-specific definitions of parental control and observed that parental strategies emphasizing control and authority among Chinese American families were not well captured by the construct of authoritarian parenting as described in European American families (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Nomura, Noguchi, Saito, and Tezuka, 1995). Chao (1994) described Chinese training ideologies which emphasize the responsibility of parents to socialize their children through close monitoring, firm control, and continual governance. Training emphasizes the importance of instilling self-discipline in children through the internalization of expectations for appropriate conduct. Toward this end, the parental role in training demands a high level of responsiveness that is demonstrated though investments of sacrifice and continual involvement. These high levels of monitoring and strict governance function are positively associated with children’s health and life satisfaction (Stewart et al., 1998), relationship harmony (Stewart et al., 1999), and academic achievement (e.g., Chao, 2000) among East Asian and Asian American adolescents.
Fung elaborated upon another indigenous Chinese construct of parenting involving the socialization of shame. In line with interdependent emphasis on maintaining harmony in relationships, shame is a central emotion that can help guide behavior within interactions across social settings (Fung, 1999). Shaming may involve the use of gestures or criticism designed to evoke shameful feelings through explicit disapproval of behavior. Alternately, shaming may be indirect, sometimes accomplished through social comparisons of the child to more well-behaved children. Although the practice of shaming children is generally viewed as hostile or punitive, research indicates that shame socialization appears distinct from other measures of harsh or authoritarian parenting (Wu et al., 2002). East Asian children appear to understand and demonstrate a sense of shame earlier than do children in Western nations (Fung, Lieber, & Leung, 2003).

In studies examining cultural variation in the implications of parental control, research has largely focused on adolescent and early adolescent samples. This is understandable since adolescence is a period where parents and children are thought to negotiate and re-conceptualize parental authority and adolescent autonomy (Collins & Steinberg, 2006). Moreover, research suggests consistent cultural differences in autonomy expectations with delayed expectations for autonomy among adolescents in East Asian compared to Western contexts (Feldman & Quatman, 1988; Stewart et al., 1999). However, few studies examine the associations between psychological control and other related processes among younger children across cultural contexts. Early ethnography of Chinese parents by Ho (1986) observed that there is a qualitative shift as children matriculate into formal education, especially from kindergarten to elementary school, where they are expected to display good conduct, and carry out obligations and responsibilities for hard work in school. Prior to the age of reason, around age six years, Chinese
parents are described as indulgent. However, following this period parents start to emphasize filial piety and obligation to family, and apply disciplinary strategies to instill proper conduct and prevent misbehavior. Examining child socialization processes in this transition from early to middle childhood presents an opportunity to observe the application of relational induction.

Studies have attempted to differentiate the context in which parental psychological control occurs in terms of parent motivations and emotional antecedents (e.g., Barber & Harmon, 2002; Rudy & Halgunseth, 2005; Smetana & Dadds, 2002). In Western contexts, psychological control is thought to emerge in the context of personal characteristics that prompt intrusive parental control. For example, parents who are highly achievement-oriented or who have perfectionistic tendencies tend to use more psychologically controlling behaviors with their child (Grolnick, 2003; Soeners, Elliot, 2005). Parents from more individualistic cultures who are psychologically controlling tend to be more preoccupied with their own concerns and hold more negative cognitions and emotions regarding their children, however, these associations do not accompany the use of psychological control among parents from collectivistic backgrounds (Rudy & Grusec, 2006). In interdependent cultural contexts, parents may use relational induction to encourage social perspective taking, and to cultivate the self-control needed to accommodate to others. Thus, in East Asian contexts elements of psychological control or relational induction may be sanctioned and understood as normative and well-advised child socialization practices, whereas in Western settings these behaviors may be a function of negative internal states or individual motivations that are less consonant with prevailing socialization norms.

There are two distinct aims of the current study. First, we hope to extend previous research which has elucidated indigenous forms of parental control and identify a set of practices
that exemplify relational induction. Some of the central features of relational induction may overlap with examples of psychological control as defined in the West but may reflect indigenous socialization and developmental goals among a sample of Hong Kong Chinese parents. Other exemplars of relational induction in Chinese families are likely not enumerated in measures of psychological control. Further, we hypothesize that forms of relational induction could be identified and reliably distinguished from power assertion and authoritative parenting.

Second, we sought to locate relational induction practices and other control strategies as a function of socialization goals and parental rationale. Examining the reasons parents provide for why they rely on parenting practices may provide some insight into implicit beliefs and cultural values that inform these choices. We hypothesize that relational induction strategies are more likely to be related to relational goals or values, whereas authoritative parenting strategies are more likely to be related to autonomous goals.

Method

Participants were parents of 19 children recruited through a public elementary school in Hong Kong. Parents had at least one child between the ages of 5 to 8 years old (mean = 6.7 years, 53% boys). The majority of the children (n= 16) had at least one sibling (mean = 2.2 children in the family). The mean age of the Hong Kong parents was 37.61 years (SD= 4.59; 89.5% mothers) with a mean level of education of 15.33 years (SD= 2.56 years). Participants were all ethnic Chinese and were Cantonese speaking.

Procedure

Each parent engaged in a 2-hour semi-structured interview by the author, a native Hong Kong Chinese researcher. Parents were informed that the purpose of the study was to investigate their beliefs, values, and parenting behaviors. The interview contained three sections used to
elicit examples of parenting strategies. These sections covered: (1) Socialization goals and allied strategies, (2) Addressing misbehavior, and (3) Addressing escalating misbehavior. The interview protocol and illustrations can be found in Appendix A.

First, the interviewer stated, “Every parent has ideas about how they want their children to be.” Then, parents were asked to pick three qualities that they consider as most important to cultivate in their child from a list of 24 desirable qualities. The 24 qualities were selected to tap the five broad dimensions that consistently emerge from factor analytic work on personality traits, the “Big Five”: Extraversion (e.g., outgoing), Openness (e.g., creative), Agreeableness (e.g., kind/caring), Conscientiousness (e.g., hardworking), and Neuroticism (e.g., restrained), as well as the personality dimension of Constraint that may be relevant to parental socialization goals that are consistent with Confucian values and filial piety (e.g., respectful, humble). For each quality selected, parents were then asked about the age by which children are expected to exhibit the quality, finally the interviewer elicited specific examples of occasions when the parents tried to cultivate that quality in their child.

In the second section of the interview, parents were shown six cards that illustrate different scenarios of child misbehavior. The scenarios include: My child hits and pushes other child; Does not participate in class activities; Doesn’t greet older relatives; Talks back and often temper tantrums; Comes home with all C grades; Spends a lot of time playing video-games. Parents were asked to sort the cards according to how severe or problematic they think each problem is. They were then asked whether they would intervene, and if so, what they would say or do for each scenario.

In the third section of the interview, parents were presented with five scenarios, such as family dinner, homework time, in the playground, and a sequence of five child misbehaviors is
described in ascending order of severity illustrating escalation of misbehavior. For example, under the “Family Dinner” scenario, the five misbehaviors are if the child: i) tries to seek your attention by making funny faces, ii) interrupts your conversation, iii) whines and protests, iv) leaves the table and runs around, or v) throws food/chopsticks on the ground. As previously, parents were asked to decide when, how, and why they choose to intervene. For each set of questions, parents were encouraged to elaborate on their methods of discipline, drawing on past real-life examples, and to offer a detailed explanation and rationale behind why they chose to intervene, or why they would not intervene in each scenario.

**Coding**

The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. Content coding was completed by two native Hong Kong researchers in order to extract common themes in discipline strategies and rationale provided by parents. For each event or parent-child interaction the parent described, we coded for Situation, Rationale, and Strategies. Situation (Private or Public) was coded based on the physical location in which the interaction takes place, whether it happened at home or outside of home. Rationale (Child, Relational or Familial) was coded based on the reason why the parent intervenes or the type of child misbehaviors that precedes parent intervention. “Child” refers to interactions in which the focus is on the focal child, for example when the child inflicts danger or harm to himself or his action leads to negative consequences upon himself. It could also be that if the parent’s goals is to train or build up the child (e.g., to promote child’s self-esteem or sense of independence). “Relational” is defined by events in which child’s action bears consequences to someone other than a family member (e.g., peer aggression). Lastly, “Familial” is refers to events in which child’s behavior affects another family member or impacts the integrity of the in-group or family structure (e.g., refusing to greet an older relative, or talking
rudely to the grandparents). It includes behaviors where it disrupts family integrity, brings shame to family members, or undermines family hierarchy.

For example, the parent may be presented with the scenario that their child is running in the mall, and asked how they will intervene and the reason behind. If the parent disciplines the child because the child may trip and hurt himself, it will be coded as a “Child” rationale because it pertains to danger to the child’s well-being. It will be coded as “Relational” if the parent indicates that it is an inappropriate behavior because the child may hurt someone or inconvenience other people in the mall because it’s related to interpersonal concerns. But if the parent intervenes because she feels embarrassed by the child’s misbehavior in public and that other people may think that she is a bad parent, it will be coded as “Familial.”

Lastly, the methods the parents described in disciplining their child were coded as strategies. Through our qualitative analyses we coded for the psychological control strategies previously codified in the literature (guilt induction and love withdrawal), and we also identified additional themes related our construct of relational induction and thus extracted and labeled examples of indigenous control strategies (e.g., reciprocity, shaming), which are described in more details in the following section. We also coded for the use of power assertive (verbal and physical aggression) and authoritative strategies (praise, reasoning, removal of privileges, time-out, and modeling). The full text of the descriptions for each dimension is reported in Appendix B.

Results

Parenting behaviors are nested in contexts and motivated by parents’ ideas and beliefs about optimal child development. As such, our analysis begins with an understanding of the qualities that Hong Kong parents indicate as important to cultivate in their children. Table 1
shows the frequency with which each quality was selected among the top three socialization goals by parents, as well as the age by which children are expected to exhibit the quality. As shown, Hong Kong Chinese parents most often gave priority to the development of qualities related to Conscientiousness (n= 18; 31.6%). The next most frequent categories of traits involved Constraint qualities that were thought to be aligned traditional Chinese values (n= 14; 24.6%), followed by Agreeableness (n= 10; 17.5%) and Openness (n= 9; 15.8%). Qualities related to Extraversion (n= 3; 5.3%) and Neuroticism (n= 3; 5.3%) were rated as the lowest priorities. Parents in this sample generally reported that these desirable qualities related to conscientiousness, constraint, and agreeableness should be displayed between 4 and 6 years of age (mean= 5.39, SD= .74).

We then examined the link between valued socialization goals and the parenting strategies parents described using to cultivate that particular child trait. We found that the forms of disciplinary strategies parents employed differed based on the socialization goals they endorsed. When parents reported a relative priority in cultivating qualities related to Extraversion, they tended to use authoritative (67%) and reciprocity (33%) parenting strategies. When the socialization goals involved cultivating qualities of Openness, parents relied equally on authoritative (44%) and reciprocity (44%), and, to a lesser extent, perspective-taking strategies (12%). When parents prioritized qualities related to Conscientiousness, they reported greater reliance on reciprocity (34%) and authoritative (27%) strategies, followed by guilt induction (17%), shaming (11%) and perspective-taking (11%) strategies. Perspective-taking (60%) strategies were most heavily used by parents who prioritized qualities related to Agreeableness, compared to reciprocity (20%), and authoritative (20%) parenting. Parents predominantly used perspective-taking (67%) and shaming (33%) strategies towards the goal of
neuroticism. Lastly, when the goal involved cultivating Constraint qualities, parents reported greatest use of reciprocity strategies (56%), followed by perspective-taking (14%), guilt induction (14%), and shaming (14%) socialization strategies.

Content Analysis

Across the three sections of the interview, 163 examples of parent-child interactions were elicited. In-depth content analysis was conducted to code parents’ descriptions of their parenting methods in each of these examples. Our goal was to highlight indigenous parental control strategies and situate these within the belief systems of Hong Kong Chinese. Two native Hong Kong researchers coded specific parental behaviors as well as the nature of incidents that prompted parental control. Percentage agreement for each code ranged from .89 to 1.00 (mean= .96).

Perspective Taking. Parents commonly emphasized the experiences and emotional states of others who are affected by the child’s behavior, this control strategy was coded in 59% of all scenarios elicited. Parents frequently point out the effects of the child’s behavior on another person (34%). The phrase “think about how the other person would think” (掉轉頭，你會點唸) was mentioned by 18 of the 19 parents who participated in the interview. Parents frequently directed the child to consider how the child’s behavior affects other people and encouraged the child to think how they would feel if they were to be treated that way. Through discussing the consequences of the child’s behaviors, parents promote the child’s understanding of the other person’s perspective. A typical example was: “If you talk too loud, you will disturb other people. Would you like people to disturb you when you are trying to concentrate and read?”

In addition, parents often presented themselves as the victim of the child’s misbehavior when pointing out the consequences of the child’s misbehaviors (25%). Parents may focus on
the tangible, behavioral consequences as well as their affective states. For example, a parent reported an incident with her son when, “He was playing with some plastic foam and was making a big mess in the living room. So I said to him, ‘Look at the mess you have created. It’s very difficult to clean up. Mommy has to sweep the floor again, and it’s more work on mommy.’”

A parent may, on the other hand, call children’s attention to the impact on their own feelings by saying, “what you did made mommy really sad.”

**Guilt Induction.** This is a set of parenting strategies in which parents induce negative affect in the child by pointing out the emotional impact the behavior on the parent, such as causing them to worry, feel sad, or making them feel embarrassed in public. This socialization strategy was coded in 18% of all scenarios elicited. It was found to be common for a parent, to promote positive behaviors or encourage the child to do what is expected of them by saying that, “if you really cared for me, you wouldn’t do this because this will make me worry about you.”

In addition, Chinese parents often appeal for the child’s empathy by highlighting how they will be seen in public. “When other people see how you behave, they will stare at mommy. They will think that I am a bad parent and will laugh at me. Do you want your mommy to be laughed at?”

The public audience for their behavior is often highlighted for children, instilling a self-consciousness that can be internalized to regulate behavior. The notion that child behavior can come under regulation through the social control influences on their parents is a complex cognitive construction. My behavior has consequences for my parents’ feelings because of the way my parent will be viewed by third parties.

Guilt induction is related to the aforementioned construct of parent-oriented perspective-taking, in that the child is socialized to be cognizant of the effects of their behaviors on the parent. Both strategies are meant to foster empathy, perspective-taking skills, and sensitivity
towards the perceptions and feelings of others. However, guilt induction is construed as a separate construct from parent-oriented induction, in that it emphasizes parents’ implicit expectations of the child and carries the message that the parents’ well-being is contingent on whether the child behaves according to the parents’ wishes. If the child loves the parent enough, they would listen to the parent, and vice versa. This strategy also captures the implicit message that if the child really cares about the parent, they will do all they can to prevent the parent from being shamed, embarrassed or losing face, as child actions are a reflection of the parent’s success in instilling culturally appropriate values and behaviors.

**Reciprocity.** This is a set of strategies in which parents emphasize role relationships and parents’ own sacrifices for the child. It is important to note that families of Chinese descent are typically organized hierarchically. Family members fulfill different roles and responsibilities within an overall family system of reciprocity and mutual obligation. By delineating everyone’s responsibilities, the parent teaches the child that every member of the family has their respective roles and positions, and that fulfilling one’s responsibilities is paramount to maintaining harmony and equilibrium within the family unit. An example of such socialization can be captured by how a parent reports, “Do you know what daddy’s responsibilities are? Daddy is responsible for earning money so that he can pay your school fees. He works hard every day. What about mommy’s responsibilities? Mommy is responsible for taking care of you. Mommy sweeps the floor, cooks, and cleans the house every day. So what are your responsibilities? You are responsible for going to school and studying hard.”

In addition to educating and instilling appropriate values and conduct in their children, most parents also believe that they are held directly responsible for the child’s behaviors. A parent, when explaining why she would be embarrassed for her child to be seen running around
In public, said, “To feed without teaching, is the father’s fault.” (yang bu jiao, fu zhi guo; 養不教, 父之過; the Trimetric Classic). It is often extrapolated to mean that it is considered the parents’ fault when the child behaves inappropriately. As such, children’s behavior is seen as a reflection of whether the parents have fulfilled their responsibilities sufficiently.

Children, on the hand, are expected to reciprocate and fulfill family obligations and responsibilities by working hard. As they mature, they are also expected to gain an appreciation and understanding of their parents’ perspectives, as well as the many sacrifices and efforts parents put into the family. This understanding will in turn drive the child to work harder and exemplify proper conduct so as to relieve the parent from worrying or being seen in an unfavorable light. As such, for the child to do what the parents expect them is an expression and demonstration of their love for the parents. One parent told her child that, “The best Mother’s Day gift for me is a worry-free day. If you can behave yourself for one day, that would be the best gift to me.” In defining what it means to be a “dutiful and good child,” another parent said, “Being dutiful means that you need to think about daddy and mommy’s feelings and to understand how much daddy and mommy have given up for you. I need to try to see things from daddy and mommy’s perspectives and know that what we do is for your own good.”

It is also common for parents to emphasize their “position” within the hierarchical structure of the family. “You can’t be so rude and call me [a bad name]. Do you know who I am? Do you know how I raised you? That’s right. I am your mother! What you said made me really sad. I am so disappointed. I would never say such a thing to my own mother.” Here, the idea that parental authority and respect are inviolable is invoked while the affective consequences for the mother are also labeled. The dual strategy of highlighting the violation of hierarchy and the emotional ramifications of the disrespect casts the child’s transgression in a
particularly inauspicious light. Relatedly, Chinese parents often use social labels to highlight where each member of the family belongs and to emphasize each responsibilities and obligations. For example, instead of calling the child by his/her first name, it is common for parents to call them as “older sister” (jie jie; 姐姐) or “younger brother” (di di; 弟弟). Similarly, it is typical for parents to reference themselves as “mommy” and “daddy” rather than “you,” “me,” or “I.”

The relationships invoked in relational discipline can sometimes extend beyond the parents, and commonly includes teachers. For example, a parent tried to encourage diligence by saying, “Your teacher puts a lot of effort into teaching you every day; so you need to work hard on your studies.” Through this, the parent is sending the message that the child needs to reciprocate the teachers’ efforts by studying hard.

Shaming. In our qualitative interview, we found examples of shame socialization that were consistent with those described by Fung (1999). A majority of parents (12%) described upward Social Comparison scenarios where they compare the child against another well-behaved child, classmate, or sibling to instill good behaviors in their own child. Family gatherings offered prime opportunities for the parent to engage in forms of social comparison when the child is among other cousins and members of the extended family. The parent may make explicit comments such as, “Why can’t you be more like cousin, Joan? Do you see how she well she eats? She even brought a book with her and is sitting quietly rather than running around and interrupting adult conversations like you.” It may also take a more implicit form where the parent praises another child in front of their own child to remind or encourage him to behave properly. For example, a parent may say in front of their child, “Cousin Daisy, you have such a
wide collection of books, you must be an avid reader. If only my daughter was half as
hardworking and diligent as you are.”

As in prior research descriptions of Love Withdrawal, we found examples where parents threatened to or actually withheld their affection or attention if the child did not do what was expected of them. Seventeen parents mentioned that they ignore their child or pretend that they don’t see him if they have misbehaved. For example, a parent reported saying explicitly to the child, “I asked you to help me with some chores but you ignored me, so I am going to ignore you as well.” The difference between love withdrawal and the behavior modification technique of differential reinforcement is that the latter works by parents consciously attending to positive child behaviors and ignoring negative behaviors. Parents who engage in differential reinforcement will ignore only when the misbehavior is in action, eye contact or verbal attention will resume once the child stops misbehaving. However, parents who use love withdrawal may choose to ignore the child for an entire evening or several days. One parent described that when her child acts in a really inappropriate way, the child would be treated as ‘invisible’ by all the members of the family. The idea is to ostracize the child and convey the message that the child will not be considered “one of us” and will lose their place within the family because of the misbehavior.

Functional Analysis

Across the 19 parents, a total of 163 events were discussed which comprised of 101 private (at home) and 62 public (outside of home) events. In terms of the rationale, there were a total of 44 Child rationales, 50 Relational rationales, and 69 Familial rationales provided for the control strategies. The use of control strategies were examined as a function of the situation and the rationale provided for each event (Table 2).
Parent reported using perspective taking strategies of other-oriented and parent-focused induction significantly more in public (n= 39%) compared to private (n= 23%) situations (F(1,161)= 7.57, p< .01). Perspective taking techniques were also employed significantly more when the rationale that parent provided concerns were relational (n= 46%) or familial (n= 30%) based compared to child-based (n= 9%) (F(2,160)= 14.83, p< .01). In terms of guilt induction, there was no significant difference for situation, but it was used more often in familial-based rationales (27%) compared to child (13%) or relational (12%) based rationales (F(1,161)= 6.46, p< .01). On the other hand, the use of reciprocity occurs significantly more often in private (n= 32%) than public (n= 12%) situations (F(1,161)= 11.53, p< .01). It was also used significantly more often when parents offered a family based rationale (n= 34%) compared to if the event is child (n= 27%) or relational (n= 9%) in nature (F(2,160)= 7.00, p< .001). We did not find any significant situation or rationale differences for the use of social comparison. Love withdrawal was used more often in private (n= 15%) than in public (n= 3%) situations (F(1,161)= 5.68, p< .05).

In terms of power assertion, there were no significant differences found in it being used in public or private. However, we found that spanking in particular was used significantly more often when the parent attributed its use to concerns about family integrity (n= 19%) compared to rationale based on child well-being (n= 0%) or relational matters that were not related to family members (n= 8%) (F(2,160)= 7.25, p< .01). Lastly, parents reported using more praise significantly more in private (n= 30%) than in public (n= 0%) (F(1,161)= 4.14, p< .05). Both praise and reasoning were reportedly used significantly more if the parent offered a child based rationale (n= 16% and n= 66%, respectively) compared to a relational (n= 2% and n= 20%,
respectively) or familial based rationale (n = 0% and n = 10%, respectively) (F(2,160) = 6.69, \( p < .01 \), and F(2,160) = 29.26, \( p < .01 \), respectively).

Discussion

This study aimed to take an emic approach to examine parental behaviors, socialization goals, values and beliefs among Hong Kong Chinese parents. As hypothesized, Hong Kong parents gave greater priority to the development of qualities related to conscientiousness, agreeableness and constraint. On the contrary, they saw it as relatively less important for the child to be assertive, creative, or outgoing. This corroborated those of other studies that found cultural differences in parents’ prioritization of socialization goals, in that immigrant Chinese American parents endorsed filial piety goals that stress the importance of perseverance, being obedient and sensitive to parents’ wishes more than the European Americans, while European American parents endorsed child-centered goals of independence and self-expression in comparison with the Chinese American counterparts (Padmawidjaja & Chao, 2010; Chao, 2005). Furthermore, parents in this sample generally reported that these desirable qualities should begin to be displayed by children between 4 and 6 years of age. This is consistent with those of previous observations (e.g., Ho, 1986) that children are held to higher expectations once they reach the “age of reason,” which occurs at around 6 years old. As young children enter into primary school they are expected to be responsible, work hard in school, and independently carry out their daily routines. They are also expected to recognize their respective roles within the family system or hierarchy, and to fulfill obligations and responsibilities to the family.

Beyond descriptive analysis, content analysis was conducted in which themes were pulled from parents’ responses on how they socialize or discipline their child. Based on parents’ narratives, we described a set of parenting strategies relational induction, which may manifest in
ways that overlap with psychological control as conceptualized in Western contexts, but which are motivated by indigenous childrearing goals within the Chinese culture. For example, guilt induction and love withdrawal are part of the operational definition of psychological control, as both strategies concern the manipulation of the love relationship between the parent and the child as a means to control child behaviors. However, unlike other aspects of psychological control that manipulates the child’s feelings by invalidating their feelings, constraining their verbal expressions, and making personal attacks at the child, guilt induction and love withdrawal encourage child’s heightened awareness of their impact of their behaviors on other people. In line with the socialization goal of filial piety that provides the foundation for parent-child relationships in most East Asian cultures, we argue that guilt induction and withdrawal are motivated by indigenous goals to induce close emotional bond between the parent and the child. Our study also identified a novel strategy of reciprocity, in which parents emphasize role relationships and their own sacrifices for the child. It is in line with relational induction, in that it encourages the child to be cognizant of how much the parents have done for the child. Although relational induction strategies highlight the role and authority of parents, they stand in contrast to power assertive strategies. Power assertion is used often to establish the parent as the ultimate authority figure with little or no explanation, whereas parents engaging in relational induction often accompany disciplinary strategies with reasoning and an emphasis on family and role relations. More importantly, the distinction lies in the fact that relational induction is used towards the promotion of perspective-taking and interpersonal sensitivity rather than to instill fear in the child.

Overall, our analyses of parents’ narratives noted a broad theme in which parents often point out the effect of the child’s behaviors on the other person to promote empathy or
perspective-taking as a means of regulating child behaviors. We noted that parents often focus on the effects of child’s behaviors on the parent, even if the parent was not the victim of the misbehaviors. Parent may appeal to the child’s guilt by noting the extent to which the behaviors make them sad, worried or ashamed. This was consistent with previous work that described the common practice among Japanese mothers to appeal for child’s empathy by presenting herself as a victim of the child’s misbehaviors (Zahn-Waxler et al., 1996; Hess et al., 1980). For example, rather than criticizing the child directly, the mother may tell the child how others will laugh at her for the child’s misbehaviors. This went beyond merely pointing out the consequences or effect of the child behaviors on the parent, but was meant to induce a certain amount of negative affect (guilt) in the child so that the child felt bad about their behaviors. This was towards the goal of helping the child internalize moral and social standards and avoid committing the same mistake again the next time.

In addition to guilt induction, Hong Kong Chinese parents were observed to instill appropriate behaviors in child by emphasizing family structure, pointing out the responsibilities and obligations of each member within the family, and underscoring the role of mutual obligations. Parent tried to evoke guilt and sympathy from the child by highlighting that failure to fulfill their roles as an older sibling or a son/daughter has consequences for the rest of the family members and may potentially disrupt the family integrity or cohesion. These socialization practices may be understood through a consideration of Confucian roots where strong emphases are placed on the child learning to adhere to societal and familial norms. Asian parents often demonstrate their love and support to their child through their instrumental support and sacrifice for their children, especially for their education (Chao, 1994, 1996; Uba, 1994). In return, children are taught to respect and obey their elders, and to fulfill their roles as children in
the family which often includes academic achievement. Specific roles guide and govern how each member behaves within the family system, which in turn brings family equilibrium and harmony, a highly prioritized socialization goal consistent with interdependent cultural values in most East Asian cultures.

In our content analysis, we also noted similar strategies of shame socialization (social comparison and love withdrawal) as described by Fung (1999). Parents compared the child against other well-behaved children or siblings as a way to socialize the child to be aware of what was considered positive or appropriate behaviors. Parents also described times when they would threaten to ostracize and withdraw love from the child to show disapproval of child misbehaviors. Parents noted that this was particularly effective as children were socialized to be sensitive to how other people think of them, especially in public, and to adjust their behaviors accordingly.

Although the aforementioned strategies may seem “psychologically controlling” as they leverage awareness of parental negative affect, it is however important to understand the context in which these strategies take place. In conducting the functional analyses of the socialization strategies, we found that parents tend to use more “psychologically controlling” strategies of affective induction and reciprocity when the goal was to foster adherence to familial norms and promote children’s obligations to the family. The use of shaming techniques and other affect-laden expressions (e.g., expressing disappointment towards the child) when the child misbehaves occurred most often when the child behavior was detrimental to family integrity and family well-being. Shame socialization was used significantly less often when the concern was regarding the child or relational matters that were not related to family members. A similar pattern was noted with the use of role relations, parents emphasizing family structure and highlighting the
responsibility of the child, occurred most frequently when parents offered a familial based rationale to the child behavior. Finally, guilt induction was used most frequently when the rationale that parent provided concerns were relational compared to familial or child-based concerns. On the other hand, the use of authoritative parenting strategies such as praise and reasoning, a prototypically Western style of parenting, was used significantly more frequently when the stated rationale for intervention was based on child well-being such as teaching the child to be independent or self-reliant.

Based on the qualitative data, we described a set of disciplinary approaches whereby parents socialize their children through the invocation of the relational consequences of their actions, calling children’s attention to parents’ feelings, stressing filial sacrifice, and emphasizing the importance of intra-familial obligations. We termed this as relational induction, a disciplinary approach meant to foster adherence to societal norms and to promote sensitivity towards the perceptions of others. Prime examples from the qualitative analysis will be used to inform item development for use in the following study. Although these discipline behaviors may be seen as negative because it involves the manipulation of the relationship between the parent and the child (Barber, 1996), we argued that they may be motivated by different reasons. In cultures where group harmony is highly prioritized, relational induction can be an appropriate form of discipline to help the child acquire empathic skills and become sensitive to others’ thoughts, feelings, and views (Mascolo et al., 2003).
References


Table 1. Top-ranked trait socialization goals and associated age expectations and parenting strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualities</th>
<th>Avg age</th>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Guilt induction</th>
<th>Reciprocity</th>
<th>Shaming</th>
<th>Power assertion</th>
<th>Authoritative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (33%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excitable</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1 (12%)</td>
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<td>4 (44%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual curiosity</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad interests</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>3 (17%)</td>
<td>6 (34%)</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardworking</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistent</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows self-control</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6 (60%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (20%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind/Caring</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathic</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive to others</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (33%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shy/Reserved</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cautious</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guarded</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrained</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Constraint</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2 (14%)</td>
<td>2 (14%)</td>
<td>8 (56%)</td>
<td>2 (14%)</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obedient</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutiful</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humble</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>
Table 2. Parental socialization strategies as a function of Situation and Rationale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
<th>F (1, 161)</th>
<th>N (%): n=163</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
<th>F (2, 160)</th>
<th>N (%): n=163</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private (n=101)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Child (n=44)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Inductive Discipline</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>7.57**</td>
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<td>92%</td>
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<td>40 (65%)</td>
<td>39.63**</td>
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<td>36 (72%)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30 (30%)</td>
<td>10 (16%)</td>
<td>2.75†</td>
<td>6 (14%)</td>
<td>10 (20%)</td>
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<td>Guilt Induction</td>
<td>20 (20%)</td>
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<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>6 (12%)</td>
<td>18 (27%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>11.53**</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>69%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7 (11%)</td>
<td>11.58**</td>
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<td>3 (6%)</td>
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<td>Parental Sacrifice</td>
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<td>6 (12%)</td>
<td>15 (22%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shaming</td>
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<td>ns</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<td>Social Comparison</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love withdrawal</td>
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<td>3 (3%)</td>
<td>5.68*</td>
<td>4 (9%)</td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
<td>11 (16%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Power Assertion</td>
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<td>31%</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<td>43%</td>
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<td>Yelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanking</td>
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<td>ns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Threats of spanking</td>
<td>3 (3%)</td>
<td>2 (3%)</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
<td>3 (4%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>6.68*</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<td>Praise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reasoning</td>
<td>33 (33%)</td>
<td>13 (21%)</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>29 (66%)</td>
<td>10 (20%)</td>
<td>7 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal of privileges</td>
<td>9 (9%)</td>
<td>3 (5%)</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>4 (9%)</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
<td>5 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-out</td>
<td>6 (6%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>3.87*</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
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<td>4 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>8 (8%)</td>
<td>7 (11%)</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
<td>7 (14%)</td>
<td>7 (9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol

Part I. Socialization goals and allied strategies

1. Every parent has ideas about how they want their children to be. Think about your child. What qualities do you want your child to develop? [Pick 3]

- Extraversion
  - Gregarious
  - Outgoing/Sociable
  - Assertive
  - Ambitious

- Openness to experience
  - Intelligent
  - Creative
  - Having broad interests
  - Independent

- Agreeableness
  - Kind/Caring
  - Cooperative
  - Empathic
  - Interpersonal sensitivity

- Conscientiousness
  - Responsible
  - Hardworking
  - Persistent
  - Self-control

- Constraint
  - Respectful
  - Obedient
  - Dutiful
  - Humility

2. When do you expect children to start exhibiting these qualities?
   - [Past] Think about the last week/month/school year. Tell me about a time you were trying to cultivate this quality. What did you say/do?
   - [Future] What would you say/do to cultivate this quality?
Part II.
Addressing Misbehaviors
A mother came to you and told you that her child ____________ (one of the below). She wanted to ask for your advice.

a. Comes home with all C grades  
   ![Image of a child holding a report card]

b. Doesn’t greet older relatives  
   ![Image of a child not greeting an older relative]

c. Does not participate in class activities  
   ![Image of a child not participating in class]

d. Talks back and often temper tantrums  
   ![Image of a child screaming and throwing a temper tantrum]

e. My child hits and pushes other child  
   ![Image of a child hitting and pushing another child]

f. Spends a lot of time playing video-games  
   ![Image of a child playing video-games]

- What would you tell the mother?
- If it was your child, what would you say to him/her?
- Please rank the 6 scenarios by their severity (In your opinion, how problematic is ______ compared to ______?)

67
Part III.
Addressing Escalating Misbehaviors
Imagine the following scenario. For each of the child misbehavior,
- What would you say/do?
- What’s your tolerance threshold- At what point would you intervene?
- Why? What is your rationale behind?

Scenario 1

**Family Dinner Time**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Seeks your attention</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Illustration of a child seeking attention" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b. Interrupts your conversation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Illustration of a child interrupting conversation" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>c. Whines/Cries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Illustration of a child whining or crying" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>d. Runs around (left the table)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Illustration of a child running around" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e. Throws food/chopsticks on the ground</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Illustration of a child throwing food" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scenario 2

**Homework Time**

a. Looks around (not paying attention)

b. Doodles on the workbook

c. Whines, “I don’t want to do my hw.”

d. Storms his feet

e. Tears the workbook apart
Scenario 3

**Household chores**

a. Says, “I’ll do it later.”

b. Argues back (“Why do I have to help?”)

c. Walks away

d. Yells/Screams

e. Bangs the door
Scenario 4

**Playground**

a. Not let other children take their turn

b. Says, ‘I don’t want to play with you.’

c. Teases other children

d. Cuts in line

e. Pushes other children
Scenario 5

Subway Station

a. Makes funny face (train window)

b. Sings on the platform
c. Plays ‘monkey bar’

d. Runs around in the train
e. Runs around on the platform
APPENDIX B

Coding System

SITUATION
C1 Private – interaction that takes place at home
C2 Public – interaction that takes place outside of home

RATIONALE
- Reason why parents intervene, or the type of child misbehaviors that precedes parent intervention

R1 Child – focus is on the focal child
  o Parent’s goal is to train or build up the child
    ▪ School achievement, teaching child to be responsible or independent
  o Danger to self: action is inflicting danger or harm to oneself; or leads to negative consequences upon oneself
    ▪ E.g., you might hurt yourself if you get into fights
  o Beneficial to child: action is promoting something desirable
    ▪ E.g., studying hard can secure your future

R2 Relational – focus is on other people
  o Action bears some consequence to people other than the focal child
    ▪ E.g., peer aggression

R3 Familial – focus is on in-group or family members
  o Child behavior affects family integrity or detrimental to family well-being
    ▪ E.g., the behavior “makes mommy look bad in front of other parents” or talking rudely to parents or grandparents

STRATEGIES

Perspective Taking

S1.1 Other-Oriented Induction – response which points out the effect of the child’s behavior on the other person; designed to promote empathy or perspective-taking
  ▪ Point out how his friend must feel
  ▪ “If you push that child, do you know what danger you are putting him in? You need to know the risks. How would you feel if he gets hurt? Or think of it the other way; if you were the one who was being pushed, how would you feel?”
  ▪ “You are wasting food, do you know there are places where children do not have anything to eat?”
  ▪ “If you keep whining, other people cannot eat peacefully.”
  ▪ 掉翻轉. 如果你被人打,你會覺得點樣?
  ▪ 如果換番較轉人哋咁對番你,你會唔會唔開心?
S1.2 Parent Focused induction - focus on effects of child’s behavior on parent, even if parent was not actual victim of misbehavior; intended to promote understanding of parents’ perspective

- Behavior: “Look at the mess you created. It is very difficult to clean up. Mommy has to sweep the floor again, and it’s more work on mommy.”
- Emotion: “It makes me really sad to see the two of you fight.”; “What you just did makes mommy very sad.”
- 會議話媽咪唔開心
- 通常會問佢：你知唔知媽咪點解唔開心。同埋要佢話番個原因俾我聽

S2. Guilt Induction - focus on the negative emotional impact on a family member, such as making them worry, feel sad, or depressed

- “If you really cared for me, you would do what you are expected.”
- “If other people on the street overheard it, what would they think about mommy? They would ask me why does your child behave like this? People would think that I don’t know how to be a good mother.”

S3. Reciprocity
S3.1 Role relations – emphasize family structure; points out the responsibility/role of each member within the family

- “Do you know what daddy’s responsibilities are? Daddy is responsible for working and earning money so that he can pay your school fees. What are mommy’s responsibilities? Mommy is responsible for taking care of you. So what are your responsibilities? You are responsible for going to school and studying hard.”
- 同埋做功課係你學生責任

S3.2 Parent Sacrifice – emphasize what parents had done for them; emphasize the role of mutual obligations

- I often tell my daughter how hard it was to give birth to her. I even showed her the scar on my belly. “You didn’t even reach 4 lbs when you were born; you were like a little kitten. I took great efforts to take care of you.” We would chat before she sleeps, and I often take the opportunity to remind her how much mommy has done for her. When she touches my belly, I would remind her of my scar or even lie to her that it still hurts. I talk about my scar about 2-3 times a week.

- “Being dutiful means that you need to obey me and respect people who are older than you. For example, you need to be polite to people. This basic. You also need to learn to think about daddy and mommy’s feelings and to understand how much daddy and mommy have sacrificed for you. You need to try to see things from daddy and mommy’s perspectives and know that what they do is for your own good.”
- 媽咪吖你，你要應，唔可以咁無禮貌
- 你知唔知爸爸做嘅好辛苦，你一袋三百幾蚊，爸爸要晒住出去做好耐先賺到三百幾蚊。你要衡量呀，你要識得體諒爸爸嘅辛苦。

S4. Shaming
S4.1 Social Comparison – compare the child against a well-behaved child or sibling
- “Why can’t you sit still like your cousin?”

S4.2 Love Withdrawal – withdraw attention or express disappointment towards child
- “Pretend I didn’t see him for a day so he knows that I’m mad at him.”
- “Why can’t you do better?”
- 我就無睬佢兩日，咁佢都知我嬲佢

Power Assertion- parental attempts to change the child’s behavior through use of the parents’ power over the child

S5. Yelling
S6. Spanking
S7. Threats of Spanking

Authoritative
S8. Praise- to give support or approval to the child to keep good behavior
S9. Reasoning- to explain to the child the consequences of an act
S10. Removal of Privileges/Logical Consequences
S11. Time-out- separating the child from an environment where inappropriate behavior has occurred
S12. Modeling- encourage positive behaviors by modeling such behaviors
Paper 3

Tiger Mothering: Tough Love or Hostile Domination?

Psychological Control in Cultural Context
Abstract

We examined two forms of parental psychological control and how they related to child behavior problems in two cultural groups. A sample of 165 Hong Kong (HK) Chinese and 96 European American (EA) parents completed measures of parental control strategies, parental rejection, and child behavior problems. The use of hostile psychological control (criticism, interference, invalidation) was more strongly associated with the use of relational induction (guilt induction, shaming, reciprocity, social comparison) among EAs compared to HK parents. Parental rejection fully mediated the relationship between the two forms of parental control and child behavior problems across groups. Psychological control was related to parental rejection for HK families which was, in turn, associated with child behavior problems. On the other hand, relational induction was indirectly related to behavior problems via parental rejection among EA families. The findings suggest that there are distinguishable forms of psychological control that may have distinctive implications for child emotional and behavioral adjustment depending on the cultural context.
Once when I was young—maybe more than once—when I was extremely disrespectful to my mother, my father angrily called me “garbage.” It worked really well. I felt terrible and deeply ashamed of what I had done. But it didn’t damage my self-esteem or anything like that. I knew exactly how highly he thought of me. I didn’t actually think I was worthless or feel like a piece of garbage.

— Amy Chua, Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother

In her memoir, Amy Chua describes several occasions in which she, like her father before her, attempted to gain control over her daughters by influencing their internal psychological experiences (i.e., emotions, thoughts, self-expression, attachments). These exchanges exemplify psychological control as defined by Barber (1996), a set of parenting practices regarded in the West as detrimental because they stifle independent expression and autonomy and are unresponsive to the needs of the developing child (Barber, 2002). Chua also engages in high levels of behavioral control, including close monitoring of her children’s activities and setting and enforcing consistent rules and limits. Behavioral control is thought to help to regulate children’s behaviors to accord with prevailing family or social norms and predicts fewer behavior problems and is seen as positive for children’s development (e.g., Barber, 2002, Steinberg, 1990). Indeed, it was Chua’s assertion of the value of psychological control that prompted outrage from the media and the public nationally and internationally.

Psychological control is characteristic of parents who pressure their child to think, feel, and act in ways they want them to. It often involves tactics, such as love withdrawal, shaming, and guilt induction, whereby parents manipulate their relationship with the child to achieve control over the child’s conduct (Barber, Olsen, & Shagle 1994). Such behaviors have been regarded as negative because they can interfere the child’s developing sense of independence,
identity, and personal integrity (Barber & Harmon, 2002), and has been found to be a risk factor for internalizing symptoms such as depression, withdrawal, and loneliness (see Barber, 2002 for a review).

Yet there are competing positions on the effects of psychological control across cultural contexts. While some scholars argue that the need for autonomy is universal and that psychological control is universally detrimental to children’s well-being (e.g., Barber, Stolz, & Olsen 2006; Chirkov & Ryan, 2001), others have contended that the cultural context of the parent-child relationship needs to be considered in anticipating its developmental outcomes (Fung, 1999, Chao & Tseng, 2002; Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003; Rothbaum & Trommsdorff, 2007). Across cultures, parents may differ in the expectations and goals they hold about children’s development (LeVine, 2003) and the practices used to help children achieve these goals (Whiting & Edwards, 1988). Greenfield and colleagues (2003) described two paths of development; one that emphasizes individuation and independence from others, the other that emphasizes group membership and interdependence with others. Each developmental pathway leads to universal tasks of human development, such as relationship formation, relationship acquisition, but emphasize a different optimal balance between autonomy and relatedness.

Individualistic cultures tend to subscribe to the ideal of independence stressing the importance of self-maximization, creativity, assertiveness, and autonomy. For example, American socialization strategies focus on encouraging the expression of mental states and the personal qualities that support self-enhancement and self-maximization (Kagitcibasi, 1996). Psychological control is thus thought to be detrimental as it undermines children’s attainment of emotional autonomy from parents. In contrast, collectivistic cultures, such as many East Asian cultures, have been broadly viewed as interdependent, where the self is construed as
fundamentally connected with others. Parents from East Asian cultures often prioritize socialization goals consistent with an interdependent worldview that foster conformity to norms, regulation of individual impulses, and obligation to family. In this context, the parent-child relationship would be a fundamental tool in gaining control over children’s behavior and development. Psychological control appears to be more normative in East Asian families compared to European American families. Compared to European Americans, Asian American parents report granting less autonomy to children (Lin & Fu, 1991; Wang & Phinney, 1998; Wu, 1996). Cross-national studies suggest that Chinese parents rely on strategies of love withdrawal, shaming, and guilt induction more so than European American parents (Wu et al., 2002; Leung, Heimberg, Holt, and Bruch, 1991). For example, Fung (1999) described Taiwanese parents reliance on shaming to evoke negative affect in children who have misbehaved through reprimands, threats of abandonment, and upward social comparison against well-behaved peers.

Indeed, some evidence suggests that parenting strategies emphasizing control and authority may be adaptive in Asian and Asian American familial contexts in ways not observed among European American families. While forms of restrictive parental control have been associated with lower levels of parental acceptance in European American families (Garber & Flynn, 2001), similar control strategies have been associated with perceived parental warmth and acceptance in Japan (Kornadt, 1991) and Korea (Rohner & Pettengill, 1985). Likewise, in Asian American families, high levels of parental control and family rules are associated with a positive relationship climate marked by warmth, cohesion, and lower levels of conflict (e.g., Lau & Cheung, 1987, Nomura, Noguchi, Saito, & Tezuka, 1995).

However, empirical studies have generated equivocal findings with regard to whether the child outcomes associated with the use of psychological control strategies differ in East Asian
versus Western contexts. Some studies support the culture-general hypothesis that parental psychological control is negatively associated with child adjustment across contexts (Barber et al., 2006; Barber et al., 2002; Wang, Pomerantz, & Chen, 2007). Barber, Stolz, and Olsen (2005) compared parents and adolescents from Africa, China, India, Bangladesh, and Germany and found that psychologically controlling parenting was associated with increased adolescent depression and antisocial behaviors across all cultural groups. Likewise, in their prospective study of parents and adolescents in the United States and China, Wang and colleagues (2007) found that parental psychological control predicted lower levels of life satisfaction and self-esteem over time in both cultures.

Yet, other studies have found that culture moderates the association between psychological control and child adjustment (e.g., Rudy & Halgunseth, 2005; Olsen et al., 2002). Olsen et al (2002) assessed psychological control in samples of Russian, Chinese, and American mothers of young children. Overall, psychological control was related to externalizing and internalizing problems in the American sample; to externalizing problems in the Russian sample; but was not related to child behavior problems in the Chinese sample. Another study reported that psychological control was related to greater anger, conduct problems, and drug use among European Americans but not among Chinese American adolescents, though the effects on depression and anxiety symptoms were similar (Chao & Aque, 2009).

Inconsistent findings in the extant literature may, in part, arise from differences in the conceptualization and measurement of parental psychological control. Stemming from earlier work by Schaefer (1959, 1965), Barber described psychological discipline as parental control and intrusiveness through appeals to pride and guilt, and involves shaming, criticism, and expressing disappointment. However, his final and most widely used measure of psychological
control (Barber’s 1996 Psychological Control Scale- Youth Self-Report [PCS-YSR]) included items that predominantly tap into constraining verbal expressions, invalidating feelings, and personal attacks of child, which may primarily denote parental hostility and rejection. Cross-national studies that found similar pattern of relations between psychological control and child outcomes tend to omit items that pertain to guilt induction and only assess the extent to which parents attacked, invalidated, or constrained the expression of the child (Barber et al., 2006; Nelson and Crick, 2002). Interestingly, when Olsen and colleagues (2002) included items of guilt induction and love withdrawal, they did not find significant associations between psychological control and child behaviors among Chinese children. Item- and subscale-selection may have contributed to the mixed findings on cultural variation in correlates of psychological control.

There are a number of reasons as to why guilt induction, love withdrawal, and parental expressions of disappointment may represent a separate subclass of psychological control strategies in which its meaning and developmental outcomes maybe more susceptible to cultural variation. In fact, scholars have at times denoted this class of parenting strategies as inductive discipline whereby parents draw children’s attention to the effects of their misbehaviors on others. For example, Krevans and Gibbs (1996) argue that parental statements of how the child has disappointed them can be seen as a form of inductive discipline, as the parent is pointing out how the child’s behavior has affected others; and in this case, how the behavior has affected the parent. By presenting themselves as victims of the fall-out of the child’s behavior, parents seek to elicit empathy in the child; which may be most powerful given a strong emotional bond between the parent and child.

Parental induction of guilt or shame in children may be motivated by different reasons across cultural groups (Rudy & Halgunseth, 2005; Mason et al., 2004). For example, Rudy and
Halgunseth (2005) found that psychological control as measured by guilt induction is associated with different meaning and parental cognitions in individualist and collectivist groups. Within the individualist cultures, parents who are psychologically controlling tend to be more preoccupied with their own concerns and hold more negative perceptions about their children. On the other hand, collectivistic parents who score high on psychological control are concerned primarily with teaching their children to behave in ways that are consistent with collectivistic values. Japanese mothers are more likely than North American mothers to use guilt and anxiety induction, stressing the consequences of social disapproval (Zahn-Waxler et al., 1996). For example, rather than criticizing the child directly a Japanese mother might tell the child ‘when you misbehave, people will laugh at me’ (Hess et al., 1980). Rather than an unhealthy manipulation of the parent-child relationship, evoking guilt or inducing a focus on the parent’s perspective is thought to help the child acquire empathy and attunement to others’ thoughts and feelings (Mascolo et al., 2003).

Previous scholars have made distinctions between forms of parental control described in the Western literature and indigenous forms of control found in other cultural contexts. Chao (1994) distinguished authoritarian or power assertive control from an indigenous Chinese parenting practices organized by the principle of training. Training involves high levels of control through continuous monitoring, close governance, and firm correction of child behavior to conform to adult expectations. Within the Chinese context, training is seen as demonstrative of parental support, care, and concern, rather than hostile or domineering forms of control.

Likewise in this tradition, we sought to distinguish two forms of psychological control: hostile psychological control that may have robustly deleterious developmental outcomes and relational induction, a form of control that may be adaptive in promoting indigenous childrearing
goals in Chinese contexts. Through relational induction, Chinese parents point out the effect of child’s behavior on the parent or another person to promote the understanding of others’ perspectives as an immediate means of regulating child behavior. Filial sacrifice and mutual obligations are also emphasized to instill affiliative competence in children. The extant literature on psychological control might have obfuscated important distinctions between hostile control and other types of indigenous control governed by interdependent cultural traditions.

In summary, the literature suggests that the nature and meaning of parental psychological control may vary across East Asian and North American cultural contexts. Further, it may be possible to identify variants of psychological control that subserve cultural socialization goals and pose little risk to the emotional and behavioral development of children in East Asian interdependent contexts. Thus, in the current study we sought to examine three related hypotheses. First, we hypothesize that the relationship between relational induction and forms of hostile psychological control (i.e., criticism, interference, and invalidation) will be moderated by culture, such that there will be a strong positive association for European Americans but not among Hong Kong Chinese parents. Second, we hypothesize that hostile psychological control will be uniformly related to parental rejection across groups, while the positive association between relational induction and parental rejection will be observed only among European Americans. Third, we posit that there will be significant indirect effects of hostile psychological control on child behavior problems via parental rejection for both European American and Hong Kong Chinese families. However, we hypothesize that relational induction will be indirectly related to behavior problems via parental rejection only among European American families.

Method

Participants
The sample consisted of 165 Hong Kong (HK) Chinese parents (89% mothers; mean age= 38.89) and 96 European American (EA) parents (87% mothers; mean age= 42.35) whose children are between 7-10 years old. The mean age of the target child was 8.89 years (SD= 1.03 years) in the HK sample and 7.67 years (SD= 1.17) in the EA sample. The target children included 93 (56%) boys in HK and 45 (47%) boys in the U.S. Families were recruited from public schools in HK and the greater Los Angeles area. Recruitment was facilitated by staff at the school sites who distributed a letter to parents whose children were between second and fifth grade. The letter contained information about the project as well as a return slip for parents to provide their contact information if they were interested in being contacted to participate in the project. The consent forms and questionnaire packets were then distributed to parents who indicated interest. The instrument included several measures with previously established reliability, as well as newly developed scales to assess salient processes for which there were no available measures.

Measures

Psychological Control Scale (PCS; Barber, 1996). Parents indicated their use of psychological control by responding to 12 items that complete the sentence, “I am a parent who…”. Parents indicate how true each item was of themselves (1 = not at all true; 3 = very true). To measure hostile forms of psychological control we used 3 items on constraining verbal expression (e.g., “changes the subject whenever the child has something to say”, α=.68 for EA, α=.60 for HK), 3 items on invalidating feelings (e.g., “is always trying to change how the child feels or thinks about things”, α=.68 for EA, α=.50 for HK), 3 items on personal attack (e.g., “blames the child for other family members’ problems”, α=.58 for EA, α=.62 for HK), and 3 items on erratic emotional behavior (e.g., “goes back and forth between being warm and
critical”, $\alpha = .65$ for EA, $\alpha = .72$ for HK). The overall scale has been shown to have good internal consistency in a US sample ($\alpha = .83$) and in a Chinese sample ($\alpha = .72$) (Barber, Stolz, & Olsen, 2005; Wang et al., 2007).

**Relational Induction.** Using the same format as the PCS, items were developed to measure relational induction, an indigenous form of parental psychological control, thought to represent a class of childrearing practices observed in East Asian cultures intended to help children develop self-regulation. A pool of 17 items were generated from qualitative interviews conducted by the first author intended to elucidate parenting practices indigenous among HK Chinese (Fung, 2011), with an additional 3 items being selected from existing measures (Barber, 1996; Olsen et al., 2002). These 20 items were thought to represent four components of relational induction including, guilt induction (drawing child’s attention to the effects of their misbehavior on others), reciprocity (emphasizing filial obligations and individual contributions to family well-being), love withdrawal (withdrawing attention or expressing disappointment towards child), and social comparison (comparing the child against a well-behaved child or sibling). Data from the current sample were subjected to a confirmatory factor analysis to assess fit of the 4-factor solution. Based on these results, 5 items were dropped because of low factor loadings ($< .40$) or low R-squared values ($< .10$).

The final 15-item scale assessed 4 dimensions of (a) guilt induction (e.g., “I might say, ‘if you really care for me, you will not do things that cause me to worry’”, 6 items $\alpha = .83$ for EA, $\alpha = .81$ for HK), (b) reciprocity (e.g., “I make my child aware of how hard I work to provide for him/her”, 3 items $\alpha = .82$ for EA, $\alpha = .75$ for HK), (c) love withdrawal (e.g., “I give my child the cold shoulder when he/she has let me down”, 4 items $\alpha = .67$ for EA, $\alpha = .70$ for HK), and (d) social comparison (e.g., “I openly compare him/her to other children who are better behaved”, 2
items $\alpha = .73$ for EA, $\alpha = .75$ for HK). Results from within group confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) indicated that the 4 factor model showed adequate fit to the data for both groups (CFI = .970, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .05 for the HK sample, and CFI = .941, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .07 for the EA sample).

The measurement model was also examined using multiple-group CFA, which tested whether parameter estimates varied between the two cultural groups. A constrained model, in which parameters were held constant across the two cultural groups, was compared to an unconstrained model, in which parameter estimates were allowed to be freely estimated. Single degrees of freedom chi-square difference tests were utilized to determine whether there was a significant difference between the parameter estimates for the two groups, with a significant chi-square test indicating that the parameter estimate differed. Results of the multi-group CFA indicated that this model fit adequately to the data, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .07, and SRMR = .09. Results indicated that the factor structure was not entirely invariant between the cultural groups. Specifically, the factor loading for guilt induction was lower for the EA sample ($\lambda = .630, p < .01$) compared to the HK sample ($\lambda = .757, p < .01; \chi^2 (1) = 13.57, p < .001$), however, there were no other significant differences in the factor structure. Table 1 shows the final 15 items and the factor loadings of each item by cultural group. In support of concurrent validity, the total Relational Induction score scale was positively correlated with the Shaming subscale ($r = .61$) of the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (Wu et al., 2002).

**Parental Rejection (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965).** The 16-item rejection subscale of the Parent Report of Parenting Behavior Inventory was used to assess parents’ perceptions of their own parenting behaviors (e.g., “I was not very patient with my child.”). Parents rate, on a 3-point scale, how each item is like themselves (1= not like me; 2= kind of like me, and 3= like
The subscales have yielded good internal consistency with alphas of .88 for Chinese Americans and .89 for EAs in previous research (Wu & Chao, 2005) and in the current study ($\alpha = .86$ for EA and $\alpha = .80$ for HK).

**Child Behavior Problems (CBCL; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001).** Parents were presented with a list of 118 behavioral and emotional problems and indicate whether each item is not true (0), somewhat or sometimes true (1), or true or often true (2) for their child based on the preceding six months. The measure yields broad-band factor scores for Internalizing (Anxious/Depressed, Withdrawn, and Somatic Complaints) and Externalizing (Aggressive and Rule-breaking behavior) problems. Extensive evidence has been presented for the reliability and validity of the CBCL in American samples (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001). The Chinese version of the CBCL has good internal consistency ($\alpha = .80$ and .83 for the Internalizing and Externalizing subscales, respectively; Yang, Soong, Chiang, & Chen, 2000) and test-retest reliability (Leung et al., 2006).

**Results**

**Preliminary Analyses**

Table 1 displays means and standard deviations for main study variables. As would be expected, HK parents reported greater use of psychological control and relational induction ($M = 20.81; SD = 3.94; M = 25.14; SD = 6.02$) than EA parents ($M = 16.98; SD = 3.90; M = 18.78; SD = 4.58$). HK parents also reported higher levels of rejection ($M = 1.57; SD = .31$) than EA parents ($M = 1.32; SD = .30$). Lastly, HK parents reported higher levels of internalizing ($M = 54.07; SD = 11.76$) and externalizing problems ($M = 55.74; SD = 10.43$) than EA parents ($M = 47.20; SD = 9.31; M = 45.49; SD = 9.69$).
Table 2 presents bivariate correlations among the study variables. Results show that psychological control was correlated with relational induction for HK ($r = .47, p < .01$) and EA families ($r = .74, p < .01$). Though both correlations were significant and positive, this correlation was significantly larger among EA’s than among HK parents ($z = 3.39, p = .0003$). Psychological control and relational induction were significantly associated with parental rejection for EA ($r = .51, p < .01$, and $r = .54, p < .01$, respectively) and HK families ($r = .61, p < .01$, and $r = .35, p < .01$, respectively). Correlation analyses also showed that psychological control and relational induction were positively correlated with internalizing ($r = .31, p < .01$ and $r = .28 p < .01$, respectively) and externalizing problems ($r = .44, p < .01$ and $r = .32 p < .01$, respectively) for EA families. Results showed a similar pattern with HK families in which psychological control and relational induction were positively correlated with internalizing ($r = .19, p < .01$ and $r = .18 p < .01$, respectively) and externalizing problems ($r = .27, p < .01$ and $r = .20 p < .01$, respectively).

**Multigroup Structural Equation Model**

A multiple-group structural equation model (SEM) was employed to determine whether the hypothesized relationships among the study variables were equivalent between Hong Kong and European American families. In this model, the constructs of psychological control and relational induction were included as measured variables. This was necessary because the strong positive correlation between psychological control and relational induction for the EA sample resulted in difficulties attaining model convergence with the latent variable measurement models once the endogenous variables were included in the structural model. Models were fit using the Mplus statistical program, version 5.0 (Muthén & Muthén, 2004). Multiple-group SEM compared two nested models (i.e., unconstrained and constrained models) (Byrne, 1994). In the constrained model, model parameters are estimated to be the same for both groups, whereas the
unconstrained path model allows model parameters to be estimated freely for each group. Single df chi-square difference tests were utilized to determine whether there was a significant difference between the constrained and unconstrained model, with a significant chi-square test indicated that the parameter estimate differed between groups.

Results from the multiple-group SEM are depicted in Figure 2. The fit of the model was good, $\chi^2 (28) = 54.503, p < .01$, CFI = .960, RMSEA = .086, and SRMR = .063. The model indicated that psychological control was correlated with relational induction for HK ($\beta = .46, p < .01$) and EA families ($\beta = .75, p < .01$), but the correlation was significantly larger among EA’s than among HK parents ($\chi^2 (1) = 9.186, p < .001$). In addition, the model results indicated that psychological control was positively associated with rejection for HK families ($\beta = .56, p < .01$) but the relationship was not significant for EA families ($\chi^2 (1) = 4.336, p < .05$). Likewise, relational induction was positively associated with rejection for EA families ($\beta = .37, p < .01$) but not significant for HK families ($\chi^2 (1) = 4.884, p < .05$). Furthermore, there were significant main effects of rejection on internalizing ($\beta = .29, p < .01$ for EA; $\beta = .23, p < .01$ for HK) and externalizing problems ($\beta = .28, p < .01$ for EA; $\beta = .21, p < .01$ for HK) for both groups. Results also indicated that there were significant direct effects of psychological control on internalizing ($\beta = .37, p < .01$) and externalizing problems ($\beta = .46, p < .01$) for European American families; but these relationships were not significant for Hong Kong families ($\chi^2 (1) = 4.031, p < .05$ for internalizing and $\chi^2 (1) = 3.913, p < .05$ for externalizing). Relational induction was not directly associated with internalizing or externalizing problems for HK or EA families.

Lastly, indirect effects were examined to test whether parental rejection mediated the relationship between parental control (psychological control and relational induction) and child behavior problems (internalizing and externalizing problems). The significance of mediation
effects were tested through MPLUS “Model Indirect” command, which computes the Sobel Z statistic (Sobel, 1982). Rejection was found to significantly mediate the relationship between relational induction and internalizing ($z= 2.019, p< .05$) and externalizing problems ($z= 2.036, p< .05$) for EA families. There was no such indirect effect of relational induction on behavior problems among HK families. On the other hand, rejection significantly mediated the relationship between psychological control and internalizing ($z= 2.800, p< .01$) and externalizing problems ($z= 2.905, p< .01$) for HK families. However, there were no significant indirect effects of psychological control on behavior problems via rejection for EA families.

**Discussion**

The current study aimed to disentangle hostile psychological control from other types of indigenous parental control (relational induction) and understand how there may be both universal and culturally unique associations with child emotional and behavioral adjustment. We found that relational induction and psychological control were positively correlated for both cultural groups. However, somewhat consistent with our first hypothesis, ethnicity moderated this relationship, such that the positive association between psychological control and relational induction was significantly stronger for EA families compared to HK families. Psychological control and relational induction had a shared variance of 55% for EA families compared to that of 22% for HK families. In other words, relational induction is very much related to other dimensions of more hostile psychological control and models suggested that they may best be considered a unitary construct for EAs. On the other hand, relational induction was a related but distinguishable construct from more hostile forms psychological control for HK Chinese parents. This supports the notion that a subset of the psychological control strategies may carry a
different meaning in a more interdependent cultural group that emphasizes maintaining harmony in within hierarchical parent-child relationships.

In examining the relations between parental control and children’s functioning, the findings supported the cultural dissimilar perspective in which the negative effects of parental psychological control on child development appear to be attenuated in East Asian cultures compared to North American cultures. Specifically, EA parents who endorsed more use of hostile forms of psychological control reported that their children had more internalizing and externalizing behavior problems; but this relationship was not significant for HK families. The positive relationship between psychological control strategies and behavior problems in the EA sample is consistent with previous findings suggesting the deleterious effects of psychological control on child development (Barber 1996, 2002; Silk, Morris, Kanaya, & Steinberg, 2003). The lack of positive association for the HK sample differs from some previous studies that found psychological control to be positively associated with child behavior problems in Chinese samples (e.g., Barber, Stolz, & Olsen, 2006; Wang, Pomerantz, & Chen, 2007), but is similar to other studies that likewise reported null associations among Chinese (e.g., Chao & Aque, 2009; Olsen et al., 2002).

These differences in findings across Chinese samples may be explained by differences among the families from across the Chinese diaspora. Evidence suggests that cultural values and parenting are changing rapidly in mainland China in an individualistic direction with parents exerting less control and granting greater autonomy to their children owing to conditions of social change (Chen et al., 2010), with some variation in values explained by birth after the institution of the one-child policy (Zahn, 2004). Research that contrasts parenting in mainland China, and Chinese societies that have not undergone changes in family policy or recent rapid
economic growth suggest that mainland Chinese parents exert less control than their Hong Kong and Taiwan counterparts (Berndt et al., 1993; Lai et al., 2000). Moreover, overseas Chinese in North America have been described as adhering to a heritage culture that is “frozen at the time when they emigrated from their country of origin” (Giguere et al., 2010). The findings that show relativism in the associations between psychological control and child well-being have been reported among in studies examining Chinese-American and HK Chinese parents (Chao & Aque, 2009; McBride-Chang & Chang, 1998) but not among mainland Chinese families (Barber, Stolz, & Olsen, 2006; Wang, Pomerantz, & Chen, 2007).

Thus, the lack of negative association between psychological control and child outcomes in the current sample of HK families may be understood in the framework of cultural fit. In societies where deference to authority, and loyalty are more strong valued (Markus & Kitayama, 2003), psychological control may be more consistent with prevailing cultural values and socialization norms. Because of this cultural fit between parenting practices and the culture at large, parental control occurs more frequently and is perceived as normative and consistent with the expected role of the concerned parent; as such children reared in this way are not affected detrimentally (e.g., Rothbaum & Trommsdorff, 2007).

Furthermore, we found that culture moderated the relationship between the two forms of control and parental rejection. Although psychological control was positively associated with parental rejection for HK families, this relationship was not significant for EA families. The lack of the expected association for EA families is likely due to the strong association observed between psychological control and relational indication in this group ($r = .74$). This strong correlation between psychological control and relational induction renders it difficult to interpret their independent relations to parental rejection in the structural model, particularly for EAs.
However, when modeled simultaneously it was the unique variance associated with negative social comparison, guilt induction, love withdrawal and emphasizing filial reciprocity that predicted parent-reported rejection for EA’s. Yet, it would be inaccurate to say that behaviors that belittle, blame or show disinterest in the child do not reflect rejection for EA’s. Psychological control had strong bivariate correlations with rejection for both EAs and HK Chinese ($r = .51$ and $.61$, respectively); parents across contexts may display these behaviors with corresponding negative affect, lower levels of warmth, and with negative views about their child (Dix, 1992; Hastings & Grusec, 1998). The multivariate findings indicate that when the covariance between relational induction and psychological control are modeled, only relational induction independently predicted parental rejection for EA’s.

Indeed we found that relational induction was significantly positively associated with rejection for EAs, but this relationship was not significant for the HK sample. In North American culture where relational induction is very closely related to hostile psychological control, it is also independently associated with parental rejection. However, given the broader social and cultural context for HK families, relational induction may reflect parents’ commitment to encouraging children to attune to the feelings, needs, and perspectives of others. This supports the notion that the meaning of indigenous forms of parental control differs for East Asian families compared to EA families (e.g., Chao & Tseng, 2002). In cultures guided by interdependence values, relational induction appears to be distinct from other more hostile forms of psychological control and is not perceived as cold or unaffectionate. This is in line with previous findings that guilt induction was associated with more negative cognition about the child and parental rejection in families from individualist backgrounds, but not among families from collectivist backgrounds (Rudy & Halgunseth, 2005). Our findings suggest that caution in
assuming that there are universal meanings that underlie family processes across cultural contexts. The distinction between hostile and indigenous forms of control may help resolve some of the inconsistent findings in the extant literature on the effects of culture on the outcomes of parental control (Pomerantz, Qin, Wang, & Chen, 2009).

In addition to the differences in direct effects, we also found significant cultural differences in the net indirect effects between parental control and child behavior problems in the two cultural groups. Specifically, parental rejection fully mediated the relationship between the two forms of parental control and child behavior problems across groups. Psychological control was related to parental rejection for HK families which was, in turn, associated with behavior problems. On the other hand, relational induction was related to parent-reported rejection for EA families which was, in turn, associated with child behavior problems. This is consistent with Rohner’s parental acceptance-rejection theory (Khaleque & Rohner, 2002) which posits that the mechanism of parental acceptance/rejection as the proximal determinant of child emotional adjustment holds for children and families irrespective of cultural context. It is the meaning that a particular parenting behavior carries that determines the child adjustment correlates.

It is thus important to understand culturally-based interpretations of parents’ behaviors. Certain behaviors that may in some contexts indicate a lack of parental affection may actually contain emic or idiosyncratic meanings and must be understood in sociocultural context. Scholars have argued that a child’s perceptions of parental acceptance and rejection may explain cultural differences in indigenous meanings of parental behavior (e.g., Nelson et al., 2006). In particular, children may experience mild forms of indigenous parental control as a sign of parental involvement and concern rather than an act of hostility or rejection. In contrast, when discipline is perceived to convey hostility or rejection, it may lead to deleterious effects.
universally. Because the same parenting behavior may be related to different perceptions of parental concern versus rejection, the mediational pathways can explain why aspects of parental control have been found to relate to divergent emotional and behavioral outcomes across cultures.

In sum, the current study provides empirical evidence that there are distinguishable forms of psychological control that have different relevance across cultures: hostile forms of psychological control versus relational induction which may be more common in East Asian cultural socialization contexts. The former type of control may be universally detrimental since it may mark parents’ negative attitudes and feelings towards their children thus undermining relationship security and child well-being (Barber & Harmon, 2002). In contrast, relational induction presents as a distinct set of disciplinary approaches in the East Asian context whereby the parent encourages children to be cognizant of the thoughts and feelings of others, and to inhibit their self-expression to achieve interpersonal harmony. The effects of this form of control appears to be more culturally-bound; with guilt induction and love withdrawal having more inconsistent child adjustment correlates depending on cultural worldview. In an interdependent context where parents aim to socialize their children to achieve affiliative competence, relational induction may be seen as parental duty. On the other hand, within a more independent cultural worldview, relational induction may be seen as a demeaning practice that thwarts the child’s development of an autonomous and positive sense of self.

Finally, limitations of the current study must be acknowledged, which may complicate our interpretation of the results. First, because the study was cross-sectional we cannot be confident in any inferences about causal effects. Alternate interpretations of the noted associations should be investigated. For example, it is possible that parental control strategies
may be elicited by child behavior problems which may also shape parents’ perceptions of their parenting behaviors. Longitudinal studies would help examine the bidirectional influences between children behavioral problems and parental psychological control. Second, our measure of parental psychological control and rejection was limited to parents’ self-ratings of parental behaviors. Recent work suggests that mother and adolescent perceptions of maternal psychological control may differ substantially and may have distinct antecedents (Laird, 2011). Future research should examine child reports of parenting behaviors and perceptions of parental rejection to unpack the extent to which child adjustment is related to how they experience parental control strategies. Third, although we found significant group differences in associations between constructs despite a relatively small sample size, replication is needed to support our conclusions about cultural variability in the purported relationships between parental control and child adjustment. Further research is required to document the validity of the distinction between hostile forms of psychological control and relational induction. Finally, the study relied on measure that was developed for this study, but for which more research is needed to support validity and reliability.

Nonetheless, the study provides new data on the role of culture in patterning the relations between parental control and child adjustment, and indicates that there may be both universal and culturally unique pathways to child developmental outcomes. The controversy following the publication of Chua’s memoir centered on the question of the relative merits of “Chinese” parenting including liberal use of social comparison, invocation of guilt, and contingencies on affection to promote child development versus “Western” parenting that respects the child’s developing sense of self and communicates unconditional positive regard. Chua characterized Western parents as being overly protective of children’s self-esteem in such a way that sets low
standards of conduct, achievement, and robs children of opportunities to learn resilience. Thus, the debate was structured around the question of superiority, a narrative that drew both media attention and book sales. However, the current findings and a growing number of studies support a more nuanced view that the associations between some forms of parenting and child well-being may be culturally relative. What parenting is best depends on the extent to which approach fits within the ethos of the larger culture and society that shapes the resultant implications for the parent-child relationship and child well-being. In both HK and EA families, hostile psychological control may fall outside of the boundaries of normative socialization goals and may uniformly harm filial relations and child adjustment. In contrast, relational induction may straddle opposite sides of the adaptive-maladaptive boundary across the East-West cultural divide.
References


Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of main study variables

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<th>European American (n= 96)</th>
<th>Hong Kong Chinese (n= 165)</th>
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<td>55.74 (10.43)</td>
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Table 2. Bivariate Correlations of Study Variables (Bottom left: US; Top right: HK)

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<td>.18*</td>
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<td>.20*</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.68**</td>
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<td>8. Love withdrawal</td>
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<td>.65**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.58**</td>
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<td>.35**</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Social Comparison</td>
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<td>.24*</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
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<td>.34**</td>
<td>.48**</td>
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<td>.79**</td>
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<td>10. Relational Induction</td>
<td>.65**</td>
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<td>.73**</td>
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<td>.74**</td>
<td>.74**</td>
<td>.77**</td>
<td>.84**</td>
<td>.75**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Parental Rejection</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
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<td>.27**</td>
<td>.54**</td>
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<td>.28**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
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<td>12. Internalizing Problems</td>
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<td>.11</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.16</td>
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<td>.23**</td>
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<td>.66**</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Externalizing Problems</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.32**</td>
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<td>.32**</td>
<td>.32**</td>
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</table>
Table 3. Relational Induction subscales and items with factor loadings by cultural group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guilt Induction</th>
<th>EA</th>
<th>HK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. tells my child that his/her behavior affects how other people think of me</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. might say, when you don’t listen, that shows you don’t care about me</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. tells my child he/she shouldn’t do anything that makes me ashamed</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. might say, “when you misbehave, people think I am a bad parent”</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. tells my child I feel humiliated when he/she misbehaves</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. might say, “if you really care for me, you will not do things that cause me to worry”</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reciprocity</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. might say “I take good care of you, so you should listen to me”</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. tells my child that he/she needs to think about how much I have done for him/her</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. makes my child aware of how hard I work to provide for him/her</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. often conveys how hard it is to raise a child, so he/she appreciates me more</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love Withdrawal</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. gives my child a cold shoulder when he/she has let me down</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. tells my child that I don’t like him/her when s/he doesn’t listen</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. will avoid looking at my child when he/she has disappointed me</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Comparison</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. openly compares my child to other children who are better behaved</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. might say, “why can’t you be more like_______” (someone more well behaved)</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. Multigroup SEM

CFI = .960, RMSEA = .086 SRMR=.063

Coefficients correspond to EA/HK

Bold, italicized = parameter freed for the 2 groups
GENERAL DISCUSSION

The series of studies in this dissertation sought to contribute to the area of cultural variations in parental beliefs, psychological control, and mechanisms to child developmental outcomes in Hong Kong Chinese and European American parent-child dyads. Results from Study 1 were consistent with the prediction that a relative priority was placed on affiliative competence in interdependent Chinese cultures, whereas self-maximization goals were emphasized more among European American mothers in an independent cultural context. While we did not find cultural differences in the links between prototypically Western styles of parenting and socialization goals, socialization goals were differentially linked to endorsement of indigenous Chinese parenting styles depending on the cultural group. Findings supported the notion that the meaning of parental control strategies may differ across cultural contexts. Specifically, indigenous Chinese forms of parenting such as training and shaming may mean something different for Chinese than for European American mothers, in that they may be driven by different socialization goals and can best be understood with reference to their particular socio-cultural history and context. As such, it is important to examine the larger cultural and societal context, including maternal motivations and beliefs, in which maternal behaviors occur when anticipating their effects of child development.

In Study 2 we described a set of indigenous disciplinary strategies and the context in which they occur. We noted that Chinese parents frequently instill appropriate child behaviors by emphasizing family structure, pointing out the responsibility and obligations of each member within the family, and referencing how the child’s behaviors affect the parents. When parental socialization strategies were examined as a function of the situation and event, we found that Chinese parents’ use of control strategies was congruent with the broader values and indigenous
socialization goals they hold for their children. Parents tended to use more “psychological controlling” strategies of guilt induction, reciprocity, and shaming when the goal is to foster adherence to familial norms and obligations to the family. On the other hand, parents tend to use more authoritative parenting (praise and reasoning) when the stated goal is to teach the child to be independent and self-reliant. Overall, it appeared that when parents are motivated by the goal to cultivate sensitivity to others and children’s obligations to the family, they tend to socialize their children in ways that may seem to be psychologically controlling in the Western context.

Finally, Study 3 built on the previous studies and tested the mechanisms of parental psychological control to child emotional and behavioral adjustment. We found that the use of hostile psychological control was more strongly associated with the use of relational induction among European Americans compared to Hong Kong Chinese parents. Hostile psychological control and relational induction appeared to be an unitary construct for European American parents, whereas they are separate and distinct constructs for Hong Kong Chinese parents. Furthermore, parental rejection fully mediated the relationship between the two forms of parental psychological control and child behavior problems. Psychological control was related to parental rejection for HK families which was, in turn, associated with child behavior problems. On the other hand, relational induction was indirectly related to behavior problems via parental rejection among EA families.

Findings of this series of papers highlight the importance of understanding the broader cultural and societal context in which parenting behaviors take place when anticipating the implications for child adjustment. Specifically the nature of the parent-child relationship and notions of autonomy and interdependence are central variables in understanding the meaning and child correlates of parental psychological control. Finally, findings suggest that there are
distinguishable forms of psychological control which constitute to universal and culturally
unique pathways to child developmental outcomes. Overall the current research contributes to
the larger body of research regarding culture, psychological control and child development, and
also suggests the need to new directions in this area of research.
References