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**AUTHORITATIVE AND AUTHORITARIAN PARENTING OF  
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**Fu-Mei Chen**

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**AUTHORITATIVE AND AUTHORITARIAN PARENTING OF MOTHERS WITH  
PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN TAIWAN**

**By**

**Fu-mei Chen**

**A DISSERTATION**

**Submitted to  
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **AUTHORITATIVE AND AUTHORITARIAN PARENTING OF MOTHERS WITH PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN TAIWAN**

By

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Doctor of Philosophy

Michigan State University, 1998

Professor Tom Luster, Chair

The purpose of this study was to examine authoritative and authoritarian parenting in Chinese mothers with preschoolers, and factors related to the mothers' parenting practices. This study not only focused on the global parenting typologies (e.g. authoritative and authoritarian parenting), but also looked into the individual component elements of authoritative and authoritarian parenting. Four subscales in the Authoritative scale were assessed: Warmth/Involvement, Reasoning/Induction, Democratic participation, and Good natured/Easy going. For the Authoritarian scale, the subscales consisted of Directiveness, Corporal punishment, Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies, and Verbal hostility. An ecological model was used to select potential predictors of parenting practices: 1) characteristics of the mother, 2) characteristics of the child, and 3) contextual factors.

The sample consisted of 463 mothers with their preschool children in Taiwan. Mothers were administered a questionnaire which assessed their parenting practices,

Chinese parenting beliefs, depression level, degree of parenting daily hassles, child's age, perception of the child's temperament, and demographic information. Based on the data, it was found that the majority of the mothers (over 65%) in this sample could be classified as authoritative mothers. None of the mothers in this sample were classified as authoritarian. The rest of the mothers practiced both authoritative and authoritarian parenting to some degree. Twenty percent of the mothers practiced authoritarian parenting at a medium level; however, they also scored medium to high on the authoritative measure. Fifteen percent of the mothers were medium on the authoritative and low on the authoritarian measure.

In the analyses examining factors related to parenting practices, Belsky's model of the determinants of parenting was supported. Maternal characteristics, child characteristics, and contextual factors all contributed to predicting mothers' parenting practices. The results suggested that maternal depression, child temperament, and degree of parenting daily hassles may have cross-culturally universal influences on parenting practices. However, the significant influence of culturally specific parenting beliefs on parenting was also found. Traditional Chinese parenting beliefs were found to be positively related to both authoritative and authoritarian parenting.

Most previous cross-cultural studies have depicted Chinese parenting as "authoritarian", or "controlling", which has not been viewed as "optimal" parenting in western culture. This study found that although Chinese parents have been found to score higher on the authoritarian parenting measure than western parents, authoritative parenting was still commonly practiced among Chinese mothers. For those who practice authoritarian parenting, it was very unlikely to be in the extensive or punitive form, and

the use of authoritarian parenting was often accompanied by the use of a medium to high degree of authoritative parenting. Chinese parents' use of authoritative and authoritarian parenting were both in some degree embedded in the traditional Chinese parenting beliefs-- the concept of training.

To

my families

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## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Rationale**

##### *Studies of Chinese parenting*

The importance of studying parenting behavior has long been recognized. For young children, parents are the most important socialization agents. Parenting practices have a significant influence on child development. With respect to parenting practices, Baumrind's three major types or patterns of child rearing are broadly studied. The three major parenting typologies are authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Authoritative parents are warm, loving, involved and responsive. They respect their children's independence, personality characteristics, point of view, interests, and motives; they communicate well with their children, encourage give and take in discussions, and are clear about the reasons for directives. At the same time, they are controlling and expect mature, independent behavior appropriate for the child's age, and requiring their children to contribute to family functioning by helping with household tasks. In contrast, authoritarian parents are highly controlling, rely heavily on punitive discipline, and provide relatively little warmth. They stress the importance of obedience to authority and discourage verbal give and take between themselves and their children. Finally, permissive parents are nurturant, but lax in disciplining and rewarding their children.

They are not controlling and make few maturity demands, allowing their children to regulate their own activities as much as possible (Baumrind, 1967).

Quite a few cross-cultural studies have been done to compare parenting practices among different cultural groups. In some studies, Chinese parents have been found to score higher on "restrictive", "controlling", or "authoritarian" parenting measures than western parents. Chiu (1987) studied the child-rearing attitudes of Chinese, Chinese-American, and Anglo-American mothers. The Chinese mothers were most restrictive, the Anglo-American mothers were least restrictive, and the Chinese-American mothers were intermediate on the continuum of authoritarian-control. Lin and Fu (1990) compared child-rearing practices among Chinese, immigrant Chinese, and Caucasian-American parents. It was found that Chinese and immigrant Chinese parents tended to rate higher on parental control than Caucasian-American parents. Kelley and Tseng (1992) compared the child-rearing practices of immigrant Chinese and Caucasian American mothers. Immigrant Chinese mothers reported more physical punishment and yelling at the child, and scored lower on nurturance, responsiveness to child input, nonrestrictiveness, consistency, and rule setting.

Based on the findings reported above, Chinese parenting was often depicted as "restrictive", "controlling", or "authoritarian". The child development literature conducted in western countries has often claimed that such parenting is not optimal for children's development. Authoritarian parenting was associated with rejected children and children with lower grades in school. In contrast, children from authoritative families were found to be instrumentally competent and had better school performance (Baumrind, 1991a; Dekovic' & Janssens, 1992; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh,

1987; Hein & Lewko, 1994). However, studies of the relations between parenting practices and child outcomes in a sample of Chinese parents are not consistent with that found in the western literature. Parental control or authoritarian parenting was found to be positively related to the child's socially competent behavior, autonomy, self-esteem, and self-control (Chen, 1997; Chung, 1994; Xu, Wan, Mussen, Shen, Li, & Cao, 1991). Moreover, though Chinese parents were found to score higher on "controlling" or "authoritarian" measures than western parents, Chinese children were found to have superior school performance (Dornbusch et al., 1987).

Researchers have tried to solve the paradox regarding Chinese restrictive parenting practices and Chinese children's outcomes. For example, it has been proposed that the parental influences are not appropriate predictors of school performance for Asian children (Dornbusch et al., 1987), or the parenting concepts "authoritarian" and "restrictive" are not very relevant to Asians, and the labels may not be generalizable across cultures (Chao, 1994; Chen, 1997; Chung, 1994). It was argued that these concepts may have different meanings for Americans and Chinese. While for Americans, "strictness" is sometimes equated with manifestations of parental hostility, aggression, mistrust, and dominance, for Asians, parental obedience and strictness may be equated with parental concern, caring, or involvement (Chao, 1994; Kim & Chun, 1994; Rohner & Pettengill, 1985).

Most studies in the area have compared parents from two or more cultural groups and focused on differences between the groups. In cross-cultural studies, the group with which Chinese were compared was often Euro-Americans. Intracultural variation has not been directly studied in previous cross-cultural research. It should be noted that though

Chinese parents "overall" scored higher on authoritarian parenting than American parents, it did not mean that Chinese would use authoritarian parenting extensively. Chinese parents did not necessarily score lower on authoritative parenting, either. Depicting Chinese parents as "controlling" or "authoritarian" may be an oversimplification.

Moreover, in the studies examining the relations between parenting practices and child outcomes, single parental variables have been investigated independently. However, in naturally occurring parenting practices, different aspects of parenting occur simultaneously, not independently. Examining the influence of single parental variables would fail to detect possible interaction effects. Combinations or patterns of child rearing techniques are better predictors of children's outcomes than individual practices. Some studies have used several parent behavior variables in nonorthogonal combinations (e.g. authoritarian and authoritative) to assess parenting. However, since authoritative and authoritarian parenting types have been identified by Baumrind as two of the three main parenting typologies, authoritative and authoritarian parenting tended to be dichotomized into two opposing types. It is often assumed that if a parent is authoritarian, he or she can not be authoritative at the same time. Therefore, the score on one measure is often discussed without considering the score on the other measure. There are many parents who could not be classified as "purely" authoritative or "purely" authoritarian. Parents may have a higher score on one measure, for example, the authoritarian measure, but their scores on the authoritative measure should also be considered. Third, a paradox has been identified in explaining Chinese "restrictive" parenting styles and Chinese children's outcomes, especially in explaining their superior school performance. A hypothesis could be made that Chinese parents might exercise some aspects of authoritarian parenting

practices while some aspects of authoritative behaviors are still present. The authoritative parenting practices offset the negative consequences of authoritarian parenting practices. The meaning and effect of parental control and strictness would differ when embedded in parental warmth and involvement versus parental hostility and rejection. It is suggested that Chinese children's outcomes depend jointly on their parents' use of authoritarian parenting and their use of authoritative parenting.

### *Determinants of parenting practices*

While great effort has been devoted to studying the characteristics and consequences of parenting, in order to better understand parenting behavior, it is also important to study why parents parent the way they do. Belsky (1984) proposed that parenting is determined by factors in three domains: maternal characteristics, child characteristics, and contextual factors. The model of the determinants of parenting was thus broadly studied. For example, Belsky and Isabella (1988) investigated the influence of maternal characteristics, child characteristics, and contextual influences on the quality of the infant-mother relationship. It was found that maternal personality, mother's perceptions of child's temperament, marital quality, and neighborhood characteristics, were significantly different for families with secure and insecure infant-mother attachment relationships. Hannan and Luster (1991) examined factors related to the quality of the home environments that mothers provide for their infants. They found that mother's age at first birth, mother's intelligence, child's difficult temperament, presence of spouse or male partner in the home, level of income and number of children contributed uniquely to the home environment that mothers provided for their infants. Menaghan and

Parcel (1991) examined multiple determinants of parenting and concluded that the home environments created by mothers for their young children are a function of maternal and child characteristics, maternal working conditions, and current family characteristics. Mothers' self-esteem, intelligence, educational levels, age, child's health, presence of a spouse, spousal earnings, number of children in the family, maternal ethnicity and maternal occupations were related to home environments.

In regard to the determinants of parenting, the view that parenting is multiply determined has been generally accepted. The studies examining Belsky's model have, however, treated parenting as a general term without specifying different aspects of parenting behaviors. Labeling parenting behavior as "supportive" or "high quality" is largely a social judgement. The judgment is often based on parents meeting certain social expectations. The specification may be especially important for studying parenting of non at-risk families, whose parenting may need further differentiation beyond "supportive" vs. "less supportive."

### Significance of the study

In response to the limitations of the previous studies in this area, this study was designed to examine authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices in Chinese mothers with preschool children, and factors related to their parenting behavior. First, this study examined the use of authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices in contemporary Chinese mothers by going beyond simple comparisons of one group versus another to focusing on within-group differences. The variations in parenting practices within Chinese mothers were investigated. Chinese parenting patterns were identified based on the degree or the weighing of their scores on both the authoritative and the

authoritarian parenting measures. Not only were the mother's scores on the authoritative and authoritarian parenting taken into account simultaneously, the mother's scores on the specific factors within each global parenting typology were also investigated. Going beyond the global parenting typologies and looking into the different components of each of these parenting practices should contribute to a better understanding of Chinese parenting.

In addition to examining what Chinese parents actually do with their preschoolers, this study also investigated the context within which these parenting behaviors occur. Factors related to Chinese mother's authoritative and authoritarian parenting were examined utilizing Belsky's model of the determinants of parenting. Specific determinants affecting different aspects of parenting practices were examined. Factors related to the component elements of authoritative parenting (warmth/involvement, reasoning/induction, democratic participation, and good natured/easy going), and authoritarian parenting (directiveness, corporal punishment, non-reasoning/punitive strategies, and verbal hostility) were identified. This study investigated if authoritative parenting and authoritarian parenting, as well as their component elements, were predicted by different factors. Moreover, earlier studies have pointed to ethnic differences in maternal behavior (Luster & Dubow, 1990; Menaghan & Parcel, 1991). A sample of Chinese mothers was used to further examine Belsky's model in Eastern culture. This study examined if factors related to parenting practices for Chinese parents would be similar to those for parents in western societies. Third, in response to the paradox in explaining Chinese parenting style and Chinese children's outcome, this study proposes that Chinese parents' use of authoritarian parenting is often accompanied by the

use of authoritative parenting. The use of authoritative parenting plays an important role in children by facilitating compliance and the acceptance of parents' authoritarian control in some occasions, which may offset any negative effects of authoritarian parenting on children.

The method the researcher used was to survey mothers with preschoolers in the city of Taipei, Taiwan. In the questionnaire, the mother's parenting practices, maternal characteristics, child characteristics, and the contextual factors were assessed. Focusing specifically on mothers instead of fathers in this study was due to the fact that mothers are still typically the primary care-takers of their children, and are usually more involved than fathers in most of the day to day activities of their children. Men have been shown to be much less involved than their wives in the daily care and supervision of the children (Sroufe, Cooper, DeHart, & Marshall, 1992). In contemporary Taiwan, though more women have joined the labor market, mothers are still the ones who play the major role in taking care of household chores and children (Lin, 1995).

### Theoretical background

Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and Belsky's determinants of parenting model (Belsky, 1984) are the theories guiding this study, in particular regarding the examination of factors related to Chinese parenting practices. Bronfenbrenner proposed that human development is profoundly related to factors within the ecological environment. An understanding of human development demands going beyond the observation of behavior on the part of one or two persons in the same place; it requires an examination of multiperson systems of interaction not limited to a single setting and must take into account aspects of the environment beyond the immediate

situation containing the subject. Studying mother's parenting behavior toward their children is complex and appears to be influenced by a multitude of dimensions in the ecosystem. Understanding individual differences in parenting requires an understanding of a parent not only as an individual psychological agent, but also as an agent who interacts with other family members and environments.

Belsky's model of the determinants of parenting (1984) identified three domains of influences on parenting: the personal psychological resources of parents, characteristics of the child, and contextual sources of stress and support. The model makes the following assumptions: a) that parental functioning is multiply determined, b) that sources of contextual stress and support can directly affect parenting, c) that sources of contextual stress and support can indirectly affect parenting by first influencing individual psychological well-being, and d) that personality influences contextual support/stress, which feeds back to shape parenting. Belsky indicated that unsupportive parenting behavior would be expected if the parents lacked personal resources, if the child was difficult to care for, and/or if the family context was characterized by high levels of stress and few resources. A child's chances of experiencing low quality parenting are greatest if all three factors combine to undermine effective parenting. In order of importance, the personal psychological resources of the parent are most effective in buffering the parent-child relation from stress. Contextual sources of support are more effective than characteristics of the child. When two of the three determinants of parenting are at risk, it is proposed that parental functioning is most protected when the personal resource subsystem still functions to promote sensitive involvement and least protected when only the subsystem of child characteristics fulfills this function.

### Variables examined in this study

Authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices were examined in the study. Their component elements: warmth and involvement, reasoning/induction, democratic participation, good natured/easy going, verbal hostility, corporal punishment, nonreasoning/punitive strategies, and directiveness were also identified. Given the fact that the primary interest of the study was on the issue of the "optimal", "authoritative" parenting in western countries vs. the "traditional", "authoritarian" parenting in Chinese societies, permissive parenting was not examined in the present study.

As noted above, Belsky's model of the determinants of parenting was utilized to select the potential predictors. To contribute to a high return rate from parents who were sampled, the variables examined in this study were carefully selected in order to avoid redundancy and keep the length of the questionnaire reasonable.

Three domains of determinants were identified in Belsky's model: maternal characteristics, child characteristics and contextual factors. In terms of maternal characteristics, mother's age, education, child-rearing beliefs and psychological well-being were examined in the study. Age was considered as a marker of maturity. It was hypothesized that younger mothers were less psychologically mature, and more likely to practice some aspects of authoritarian parenting than older mothers. Education is viewed as a general socialization construct. Mothers with higher education were more likely to be influenced by western culture. Thus, it was hypothesized that mothers with higher education were more likely to practice authoritative parenting, and less likely to practice authoritarian parenting. "Traditional" Chinese child-rearing beliefs were also examined in the study. The traditional Chinese child-rearing beliefs assessed in this study included

two important features, that of a concept of training, as well as a highly involved concern and care for children. (These ideas will be discussed in more detail in Chapters Two and Three). Therefore, it was hypothesized that mothers holding traditional Chinese child-rearing beliefs were more likely to practice some aspects of authoritarian parenting. However, it was expected that some aspects of authoritative parenting (e.g. warmth and involvement) would also be practiced by these mothers. No specific hypothesis was made for the relation between mother's Chinese child-rearing beliefs and education. Will greater departures from the traditional Chinese child-rearing beliefs be shown among the higher educated Chinese mothers? Or, are traditional child-rearing beliefs fairly consistent across educational groups among contemporary Chinese mothers? This study will try to answer these questions.

Maternal psychological well-being has received a lot of attention in the studies of the determinants of parenting. In this study, maternal psychological well-being was measured by the CES-D depression scale. It was hypothesized that mothers who were more depressed were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting, and less likely to be authoritative with their child. It was recognized that the influence of maternal psychological well-being on parenting may be traced back to the experiences parents had while growing up. According to Belsky's model, maternal developmental history influenced parenting indirectly, by first influencing the broader context in which parent-child relations exist. This indirect linkage was not examined in the present study. Therefore, mother's developmental history was not included.

Children's temperament and age were examined as child characteristics.

Regarding the child's contribution to parental functioning, temperament has received the

most attention, especially those behavioral styles that make parenting more or less difficult (Bates, 1980; Belsky, 1984). Each mother's perception of her child's temperament (emotionality, activity, sociability) was examined. According to Buss and Plomin (1975), in terms of the relations between parental practices and child's temperament, the love dimension is clearly more important for sociability, and the control dimension is more important for emotionality. It was hypothesized that the mothers who perceived their children as relatively emotional were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting. Mothers who perceived their children as more social were more likely to practice authoritative parenting. No hypothesis was made for the relation between child's activity level and the mother's parenting practices. In addition, according to the literature which will be reviewed in Chapter Two, studies showed that Chinese parents tend to be highly lenient and warm toward very young children until they reach "the age of understanding." For children beyond the "age of understanding", strict discipline is reported to be used. Therefore, "the age of understanding" in Chinese society was also tested. This study examined if "the age of understanding" would occur during the preschool years.

SES, family size, and mother's report of parenting daily hassles were the contextual factors examined in the study. According to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, it was hypothesized that families with higher SES status were more likely to practice authoritative parenting, and less likely to practice authoritarian parenting. Families with more children were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting. In addition, mothers were asked to rate the intensity of their parenting daily hassles. The mother's cognitive appraisal of the intensity of these hassles was considered as the

reflection of her contextual stress/support. Mothers who perceived their parenting events as big daily hassles were very likely to be the ones who had less social support and more stress than other mothers. It should be noted, however, that although parenting daily hassles were categorized as a contextual factor, this variable may also reflect, at least in part, the mother's psychological well-being. It was hypothesized that mothers who perceived their parenting events as big hassles were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting, and less likely to practice authoritative parenting. While contextual stress/support factors were examined, the "sources" of the contextual stress/support (e.g. marriage, work) were not selected for examination in the present study.

### Research questions and hypotheses

On the basis of the limitations of the prior studies in this area, this study will ask the following research questions:

Research question 1: How do the component elements of the Authoritative (Warmth/Involvement, Reasoning/Induction, Democratic participation, and Good natured/Easy going) and the Authoritarian ( Directiveness, Corporal punishment, Nonreasoning/Punitive strategies, and Verbal hostility) scales relate to each other? What parenting patterns will be identified in Chinese mothers based on their scores on the Authoritative and the Authoritarian parenting measures?

For the first research question, 2 hypotheses were tested:

H1.1. There is no relationship between the mother's use of authoritarian parenting practices and the mother's warmth/involvement toward the child.

H1.2. There is no relationship between the mother's use of directiveness, corporal punishment parenting practices and the mother's use of non-reasoning/punitive strategies,

verbal hostility parenting practices.

**Research question 2: What factors are related to the Chinese mother's authoritarian and authoritative parenting practices? How will the mother's age, education, child-rearing beliefs, psychological well-being, her child's age, her perception of the child's temperament and daily parenting stress, as well as the family's SES and size, relate to her authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices?**

**For the second research question, 10 hypotheses were tested:**

**H2.1. There is a negative relationship between mother's age and her use of authoritarian parenting.**

**H2.2. There is a positive relationship between mother's education and her use of authoritative parenting, and a negative relationship between mother's education and her use of authoritarian parenting.**

**H2.3. There is a positive relationship between Chinese parenting beliefs and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting, and a positive relationship between Chinese parenting beliefs and the mother's use of warmth/involvement aspect of authoritative parenting.**

**H2.4. There is a negative relationship between the mother's depression and her use of authoritative parenting, and a positive relationship between the mother's depression and her use of authoritarian parenting.**

**H2.5. There is a positive relationship between the child's sociability and the mother's use of authoritative parenting.**

**H2.6. There is a positive relationship between the child's emotionality and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting.**

H2.7. There is a positive relationship between the child's age and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting, and a negative relationship between the child's age and the mother's warmth/involvement, as well as her good natured/easy going interaction with the child.

H2.8. There is a positive relationship between the family's SES status and the mother's use of authoritative parenting, and a negative relationship between the family's SES status and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting.

H2.9. There is a positive relationship between the number of children at home and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting.

H2.10. There is a negative relationship between the mother's perception of the degree of her parenting daily hassles and her use of authoritative parenting, and a positive relationship between the mother's perception of the degree of her parenting daily hassles and her use of authoritarian parenting.

### Organization of the study

The dissertation is organized in five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction to the study. Chapter 2 consists of a review of related literature. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology. Chapter 4 summarizes the results of the analyses. Chapter 5 consists of a discussion of the findings and implications for future studies.

## **Chapter 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Backgrounds of Chinese parenting concepts and Euro-American parenting concepts**

In order to best understand Chinese childrearing practices, there is a need to explore it in the context of Confucianism (Coll, Meyer, & Brillon, 1995; Kelley & Tseng, 1992; Lin & Fu, 1990). Parental control, obedience, strict discipline, the emphasis on education, filial piety, respect for elders, family duties and obligations, reverence for tradition, and minimization of conflict are attributed to the influence of Confucianism (Chao, 1983; Ho, 1981; Lin & Fu, 1990; Coll, Meyer, & Brillon, 1995). For example, "filial piety" is highly valued in Chinese families. Children should try to satisfy their parents and respect and show reverence for their elders in all circumstances (Hsu, 1981). Parental authority over the children is traditionally stressed and children's unquestioning obedience from them is also expected (Ryan, 1985). In Chinese society, the term chiao-yang is the most frequently used term in child rearing, with chiao (education) being emphasized more than yang (rearing) (Ho, 1981). In terms of the nature versus nurture controversy, Chinese have tended to emphasize the social environment rather than the hereditary factors (Ho & Kang, 1984). Chinese parents view the parenting role mainly as one of teacher. They are very involved in child training (Kelly & Tseng, 1992). "Cha chiao" in Chinese means "family education." If a child misbehaves or shows bad

manners, it is viewed as a reflection of poor "cha chiao." Parents are often the ones to be criticized for not being able to "teach" their child right.

Chao (1992, 1994) stressed the importance of understanding the "training" concept in Chinese parenting. The training concept--in Mandarin, is "chiaoshun" or "guan." The term "chiao" means education in terms of the proper development of character, and "shun" means very disciplined teaching. The training concept for the Chinese implies a disciplined teaching for the building of moral character, specifically self-discipline. "Guan" has two intercorrelated meanings in Chinese culture. Guan means to govern, which would be how the American culture would interpret the term. In Chinese society, parents, relatives, teachers, and any other adults who have a particular relationship with the child, are responsible for governing the child. However, in Chinese culture, guan also has a very positive connotation--it means to care for, or even to love, as well as to govern (Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989). Tobin and colleagues provided the example of a mother saying to her disobedient child in explaining the cultural notion of guan. "Wo bu guan ni!" ( I am not going to interfere with your life---meaning I do not love you, I am not going to care for you anymore). Parents often tell their children that the governing is out of love. If parents don't care about their children, parents won't bother to govern their children.

Chao (1992) indicated that, while the Chinese emphasize training their children, the Americans speak of "nurturing innate ability." Stevenson and Lee (1990) pointed out that Americans have a more nativist perspective versus the Chinese emphasis on effort. The nativist view sees child development as "not all children are capable of the same levels of achievement, no matter how hard they work." Children are viewed as born with

different ability levels. The parent's role is to provide the most supportive and rich environment possible for the child's own innate maturation or unfolding of his or her cognitive growth. The innate unfolding process of cognitive development should come from within the child, and parents can not direct the process. The "humanistic" approach has a similar viewpoint. Humanists focus on children's conceptions of themselves. The development of each child's unique "self" is a key concern (Thomas, 1992). The original nature of the child is believed to be good or neutral. Therefore, the goal of guiding child development is to foster the expression of the child's inner nature.

Western literature has related child-rearing practices to socioeconomic factors. More favored parenting characteristics were found among high SES Euro-American parents. Research has indicated that working-class parents are more likely than middle-class parents to use disciplinary techniques of control (Kohn, 1969). More specifically, parents of higher SES backgrounds place greater value on self-direction than do parents of lower socioeconomic backgrounds, who value conformity to external authority. Based on the findings regarding the different parenting styles between working-class parents and middle-class parents, and the more positive child outcomes found among children from higher SES families, the least possible amount of restriction on the children was expected from parents to support children's self exploration and development. Therefore, parenting styles of other cultures are often regarded as being too restrictive or controlling just because they look different from those of high SES Euro-American parents (Chao, 1992).

### Cross-cultural studies related to Chinese parenting

Quite a few studies of Chinese parenting have been done by comparing Chinese mothers and, primarily, American mothers to examine cultural differences in child rearing. Chinese parenting has been depicted as "restrictive" and "controlling", as well as "authoritarian." Chiu (1987) studied the child-rearing attitudes of Chinese living in Taiwan, Chinese-Americans who immigrated from Taiwan, and Anglo-Americans. Significant differences were found on all 23 attitudinal scales and the three attitudinal factors extracted from them: authoritarian-control, hostility-rejection, and democratic attitudes. The results showed that the Chinese mothers were most restrictive, the Anglo-American mothers were least restrictive, and the Chinese-American mothers were intermediate on the continuum of authoritarian-control. The Chinese-American mothers were more likely to approve the expression of hostility or rejection toward the child than the Chinese or Anglo-American mothers. The Chinese-American mothers were more democratic than the Chinese mothers, and the Chinese mothers were more democratic than the Anglo-American mothers. The author concluded that the findings regarding the authoritarian-control factor were consistent with theoretical expectations as well as with the previous empirical studies. The findings clearly indicated that Chinese mothers were more restrictive and controlling than the Chinese-American mothers who in turn were more restrictive and controlling than the Anglo-American mothers.

Lin and Fu (1990) compared child-rearing practices among Chinese, immigrant Chinese, and Caucasian-American parents in a sample of parents with children enrolled in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade in Taiwan and the United States. The child-rearing variables under study were: parental control, encouragement of independence,

expression of affection, and emphasis on achievement. It was found that Chinese and immigrant Chinese parents tended to rate higher on parental control, encouragement of independence, and emphasis on achievement than Caucasian-American parents. The authors claimed that the higher ratings on parental control and emphasis on achievement among parents of Chinese origin reflected the important influence of traditional cultural values on Chinese child-rearing practices, in spite of rapid social and political changes or the relocation to another country. In explaining the higher ratings on encouragement of independence among the parents of Chinese origin than their Caucasian counterparts, it was suggested that independence may be viewed as a prerequisite to achievement. The result showed that parents of Chinese origin, especially fathers, tend to encourage their children to be independent and to achieve.

Kelley and Tseng (1992) compared the child-rearing practices of immigrant Chinese and Caucasian American mothers with 3- to 8- year-old children. Almost all Chinese mothers were from Taiwan. Three dimensions assessed parental support (nurturance, responsiveness to child input, and nonrestrictive attitude), and three assessed disciplinary practices and control (consistency, amount of control [i.e., rule setting], and type of control [e.g., reasoning and physical punishment]). Results showed that immigrant Chinese mothers reported more physical punishment and yelling at the child, and scored lower on nurturance, responsiveness to child input, nonrestrictiveness, consistency, and rule setting. No group difference was found on the use of reasoning. Both immigrant Chinese and Caucasian American mothers reported considerable use of reasoning in response to common child-rearing occurrences.

Though Chinese parents have been found to have higher scores on authoritarian

related measures, it should be noted that Chinese parents were no less warm or authoritative than American parents. In Lin and Fu's study (1990), no difference was found on open expression of affection between Chinese and Caucasian-American parents. In Chao's study (1994), Chinese mothers' and European-American mothers' scores on the authoritative scale did not differ. In the use of reasoning strategy, there was no difference found between Chinese and Caucasian American mothers (Kelley & Tseng, 1992). In an earlier study (Chiu, 1987), Chinese mothers were found to be more democratic than the Anglo-American mothers. Chiu also indicated that, while the Chinese mothers were more restrictive and controlling than the Anglo-American mothers, they were not more likely to approve of the expression of hostility or rejection toward the child. These findings all suggested that, while the Chinese parents may have higher scores on "restrictive", "controlling" or "authoritarian" measures than their American counterparts, they do not necessarily have lower scores on the "authoritative" measure, component elements of the authoritative measure (e.g., reasoning, democratic attitudes), or have higher scores on a particular component element of the authoritarian measure (e.g. hostility or rejection). Therefore, "authoritarian" is an incomplete, or even misleading, characterization of Chinese parenting. To describe Chinese parenting as restrictive or authoritarian would be missing other aspects that are actually at least as descriptive of the Chinese (Chao, 1992).

#### Arguments on the validity of Baumrind's typologies for Chinese parenting

In the literature comparing parenting in Chinese and western societies, a question has been raised concerning the ethnocentricity of the concepts of authoritative and authoritarian parenting developed in western culture. It is also questioned if American

and Chinese share the same meanings for the concepts of controlling and strictness.

While for Americans, "strictness" is sometimes equated with manifestations of parental hostility, aggression, mistrust, and dominance (Kim & Chun, 1994; Rohner & Pettengill, 1985), for Asians, parental obedience and strictness may be equated with parental concern, caring, or involvement (Chao, 1994). For Asians, parental control may not always involve "domination" of children per se, but rather a more organizational type of control for the purpose or goal of keeping the family running more smoothly and fostering family harmony (Lau & Cheung, 1987). For Chinese, the strategies for discipline or behavior control are love-oriented and non-physical (Suzuki, 1980). The strictness and restriction of the Chinese mothers are meant to protect more than inhibit (Chiu, 1987). In studies of parenting practices in Asian families, Rohner and Pettengill (1985) found that Korean youths' perceptions of parental control were correlated positively with perceived parental warmth and low neglect, which contrasted with the findings of studies on North American youth (e.g. Saavedra, 1977, 1980).

In parenting studies of contemporary Taiwan's society, Chung (1994) pointed out that, although the traditional view of parental roles does not seem to be as prevalent as in the past, the overall view of the parent as an authority figure and that parents have a duty to control their children is still present. However, the view does not translate into behaviors that are punitive or insensitive to children's needs and abilities. In Lin's study (1995), she found that fathers with preschoolers in Taiwan could possess characteristics of being nurturant, respectful and power assertive at the same time. She claimed that this parenting style is very similar to the "authoritative parenting style" named by Baumrind (1967). The only difference between these two styles is that Taiwanese authoritative

parents punish children more than American authoritative parents do. Lin claimed that the difference results from the differences embedded in two cultures. Early childhood education in American culture has been criticizing the involvement of punishment in child rearing and education. However, in Taiwan, punishment is still considered a strength and a tradition in rearing children. It involves a version of care, love, and expectation.

Regarding the influences of parenting practices on children, a paradox has also been raised in explaining the "Chinese" parenting styles (e.g. controlling, authoritarian) and Chinese children's outcomes, especially their superior school performance. For example, the "Chinese" parenting styles (e.g. controlling, authoritarian) have been found to be predictive of poor school achievement among European-Americans, and yet the Chinese are performing quite well in school (Chao, 1994). As a resolution to the paradox, for example, it has been proposed that the parental influences are not appropriate predictors of school performance for Asian children (Dornbusch et al., 1987), or the parenting concepts "authoritarian" and "restrictive" are not very relevant to Asians (Chao, 1994). However, the studies still have not yielded a consistent picture. In Dornbusch et al.'s study, they examined the relations between parenting styles and adolescent school performance in a sample of four different ethnic groups, Afro-American, Mexican-American, Asian-American, and Euro-American. They found that Asian-American students, along with students from the other minority groups, rated their own parents as more "authoritarian" than Euro-American adolescents. As expected regarding the relation between the poor school performance and authoritarian parenting, Mexican-American and Afro-American students were found to do less well in school than

Euro-American students. However, Asian students had better grades than Euro-American adolescents. In response to the finding, the researchers concluded that "Asian children in our public schools cannot be adequately explained in terms of the parenting styles we have studied" (p.1256).

In Chao's study (1994), the cross-cultural validity of the labels "authoritarian", "controlling", and "restrictive" was questioned. Immigrant Chinese mothers and European-American mothers of preschool-aged children were administered standard measures of parental control and authoritative-authoritarian parenting style as well as Chinese child-rearing items involving the concept of training. After controlling for mothers' education, and their scores on the measures of parental control and authoritative-authoritarian parenting style, the Chinese mothers were found to score significantly higher on the "training" ideologies. The author thus proposed that the "training" concept has important features, beyond the authoritarian concept, that may explain Chinese school success.

Besides children's school performance, research findings regarding the relation between authoritarian parenting and other child outcomes in Chinese samples have also raised questions about the cross-cultural validity of Baumrind's typologies. The western literature has suggested that authoritarian parenting is not conducive to children's competence. Baumrind (1991a) summarized the influences of parental styles on children prior to adolescence. Children from authoritative families have consistently been found to be more instrumentally competent -- agentic, communal, and cognitively competent -- than children from authoritarian or permissive families. Dekovic' and Janssens (1992) studied parents' child-rearing styles and the sociometric status of 6-11 year-old children.

The results revealed that parents of popular children are more likely to adopt an authoritative/democratic style when interacting with their children; parents of rejected children tend to endorse an authoritarian/restrictive style.

In a study examining the relations among parenting attitudes, parent-child interaction, and preschool children's competent behavior in Taiwan, it was found that children of authoritarian parents scored significantly higher on behavioral competence measures than did children of authoritative parents (Chung, 1994). In her study, authoritarian parents had children who scored significantly higher on autonomy than authoritative parents. The authoritarian parents were more likely than authoritative parents to score more favorably on parent-child interaction as assessed by parental scaffolding behaviors. Chung then raised serious questions about the link between child rearing attitudes (i.e., authoritative versus authoritarian) and children's competent behavior. Because the finding is not consistent with what was found in the western literature, the author claimed that the Baumrind model, as culturally defined, may need to be reinterpreted. Labeling parents as authoritative or authoritarian may not generalize across cultures.

Chen (1997) studied 171 pairs of parents and their children in Taiwan on the relation between parental goals, parenting practices and preschoolers' socially competent behaviors. It was found that parental warmth, consistent control and management have significant effects on children's socially competent development. However, parental disciplinary control (authoritarian control) was also positively associated with children's social competence and negatively related to children's aggressive behaviors. It should also be noted that the frequency of parental warmth, parental consistent control, and

parental management tended to increase as the frequency of parental disciplinary control increased. The author claimed that parental actions that fit within the authoritarian or restrictive pattern within European American families do not result in an "authoritarian syndrome" in Chinese children.

Wu (1997) examined relationship between children's self-esteem and authoritarian parenting style in a sample of mothers with their fourth, fifth, and sixth graders in Taiwan. It was found that the self-esteem scores among children of mothers with high levels of authoritarian parenting did not differ from those with parents with lower levels of authoritarianism. The author suggested that the positive perceptions of authoritarian parenting in Chinese cultures may contribute to the lack of association between authoritarianism and children's low self-esteem.

In a study conducted in China, Xu and colleagues (1991) examined family socialization and kindergarten children's behavior and personality development. In this study, nine dimensions of parental practices were examined: parental control, use of reasoning, concern, intellectual stimulation, encouragement of independence, respect for individuality, consistency, setting good examples, and fairness in conflict resolution. Children's behavior and personality development were indicated by seven dimensions: curiosity, positive attitudes toward others, self-confidence, independence, self-control, frustration tolerance, and attitudes toward work. It was found that parental control was positively associated with positive attitudes toward others and work, self-confidence, and self-control. Among the nine dimensions of parental practices examined in this study, the authors concluded that parental control was the socialization variable that best predicted the development of positive characteristics and behavior of the child.

In the studies examining the relations between parenting practices and child outcomes, single parental variables have been investigated independently. Examining the influence of single parental variables failed to detect possible interaction effects. A more complete understanding of parenting influences must examine the joint influences of different dimensions of parenting practices. For studies using different parenting styles (e.g. authoritarian and authoritative) to assess their influences on children, it is proposed that the scores on both the authoritative and the authoritarian measures should be taken into account simultaneously. It is a danger to assume that a parent would fit into and only fit into one particular parenting style. The methods of assessing parenting practices is reviewed and discussed next.

### Assessment of parenting

Researchers have tried to differentiate underlying dimensions of parenting styles with two-dimensional frameworks. For example, acceptance/rejection and dominance/submission; emotional warmth/hostility and detachment/involvement; love/hostility and autonomy/control; warmth and permissiveness/strictness; warmth/hostility and restrictiveness/permissiveness (see Darling & Steinberg's review, 1993). Maccoby and Martin (1983) and Rollins and Thomas (1979) invoke two general constructs to account for the relationships among parent and child behavior reported in the parenting literature: parental support and control. Thomas, Gecas, Weigert, and Rooney (1974) define parental support as behavior manifest by a parent toward a child that makes the child feel comfortable in the presence of the parent and confirms in the child's mind that he is basically accepted and approved as a person by the parent. Parental control involves behavior of the parent toward the child with the intent of

directing the behavior of the child in a manner desirable to the parent (Rollins & Thomas, 1979). Studies typically suggest that these two dimensions of parenting are independent of each other. They found that, on the average, knowing how controlling a parent is seen to be by the child gives no basis by itself for predicting how warm the parent will be perceived as being (Schwarz, Barton-Henry, & Pruzinsky, 1985). Because these two dimensions are viewed as orthogonal, studies often examine them independently.

Heilbrun and Water (1968) suggested that the relationship between parental control attempts and child behaviors (academic achievement) might be contingent on the level of parental support. The use of support as a contingent variable to account for discrepant results in the relationship between parental control attempts and academic achievement in children was examined in their study. It was found that when parental support was low, a negative relationship existed between control attempts and achievement, but when support was high, the relationship was reversed and was positive. The results support the notion that the two dimensions of parenting have to be studied simultaneously to observe any possible interaction effects of these variables.

Baumrind (1966, 1967) has used several parent behavior variables in nonorthogonal combinations to create the three typologies of authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. In Baumrind's study in 1991 (Baumrind, 1991b), the fourth classification, rejecting-neglecting, is further derived. As Smetana (1994) pointed out, however, these global typologies may give little information about ways specific parenting practices are related to children's behavior. For example, within the authoritative typology, it would be reasonable to assume that inductive practices would be related more to children's adaptive social cognition (Hart, DeWolf, & Burts, 1993) and

that parental warmth and involvement would have stronger linkages with children's prosocial behavior. The global typology serves as a shorthand way to refer to an entire constellation of attributes. The assumption of a typology is that the types are more than and different from the sum of their parts (Baumrind, 1991a, b). While parents may be roughly classified as, for example, authoritarian in their parenting style, there are variations in degree and in the weighting of the component elements (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Hinde and Dennis (1986) indicated that by considering naturally occurring patterns of interaction among parenting variables, typological analyses are often more meaningful than linear analyses. For example, high assertive control with low supportive control is hypothesized to have a different effect on a child than would moderate levels of both variables. In Baumrind's longitudinal study (Baumrind, 1991a), when the children were adolescents, parents in the project were classified into seven types: Authoritative, Democratic, Nondirective, Authoritarian-Directive, Nonauthoritarian-Directive, Unengaged, and Good Enough. In this study, families were classified as "high", "low" or "medium" on the parent behavior scales for this further differentiation.

Other examples supporting the need to examine the degree or weighing of the parenting typologies include Dorubusch et al.'s (1987) and Hein and Lewko's (1994) studies. In both of their studies, parenting style was assessed by the high school student's report concerning the frequency of certain family behaviors in his/her family. An unambiguous or "pure" parenting style was considered to be reflected by students with scores in the top one third of a single one of the parenting indexes. Thus, all students who had scores that fell in the top one third of two or three indexes were considered to

come from families with mixed parenting styles. In both studies, about half of the samples were classified as coming from families with a single pure parenting style (authoritative, authoritarian, or permissive). For the rest of the subsamples, they were classified as "All indexes high", "Authoritarian and permissive", "Authoritarian and authoritative", "Permissive and authoritative" or "No index high." A significant portion of families (25% of the total sample in Dombusch et al.'s study and 38% of the total sample in Hein and Lewko's study) were classified as "no index high"---students with no scores in the top one third of any of the parenting indexes. According to the studies above, simply classifying families as authoritative, authoritarian, or permissive appeared to be insufficient for detecting the full range of variations of parenting patterns. Therefore, this study proposes the need of assessing parenting practices by examining parents' scores on both the authoritative and the authoritarian measures, and looking into the component elements of the measures.

In this study, the use of authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices in Chinese mothers with preschool children was assessed by the Parenting Behavior Questionnaire (PBQ) (Robinson, Hart, Mandlco, & Olsen, 1996). This measure was designed to overcome limitations of other widely used measures for parents of young children (see Robinson, Mandlco, Olsen, & Hart's review, 1995). First, Baumrind has used a multimethod approach to assess parenting styles that included parents' rating scales, psychologists' Q-sorts, and behavioral observations. However, Baumrind's approach has several disadvantages. For example, when observation and interviewing are extensive, fewer subjects can be included in studies. In addition, the cost for this approach is high in terms of special training required for data collection personnel and the

time required for collecting data. Quite a few studies assessing Baumrind's three main typologies have relied on adolescents' reports of parents' parenting styles (e.g., Buri, 1991; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Greenberger, 1988; Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992; Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch, 1991). The parenting measures completed by adolescents eliminate several disadvantages of Baumrind's approach. However, these methods may be inappropriate for use with young children, because they are designed particularly for adolescents reporting on how they were parented and academic-related content is often used in the questionnaire items.

Block's (1965) Child-rearing Practices Report is a widely used parenting practices instruments developed for parents of young children. Robinson et al. (1995) indicated that the 91-item Q-sort measure has several disadvantages. First, it contains a large number of determined factors (28 to 33) with moderate to low reliabilities. Second, it does not adequately tap Baumrind's typology. Third, it is comprised of many items which may be outdated or inconsistent with the current literature. Kochanska, Kuczynski, and Radke-Yarrow (1989) reduced the number of factors in the Block report and made them more consistent with Baumrind's conceptualizations. However, the limitation with this measure was that the authors used conceptual guidelines rather than empirical derivations (for examples see Robinson et al.'s review, 1995), and the reliabilities of the scales were not reported.

Due to the limitations of other parenting measures, the Parenting Behavior Questionnaire (PBQ) was used in this study. It is an empirical means of assessing global typologies consistent with Baumrind's conceptualizations of parenting. It is a measure

with a reasonable number of items and reliabilities. The version used in this study was especially designed for parents of preschool children. In particular, not only the global parenting typologies (e.g. authoritative and authoritarian), but also the specific parenting practices that occur within the context of the typologies would be identified.

### Determinants of Parenting

#### *Studies supporting Belsky's model of the determinants of parenting*

As indicated in the introduction section, the theory guiding this study of the determinants of Chinese parenting is Belsky's (1984) model of the determinants of parenting. Though factors related to parenting practices have been broadly studied, much of the research relevant to this area of concern remains unintegrated and underutilized. Belsky (1984) pointed out the need for conceptual models capable of integrating the disparate findings in the literature into a coherent whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. Because the effects of the various influences on parenting may be additive or cumulative, it is important to examine several potential influences in the same study.

Quite a few studies have investigated the combined effect of several factors on parenting, and provide some support for Belsky's model. In Crockenberg and McCluskey's study (1986), the authors evaluated the effect of maternal attitudes, infant irritability, and social support on maternal behavior over the infant's first year. Mothers with more irritable babies showed greater insensitivity toward their infants if they had unresponsive attitudes about parenting, whereas mothers showed greater sensitivity if they had adequate social support.

Belsky and Isabella (1988) investigated the influence of maternal characteristics (developmental history, personality), child characteristics (temperament), and contextual

influences (marital quality, social networks, neighborhood characteristics) on the quality of the infant-mother relationship. Although some of the variables did not differ for families with secure and anxious infants, other factors including maternal personality, mother's perceptions of child's temperament, marital quality, and neighborhood characteristics were significantly different for these two groups. Moreover, they found that the probability of insecure infant-mother attachment relationships increased dramatically (from 17% to 62 %) if more than one of the three influences studied (maternal personality, marital quality, and infant temperament) fell below the sample median.

Hannan and Luster (1991) examined factors related to the quality of the home environments that mothers provide for their infants using NLSY data. They found that parent, child and contextual characteristics all contributed uniquely to the quality of care which the infants received. The mother's age at first birth and intelligence contributed uniquely to the home environments. Contextual variables, including the presence of spouse or male partner in the home, level of income and number of children, were found to be significantly correlated with the home environments. They also found that infants with difficult temperaments received less supportive care than easier children. Their findings were consistent with Belsky's model, which viewed parenting as multiply determined by three domains of determinants. Moreover, in this study, a family risk index was developed and the authors found a positive relation between scores on the risk index and the probability of providing a relatively unsupportive environment. Eighty-eight percent of the families with all six risk factors were in the low home environment group compared to 11% of the families with a score of 0 on the family risk index.

Menaghan and Parcel (1991) examined multiple determinants of parenting and concluded that the home environments created by mothers for their young children are a function of maternal and child characteristics, maternal working conditions, and current family characteristics. Mothers with higher self-esteem, higher intelligence, higher educational levels, and who were older in age, provided more stimulating home environments for their children. Presence of a spouse, spousal earnings, number of children in the family, maternal ethnicity and maternal occupations were also related to home environments. However, in examining the relationship between child characteristics (gender and health) and home environments, this study reported a positive correlation between the children's health problems and the children's home environments. That is, children with health problems came from families that provided more supportive care. The relation between the child's gender and home environment was not significant.

According to the literature reviewed, there is general agreement that parenting practices are multiply determined. Our understanding of parenting behavior should be enhanced if we consider the combined influence of several factors rather than thinking about each factor singly (Luster & Okagaki, 1993). However, it should be noted that parenting is not defined very specifically in Belsky's model. Parenting may involve such differing behaviors as being punitive, being indifferent, being sensitive, or providing a cognitively stimulating environment. It is important to distinguish between relationship and control dimensions of parenting when building models of the determinants of parenting, as the factors affecting the degree of parental warmth and involvement may differ from those influencing disciplinary practices (Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Melby, 1990). This study proposes the need to identify the unique determinants of

authoritative and authoritarian parenting. Identification of specific factors related to each of the component elements of the authoritative and the authoritarian measures would also contribute to a better understanding of parenting practices.

#### *Determinants of authoritative and authoritarian parenting*

Research in the area of parenting style (e.g. authoritative and authoritarian) has been focused on its relation with child outcomes, especially for adolescents (e.g. Baumrind, D. 1991a, 1991b; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbush, 1994; Weiss & Schwarz, 1996). Relatively few studies have been done studying the determinants of authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices.

Parents have different levels of knowledge about child development and diverse views about appropriate child-rearing practices. These differences in parental child-rearing beliefs contribute to differences in parenting practices (Luster, Rhoades, & Haas, 1989). Chao (1994) indicated that Chinese may score high on "authoritarian" and "restrictive" measures because they are related to the concept of "training" or "guan" in Chinese child-rearing. Training or guan encompass a set standard of conduct enforced by both the larger society and the parents. However, the motivations or intentions are to assure the familial and societal goals of harmonious relations with others and the integrity of the family unit, rather than to dominate the child. The concepts of training and "authoritarian" have very different cultural roots, and thus very divergent implications. Unlike the "authoritarian" concept which is associated with hostile, rejecting, and somewhat uninvolved parental behaviors toward the child, the Chinese training concepts include a highly involved concern and care for children (Chao, 1994). In terms of

maternal characteristics other than child-rearing beliefs, young maternal age has been found to be related to strict, angry, or punitive attitudes toward the child during the first few years of life (Jones, Green, & Krauss, 1980; Ragozin, Basham, Crnic, Greenberg, & Robinson, 1982). Fox, Platz, and Bentley (1995) also found a link between mother's education, age, and her nurturing and discipline. Younger, less educated mothers were more likely to use corporal punishment and yelling as discipline strategies, and were less likely to be nurturant toward their children than older mothers.

In regard to the influence of child characteristics on parenting patterns, a few studies examined parental behaviors as a function of child's age. Chinese parents tend to be highly lenient, warm and affectionate toward infants and very young children until they reach "the age of understanding", in contrast to the strict discipline they impose on the older child (Bond, 1986; Ho, 1981; Ho & Kang, 1984; Sollenberger, 1968; Suzuki, 1980; Wolf, 1970). This indulgence is based on the belief that young children are incapable of understanding, and therefore wrongdoing should be tolerated (Lang, 1946; Wolf, 1970). Though Chinese emphasize the training concept, Kojima (1986) indicated that most Asian parents stress the importance of early training, but not "earliest" training. The various researchers found that parents believed the "age of understanding" was around 6 years (Sollenberger, 1968; Wolf, 1970). According to Ho and Kang's study, it may be as early as 3 or 4 years. In a more recent study by Kelly and Tseng (1992) with a small sample of immigrant Chinese mothers and their 3- to 8-year-old children, parents' reported parenting behavior of preschoolers and elementary school children were examined. No abrupt changes were found in parenting behaviors of Chinese parents with the beginning of primary school. The author suggested that it may be that the age at

which parents believe discipline needs to be introduced appear to be younger than the ages examined in the study, or it is possible that changes in parenting behavior are introduced gradually.

Child temperament has also been found to be related to parental behavior. In general, more difficult children are likely to elicit more negative, controlling behavior from their parents (Belsky, 1990). The mother's perception of her child as difficult was found to be related to her destructive parenting, for example, hostility and rejection (Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Melby, 1990). In a more recent study ( Fox, Platz, & Bentley, 1995), mothers, who perceived their children as demonstrating more difficult behavior problem, were more likely to use corporal punishment and yelling as a discipline strategie, and were less likely to be nurturant.

Contextual factors can influence what parents bring to the parenting situation. Kohn (1963) indicated that the lower a parent's social class is, the more likely he or she is to value conformity to external authority. Parents who value conformity emphasize such things as obedience and good manners. The higher the parent's social class is, the more likely he or she is to value self-control and responsibility. Higher SES parents have been found to be less punitive than lower SES parents (Gecas, 1979; Kamii & Radin, 1967). In Luster, Rhoades, and Haas's (1989) study, it was found that mothers' education, mothers' occupational prestige, and family income were negatively related to mothers' conformity values. In Dornbusch et al.'s (1987) study of high school students, families with higher parental education tended to be lower in authoritarian and permissive parenting and higher in authoritative parenting. Fox et al. (1995) found that the tendency of parents from the lower socioeconomic status level to use more frequent discipline (e.g.

corporal punishment and yelling) was moderated by higher maternal education. That is, the mothers from the lower income levels who had more education reported less discipline than did the mothers from the same income levels who had less education.

Bossard and Boll (1956) suggested that as the size of the family increases, better internal organization and a higher degree of discipline are required for the sake of efficiency and order. Nye et al. (1970) found that parents of large families were more likely to employ corporal punishment in controlling children, whereas smaller families were more likely to employ discussion and reasoning strategies. Elder and Bowerman (1963) and Scheck and Emerick (1976), in studies of adolescents, found that as family size increases, parents are reported as less communicative and more controlling, more likely to use physical punishment, less likely to explain rules of conduct to the child and less likely to give praise and support. These relationships generally held within social class categories (middle class and lower class). In Fox et al.'s (1995) study of mothers with very young children (1-4 years old), mothers who had more than one child at home were more likely to use corporal punishment and yelling as a discipline strategy, and less likely to be nurturant toward their children.

In sum, the previous cross-cultural studies did not seem to capture the real picture of Chinese parenting. Intracultural variations in Chinese parenting should be examined. In terms of studying the determinants of parenting, there is a need to identify the unique determinants of authoritative and authoritarian parenting. Looking into the component elements of authoritative and authoritarian parenting would also contribute to a better understanding of parenting practices. In response to the limitations of the previous studies, this study will examine authoritative and authoritarian parenting in Chinese

mothers and factors related to their parenting practices. The next chapter will describe the methodology of this study.

## **Chapter 3**

### **METHOD**

This chapter describes the methodology of this study. Six sections are included:

(1) Sample; (2) Procedure; (3) Definition of the variables; (4) Instrumentation; (5)

Transformation method; and (6) Limitations.

#### **Sample**

About 1,100 mothers with children who were enrolled in preschools in the city of Taipei were the sample of this study. A list of preschools from four regions of Taipei were randomly sampled. Twelve preschools were selected. Eleven of them were successfully contacted and agreed to participate in the study. Next, all families from the selected preschools were invited to participate. The final sample for data analyses includes 463 mothers with 3- to 7- year-old children. The majority of the mothers had a high school or college education, with an average income level of 4.3 on the 7 level income scale. In American dollars, the average monthly family income for this sample was about 3,200 dollars, or \$ 38,400 annually. On average, they have 2.02 children, with a range from 1 to 4. The demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Sample**  
 (N= 463)

**I. Age**

	mother's	child's
Mean	34.8 (SD= 3.9)	5.4 (SD= 1.0)
Range	22-48	3-7

**II. Marital Status**

Married	98 %
Single	.4%
Divorced	1.3%

**III. Parents' Educational Level**

	Mother's	Father's
1. Illiterate	0 %	0 %
2. Primary School	.7%	.5%
3. High School	41 %	26 %
4. College Graduate	47 %	55 %
5. Graduate School and Above	5 %	7 %

**IV. Family Income\***

30,000 NT and below	2%
30,000 NT to 50,000 NT	12%
Above 50,000 NT to 70,000 NT	21%
Above 70,000 NT to 90,000 NT	19%
Above 90,000 NT to 11,000 NT	21%
Above 11,000 NT to 13,000 NT	9%
Above 13,000 NT	13%

\* The family's total monthly income. NT= New Taiwan Dollars

### Procedure

The translated version of the questionnaire along with a letter describing the study were distributed to students in the randomly selected Taiwan preschools, who took the questionnaires home for their mothers to fill out. The mothers were asked to return the questionnaires to the preschool. A reminder letter, which was originally planned to increase the return rate, was not sent out. Most preschool directors and teachers indicated that the reminder letter would not help much, but would burden the teachers with extra work. Instead, as suggested by the preschool directors and teachers, a gift certificate drawing was used to encourage participation. Over 47 % of the mothers completed and returned the questionnaire. Five hundred and ten questionnaires were returned. A total of 463 questionnaires were usable for analysis. Most of the unused questionnaires (47 questionnaires) were ones that only had the odd-numbered pages filled out on the double-sided form.

### Definition of variables

Chinese mothers' use of authoritative and authoritarian parenting and factors related to these parenting practices were examined in this study. Predictors of authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices were selected from three domains: maternal characteristics, child characteristics, and contextual factors. The definitions of key variables are presented next.

#### *Authoritative parenting*

Conceptual definition: The authoritative parent attempts to direct the child's activities in a rational issue-oriented manner. He or she encourages verbal give and take,

shares with the child the reasoning behind parental policy, and solicits the child's objections when the child refuses to conform. The parent enforces the adult perspective, but recognizes the child's individual interests and special ways. The parent affirms the child's present qualities, also sets standards for future conduct, using reason as well as power and shaping by regimen and reinforcement to achieve parental objectives (Baumrind, 1978).

Operational definition: The mother's scores on the Authoritative scale and four subscales (Warmth and involvement, Reasoning/induction, Democratic participation, Good natured/easy going) of the Parenting Behavior Questionnaire (PBQ) (Robinson, Mandlco, Olsen, & Hart, 1996) were the indicators of authoritative parenting used in this study.

### *Authoritarian parenting*

Conceptual definition: The authoritarian parent values obedience as a virtue and favors punitive, forceful measures to curb self-will at points where the child's actions or beliefs conflict with what the parent thinks is right. The parent believes in keeping the child in a subordinate role and in restricting his autonomy, and does not encourage verbal give and take, believing that the child should accept a parent's word for what is right (Baumrind, 1978).

Operational definition: The mother's score on the Authoritarian scale and four subscales (Verbal hostility, Corporal punishment, Nonreasoning/punitive strategies, Directiveness) of the Parenting Behavior Questionnaire (PBQ) (Robinson, Madleco, Olsen, & Hart, 1996) were used to measure authoritarian parenting.

### *Maternal Characteristics*

**Conceptual definition:** Maternal characteristics are individual traits or attributes of the mother, for example, age, education, child-rearing beliefs, and psychological well-beings.

**Operational:** The mother's responses to the questions regarding her age and education, her score on the "training" questionnaire items (Chao, 1994), and her score on CES-D Depression scale (Radloff, 1977) were used to measure these characteristics.

### *Child Characteristics*

**Conceptual:** Child characteristics are individual traits or attributes of the child, for example, age and temperament.

**Operational:** Mother's report of the child's age and her perception of the child's temperament on the EAS Temperament Survey (Buss & Plomin, 1984) were used. EAS is an acronym for emotionality, activity level, and sociability.

### *Contextual Characteristics*

**Conceptual:** Contextual characteristics are situational elements that can affect the parenting behavior of mothers, for example, the family's social economic status (SES), family size and parenting stress.

**Operational:** The mother's report on her husband/partner's educational level, family monthly income, family size, and her score on the Parenting Daily Hassles (PDH) (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990) were used to measure these factors.

## Instrumentation

### *Parenting Behavior Questionnaire (PBQ)*

The pilot study of the PBQ (Robinson et al., 1995) used data from 1251 parents of preschool and school-age children in the United States. The measure not only assesses global typologies consistent with Baumrind's main conceptualizations for parents of preadolescent children but also identifies specific parenting practices that occur within the context of the typologies. One hundred and thirty three items in this measure were reduced to 62 items using principal axes factor analyses followed by varimax rotation. Three global parenting dimensions emerged consistent with Baumrind's authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive typologies. The parent is asked to rate how often she exhibits the behavior with her child on a 5-point scale from (1) never to (5) always. The authoritative scales consist of 27 items with a Cronbach alpha of .91 (with four factors: Warmth and Involvement, Reasoning/Induction, Democratic participation, and Good natured/ Easy going). The Authoritarian scales consist of 20 items with a Cronbach alpha of .75 (with four factors: Verbal hostility, Corporal punishment, Nonreasoning/Punitive strategies, and Directiveness). The items were constructed based on conceptualizations of authoritative and authoritarian typologies drawn from the current literature that appeared to have face validity. The use of separate items for each parenting style would avoid forced correlations between the styles (Dornbusch, et al., 1987).

A cross-cultural study of the measure was done by using data from families with preschool-age children only (Robinson et al., 1996). The 62-item parenting questionnaire was completed by parents from the United States, Australia, China, and Russia. Principal

axes factor analyses followed by varimax rotation were used to identify global parenting styles and specific parenting practices for each culture. Though subtle parenting practices within parenting styles differed between the four cultures, the overall parenting styles are somewhat similar among parents in the four cultures. A comparison of the Chinese version and American version for authoritative style showed that the China and the U.S. versions share a "Reasoning/Induction" factor. China did not have Good natured/Easy going and Warmth/Involvement factors. For China, the Warmth factor separated from Involvement and China had a unique Respect/Confidence factor. For authoritarian style, China only had two factors: Verbal/Physical punishment and Verbal directiveness. For the U.S. version, Verbal hostility and Corporal punishment were separate factors. The U.S. version also had a Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies factor. For this sample, the alphas of the China version were no better than the alphas of the U.S. version. Therefore, due to this researcher's intention to examine how Chinese parents score on the U.S. parenting measure as well as to relate these findings with previous cross-cultural studies, the U.S. version of the measure was used in this study.

The U.S. preschool-age children version of the PBQ, which was used in this study, was developed using data from 456 parents. The authoritative items consist of 22 questions with a reported Cronbach alpha of .88 (Warmth and Involvement with 7 items,  $\alpha = .81$ ; Reasoning/Induction with 7 items,  $\alpha = .81$ ; Democratic participation with 4 items,  $\alpha = .61$ ; Good natured/Easy going with 4 items,  $\alpha = .66$ ). The Authoritarian items consist of 18 questions with a Cronbach alpha of .85. (Directiveness with 4 items,  $\alpha = .63$ ; Corporal punishment with 4 items,  $\alpha = .73$ ; Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies with 6 items,  $\alpha = .70$ ; Verbal hostility with 4 items,  $\alpha = .67$ ). The item

scores were summed to produce the total score. There was an Authoritative total score with four subscores and an Authoritarian total score with four subscores. The permissive parenting pattern was not examined in this study.

There were slight modifications of the Authoritarian subscales for this study. Based on a reliability analysis, three items which may not be suitable for a Chinese sample were excluded from the analyses. The item "I tell my child what to do" was deleted from the "Directiveness" subscale and thus increased the alpha from .57 to .64. The items "I appear to be more concerned with own feelings than with my child's feelings" and "When two children are fighting, I discipline my child first and ask questions later" were deleted from the "Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies" subscale and the alpha increased from .48 to .61. The alpha for the "Corporal punishment" subscale for this sample was .77, and the alpha for the "Verbal hostility" subscale was .64. Fifteen items remained in Authoritarian scale and the alpha for the total scale for this sample was .84. Alphas of the Authoritative scale and its subscales for this sample were similar to the reported alphas. For my sample, the alpha for the total Authoritative scale was .90; the alpha for the Warmth/Involvement subscale was .77; the alpha for the Reasoning/Induction subscale was .80; the alpha for the Democratic participation subscale was .65; the alpha for the Good natured/Easy going subscale was .68. A copy of the measure used in this study can be found in Appendix A.

There are several reasons for using the self-report measure. First, observations and interviewing are expensive, so fewer subjects can be included in studies. Secondly, it is doubtful that certain important features of Chinese mother's parenting behavior can be observed in a limited period of time with a stranger present. Compared to American

parents, Chinese parents may be less accustomed to such intrusive techniques and have relatively more concerns about their "performance". Moreover, they may have been less likely to participate if more intrusive methods had been used.

### *The "training" questionnaire items*

Seven "training" questionnaire items scored on a 5-point scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) were used to assess the mother's child-rearing beliefs (Chao, 1994). The training questionnaire covered two areas, "ideologies on child development and learning" (involving 4 items) and "ideologies on the mother-child relationship" (involving 3 items), that were derived from the concepts of chiao shun (or training or guan). The items were derived from the literature on Chinese child rearing and involved ideas such as: the earliest possible introduction of training, the promotion of training through exposing the young child as much as possible to the adult world and through explicit example or comparison to other children, helping the child to succeed in school as a primary way of expressing parent's love, the child being in the constant care of the mother or family, and sleeping with the mother. These child-rearing beliefs may be related to the concept of "authoritarian." However, the beliefs also imply for the Chinese a very involved care and concern for the child. Thirteen items were originally developed and summed to assess the Chinese "training" concept. Seven items distinguished between the Chinese mothers and the European-American, with the Chinese scoring higher (see Chao, 1994). The alpha for the questionnaire items was not reported by Chao. The Chinese version of the questionnaire items are used in this study.

For this sample, item 7 "Child should be allowed to sleep in mother's bed "was

only significantly related to item 6 "Child should be in the constant care of their mothers or family", but not to the rest of the items. Deleting item 7 from the scale increased the alpha from .61 to .64. Therefore, item 7 was deleted for this study. Six items remained for the "training" questionnaire items" and the alpha was .64. The scores of the 6 items were summed to produce the Chinese parenting belief score. A copy of the measure used in this study can be found in Appendix A.

#### *CES-D depression scale*

Maternal depression was assessed with the CES-D, a widely used 20-item depression inventory, with a reported Cronbach's alpha of .82 (Radloff, 1977). Each item is scored on a 4-point scale in terms of frequency of occurrence during the previous week. A score of 0 means that the symptom occurred rarely or none of the time, and a score of 3 means that the symptom occurred most of the time. The items are summed to produce a total score and may range from 0 to 60. Higher scores indicate higher levels of depression. The usual cutoff to indicate "clinical depression" is 16. The CES-D depression scale has been linked to parenting behavior in earlier studies (Radloff, 1977; Reis, Barbera-Stein & Bennett, 1986). The measure was translated into Chinese and used in this study. The alpha for this sample was .76. A copy of this measure can be found in Appendix A.

#### *EAS Temperament survey for children: parental ratings*

This is a 20-item questionnaire (Buss & Plomin, 1984), assessing activity, emotionality, sociability/shyness (the sociability subscale is viewed as a mixture of

sociability and shyness). Each item was rated on a scale of 1 (not characteristic or typical of your child) to 5 (very characteristic or typical of your child). All but the Sociability items have been taken from the Colorado Childhood Temperament Inventory (Rowe & Plomin, 1977), which was developed in a study that included the Children's EASI-II items (Buss & Plomin, 1975) and items based on the nine temperament dimensions of the New York Longitudinal Study (Thomas, Chess, & Birch, 1968; Thomas, Chess, Birch, Hertzog, & Korn, 1963). The CCTI "Sociability" scale is a measure of shyness, so the Sociability scale is based on the adult EAS temperament survey items. The internal consistencies of the three scales averaged .83. Test-retest reliabilities are available for 31 children with an average age of 3.6 years, the interval between ratings being one week. The test-retest correlations were .72 for emotionality, .80 for activity, and .58 for sociability/shyness. For this sample, the alpha for activity was .71; for emotionality it was .77; for sociability/shyness it was .58. The measure was translated into Chinese and used in this study. A copy of this measure can be found in Appendix A.

#### *Parenting Daily Hassles (PDH)*

This is a 15-item questionnaire assessing the degree or intensity of hassles rated on a 5-point scale from no hassle = 1 to big hassle = 5 (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990). Two subscales were included: (1) Parenting task: 8 items involve typical duties or tasks normally associated with parenting (the alpha for this sample = .78). (2) Challenging behavior: items describing challenging child behaviors (reported alpha = .86; alpha for this sample = .79). The alpha of the total PDH scale for this sample was .86.

Hassles are conceptualized as the irritating, frustrating, annoying, and distressing

demands that to some degree characterize everyday transactions with the environment (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990). It was hypothesized that an individual's cognitive appraisal of the significance of these events for one's own well-being is the primary factor predicting the impact of the stressor. The individual's appraisal of daily hassles are considered better predictors of psychological well-being than are life events and operate independently in the prediction of depression and anxiety across various adult populations (DeLongis, Coyne, DaKof, Folkman, & Lazarus, 1982; Lazarus, DeLongis, Folkman, & Gruen, 1985; Crnic & Greenberg, 1990). The items were translated into Chinese and used in this study. A copy of this measure can be found in Appendix A.

#### Translation method

The instrument was translated into Chinese, and then translated back into English by another person. A third person was consulted to resolve any disagreement between the back translation of the items and the original. The back translation method was employed for the purpose of validating the authenticity of the original.

#### Limitations

The instruments used in this study, such as the Parenting Behavior Questionnaire (PBQ), are self-report instruments. While the advantages of using self-report instruments have been discussed above, there are problems related to the use of them also. As Maccoby and Martin (1983) noted, parents may not be aware of certain aspects of their own behavior and subjects may vary in their subjective interpretation of questions. Susceptibility to response sets, particularly to social desirability, is also a problem. The limitations of using self-report instruments must be considered when interpreting the data.

Using a single source of data is another limitation of the study. However, getting

information from the teacher would be extremely difficult for an individual student's project, and the preschool children are too young to report either their own or their parents' behavior. Therefore, only the mother's self report is used in the study.

Finally, in regard to the sample in this study, this study has no intention of generalizing the result to parents living in rural areas of Taiwan, or Chinese parents living outside of Taiwan. However, it might apply to Chinese parents living in different geographical locations, to some degree, due to the fact that they are all influenced by Confucian ideology. Generalizing the findings to Chinese parenting with children in different age groups (beyond preschool) also must be done cautiously.

### Analysis

In order to examine the first research question concerning the identification of Chinese parenting patterns, the intercorrelations among the different factors from the authoritative and authoritarian scales were computed. Second, a procedure was followed to classify mother's scores on the Authoritative and Authoritarian scales as "high", "low", or "medium". Four parenting patterns were then identified.

To examine the second research question regarding the determinants of parenting, the zero-order correlations among the predictors were computed first. Second, zero order correlations between predictors and outcome variables (the Authoritative total scale, the Authoritarian total scale, and each of their subscales) were computed. Multiple regression was also used to examine the individual and joint contribution of the predictors. Finally, a MANOVA followed by one-way ANOVAs were computed to compare the differences of each predictors among the parenting patterns identified above. For the significance level, the most commonly used alpha levels, .001 and .05 were

chosen and presented in the analyses.

In this chapter, the methods used to address the research questions have been described. To summarize, about 1,100 mothers with children who were enrolled in preschools in the city of Taipei were sampled. Four hundred and sixty three mothers returned completed questionnaires. Key variables assessed by the questionnaire included mother's authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices, mother's age, education, depression level, Chinese parenting beliefs, child's age, child's temperament, family's SES, parenting daily hassles, and family size. In the next chapter, the results of the analyses are presented.

## Chapter 4

### RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the data analyses. Three sections are included:

- (1) Descriptive statistics for the variables in the analyses;
- (2) Chinese parenting patterns;
- and (3) Factors related to Chinese parenting.

#### Descriptive statistics for the variables in the analyses

Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations of the predictor variables in the analysis. Some predictor variables (e.g. mother's age, education, father's education, and family income level) were described in the demographic characteristics of the sample section of Chapter 3 (see Table 1) and are not repeated here.

Mothers had a mean score of 20.6 on the Chinese parenting beliefs measure, which may range from 6 to 30, with higher score indicating stronger beliefs in the Chinese "training" concepts. On average, mothers agreed with the Chinese parenting beliefs assessed in this study to some degree. Maternal depression, assessed by CES-D depression scale, had a mean score of 17.8, which was slightly higher than the usual cutoff for "clinical depression" (cutoff score = 16). This may be a reflection of stressful life in the big city, Taipei. The cutoff score was also based on a U.S. sample. The average child age was 5.4 years-old, and the child's temperament was assessed on the 5-point scale with an average score of approximately 3 for all three temperament indicators

(activity, emotionality, and sociability) assessed in this study. Mothers had a mean score of 32.7 on the Parenting Daily Hassles scale, which may range from 15-75, with higher scores indicating more parenting daily hassles perceived by the mothers.

On the parenting practices measures, mothers had mean scores ranging from 3.6 to 4.1 on the 5-point scale for the four authoritative subscales, and mean scores ranging from 1.7 to 2.2 for the four authoritarian subscales, indicating a generally high level of authoritative parenting and low level of authoritarian parenting across all the mothers. The instrument used in this study for assessing parenting practices was an existing instrument developed in Robinson et al.'s study (1996). For the comparison of mean scores on the Authoritative scales and Authoritarian scales between this sample and the American sample in Robinson et al.'s study, please see Appendix B. This is for reference only. Due to the fact that there were modifications of the original scale for this study, as well as the sampling differences between the two studies, any comparison should be made cautiously.

Table 2 Means, standard deviations of the variables in the analysis

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Mother's characteristics</b>		
Parenting beliefs	20.6	3.9
CES-D scores	17.8	6.1
<b>Child's characteristics</b>		
Age	5.4	1.0
<i>Temperament</i>		
Activity	3.6	.7
Emotionality	2.4	.8
Sociability	3.4	.5
<b>Contextual factors</b>		
PDH scores	32.7	8.3
<b>Parenting Scales</b>		
<i>Authoritative scale</i>		
Warmth/Involvement	4.1	.6
Reasoning Induction	3.9	.6
Democratic participation	3.6	.7
Good natured/Easy going	3.9	.6
<i>Authoritarian scale</i>		
Directiveness	2.2	.6
Corporal punishment	2.0	.6
Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies	1.7	.5
Verbal hostility	2.1	.5

### Chinese parenting patterns

Chinese parenting patterns were categorized based on the mother's scores on the Authoritative scale, Authoritarian scale, and their subscales. Correlations among the mother's scores on the Authoritative and Authoritarian subscales were examined first.

#### *Correlations among the component elements of Authoritative and Authoritarian scales*

The correlation analysis found that all four subscales of the Authoritative scale (Warmth/Involvement, Reasoning/Induction, Democratic participation, and Good natured/Easy going) were positively related to each other. Subscales of the Authoritarian scale (Directiveness, Corporal punishment, Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies, and Verbal hostility) were also significantly related to each other in the positive direction. Regarding the relation between the Authoritative and the Authoritarian scales, the Authoritative total scale and the Authoritarian total scale were negatively related to each other ( $r = -.38$ ,  $p < .001$ ). All subscales of the Authoritative scale were also negatively related to subscales of Authoritarian scale at  $p < .001$  level (see Table 3).

The hypotheses regarding the relation between the mother's use of authoritarian parenting practices and her warmth/involvement toward the child, as well as the relation between the mother's use of directiveness, corporal punishment and her use of non-reasoning/punitive, verbal hostility parenting practices were not supported. The mother's scores on the Authoritarian measures were negatively related to her score on the Warmth/Involvement subscale. The mother's scores on the Directiveness and Corporal punishment subscales were positively related to her scores on the Non-reasoning/Punitive and Verbal hostility subscales.

**Table 3 Intercorrelations among the components of authoritative and authoritarian patterns.**

(N=463)

	A: Authoritative Scale				B: Authoritarian Scale			
	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4
A1								
A2	.63**							
A3	.56**	.64**						
A4	.66**	.68**	.58**					
B1	-.27**	-.10*	-.16**	-.33**				
B2	-.29**	-.17**	-.18**	-.36**	.45**			
B3	-.34**	-.26**	-.26**	-.41**	.48**	.41**		
B4	-.18**	-.17**	-.17**	-.40**	.53**	.49**	.42**	
<b>A: Authoritative subfactors</b>					<b>B: Authoritarian subfactors</b>			
A1: Warmth/Involvement					B1: Directiveness			
A2: Reasoning/Induction					B2: Corporal punishment			
A3: Democratic participation					B3: Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies			
A4: Good natured/Easy going					B4: Verbal hostility			

\*\* P<.001

\*P< .05

*Categorization of Chinese parenting pattern*

Cluster analyses were done based on the mother's scores on 8 parenting subscales. The Quick Cluster method was used with 3- and 4- cluster solutions. The results indicated that the mother's scores on the subfactors of the Authoritative and Authoritarian scales did not further differentiate Chinese parenting patterns than the scores on the global parenting measures (i.e., Authoritative total scale and Authoritarian total scale) did. For example, in a 4-cluster solution, mothers who were classified into cluster 1 had the highest scores across the four Authoritative subfactors; mothers in cluster 2 had the second highest scores across the four Authoritative subfactors; mothers in cluster 3 had the third highest scores across the four Authoritative subfactors; mothers in cluster 4 had the lowest scores across the four Authoritative subfactors. The same pattern also applied to the scores across the Authoritarian subfactors. The finding suggested that, for categorizing Chinese parenting patterns based on their scores on the parenting measures, looking into the component elements of the scales was a redundancy. Therefore, a decision was made to perform the categorization analysis based on the Authoritative and Authoritarian total scores.

First, mothers were classified as "low", "medium", and "high", based on their mean scores on the Authoritative and Authoritarian total scales. On the 5-point scale, mothers with mean scores between 1 and 2.3 were classified as "low", above 2.3 through 3.6 as "medium", above 3.6 through 5 as "high". After the classification, no mother in this sample fell into the "high Authoritarian" category. Only 2 mothers were in the "low authoritative" category; thus, they were excluded from the analysis. Therefore, four parenting patterns were identified for this sample-- "high authoritative, low authoritarian",

"high authoritative, medium authoritarian", "medium authoritative, low authoritarian", and "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian". Over 65% of the mothers fell into the "high authoritative high, low authoritarian" group; 15% of the mothers were in the "medium authoritative, low authoritarian" group; 12% were in the "high authoritative, medium authoritarian" group", and 7% were in the "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" group (see Table 4).

Table 4. Four parenting patterns for Chinese mothers

	<b>Authoritative</b>	
	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Authoritarian</b>		
<b>Low</b>	N=69 (15%)	N=295 (65%)
<b>Medium</b>	N=31 (7%)	N=55 (12%)

Mothers' scores on the subscales of the Authoritative and the Authoritarian scales were also classified as "low", "medium", and "high", based on the criteria described above. For the Authoritative subfactors, 80% of the mothers were high in Warmth/Involvement, and 20% were medium. No one in this study fell in the low group for this factor. For the Reasoning/Induction subfactor, 73% were high, 26% were medium, and only 1% were low. For Democratic participation, 55% of mothers were in the high group, and 45% of mothers were in the medium group. Seventy-one percent of the mothers were high on the Good natured/Easy going factor, 28% were medium, and 1% were low. For the Authoritarian subfactors, 57% of mothers were in the low Directiveness group, and 42% of mothers were in the medium Directiveness group. Seventy-eight percent of mothers were low in corporal punishment, 21% were medium, and 1% were high. Most mothers (92%) in this sample were low in Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies. Seventy-nine percent of mothers were low in Verbal hostility, 20% were medium, and less than 1% were high.

It was noticed that the majority of the mothers, over 70%, were high in most of the authoritative factors and low in most of the authoritarian factors. The exceptions were Democratic participation and Directiveness. Mothers varied more widely in their scores on these two subfactors. Approximately 56% of the mothers were high in Democratic participation, and/or low in Directiveness, while approximately 46% of the mothers practiced Democratic participation and Directiveness parenting at a medium level.

## Factors related to Chinese parenting

### *Relations among the predictor variables*

To answer the second research question regarding factors related to Chinese authoritative and authoritarian parenting, first, correlations were computed to examine the pattern of associations among the predictor variables (i.e., maternal characteristics, child characteristics, and contextual factors). The results are presented in Table 5. Older mothers had higher levels of family income and more children. Depressed mothers were more likely to rate their child as emotional, and had higher scores on the Parenting Daily Hassles scale. Among the three indicators of child temperament, sociability was positively related to activity. Mother's education, father's education, and family income were positively related to each other.

### *Zero-order correlations between the predictor variables and the dependent variables*

Zero-order correlations between the predictor variables and the parenting measures were examined to show the relations among them (see Table 6). It should be noted that although many of the correlations were statistically significant with this large sample, they were modest in magnitude. All maternal characteristics were significantly related to the Authoritarian total scale and subscales, except for the relation between mothers' education and verbal hostility. Mothers who were more likely to practice Authoritarian parenting were younger, less educated, more psychologically distressed, and held more traditional Chinese parenting beliefs. All maternal characteristics were significantly related to the Authoritative total scale. When looking into the subscales, older, highly educated mothers were more likely to be warm, involved, and had easy

going interactions with their children. Mothers' parenting beliefs were positively related to Authoritative parenting, except for the Warmth/Involvement subscale. Mothers' CES-D scores were negatively related to their scores on the Authoritative scales, except for democratic participation.

Child's age was related to the Authoritative total scale. Mothers with older children were less warm and involved with them. Mothers with more active children were more likely to be warm, involved, had easy going interactions with their children, and reasoned with their children. Child's age and child's activity level were not related to the Authoritarian subscales. Mothers who perceived their children as relatively emotional were more likely to practice Authoritarian parenting, and were less warm and easy going with their children. Mothers with more social children were more likely to practice Authoritative parenting. Child's sociability was also negatively related to the Authoritarian total scale. Mothers who perceived their children as less social were more likely to use Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies.

Among the contextual factors, Parenting Daily Hassles scores were significantly related to all parenting factors, with negative relations with the Authoritative factors and positive relations with the Authoritarian factors. Fathers' education was related to the Authoritative total scale. Mothers with well-educated husbands were more likely to be warm and involved with their children. Mothers with higher family income levels were more likely to practice Authoritative parenting. Family income levels were also related to the Authoritarian total scale. Mothers with higher family income levels were less likely to use non-reasoning, punitive strategies. Mothers with more children in the family were less likely to be warm and involved with their children.

*Multiple regression analyses: Predictors of parenting factors*

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine which of the predictor variables were related to the parenting factors when other predictor variables were controlled, and to assess how much of the variance in each outcome of interest was explained by sets of predictor variables. The analyses were conducted for the total Authoritative scale, the total Authoritarian scale, and separately for each of the subfactors of the parenting scales.

In the first step of the analyses, the predictor variables were entered in sets based on the domain to which they had been assigned (e.g., maternal characteristics). Four maternal characteristics were entered as predictor variables: mother's age, education, parenting beliefs, and CES-D scores. Four child characteristics, child's age, child's activity level, emotionality, and sociability were entered in the second analysis. The contextual factors, Parenting Daily Hassles scores, father's education, family income and size, were entered in the third analysis. In the final analysis, all of the predictor variables that were related to the outcomes in the preliminary analyses were entered simultaneously. The results of the regression analyses for the total Authoritative and Authoritarian scales and their subscales are presented in Tables 7, 8, and 9.

Table 5. Intercorrelations among predictor variables

(N=463)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Mother's characteristics</b>												
1. Mother's age												
2. Mother's education	.16**											
3. Parenting beliefs	.01	-.15*										
4. CES-D scores	-.08	-.08	.13*									
<b>Child's characteristics</b>												
5. Child's age	.13*	-.25**	.01	.05								
6. Activity	-.11*	-.06	.09	.00	-.04							
7. Emotionality	-.11*	-.06	.16*	.21**	-.04	.08						
8. Sociability	.07	.02	.03	-.02	-.09*	.45**	-.09*					
<b>Contextual factors</b>												
9. PDH scores	-.06	.02	.16*	.25**	-.01	.01	.43**	-.08				
10. Father's education	.15*	.61**	-.08	-.08	-.27**	-.08	-.04	-.05	.04			
11. Income	.20**	.40**	-.02	-.07	-.05	-.01	-.07	.04	-.02	.36**		
12. Number of children	.21**	-.14*	-.11*	-.06	.23**	-.08	-.04	.07	-.03	-.12*	-.02	

\*\* p&lt; .001 \*p&lt; .05

Table 6. Zero order correlations between predictors and parenting factors

	<b>Authoritative Scales</b>				<b>Authoritarian Scale</b>					
	Total	Subscales			Total	Subscales				
		1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4
<b>Mother's characteristics</b>										
Mother's age	.11*	.13*	0.04	0.1	.15*	-.18*	-.15*	-.11*	-.19**	-.10*
Mother's education	.17**	.28**	.08	.08	.10*	-.15*	-.14*	-.15*	-.16*	-.03
Parenting beliefs	.19**	.08	.28**	.14*	.11*	.31**	.31**	.27**	.23**	.14*
CES-D scores	-.17**	-.16*	-.14*	-.09	-.21**	.26**	.26**	.12*	.22**	.20**
<b>Child's characteristics</b>										
Child's age	-.10*	-.18**	-.04	-.03	-.05	.05	.09	-.01	.07	.00
Activity	.12*	.11*	.13*	.05	.10*	.05	.01	.08	-.02	.07
Emotionality	-.12*	-.10*	-.08	-.05	-.21**	.34**	.24**	.25**	.23**	.33**
Sociability	.23**	.16*	.25**	.16*	.22**	-.10*	-.04	-.07	-.11*	-.08
<b>Contextual factors</b>										
PDH scores	-.22**	-.15*	-.17**	-.15*	-.30**	.39**	.34**	.29**	.20**	.39**
Father's education	.10*	.20**	.03	.04	.07	-.05	-.07	-.08	-.04	.03
Income	.20**	.28**	.12*	.14*	.12*	-.11*	-.08	-.08	-.12*	-.06
Number of children	-.11*	-.17**	-.08	-.03	-.05	-.01	.02	.00	-.03	-.02

Authoritative subfactors

1.Warmth/Involvement

2.Reasoning/Induction

3.Democratic participation

4.Good natured/Easy going

Authoritarian subfactors

1.Directiveness

2.Corporal punishment

3.Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies

4.Verbal hostility

\*\* p&lt;.001 \*p&lt;.05

Table 7. Multiple regression analyses: Predictors of Authoritative and Authoritarian total scales

(Standardized betas are presented in the table)

	Authoritative total scale		Authoritarian total scale	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
<b>Mother's characteristics</b>				
Mother's age	.07		-.14*	-.14*
Mother's education	.18**	.12*	-.08	
Parenting beliefs	.26**	.25**	.27**	.24**
CES-D scores	-.18**	-.13*	.19**	.14*
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.13		.16	
<b>Child's characteristics</b>				
Child's age	-.12**	-.07	.08	
Activity	.02		.08	
Emotionality	-.11*	-.02	.32**	.13*
Sociability	.21**	.19**	-.10*	
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.07		.13	
<b>Contextual factors</b>				
PDH scores	-.23**	-.21**	.40**	.26**
Father's education	.04		-.05	
Family income	.18**	.12*	-.07	
Number of children	-.11*	-.09	-.00	
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.11		.17	
<b>Final model</b>				
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>		.23		.29

\*\* p< .001 \* p< .05

Table 8. Multiple regression analyses: Predictors of Authoritative subfactor  
(Standardized betas are presented in the table)

	<b>Warmth</b>		<b>Reasoning</b>		<b>Democratic</b>		<b>Good natured</b>	
	<b>/Involvement</b>		<b>/Induction</b>		<b>participation</b>		<b>/Easy going</b>	
	<b>Step</b>		<b>Step</b>		<b>Step</b>		<b>Step</b>	
<b>Mother's characteristics</b>	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Mother's age	.09		.02		.04		.11*	.06
Mother's education	.29**	.15*	.11*	.07	.10*	.08	.09	
Parenting beliefs	.16**	.14*	.33**	.31**	.19**	.19**	.16**	.18**
CES-D scores	-.14*	-.10*	-.17**	-.12*	-.09		-.20**	-.15*
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.14		.13		.05		.08	
<b>Child's characteristics</b>								
Child's age	-.20**	-.12*	-.06		-.05		-.08	
Activity	.04		.02		-.03		.01	
Emotionality	-.10*	-.04	-.06		-.04		-.19**	-.06
Sociability	.14*	.15*	.23**	.23**	.16*	.14*	.19**	.14*
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.07		.06		.03		.09	
<b>Contextual factors</b>								
PDH scores	-.17**	-.13*	-.18**	-.18**	-.17**	-.18**	-.30**	-.27**
Father's education	.12*	.03	-.01		-.00		.04	
Family income	.23*	.17**	.12*	.07	.14*	.10*	.10*	.07
Number of children	-.13*	-.10*	-.10*	-.09*	-.04		-.06	
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.14		.06		.05		.11	
<b>Final model</b>								
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.21		.21		.10		.20	

\*\* p < .001 \* p < .05

Table 9. Multiple regression analyses: Predictors of Authoritarian subfactors  
(Standardized betas are presented in the table)

	<b>Directiveness</b>		<b>Corporal punishment</b>		<b>Non-reasoning /Punitive strategies</b>		<b>Verbal hostility</b>	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
<b>Mother's characteristics</b>								
Mother's age	-.14*	-.13*	-.08		-.15*	-.14*	-.07	
Mother's education	-.07		-.09		-.11*	-.12*	.02	
Parenting beliefs	.28**	.26**	.23**	.21**	.20**	.19**	.12*	.06
CES-D scores	.19**	.16**	.07		.16**	.14*	.17**	.10*
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.16		.09		.12		.05	
<b>Child's characteristics</b>								
Child's age	.10*	.11*	.02		.09		.03	
Activity	.02		.11*	.04	.02		.10*	.06
Emotionality	.24**	.04	.24**	.13*	.22**	.11*	.31**	.16**
Sociability	-.03		-.09		-.09		-.09	
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.07		.08		.07		.12	
<b>Contextual factors</b>								
PDH scores	.34**	.24**	.29**	.20**	.21**	.11*	.40**	.28**
Father's education	-.07		-.08		-.03		.03	
Income	-.05		-.02		-.09		-.05	
Number of children	.01		.00		-.02		-.00	
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.13		.09		.06		.16	
<b>Final model</b>								
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.25		.15		.17		.20	

\*\* p < .001 \*p < .05

*Predictors of the Authoritative scale:* Mother's education, parenting beliefs, depression, child's sociability, degree of parenting daily hassles, and family income were significant predictors of the mother's Authoritative total score. Parenting beliefs, child's sociability, and degree of parenting daily hassles were significant predictors for all four authoritative subfactors. Mothers who held stronger Chinese parenting beliefs, perceived their children as more social, and perceived their daily parenting tasks as less problematic were more likely to practice authoritative parenting. The CES-D score was also a significant predictor of the Authoritative subfactors, except for the Democratic Participation subfactor. Relatively depressed mothers were less likely to be warm, and involved, use reasoning and induction discipline strategies, and have easy going interactions with their children. Mother's education and child's age were predictive of the Warmth/Involvement subfactor, but not the other subfactors. Mothers with higher levels of education, and/or with younger children, were more likely to be warm and involved with their children. Child's sociability was predictive of the Authoritative total scale and all Authoritative subscales. Mothers who perceived their children as more social were more likely to practice authoritative parenting in all aspects. Among the contextual factors, family income was a significant predictor of the Warmth/Involvement and the Democratic participation subfactors, but was not a significant predictor of the Reasoning/Induction and Good natured/Easy going subfactors. Mothers with higher family income levels were more likely to be warm and involved with their children, and to use democratic participation strategies. Mothers with more children were less likely to be warm and involved, and to reason with their children. The amount of variance in the Authoritative subfactors explained by each model is presented in Table 8.

Predictors of the Authoritarian scale: Mother's age, parenting beliefs, depression, the child's emotionality, and degree of parenting daily hassles were significant predictors of the mother's Authoritarian total score. Younger mothers were more likely to scold and criticize their children, and use non-reasoning, punitive strategies. Parenting beliefs were predictive of three of the Authoritarian subfactors, but were not significantly related to the Verbal hostility subfactor when other factors were controlled. Mothers with more traditional Chinese parenting beliefs were more likely to be demanding, to scold or criticize their children, as well as to use corporal punishment, non-reasoning, and punitive discipline strategies. The CES-D score was a significant predictor of three of the Authoritarian subscales, but was not related to the Corporal punishment subscale. Depressed mothers were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting. Moreover, mothers with lower levels of education were more likely to use non-reasoning/punitive strategies. Of the child's characteristics, child's emotionality was predictive of the total Authoritarian scale, and three of the Authoritarian subscales, but was not a significant predictor of the Directiveness subscale when other factors were controlled. Mothers who perceived their children as relatively emotional were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting. Child's age was a significant predictor of the Directiveness subscale. Mothers with older children were more likely to be demanding, and to use scolding or criticizing as discipline strategies. The Parenting Daily Hassles measure was a significant factor for all four subfactors. It was also the only contextual factor that was predictive of the Authoritarian factors when other factors were controlled. Mothers who experienced higher degrees of parenting daily hassles were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting. The  $R^2$  for each model is presented in Table 9.

The most commonly identified predictor across the eight subfactors was degree of parenting daily hassles, which was positively related to all of the Authoritarian factors, and negatively related to all of the Authoritative factors. It indicated that mothers who perceived their parenting daily tasks as big hassles were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting, and less likely to practice authoritative parenting. Second in frequency of occurrence as a predictive variable was the parenting beliefs measure, which was positively related to all of the parenting factors, except for the Verbal hostility subfactor, when other factors were controlled. This indicated that mothers with more traditional Chinese parenting beliefs were more likely to practice various aspects of authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices.

Of the child's temperament variables, child's sociability was predictive of all four authoritative subfactors, and child's emotionality was predictive of all authoritarian subfactors, except for the Directiveness subfactor. Child's activity level was not predictive of any of the parenting measures. Child's age was related to the Warmth/Involvement and Directiveness subfactors. Mothers with older children were less likely to be warm and involved, more likely to be demanding, and to use scolding or criticizing as discipline techniques. To test the "age of understanding" hypothesis as discussed in the literature review section, a posthoc analysis was done by splitting children into two groups, and comparing their scores on the Warmth/Involvement and Directiveness subscales. Because the age range of the children was from 3 to 7, age 4, 5, and 6 were tested individually as the splitting point. First, children were divided into two groups--one group with children age 4 and under, the other group with children above age 4. A T-test analysis was done to compare the two groups on the Warmth/Involvement

and Directiveness scores. No differences were found between the two groups. Second, children were divided into two groups--one group with children age 5 and under, the other group with children above age 5; their scores on the Warmth/Involvement and Directiveness scores subscales were compared. Finally, children were divided into two groups with age 6 as the splitting point. No group differences were found regardless of the age used to split the two groups.

*Differences among the four parenting patterns on the predictor variables*

In addition to examining the parenting predictors linearly, a MANOVA analysis, followed by one-way ANOVAs were done to examine predictors of the four parenting patterns identified earlier: "high authoritative, low authoritarian" group, "high authoritative, medium authoritarian" group, "medium authoritative, low authoritarian" group, and "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" group. The MANOVA analysis revealed that the four parenting groups differed significantly on several predictor variables: mother's age, mother's education, parenting beliefs, maternal depression, child's emotionality, degree of parenting daily hassles, and family income. One-way ANOVAs using Turkey-B tests were conducted to further examine the differences among the four parenting patterns. For mother's age, mothers in the "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" group were the youngest, mothers in the "high authoritative, low authoritarian" group were the oldest, and the other two groups fell in between. However, no two groups were significantly different at the .05 level. Mothers in the "high authoritative, low authoritarian" group had the highest mean educational level among the four groups, while mothers in the "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" group

were the lowest in mother's education level. These two groups were significantly different in term of mother's education. For the parenting beliefs measure, the "high authoritative, medium authoritarian" group had the highest scores on the Chinese parenting beliefs, and was significantly different from the other three groups. The "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" was the second highest, followed by the "high authoritative, low authoritarian" group, and the "medium authoritative, low authoritarian" group. The lowest parenting belief group, "medium authoritative, low authoritarian", was also significantly lower than the other three groups. For mother's depression, "high authoritative, low authoritarian" mothers had the lowest CES-D scores. The "medium authoritative, low authoritarian" group was the second lowest, followed by the "high authoritative, medium authoritarian" group, and the "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" mothers had the highest CES-D scores among the four groups. The lowest group, "high authoritative, low authoritarian" group, was significantly lower than the two highest groups.

Emotionality was the only child characteristics that differed among the four parenting groups. Among the four groups, mothers in the "high authoritative, medium authoritarian" group perceived their children as the most emotional, while mothers in the "high authoritative, low authoritarian" group perceived their children as the least emotional. These two groups' scores on child's emotionality were significantly different.

The four parenting groups differed on two of the contextual factors--parenting daily hassle scores and family income. The "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" mothers had the highest scores on the parenting daily hassles measure, the "high authoritative, medium authoritarian" mothers were the second, followed by the

"medium authoritative, low authoritarian" group, and the "high authoritative, low authoritarian." The group with the lowest scores was significantly different from the two highest groups. The "high authoritative, low authoritarian" group was highest on family income, while the "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" group was the lowest. These two groups were significantly different.

### Summary of the results

To summarize the results, the result for each research question/hypothesis are chart listed below:

#### **Research question/hypothesis**

#### **Result**

<p>Q1.1 How do the component elements of the Authoritative (Warmth/ Involvement, Reasoning/Induction, Democratic participation, and Good natured/Easy going) and the Authoritarian (Directiveness, Corporal punishment, Nonreasoning/Punitive strategies, and Verbal hostility, ) scales relate to each other?</p>	<p>All four subscales of the Authoritative scale were positively related to each other.</p> <p>All four subscales of the Authoritarian scale were positively related to each other.</p> <p>All subscales of the Authoritative scale were negatively related to subscales of the Authoritarian scale.</p>
--	--

<p>H1.1. There is no relationship between the mother's use of authoritarian parenting practices and the mother's warmth/involvement toward the child.</p>	<p>Not supported</p> <p>The mother's scores on the Authoritarian measures were negatively related to her score on the Warmth/Involvement subscale</p>
<p>H1.2. There is no relationship between the mother's use of directiveness, corporal punishment parenting practices and the mother's use of non-reasoning/punitive strategies, verbal hostility parenting practices.</p>	<p>Not supported</p> <p>The mother's scores on the Directiveness and Corporal punishment subscales were positively related to her scores on the Non-reasoning/Punitive and Verbal hostility subscales.</p>
<p>Q1.2. What parenting patterns will be identified in Chinese mothers based on their scores on the Authoritative and the Authoritarian parenting measures?</p>	<p>Four parenting patterns were identified "high authoritative, low authoritarian", "high authoritative, medium authoritarian", "medium authoritative, low authoritarian", and "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian".</p>
<p>Q2. What factors are related to the Chinese mother's authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices?</p>	<p>Maternal characteristics, child characteristics, and contextual factors were all predictive of Chinese mother's authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices.</p>

<p>H2.1. There is a negative relationship between mother's age and her use of authoritarian parenting.</p>	<p>Supported</p>
<p>H2.2. There is a positive relationship between mother's education and her use of authoritative parenting, and a negative relationship between mother's education and her use of authoritarian parenting.</p>	<p>Partially supported</p> <p>Mother's education was positively related to the mother's scores on the Authoritative total scale and the Warmth/Involvement subscale.</p> <p>Mother's education was negatively related to the Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies subscale, but not to the Authoritarian total scale and the other three Authoritarian subscales.</p>
<p>H2.3. There is a positive relationship between Chinese parenting beliefs and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting, and a positive relationship between Chinese parenting beliefs and the mother's use of warmth/involvement aspect of authoritative parenting.</p>	<p>Supported</p>

<p>H2.4. There is a negative relationship between the mother's depression and her use of authoritative parenting, and a positive relationship between the mother's depression and her use of authoritarian parenting</p>	<p>Supported</p>
<p>H2.5. There is a positive relationship between the child's sociability and the mother's use of authoritative parenting.</p>	<p>Supported</p>
<p>H2.6. There is a positive relationship between the child's emotionality and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting.</p>	<p>Supported</p>
<p>H2.7. There is a positive relationship between the child's age and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting, and a negative relationship between the child's age and the mother's warmth/involvement, as well as her good natured/easy going interaction with the child.</p>	<p>Supported</p>

<p>H2.8. There is a positive relationship between the family's SES status and the mother's use of authoritative parenting, and a negative relationship between the family's SES status and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting</p>	<p>Partially supported</p> <p>There is a positive relationship between the family's SES status and the mother's use of authoritative parenting.</p> <p>There is no relationship between the family's SES status and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting.</p>
<p>H2.9. There is a positive relationship between the number of children at home and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting.</p>	<p>Not supported</p> <p>There is no relationship between the number of children and the mother's use of authoritarian parenting.</p>
<p>H2.10. There is a negative relationship between the mother's perception of the degree of her parenting daily hassles and her use of authoritative parenting, and a positive relationship between the mother's perception of the degree of her parenting daily hassles and her use of authoritarian parenting.</p>	<p>Supported</p>

In the next Chapter, interpretations of the results are presented and the implications of this study are discussed.

## **Chapter 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

In this discussion section, results are summarized and interpreted under the following headings: (1) Chinese parenting patterns; (2) Factors related to Chinese parenting practices; (3) Examination of Belsky's model by differentiating different aspects of parenting behavior; (4) Conclusions; and (5) Directions for future research.

#### **Chinese parenting patterns**

##### *Interrelations among the subscales of the Authoritative and the Authoritarian measures*

In response to the concern regarding the appropriateness of applying the authoritative and authoritarian parenting typologies to assess Chinese parenting, the interrelations among the subscales of the Authoritative and the Authoritarian scales were computed to examine if the relations among them for Chinese would be different from what was expected based on the western parenting literature. According to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, Chinese mothers' "restrictive", "authoritarian" parenting is unlikely to be punitive, and has the component of parental concern and involvement. Therefore, one would expect, for example, that Chinese mothers' use of authoritarian parenting may not be related to their warmth and involvement toward children. Chinese mothers' use of some aspects of authoritarian parenting practices (e.g. directiveness and corporal punishment) may not be related to punitiveness and hostility. However, the

hypothesis was not supported in this study. The relations found within and between the subscales of the Authoritative and Authoritarian scales were consistent with the literature on western parents. Subscales within the Authoritative scales and the Authoritarian scales were all positively and significantly related to each others, and correlations between the Authoritative subscales and the Authoritarian subscales were all negative and significant. Mothers who practiced one aspect of authoritative parenting, were more likely to practice other aspects of authoritative parenting, and were less likely to practice all aspects of authoritarian parenting. Mothers who practiced authoritarian parenting in on aspect, were more likely to practice all other aspects of authoritarian parenting, and less likely to practice authoritative parenting in all aspects. Based on this analysis, the patterns of Chinese parenting did not seem to depart from the parenting patterns found in western cultures.

#### *Categorization of Chinese parenting patterns*

An analysis was then done to categorize Chinese parenting patterns based on their scores on the total Authoritative and Authoritarian scales. Mothers were divided into "low", "medium", and "high" groups, based on their mean scores on the Authoritative and Authoritarian total scales. Contrary to the impression from many previous cross-cultural studies which seem to present Chinese as relatively "controlling" and "authoritarian", the results of this study showed that the authoritative parenting pattern was predominant among participants. Over 65% of Chinese mothers were highly authoritative and low in authoritarian parenting. None of the mother in this sample met the criteria for high authoritarian parenting practices. There were approximately 20% of the mothers who

scored in the medium range for authoritarian parenting. However, it should be noted that the use of authoritarian parenting was accompanied by medium to high scores on the authoritative parenting measure. Moreover, there were also about 15% of the mothers who were medium on the authoritative and low on the authoritarian parenting measures. The correlational analysis in this study indicated that mothers who were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting were less likely to practice authoritative parenting. The present analysis provides a clearer picture of Chinese parenting by going beyond examining the scores linearly. It showed that the use of authoritative and authoritarian parenting, though negatively correlated, were not necessarily independent from each other. Some Chinese mothers practice authoritarian parenting at a medium level, and also practice authoritative parenting at a medium to high level.

If a "purely" authoritative or authoritarian parenting style was defined by having scores that were high on one measure and low on the other, 65% of the Chinese mothers in this sample would be identified as "purely" authoritative. No one was in the "purely" authoritarian group. Thirty-five percent of the mothers in this sample could not be simply described as "authoritative" or "authoritarian." The results support the argument that depicting Chinese as "authoritarian" based on their higher "authoritarian" scores relative to western samples, is not only misleading, but also an over simplification.

In the Literature Review section, the importance of looking into the component elements of global parenting typologies was stressed. Contrary to the researcher's expectations, the degree and weighing of the component elements of authoritative and authoritarian parenting scales did not differentiate further Chinese parenting patterns than the Authoritative and Authoritarian total scales did. However, going beyond the global

parenting typologies and examining the subfactors did provide some insights into Chinese parenting. As noted in the result section, over 70 % of the mothers were classified as "high" in most of the authoritative subfactors, and "low" in most of the authoritarian subfactors. The exceptions were the Democratic participation and the Directiveness subfactors; scores on these subscales varied more widely among the mothers. Fifty-five percent of the mothers were high on Democratic participation, and 45% were medium. Fifty-seven percent of the mothers were low on the Directiveness subfactors, and 42% were medium. In addition, most mothers in the sample (92%) hardly used non-reasoning, punitive discipline strategies. It is suggested that, although Chinese parents have higher scores on the authoritarian measures than Euro-American parents, it may be due to their use of directive discipline strategies (demanding, scolding, and criticizing), and not because they use non-reasoning, punitive strategies (e.g., punishing children with no explanation or justification). Instead of punishing children with no explanation, Chinese parents are more likely to use directive discipline strategies to let children know what was expected from them. Moreover, the results indicated that a certain percentage of Chinese mothers may not highly encourage democratic participation in the family, but again, they were very unlikely to be punitive toward their children. Baumrind (1968) has identified several subpatterns of parental socialization. There are two authoritarian subpatterns: one involves parents who are rejecting or indifferent, while the other involves parents who do not encourage independence and individuality but are not rejecting. This study suggested that Chinese's use of authoritarian parenting is very likely to be similar to the latter subpattern identified by Baumrind. However, the independence that Chinese parents do not particularly encourage is family independence; individual independence is not

necessarily discouraged (Chen & Uttal, 1988; Lin & Fu, 1990).

Quite a few studies provide support for the distinction between family interdependence and individual interdependence. Lin and Fu (1990) found that both Chinese in Taiwan and immigrant Chinese-American parents tended to have higher ratings on encouragement of independence than did Caucasian-American parents. In explaining the unexpected finding, they suggested that although the Chinese emphasize family interdependence, children are also encouraged to be independent outside the family to fulfill personal goals and to adjust to the changing demand of the society. Kagitcibasi (1989) studied socialization values in Taiwan. The author found that being obedient to parents and being independent and self-reliant both were viewed as desirable traits by parents in Taiwan. Xu and the colleague (1991) invited a panel of Chinese psychologists to select family socialization dimensions and children's characteristics which were most critical and desirable in contemporary Chinese culture. It was found that for family socialization dimensions, parameters such as democracy in making family decisions which are usually investigated in American studies, were not included. However, independence was included as one of the most desirable child characteristics. In the present study, the results showed that approximately 70% to 80% of the mothers would practice authoritative parenting (warmth/involvement, reasoning/induction, and having good natured/easy going interaction with their children) extensively, but only 55% of the mothers would practice extensive democratic participation with their children. Though mothers with more traditional Chinese parenting beliefs were more likely to practice authoritative parenting, including democratic participation, a lower percentage of mothers would practice democratic participation at a high degree compared to other

aspects of authoritative parenting. It seems that when making family rules is involved, independent thinking and individuality, which may challenge parental authority, are not particularly encouraged.

The results of this study revealed that the majority of the mothers in this sample were highly authoritative and rarely practiced authoritarian parenting. For those who practiced authoritarian parenting, the use of the authoritarian discipline was at "medium" level, and was often accompanied by the use of authoritative parenting at a medium to high level. As Chung (1994) pointed out, parental control, strict discipline, and children's obedience may not represent the same inflexibility and rigidity in Taiwan as they do in American studies. It may be that Chinese parents would typically use authoritative parenting, and would use authoritarian discipline techniques when the authoritative discipline does not work and parental authority is challenged. Stevenson, Chen, and Lee (1992) also reported that in response to young children's wrong doings, Chinese parents often try to discuss and explain misbehavior with their children. However, if they continue the negative behaviors, direct forms of discipline, such as threats of punishment or actual use of physical punishment, would be used. To these parents, the use of authoritarian parenting was well-intentioned, rather than punitive. To the children, the parents' use of authoritative parenting makes them emotionally secure, and more receptive to their parents' occasional use of authoritarian discipline. However, it should be noted that there was not extreme use of authoritarian parenting found in this sample. Rohner and Pettengil's study (1985) on Korean parenting found that even though mothers high in reported control were perceived as being high in warmth and low in neglect, strict maternal control was also seen by Korean youths as being slightly hostile and rejecting.

While it is suggested that, for Chinese, the use of authoritarian parenting is very likely to be out of concern and love, and is often accompanied by the use of authoritative parenting, it may not apply to the case in which extensive authoritarian parenting is used.

### Factors related to Chinese mothers' parenting

#### *Regression analyses results*

The second research objective was to examine factors related to Chinese mothers' parenting. Belsky's model of the determinants of parenting was supported. Maternal characteristics, child characteristics, and contextual factors all were predictive of Chinese mothers' parenting practices.

*Maternal characteristics:* Regarding *maternal age*, consistent with the hypothesis, younger mothers were more likely to be punitive, or to use scolding and criticizing as discipline techniques. The hypothesis about the relation between *maternal education* and parenting practices was partially supported. Mothers with higher levels of education were more likely to be involved with and warm toward their child, and less likely to be punitive. Mother's education was negatively related to the Authoritarian factors in the bivariate analyses; however, it was not predictive of most of the authoritarian parenting subfactors when other maternal characteristics were controlled. The fact that maternal education was significantly related to both mother's age and parenting beliefs may explain why education was not a significant predictor of parenting practices in the regression analysis. It may be Chinese parents' use of authoritarian parenting is less likely to be influenced by their education than their parenting beliefs. Another explanation could be that the average education level that people in Taiwan receive is relatively high, especially in urban areas. Thus, the influence of education on parenting practices might

be reduced if there is a restricted range on the education variable.

*Maternal depression* was predictive of both authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices. As it was hypothesized, depressed mothers were less likely to practice authoritative parenting and more likely to practice authoritarian parenting. However, mother's depression was not related to the use of democratic participation and corporal punishment. Mother's use of democratic participation and corporal punishment were more strongly related to parenting beliefs, than to mother's age, education level, or psychological distress. Chinese training concepts do support the practice of democratic participation toward children. However, as discussed above, democratic participation may not be particularly encouraged due to the emphasis on family interdependence and parental authority among the Chinese. Regarding the use of corporal punishment, Chen, Lu, Hung, and Chen (1980) surveyed Chinese teachers, students, and parents regarding corporal punishment in Taiwan. They found that most of the teachers, students, and parents (over 92%) think that as long as no injury is inflicted, appropriate physical punishment (e.g., palm swatting or standing and facing the wall for a long period of time) is permissible or even necessary to correct students' misbehavior. It showed that traditional Chinese parenting does support the use of corporal punishment in child training to a certain degree.

*Chinese parenting beliefs* appeared to be very important predictors of both authoritative and authoritarian parenting. As expected, mothers with more traditional Chinese parenting beliefs were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting (though it lost its significance in predicting Verbal hostility when other factors were controlled). The results also support the hypothesis that mothers with more traditional Chinese

parenting beliefs were more likely to be warm and involved with their children. However, interestingly, Chinese parenting beliefs were also predictive of the other three authoritative subfactors: Reasoning/Induction, Democratic participation, and Good natured/Easy going. The seemingly contradictory finding--Chinese parenting beliefs are positively related to both authoritative and authoritarian parenting--is of particular interest. Among the Chinese, the use of authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices are both imbedded in the concept of training. "Training" children is viewed as a major parental task, and is primarily motivated by the parents' intense concern for their children. This may explain the reason why the use of the two parenting patterns are not viewed as inconsistent for the parents who hold traditional Chinese parenting beliefs. These parents would use both inductive and power-assertive disciplinary techniques to "train", or "guan" their children. Xu et al.'s findings (1991) also supported this notion. In their study of family socialization and kindergarten children's personality characteristics in China, parental control was significantly correlated with the use of reasoning, inductive strategies. It seems that Chinese parents set rules and restrictions on the children, but they do "reason" with their children, instead of saying "do it because I say so." Mild verbal or physical punishment may be used when the child continues to disobey parents. The fact that authoritarian parenting is influenced by the concept of training may also explain the relation between Chinese parenting and child outcomes. Baumrind (1993) claimed the importance of parents' belief in their own effectiveness on child-rearing--causal attributions that assign primary responsibility for child outcomes to genetic factors, the effect of which parents believe they cannot change, undermine parents' beliefs in their own effectiveness, whereas parents' attribution of responsibility for their children's

outcomes to parents' own actions is associated with more effective caregiving, which in turn is associated with more positive child outcomes. The Chinese training beliefs may contribute to parents' more effective use of both authoritative and authoritarian parenting, and in turn result in more positive outcomes in Chinese children.

Regarding the question concerning the relation between mothers' Chinese child-rearing beliefs and education, although in general, mothers with more education were less likely to hold traditional Chinese child-rearing beliefs, even the mothers with the highest education level (graduate and above) still agree with most of the parenting beliefs items examined in this study. The results suggested that, although a departure from the traditional Chinese child-rearing beliefs was shown among the higher educated Chinese mothers, traditional Chinese child-rearing beliefs were still held among most contemporary Chinese mothers.

*Child characteristics:* Regarding child characteristics, *child's age* was negatively related to Warmth/Involvement, and positively related to Directiveness. The results are consistent with the hypothesis that Chinese parents tend to be highly lenient, warm and affectionate toward infants and young children, but impose more strict discipline on older children. However, post hoc analyses suggested that the change seems to be gradual, instead of being in response to an agreed upon "age of understanding."

In terms of *child temperament*, child's sociability was predictive of all four authoritative subfactors, and child's emotionality was related to all four authoritarian subfactors (though losing its significance in predicting Directiveness when other predictors were controlled). Mothers who perceived their children as more social were more likely to practice authoritative parenting. Mothers with emotional children were

more likely to practice authoritarian parenting. The results support the hypothesis based on Buss and Plomin's study (1975). According to Buss and Plomin, it is usually the troublesome child who forces the parent to take special pains, and the trouble typically concerns the child's excessive impulsivity or emotionality. The highly social child is more responsive and offers more feedback from the mother's use of authoritative practices, while a highly emotional child is less likely to develop self-control, which may contribute to the parents' use of power assertive discipline strategies.

No specific hypothesis regarding the relation between child activity and parenting practices was made. The result showed that the child's activity level was not predictive of the mother's parenting practices. Child's activity was positively related to the mother's authoritative parenting in the zero-order correlation analysis. However, because the child's activity level was related to the child's sociability ( $r=.45, p<.001$ ), after controlling for other child characteristics in the regression analysis, child's activity was not related to the mother's authoritative parenting. Child's activity was not related to the Authoritarian factors either. It should be noted that the activity level assessed by the EAS Temperament survey did not appear to assess hyperactivity. It may be that children who have a high score on activity level are relatively active, but the level is not so high as to create problems for parents. In general, compared to the other child temperament indicators-- sociability and emotionality--child activity does not seem to be an important predictor of the parenting practices assessed in this study.

*Contextual factors:* Among the contextual factors, the degree of *parenting daily hassles* was predictive of all eight parenting outcomes. As expected, mothers experiencing intensive parenting daily hassles were less likely to practice authoritative

parenting, and were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting. Parenting daily hassles appear to be an important indicator of contextual stress. They not only contribute to the mother's psychological distress, but also are meaningful independent predictors of maternal parenting practices. As Crnic and Greenberg (1990) mentioned, it is important to emphasize that the parenting daily hassles examined in this study represent typical or normal events. In this study, when mothers' perceptions of children's temperament were controlled, the parenting hassles measure continued to be a significant predictor of parenting practices. This suggests that hassles involving challenging behavior cannot be considered simply another measure of child's difficult behavior. Mother's cognitive appraisal of the significance of the events as a stressor contributes independently to the prediction of parenting behavior (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990).

— Of the *family's SES*, family income level was predictive of the Warmth/Involvement and Democratic Participation subscales. However, another indicator of the family's SES, father's education, was not predictive of the mother's authoritative parenting. Contrary to expectations, neither indicator of the family's SES, family's income or father's education, was related to the mother's authoritarian parenting. Though parents' occupations were not assessed in this study, the use of authoritarian parenting was not predicted by family income, father's education, or mother's education (with the exception of the Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies subfactor). For Chinese mothers, the family's SES did not appear to be a significant predictor of their use of the authoritarian parenting. However, it is recognized that the variability in SES in this sample is not large.

*Number of children* was predictive of the Warmth/Involvement and

Reasoning/Induction subfactors. However, contrary to expectations, it was not related to the mother's use of authoritarian parenting. This may be due to the fact that the average number of children in this sample is small, which is 2.02. The range is from 1 to 4, and only 2 percent of the mothers had 4 children. The stress caused by having many children therefore may not be detected in this sample. However, having more children at home does seem to reduce the time and energy for being involved, and reasoning with each child.

#### *Cross cultural implications*

One reason for examining the determinants of Chinese parenting was to determine if factors related to parenting practices for Chinese parents would be similar to those for parents in western societies. This study suggests that there are certain factors that predict parenting behavior across cultures--specifically, mother's psychological distress, child temperament, and parenting daily hassles. However, this study also suggests that "culturally specific" parenting beliefs plays an important role in influencing parenting behavior. Studying Chinese parenting practices without taking their cultural roots into consideration could lead to a misinterpretation of certain parenting behaviors, and thus fail to understand their influences on child outcomes. Besides the influence of Chinese parenting beliefs on Chinese mothers' parenting, the relation between SES and Chinese mothers' use of authoritarian parenting was not consistent with what would be expected based on western literature. The family's SES, assessed by the father's education level and family income, was not predictive of the mother's authoritarian parenting. Among the Chinese, the use of authoritarian parenting was more likely to be related to parenting

beliefs, along with other factors, such as parenting daily hassles, the child's emotionality and the mother's psychological distress.

*MANOVA and One-way ANOVA results*

MANOVA analyses followed by one-way ANOVAs were done to examine predictors of the four parenting patterns identified in this study: "high authoritative, low authoritarian" group, "high authoritative, medium authoritarian" group, "medium authoritative, low authoritarian" group, and "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" group. Mother's age, mother's education, parenting beliefs, maternal depression, child emotionality, degree of parenting daily hassles, and family income were significant predictors of group status when the mother's scores on the Authoritative and Authoritarian scales were considered simultaneously. In general, mothers in the "high authoritative, low authoritarian" group were the most educated, least likely to be depressed or perceived their parenting tasks as big hassles, and had the highest average family income level among the four groups, while mothers in the "medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" group were least educated, most likely to be depressed and perceived their parenting tasks as big hassles, and had the lowest average family income level. The "high authoritative, medium authoritarian" group and the "medium authoritative, low authoritarian" group fell in between these two groups.

It should be noted that, among those mothers who practiced authoritarian parenting at a medium level, approximately 37% of them had medium scores on the authoritative measure ("medium authoritative, medium authoritarian" group), and the majority of them scored high on the authoritative measure ("high authoritative, medium

authoritarian" group). Comparing these mothers who practiced authoritarian parenting to some degree, with those who practiced "purely" authoritative parenting ("high authoritative, low authoritarian" group), showed that "purely" authoritative mothers and mothers who practiced both authoritarian and authoritative parenting at *medium* levels differed on several factors, as indicated above. Mothers who practice authoritarian parenting, but also practice authoritative parenting at a *high* level, did not differ significantly from the "purely" authoritative mothers on maternal education and family income level. They were, however, more likely to be depressed and perceived the parenting daily tasks as bigger hassles than the "purely" authoritative mothers. Moreover, Chinese parenting beliefs also differentiated between the two groups. In fact, mothers who practiced authoritarian parenting at medium level, while also practicing authoritative parenting at high level, held the strongest Chinese parenting beliefs among the four groups. This finding again supports the results from the regression analysis. Chinese parenting beliefs contribute to the use of both authoritative and authoritarian parenting. It is suggested that special attention should be paid to the "high authoritative, medium authoritarian" mothers. These mothers did not differ from the "purely" authoritative mothers on mother's age, education, child's age and temperament, as well as family's SES and size. Future studies should be done to compare children's outcomes for these two groups. It is proposed that the use of authoritative parenting at a high level would offset any negative effects of authoritarian parenting on child outcomes.

Regarding child characteristics, when authoritative and authoritarian measures were considered together, only child emotionality differed among the four parenting groups. Mothers in the "high authoritative, medium authoritarian" group rated their

children significantly higher on the "emotionality" measure than mothers in the "high authoritative, low authoritarian" group. It appeared that child's emotionality, which may make parenting more difficult, influenced parents' use of authoritarian parenting.

However, it may not necessarily influence parents' use of authoritative parenting.

#### Examination of Belsky's model by differentiating different aspects of parenting behavior

In general, Belsky's model of the determinants of parenting was supported.

Maternal characteristics, child characteristics, and contextual factors all contributed to predicting individual differences in Chinese mothers' parenting. This study supported Belsky's assertion that individual parenting differences are multiply determined, and no one variable may be said to be the one "driving force" behind parenting practices. Unlike most previous studies which examined Belsky's model by treating "parenting" as a general term, this study not only examined determinants of authoritative and authoritarian parenting individually, but also examined factors related to each of their subfactors. It was found that different factors predicted authoritative versus authoritarian parenting. Different sets of factors were also found to be predictive of different components of authoritative and authoritarian parenting.

#### *Determinants of the Authoritative v.s. Authoritarian total scales*

The Authoritative and Authoritarian parenting total scales shared several determinants--parenting beliefs, mother's depression, and mother's perception of parenting daily hassles. Mothers who were depressed and perceived their parenting tasks as big hassles were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting, and less likely to practice authoritative parenting. Mothers who held more traditional Chinese parenting

beliefs were more likely to practice both authoritative and authoritarian parenting. In terms of maternal characteristics other than parenting beliefs and depression, mother's age was predictive of the Authoritarian total scale, but not the Authoritative total scale; mother's education was predictive of the Authoritative total scale, but not the Authoritarian scale. Younger mothers were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting, but were not necessarily less likely to practice authoritative parenting than older mothers. Less educated mothers were less likely to practice authoritative parenting, but were not more likely to practice authoritarian parenting than higher educated mothers. In terms of the relation between child characteristics and parenting measures, authoritative and authoritarian parenting were predicted by different aspects of child temperament. Child's sociability was predictive of the mother's authoritative parenting, while child's emotionality was predictive of the mother's authoritarian parenting. Mothers who perceived their children as more social were more likely to practice authoritative parenting, while mothers who perceived their children as relatively emotional were more likely to practice authoritarian parenting. Moreover, family income was predictive of the Authoritative total scale, but not the Authoritarian total scale. Mothers with higher family incomes were more likely to practice authoritative parenting.

#### *Determinants of the Authoritative subscales*

When looking into the component elements of the Authoritative scale, parenting beliefs, child's sociability, and the degree of parenting daily hassles were predictive of all four subscales of the Authoritative scale. As discussed above, mother's education was predictive of the Authoritative total scale. When looking into the subscales, mother's

education was predictive of the Warmth/Involvement scale, but not the other Authoritative subscales. It appeared that the influence of maternal education on authoritative parenting was mainly on the warmth/involvement aspect. In general, depressed mothers were less likely to practice authoritative parenting. However, it may not apply to their use of democratic participation. According to the regression results, the use of democratic participation was related to Chinese parenting beliefs, the child's sociability, and the degree of perceived parenting daily hassles.

Child's age was predictive of the Warmth/Involvement subscale, but not the other three Authoritative subscales. When children get older, mothers may be less warm and involved, but other aspects of authoritative parenting may not be affected. In terms of the contextual factors, mothers with higher family incomes were more likely to be warm and involved with their children, and more likely to use democratic participation strategies. Mothers with more children were less likely to be warm, involved with, and reason with their children.

#### *Determinants of the Authoritarian subscales*

Regarding the determinants of the Authoritarian subscales, younger mothers are more likely to use demanding, scolding, criticizing, or non-reasoning/punitive strategies; however, they do not use more corporal punishment or show more hostility verbally toward their children. Though mother's education, in general, did not affect her use of authoritarian parenting, mothers with lower levels of education were more likely to use non-reasoning/punitive discipline strategies toward their children.

The mother's depression level was positively related to her scores on most of the

authoritarian subscales, but not to her use of corporal punishment. Depressed mothers were more likely to scold, criticize, yell at their children, or use non-reasoning/punitive strategies. However, punishing children physically may be mainly a matter of parental beliefs, and triggered by other factors, such as stress from parenting daily hassles or children being temperamentally difficult. Parenting beliefs were predictive of the use of directiveness, corporal punishment, non-reasoning, punitive strategies, but not verbal hostility, when other factors were controlled. One possible explanation is that Chinese mothers may use scolding or criticizing in child training, but getting into arguments or yelling and shouting at children was not supported by the Chinese training concepts.

Child's emotionality was predictive of the mother's use of corporal punishment, non-reasoning, punitive strategies, verbal hostility, but not to her use of directiveness when other factors were controlled. Among the child's characteristics, the mother's use of directiveness was more likely to be predicted by the child's age. Mothers were more likely to demand, scold, or criticize their children when their children were older. This may be due to the higher expectations that mothers place on their older children.

In sum, the analyses support the need of differentiating the determinants of authoritative and authoritarian parenting. Several factors are shared as predictors of both authoritative and authoritarian parenting. However, there are some factors which appear to be specific for predicting certain parenting patterns. It is also strongly suggested that the determinants of parenting would be better understood by looking into the component elements of the global parenting typologies.

## Conclusion

This study found that authoritative parenting is a predominant parenting style among contemporary Chinese mothers in Taiwan. It is suggested that Chinese parents who practice authoritarian parenting when necessary could be very warm and caring. In this study, mothers who used verbal or physical punishment at moderate levels were likely to demonstrate characteristics of "authoritative" parenting at the same time. The use of authoritative and authoritarian parenting are both embedded in the Chinese training concepts. Parents who hold traditional Chinese parenting beliefs would use both authoritative and authoritarian parenting in different situations and at different times. Both inductive and power-assertive disciplinary techniques would be used as a mean of "training" their children. The use of authoritative parenting may play an important role in children by facilitating compliance and the acceptance of parental control.

Belsky's model of the determinants of parenting was supported in this sample of Chinese mothers in Taiwan. Maternal characteristics, child characteristics, and contextual factors all explained some of the variance in Chinese parenting. In general, factors related to Chinese parenting were similar to those found for western parents. "Purely" authoritative mothers were the most educated, least likely to be depressed or to perceive their parenting tasks as big hassles, and had the highest family income levels among the four parenting groups identified in this study. It was found that different factors predicted authoritative and authoritarian parenting. Different sets of factors were also found to be predictive of different components of authoritative and authoritarian parenting. Moreover, this study suggests that there are certain factors that predict parenting behavior across cultures. However, "culturally specific" parenting beliefs also

play an important role in influencing parenting behavior.

In general, instead of raising questions about using Baumrind's typologies (i.e. authoritative and authoritarian) to assess Chinese parenting, this study suggests that Chinese parents' scores on the authoritative and the authoritarian measures should be considered simultaneously. The degree of their use of certain parenting practices should be taken into account, too. Having relatively higher score on the authoritarian measure than Euro-American parents does not mean that Chinese parents use authoritarian parenting extensively, or that they do not practice authoritative parenting at all. The effect of authoritarian parenting on children's development is likely to be different if parents also use authoritative methods to guide their children.

#### Directions for future research

This study does not intend to generalize the results to parents in rural areas of Taiwan, or Chinese parents outside of Taiwan. Future investigations should address some of this study's limitations by including both urban and rural Chinese mothers with a wider SES range, as these limitations of the sample could well have affected the findings of the current investigation. This study could also contribute to future studies which try to explain the paradox involving Chinese parenting and the academic success of Chinese children. Though Chinese parents have been found to score higher on "authoritarian" measures than western parents, future studies should asked the following questions. First, how high is the score? Do most Chinese parents' practice authoritarian parenting extensively, and are their scores in the "medium" range? Second, to what degree is the Chinese parents' use of authoritarian parenting accompanied by medium to high levels of authoritative parenting? There is a high percentage of parents who do not simply practice

"purely" authoritative or "purely" authoritarian" parenting. Thus, "authoritarian" parenting by itself is not likely to explain the relation between parenting and child outcomes. Moreover, in comparisons of Chinese and American parenting, the component elements of the authoritative and authoritarian parenting measures should be examined to detect the specific differences in parenting between the two cultures. Are Chinese parents' higher scores mainly due to the use of directive discipline techniques (e.g. demanding, scolding, and criticizing), or other "punitive" discipline strategies? This study suggested that Chinese parents' higher scores on the authoritarian measure may be largely due to the use of "directiveness" techniques (e.g. demanding, scolding, and criticizing), and less likely due to the use of punitive discipline strategies.

The present study should be viewed as a first step toward greater understanding of the parenting practices within the Chinese population. It should be noted that in this study, there is no intention of making judgement about what is a "good" parenting style for Chinese parents. Further studies should be done examining the relations between different parenting styles and child outcomes. For future studies related to explaining Chinese children's outcome and parenting, it is suggested that the joint influences of Chinese parents' use of authoritative and authoritarian parenting should be considered.

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## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A**  
**Measures Used In The Study**

**Parenting Practices Questionnaire (PPO)**

**Directions:**

The following pages contain a list of behaviors that parents may exhibit when interacting with their children. The questions are designed to measure how often you exhibit certain behaviors towards your child.

**I exhibit this behavior:**

1 = Never

2 = Once in a while

3 = About half of the time

4 = Very often

5 = Always

- \_\_\_ 1. I encourage my child to talk about the child's troubles.
- \_\_\_ 2. I guide my child by punishment more than by reason.
- \_\_\_ 3. I know the names of my child's friends.
- \_\_\_ 4. I find it difficult to discipline my child.
- \_\_\_ 5. I give praise when my child is good.
- \_\_\_ 6. I spank when my child is disobedient.
- \_\_\_ 7. I show sympathy when my child is hurt or frustrated.
- \_\_\_ 8. I punish by taking privileges away from our child with little if any explanations.
- \_\_\_ 9. I give comfort and understanding when my child is upset.
- \_\_\_ 10. I yell or shout when my child misbehaves.
- \_\_\_ 11. I am easy going and relaxed with my child.
- \_\_\_ 12. I tell child my expectations regarding behavior before the child engages in an

activity.

- \_\_\_ 13. I scold and criticize to make my child improve.
- \_\_\_ 14. I show patience with child.
- \_\_\_ 15. I grab my child when being disobedient.
- \_\_\_ 16. I am responsive to my child's feelings or needs.
- \_\_\_ 17. I allow my child to give input into family rules.
- \_\_\_ 18. I argue with my child.
- \_\_\_ 19. I appear confident about parenting abilities.
- \_\_\_ 20. I give my child reasons why rules should be obeyed.
- \_\_\_ 21. I appear to be more concerned with own feelings than with my child's feelings.
- \_\_\_ 22. I tell my child that we appreciate what the child tries or accomplishes.
- \_\_\_ 23. I punish by putting my child off somewhere alone with little if any explanations.
- \_\_\_ 24. I help my child to understand the impact of behavior by encouraging our child to talk about the consequences of own actions.
- \_\_\_ 25. I am afraid that disciplining my child for misbehavior will cause the child to not like me.
- \_\_\_ 26. I take my child's desires into account before asking the child to do something.
- \_\_\_ 27. I explode in anger towards my child.
- \_\_\_ 28. I am aware of problems or concerns about my child in school.
- \_\_\_ 29. I threaten my child with punishment more often than actually giving it.
- \_\_\_ 30. I express affection by hugging, kissing, and holding my child.
- \_\_\_ 31. I use physical punishment as a way of disciplining my child.
- \_\_\_ 32. I tell my child what to do.
- \_\_\_ 33. I talk it over and reason with my child when the child misbehaves.
- \_\_\_ 34. I slap my child when the child misbehaves.
- \_\_\_ 35. I disagree with my child.
- \_\_\_ 36. When two children are fighting, I discipline my child first and ask questions later.
- \_\_\_ 37. I encourage my child to freely express (himself)(herself) even when disagreeing with parents.
- \_\_\_ 38. I scold or criticize when my child's behavior doesn't meet my expectations.

- \_\_\_ 39. I show respect for my child's opinions by encouraging my child to express them.
- \_\_\_ 40. I explain to our child how we feel about the child's good and bad behavior.
- \_\_\_ 41. I use threats as punishment with little or no justification.
- \_\_\_ 42. I take into account my child's preferences in making plans for the family.
- \_\_\_ 43. When my child asks why (he)(she) has to conform, I state: because I said so, or I am your parent and I want you to.
- \_\_\_ 44. I explain the consequences of the child's misbehavior.
- \_\_\_ 45. I demand that my child does things.
- \_\_\_ 46. I channel my child's misbehavior into a more acceptable activity.
- \_\_\_ 47. I emphasize the reasons for rules.

Authoritative pattern: subfactor 1 (warmth/involvement): items 1, 5, 7, 9, 16, 22, 30.

subfactor 2 (reasoning/induction): items 12, 20, 24, 33, 40, 44, 47.

subfactor 3 (democratic participation): items 17, 26, 37, 42.

subfactor 4 (good natured/easy going): items 11, 14, 39, 46.

Authoritarian pattern: subfactor 1 (directiveness): items 13, 32, 38, 45.

subfactor 2 (corporal punishment): items 6, 15, 31, 34

subfactor 3 (non-reasoning/punitive strategies): items 8, 21, 23, 36, 41, 43.

subfactor 4 (verbal hostility): items 10, 18, 27, 35.

**Parenting Daily Hassles (PDH)**

How hassled you felt by the following events? Please rate each of the items on a scale of 1 (no hassle) to 5 (big hassle).

**no hassle****big hassle**

1

2

3

4

5

- 1. Continually cleaning up kid's messes
- 2. Kid's schedules interfere with parent/household needs
- 3. Sibling arguments require referee.
- 4. Kids are constantly under foot or in the way
- 5. Having to change plans to meet kids' needs
- 6. Kids get dirty and need to have clothes changed
- 7. Difficulties getting kids ready for outings on time
- 8. Having to run extra errands just for kids
- 9. Being nagged, whined at, or complained to
- 10. Kids don't listen, won't do what they are asked without being nagged
- 11. Kids demand to be entertained or played with
- 12. Kids resist or struggle over bedtimes
- 13. Need to keep a constant eye on what kids are doing
- 14. Kids interrupt adult conversation or interaction
- 15. Kids are difficult to manage in public places

The "Training" Questionnaire

Parents have diverse views about appropriate child-rearing practices. Please rate each of the items on the scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

strongly

strongly

disagree

agree

1

2

3

4

5

- \_\_\_ 1. Parents must begin training child as soon as ready.
- \_\_\_ 2. Mothers must train child to work very hard and be disciplined.
- \_\_\_ 3. Mothers teach child by pointing out good behavior in others.
- \_\_\_ 4. When child continues to disobey you, he/she deserves a spanking.
- \_\_\_ 5. Mothers primarily express love by helping child succeed, esp, in school.
- \_\_\_ 6. Child should be in the constant care of their mothers or family.
- \_\_\_ 7. Child should be allowed to sleep in mother's bed.

EAS Temperament Survey For Children: Parental Ratings

Rate each of the items for your child on a scale of 1 (not characteristic or typical of your child) to 5 (very characteristic or typical of your child).

not characteristic or  
typical of my child

very characteristic or  
typical of my child

1

2

3

4

5

- \_\_\_ 1. Child tends to be shy. (Shyness)
- \_\_\_ 2. Child cries easily. (Emotionality)
- \_\_\_ 3. Child likes to be with people. (Sociability)
- \_\_\_ 4. Child is always on the go. (Activity)
- \_\_\_ 5. Child prefers playing with others rather than alone. (Sociability)
- \_\_\_ 6. Child tends to be somewhat emotional. (Emotionality)
- \_\_\_ 7. When child moves about, he usually moves slowly. (reversed, Activity)
- \_\_\_ 8. Child makes friends easily. (reversed, Shyness)
- \_\_\_ 9. Child is off and running as soon as he wakes up in the morning. (Activity)
- \_\_\_ 10. Child finds people more stimulating than anything else. (Sociability)
- \_\_\_ 11. Child often fusses and cries. (Emotionality)
- \_\_\_ 12. Child is very sociable. (reversed, Shyness)
- \_\_\_ 13. Child is very energetic. (Activity)
- \_\_\_ 14. Child takes a long time to warm up to strangers. (Shyness)
- \_\_\_ 15. Child gets upset easily. (Emotionality)
- \_\_\_ 16. Child is something of a loner. (reversed, Sociability)
- \_\_\_ 17. Child prefers quiet, inactive games to more active ones. (reversed, Activity)
- \_\_\_ 18. When alone, child feels isolated. (Sociability)
- \_\_\_ 19. Child reacts intensely when upset. (Emotionality)
- \_\_\_ 20. Child is very friendly with strangers. (reversed, Shyness)

**CES-D Scale**

Instructions for questions: Below is a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved.

Please rate how often you have felt this way during the past week.

0 = Rarely or none of the time (Less than 1 day)

1 = Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)

2 = Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)

3 = Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

During the past week:

- 1. I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.
- 2. I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.
- 3. I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with help from my family or friends.
- 4. I felt that I was just as good as other people. (reversed)
- 5. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.
- 6. I felt depressed.
- 7. I felt that everything I did was an effort.
- 8. I felt hopeful about the future. (reversed)
- 9. I thought my life had been a failure.
- 10. I felt fearful.
- 11. My sleep was restless.
- 12. I was happy. (reversed)
- 13. I talked less than usual.
- 14. I felt lonely.
- 15. People were unfriendly.
- 16. I enjoyed life. (reversed)
- 17. I had crying spells.
- 18. I felt sad.
- 19. I felt that people dislike me.
- 20. I could not get "going."

**Demographic information***Your age:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Marital Status:*

\_\_\_Married    \_\_\_ Single    \_\_\_Divorced

*The family's total monthly income:*

\_\_\_ 30,000 NT and below                      \_\_\_ above 13, 000 NT

\_\_\_ 30,000 NT to 50,000 NT

\_\_\_ 50,000 NT to 70,000 NT

\_\_\_ 70,000 NT to 90,000 NT

\_\_\_ 90,000 NT to 11,000 NT

\_\_\_ 11,000 NT to 13,000 NT

\* NT: New Taiwan Dollars

\* They are coded as, from 1=30,000NT and below, to 7=above 13,000NT for analyses

*Education:*

You    Your husband/partner

\_\_\_    \_\_\_ illiterate

\_\_\_    \_\_\_ primary school

\_\_\_    \_\_\_ high school

\_\_\_    \_\_\_ college graduate

\_\_\_    \_\_\_ graduate school and above

\* Number of years is not used as a measure of education level in Taiwan

\* They are coded as followed for analyses:

illiterate: 1; primary school: 2; high school: 3; college graduate: 4; graduate school and  
abov:5

*Occupation:*

You \_\_\_\_\_

Your husband/partner \_\_\_\_\_

Consent letter

Dear Parent:

I graduated from the Department of Sociology at National Taiwan University, and now I am a doctoral student at Michigan State University. I am working on my dissertation designed to study mothers' parenting behaviors in Taiwan. The purpose of this research is understand the different approaches that mothers use while parenting preschool children. Attached is a questionnaire which you are being asked to complete, if you choose to participate in this research project. The questionnaire asks about your parenting practices, about your beliefs about how children should be raised, and about your child's characteristics. There are also questions about you and your family.

Anonymity of the information is guaranteed. There is no personal risk involved with this research. It is hoped that you will take time to complete these materials. It should take no more than half an hour of your time. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire. In the event that you choose not to participate, it would be appreciated if you would still return the materials. Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation. Without the help of people like yourself, research on parenting would not be possible.

If you have any questions that may arise in connection with your participation in this research study, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Fu-mei Chen

Ph.D. student at Michigan State University

Phone # in Taipei: 633-4337

**Appendix B****Comparison of mean scores of the Authoritative scales and Authoritarian scales on Chinese sample in this study and American sample in Robinson et al.'s study**

	Chinese sample (N=463)		American sample (N=245)	
	Mean*	SD	Mean	SD
<b>Authoritative total score</b>	4.0	.5	4.0	.4
Warmth/Involvement	4.1	.6	4.3	.5
Reasoning/Induction	3.9	.6	3.9	.6
Democratic participation	3.6	.7	3.4	.6
Good natured/Easy going	3.9	.6	4.0	.4
<b>Authoritarian total score</b>	2.0	.4	2.1	.4
Directiveness	2.2	.6	2.3	.7
Corporal punishment	2.0	.6	2.0	.6
Non-reasoning/Punitive strategies	1.7	.5	1.8	.6
Verbal hostility	2.1	.5	2.3	.5

\* The mean scores are the average item scores

## Appendix C: Copy of the UCRIHS Approval Letter

**MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

December 8, 1997

TO: Tom Luster  
101 Morrill Hall

RE: IRB#: 87-815  
TITLE: AUTHORITATIVE AND AUTHORITARIAN PARENTING IN  
CHINESE MOTHERS WITH PRESCHOOL CHILDREN  
REVISION REQUESTED: N/A  
CATEGORY: 1-C  
APPROVAL DATE: 12/04/97

The University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects' (UCRIHS) review of this project is complete. I am pleased to advise that the rights and welfare of the human subjects appear to be adequately protected and methods to obtain informed consent are appropriate. Therefore, the UCRIHS approved this project and any revisions listed above.

IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO INCLUDE A SPECIFIC STATEMENT IN THE INFORMATION LETTER TELLING SUBJECTS NOT TO WRITE THEIR NAMES ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

**RENEWAL:** UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year, beginning with the approval date shown above. Investigators planning to continue a project beyond one year must use the green renewal form (enclosed with the original approval letter or when a project is renewed) to seek updated certification. There is a maximum of four such expedited renewals possible. Investigators wishing to continue a project beyond that time need to submit it again for complete review.

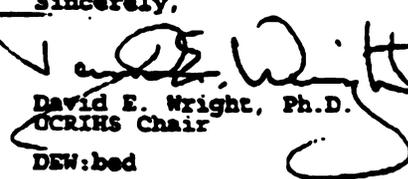
**REVISIONS:** UCRIHS must review any changes in procedures involving human subjects, prior to initiation of the change. If this is done at the time of renewal, please use the green renewal form. To revise an approved protocol at any other time during the year, send your written request to the UCRIHS Chair, requesting revised approval and referencing the project's IRB # and title. Include in your request a description of the change and any revised instruments, consent forms or advertisements that are applicable.

**PROBLEMS/  
CHANGES:**

Should either of the following arise during the course of the work, investigators must notify UCRIHS promptly: (1) problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects or (2) changes in the research environment or new information indicating greater risk to the human subjects than existed when the protocol was previously reviewed and approved.

If we can be of any future help, please do not hesitate to contact us at (517) 355-2180 or FAX (517) 432-1171.

Sincerely,

  
David E. Wright, Ph.D.  
UCRIHS Chair

DEW:bed

cc: Fu Mei Chen



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