

Parenting styles across two cultures essay sample

[Family](#), [Parenting](#)



Introduction

There are cultural and ethnic variations that produce value systems which essentially direct parents' manner and styles of parenting. Within authoritarian parenting styles, Chinese and European American families are premised from different sets of beliefs. With this specific root of family training, variations of effects are also seen.

This paper attempts to portray in précis the distinctiveness between Chinese American and European American styles, underscoring their values and belief systems and the effects of these to the children.

Discussion

~ Values or Belief systems

In a highly individualistic society such as America, Asian American families living even in the U. S. promote a collectivistic pattern on the family. Termed as “ control and restrictiveness” (Chao, 1994), the concepts, according to the researcher hardly captures its essence. For the Chinese families, Confucian tenets (e. g., *chiao shun & guan*) underlie training that is seen as strictness whereas the Protestant Christian values define strictness in the Biblical context (Chao, 1994). In addition, because of these varying roots, the goals for the style or kind of training are starkly different.

For Chinese American parents, the “ training” that seems restrictive or controlling, emanate from the idea that children are not being controlled or dominated, and this is not the goal for such preparation, but rather to achieve harmonious relations. On the other hand, their European American

counterparts introduce the kind of training on their children. *Familism* refers to the emphasis by Asian American families to pursue the interests of family members and one's obligations toward the collective unit more than the individual's. Asian American families take time to inculcate to their children, the values and beliefs that their ancestors had ingrained to the former generations. Summoning members to do things for the family, instilling respect, devotion and loyalty as kinship values, where priorities are the needs of the family. The way families are knot together as a social unit is uniquely cultural in nature (Darling & Sternberg, 1993).

Moreover, European Americans in contrast, differ in the styles of parenting towards their children. In general, they promote more individualistic and independent thinking and nurturing styles that are vastly different from their Asian American counterparts. According to studies, European Americans emphasized self-esteem, “ stressing the personal well-being in the individual” (Kim & Wong, 2002). In the light of these differing and similar cultures, the families take on similar styles in parenting. Since the families coming from the Asian ethnicity origin are usually paternalistic or patriarchal in nature, the assumption is that parental authority is of pivotal and primary importance. Parents often demand subservience and/or sacrifice of oneself to the advantage of the whole. Considering this common scenario in most households, despite modernity, families from the Asian American group have their own specific sub-culture where they run their families according to their peculiarities and particular beliefs.

Asian Americans, with this paternalistic and deference to the ancestor approach or orientation, studies imply that they point to an authoritarian or authoritative leaning according to Baumrind's model. The problem that is usually posed here is that the Baumrind and other parenting styles are more culturally western in terms of measures and concepts that it lacks the unique sensitivity of what is culturally appropriate in Asian or Asian American contexts (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

~Differing Practices

Both cultures appreciate education but Chinese American immigrants emphasize academic achievement more than the European American parents (Jose et al, 2000). The tradition of collectivism are also handed down to the children, this despite living in and assimilating Western ways. The use of time is vastly different between these two types of families. For Chinese Americans, time is limited where playing, watching television and rough and tumble play are concerned; the parents oftentimes are more seen as to encourage their children to spend time for drawing and music and even yet in preschool, parents prefer academic tasks for their children to aspire to (Jose et al, 2000).

~Disciplinary techniques

Studies show that more positive disciplinary techniques are reported as coming from Chinese as against European American families (Jose et al, 2000). In contrast, the latter prefer the use withholding privileges and time-outs as strategies in discipline. When it comes to positive reinforcement,

Chinese American parents often use this method more than the European Americans. This is based in the Chinese belief that children are basically good and that firm and consistent parental discipline are instilled although less punitive in nature (Jose et al, 2000).

Levels of warmth between cultures are not much different between the two cultures. With the prediction that Chinese Americans are more authoritative than the European Americans, this is not seen in studies. Home learning environment then reflect significant differences towards children's social competency and academic success (Jose et al, 2000).

Diana Baumrind (Baumrind, 1975) developed a very widely known theory of parenting which created a great impact on the idea of parenting styles that most parents adhere to and follow today. The main concepts include the *authoritative, permissive and authoritarian models* (Darling, 1999; Atkinson et al, 1993) . The main idea concerns these styles and their impact on the resulting developing person. It is considered influential because it is perhaps the easiest to remember and where most parents or adults readily relate to in most cases (Darling, 1999).

The theory indeed has inspired a lot of consequent studies especially the implied and emphasized acceptance of the superiority of the authoritative model over and against the rest of the other styles. In a sense, Baumrind and her theory or studies convey the clear message that there is such a correct way of rearing children and this she mentioned as the authoritative way (Baumrind, 1971). Critiques of course abound as to the validity and applicability of her theory at all times or in all set-ups or situations. The

studies many argue had only been correlation which means that there is no such direct “ cause and effect” as one would have wanted to appear (Darling, 1999).

Conclusion

The findings are mostly true for the idea that for most of those who advocate the authoritative style, children have emerged as more adjusted and more capable of getting into different stresses that life in reality has to offer (Darling, 1999). Although there may not be a hundred percent chance that all parents who advocate the authoritative style be fully successful as they should, nevertheless, the children stand a better and greater chance of ending as assets and not as liabilities to the community or society from which are brought forth. Many get their inspiration for adopting their way of raising their family based on the Baumrind model. Indeed, it has been effective to a degree because it can easily be remembered and understood. Usually, anyone coming from a background of any of the styles can immediately relate.

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