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Child rearing experiences and views of parent-child interactions among American and Taiwan young adults

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CHILD REARING EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS OF PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS AMONG AMERICAN AND TAIWAN YOUNG ADULTS

A Thesis

Presented to the

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In Partial Fulfillment

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in

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Abstract

The current study examines similarities and differences in views of maltreatment and child-rearing experiences of young adults in the United States and Taiwan, in an attempt to understand the impact of familial values on what may or may not be considered child maltreatment in two socio-culturally different populations. Two measures were used. One, the Parent-Child Interaction Questionnaire, measured the degree to which respondents considered hypothetical vignettes involving parent-child interactions as abusive and whether or not they would recommend outside intervention. This questionnaire was adapted from vignettes developed by Buriel, Mercado, Rodrigues, and Chavez (1991) and Hong and Hong (1991). The second measure, the Parent/Caregiver-Child Relationship Questionnaire measured child rearing experiences of young adults. This questionnaire was adapted from a questionnaire developed by Hower & Edwards (1978). It was hypothesized that young adults in the United States and Taiwan would differ in their ratings of the abusiveness of the vignettes concerning parent-child interactions, and in the extent to which they would recommend outside intervention when vignettes were considered seriously abusive. It was further hypothesized that these young adults would report differences in their child rearing experiences on the dimensions of psychological autonomy, firm control, lax control, power assertion, and induction but not on the dimensions of acceptance, rejection, and psychological control. The results of the current study

suggested that the subjects in the United States judged most of the hypothetical vignettes of parent-child interactions to be significantly more abusive than the subjects in Taiwan. It was also found that when the vignettes were rated as seriously abusive, the United States subjects were more likely to recommend outside intervention than Taiwan subjects. Significant differences were found between the Taiwan respondents and the United States respondents in their experiences of parental child-rearing behaviors. The subjects in Taiwan perceived their parental child care providers as exhibiting more psychological autonomy, lax control, and induction than the subjects in the United States. The United States subjects perceived their parental child care providers as exhibiting more firm control and power assertion than Taiwan subjects. The results of this study are discussed in terms of the possible impact of cultural and societal factors on families and their formulation of what might be considered maltreatment.

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Child-Rearing Experiences and Views of Parent/Child Interactions Among American and Taiwan Young Adults

There has been considerable debate in the literature regarding how child maltreatment should be defined. Child maltreatment lacks a clear, operational definition, due in part to the disagreement regarding what aspects of maltreatment should be emphasized and which organizational and professional groups' (i.e., legal, social services, legislative) criteria should be used. The issue is further complicated by the fact that appropriate child rearing practices and disciplinary customs are determined by culturally sanctioned practices; consequently, what may or may not constitute maltreatment is also culturally determined.

Some of the controversy has centered on whether the definition should emphasize: 1) the INTENT of the perpetrator (for example, burning a child deliberately versus accidentally); 2) the NATURE of the ACT or BEHAVIOR which includes both acts of commission (e.g., physical punishment, verbal abuse) and acts of omission (e.g., failure to meet a child's intellectual, physical, and emotional needs, such as, keeping a child out of school or not providing adequate stimulation); or 3) the CONSEQUENCES of the behavior (e.g. major versus minor physical injury regardless of the intent). Socio-cultural factors are likely to impact the relative importance accorded to each of these factors, especially the extent to which the parental behaviors deviate from public opinion and from the values held by that society.

Developing functional, operational definitions of child maltreatment is important because it has significant implications for:

1) social policy and planning (for example, policies regarding the types of services to be offered to families and eligibility for these services); 2) establishing legal regulations (for example, determining reporting laws and developing criminal codes); 3) research purposes, especially theory building regarding the causes and consequences of abuse; and 4) intervention purposes. (See Hutchinson, 1990, for a review of these issues). In order to address maltreatment from each of these perspectives (social, legal, research, and intervention), greater awareness and understanding of the impact of cultural and familial factors is required.

The purpose of this study is to focus on the effects of socio-cultural and familial factors which impact the formulation of what is considered maltreatment. Although socio-cultural factors are not directly assessed, use of two socio-culturally distinct populations serves as a proxy for this variable. This thesis will begin by briefly describing the current reports on the magnitude of child maltreatment in two culturally distinct regions, the United States and Taiwan, Republic of China. To gain a greater understanding of some potential causes of abuse, theories relevant to socio-cultural and familial factors will be discussed to provide a framework from which child maltreatment can be examined. Finally, how these socio-cultural and familial experiences might impact child rearing values and thereby impact views of abuse will be delineated. This will be followed by the report of the results of a study which assesses differences in views of maltreatment and in child rearing experiences of young adults in the United States and Taiwan, in

an attempt to understand the impact of living in two socio-culturally distinct countries and of familial values (especially as they influence child rearing practices) on this issue.

Magnitude of Abuse

In the United States, child abuse has come to be recognized as a major public health problem. According to the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (1981), the estimated annual incidence of physical and/or sexual abuse is 351,000 (5.7 per 1000) cases. When neglect (such as, depriving children of adequate nutrition, medical care, and appropriate supervision) and emotional abuse or emotional deprivation are taken into account, the number of children victimized is staggering (Goldman & Gargiulo, 1990).

In contrast, reports suggest that China has a very low overall incidence of maltreatment (Sidel, 1972, Stevenson, 1974). Reports from other countries such as Japan also suggest that child abuse is infrequent (Goode, 1971). In addition, reports of other kinds of abuse (e.g., emotional, sexual) in these Asian countries is rare.

However, obtaining reliable and accurate figures of child abuse and neglect is difficult. There are potential biases in the differential labeling of maltreatment which will affect reporting rates. The definition of what constitutes child maltreatment may vary from society to society. And, reported incidents of child abuse may vary because cultures may differ in their attitudes toward reporting. For example, some cultures may be more inclined to keep personal issues within the family and less likely to use outside intervention services.

In fact, this is a common approach to dealing with family problems among Asians (Sue & Sue, 1990). Thus, incidents of child abuse in Asian countries may be underreported compared to incidents in the United States because of different definitions of maltreatment and because of different family values. In contrast, there is a greater likelihood of reporting in the United States where issues of abuse are frequently addressed in the media and reporting is encouraged in school-based child abuse prevention programs (Jenkins, Slus, Schultze, 1979).

In summary, it seems that child abuse is a major public health problem in the United States. Reports of child abuse are growing but we still lack understanding of how various groups define abuse. That is, viewpoints diverge considerably with regard to how child abuse and neglect can most effectively be defined and addressed. The difficulty in acquiring clear and uniform definitions of child abuse is evidenced by researchers, child welfare workers, policy makers and social scientists' disagreements regarding which behaviors or conditions should be labeled as maltreatment. Unfortunately the consequence of this disagreement ultimately affects policy planning, legal regulations and social services. Furthermore, lack of consistent cross-cultural definitions limits research findings and diminishes our understanding of the long-term affects of abuse across cultures.

Theoretical Perspectives

The potential causes of abuse have been addressed from a number of theoretical perspectives. Evaluations of the various theories are important because each theory has a different viewpoint and provides

insight into the potential factors that contribute to the occurrence of maltreatment. Some of the theoretical perspectives which will be briefly discussed include the social learning theory, the sociological approach, and the interactionist or transactional approach. There are many other theories besides the above, such as the medical-psychological approach. However, in this thesis, the focus of the discussion is on the theories involving social/cultural factors, since these factors are the dimensions of particular interest for this thesis (Iverson & Segal, 1990; Parke, 1978).

The social learning theory postulates that individuals learn certain behavior patterns from prior experience. This theory further postulates that social conditions exist which encourage the use of the previously learned behaviors. Thus, an individual engages in specific behaviors because of the rewards/punishment that these behaviors produce. For example, many abusers often report having been abused (sexually, physically, and/or emotionally) when they were growing up. Thus, a family may be "at risk" for abuse if the parent had been abused or neglected as a child. The parent may have learned that abusive behaviors are acceptable and never had exposure to appropriate parenting practices. Consequently, they fall back upon the child rearing patterns they learned from their parents.

The social model focuses on the socio-cultural, environmental, and socio-economic factors which interact to create a cultural milieu conducive to maltreatment. Gil (1970) suggests that there are three interrelated levels which contribute to child maltreatment: the home,

the institutional level (policies and practices of childcare, welfare and correctional institutions), and the societal level. The values of social, economic, and political institutions at the societal level shape the social policies which determine the rights and lives of children. As a result, societies that view children as "property" of their parents and which are highly patriarchal are at greater risk for condoning abuse of their children. Furthermore, the lack of legislative emphasis on social programs, institutions, and polices for improving children's well-being maintains the problem of maltreatment by not providing the resources necessary to mitigate this problem. Thus, the social model extends the learning theory approach by emphasizing the contributions of institutions and society to increased risk for abuse (Iverson & Segal, 1990; Parke, 1978).

The interactionist approach suggests that the family should not be treated as an independent social unit, but as embedded in a broader social network of informal and formal community-based support systems. This perspective emphasizes that parents' child rearing practices are socialized through the interactive impact of cultural, community, and familial influences. The community functions as a monitor of the child rearing practices of family members, and sets community standards concerning the appropriate treatment of children. Each source (family, community, and culture) directly or indirectly influences another source. Thus, children can be influenced directly by the society through institutions and policies, not just the family. The interactionist model goes beyond the social model by suggesting a more

integrative and interactive association between each of the factors, social, cultural, and familial. Each part is embedded in the other with social, cultural, familial and individual factors all impacting each other in reciprocal ways (Iverson & Segal, 1990: Parke, 1982).

Thus, understanding child rearing patterns, the community, and cultural contexts in which they are imbedded is important. Child rearing practices are not only a function of community and familial influences, but are embedded in a broader society.

Child Rearing Practices

Each culture, ethnic group, and/or family demonstrates different patterns of child rearing practices reflecting different social and environmental conditions. Groups perceive, evaluate, and act based on a shared sense of beliefs, goals, and values. The values of a group have an impact on the type of child rearing practices which are used. Ellis and Peterson (1992) evaluated the relationship between values (e.g., conformity, self-reliance) and child rearing practices (e.g., lecturing, corporal punishment) in 122 societies. They found that societies which valued conformity highly were more likely to use corporal punishment, lecturing and overall control. Conversely, they suggested that cultures which stress self-reliance and autonomy were less likely to use coercive practices. It thus appears that values and beliefs have an impact on child rearing practices, as well as an impact on the perspective of what might be viewed as appropriate discipline versus abusive treatment of children.

There are certain values and beliefs which are common to most Asians. According to Sue and Sue (1990), in Asian families, deference to authority, emotional restraint, and recognition of family hierarchy and specified roles within that hierarchy are important. In addition, cooperation, loyalty, and extended family orientation are valued. In Asian society, patterns of communication tend to be vertical, flowing from those of higher prestige and status to those of lower prestige and status who are expected to respond with silence. In addition, Asians value restraint of strong feelings and subtleness in approaching problems; maturity and wisdom are associated with one's ability to control emotions and feelings (Sue & Sue, 1990). These factors together suggest that among Asian families, certain kinds of expectations of children (e.g., studying for long hours, never talking back, etc.) may determine a particular range of disciplinary practices. Furthermore the emphasis on familism dictates that the family is more important than the individual. The success, unity, and reputation of the family is maintained even at the expense of the individual. Thus, behaviors that may be viewed as abusive by an individual may not be seen in that light if their purpose is preservation of the family and the family's status. Finally, Asians tend not to reveal personal matters to "strangers." They are less likely to seek assistance for personal and emotional problems from outside sources. For example, in a study comparing Chinese, Hispanic and white students, Hong and Hong (1991) found that the Chinese were more reluctant to seek external agency intervention than the Hispanics and whites. According to Hong (1988), Asians believe

that internal resolution of problems within the family is best. Thus, Asians may grant greater latitude to parents in making decisions on how to raise their children than other ethnic groups. Thus, it seems likely that how parents and children would evaluate behavior (i.e., as abusive or not abusive) would differ from evaluations made by other cultural groups.

Sue and Sue (1990) suggest that Asians tend to be less individual centered. Thus, one's identity is not seen apart from the group but is defined within the family constellation. However, based on a recent study, Asian identity may no longer consist of a "family identity" but may be shifting to a individualistic orientation. Lau (1992) examined the values of Asian students, in mainland China, Hong Kong, and Singapore. The overall results showed an emphasis on individualistic values. In comparisons of values between students from the United States and mainland China, they did not find any distinct differences in individualist or collectivistic values. This study suggests that there is a need to assess the assumed child rearing patterns of Asians. That is, additional studies are needed to assess whether Chinese and other Asian populations are more collectivist and differ from Western populations in the areas of control, reasoning, and autonomy.

In contrast to Asian cultures, it is believed that Western society values power, individualism, one's ability to self-disclose and talk about the most intimate aspects of one's life to others (Sue & Sue, 1990). Historically, in the United States, children were seen as property of their parents. This allowed adults to treat children any

way that they pleased (Iverson & Segal, 1990). With recent movements, it is being recognized that children have rights and children are given more "voice" and are allowed an active role in the decision making process. In Western society there is a greater range of disciplinary practices and reporting of abusive disciplinary practices may occur with greater frequency than in Asian cultures. These factors suggest that Western expectations of children may differ from the expectations of Asians and that the specific child rearing experiences of these groups may differ. However, contemporary empirical assessment of these factors is absent and the reality of these factors has gone unquestioned.

Understanding similarities and differences among societies is important to our understanding of child maltreatment because they assist in the development of socio-culturally sensitive definitions of child maltreatment.

Views of Child Abuse and Child Rearing Practices

Cultures and the values that develop from cultural experiences may have considerable impact on what is considered child maltreatment. As previously suggested, among some groups certain child rearing practices may be considered normal and common but may appear aberrant in other groups. For example, some cultures condone such acts as initiation rites for preadolescent girls which include beating, food deprivation, and genital operations (Korbin, 1980, 1981; Mayhall & Norgard, 1983). These behaviors would be judged harsh by Western standards, although many of the Western practices, such as sorority and fraternity initiation rites, circumcision of male infants, leaving children all day

at centers with "strangers", and isolation of children every night in their own rooms, may be seen as cruel by those of other cultures (Meier & Sloan, 1984). This illustrates the difficulty in defining maltreatment and determining which acts are considered abusive because parenting practices and child care norms differ across cultures and social structures.

The forces of each society therefore serve to shape and define child rearing practices. Child maltreatment and how it is conceptualized may thus be a reflection of the beliefs and value systems of a society. Society guides, governs, and sets the parameters for which conditions and acts of discipline and/or abuse are tolerated, and which conditions and acts are inhibited. Societal forces mandate which standards and practices should be enforced when caring for children. It is imperative that we recognize the impact that society has on how child maltreatment is comprehended because consequently this will have an impact on the welfare of the child. Iverson and Segal (1990) state that the value system of a society is a barometer of society's concern for the health and welfare of children. There is a need for a balance between protecting children and honoring culturally sanctioned child rearing practices. Surrendering to any cultural or societal orientation of child rearing practices may not be in the best interest of children. Standards for treatment of children could be biased in favor of values and customs of a selected or majority segment of society (Giovanni & Becerra, 1979). However, it is also unjustifiable and untenable to allow a child rearing practice to be continued (which causes distress),

simply because it is a common cultural practice. The difficulty here, however, is that there is no universal agreement regarding which parent-child interactions might be considered abusive. Understanding how cultures differ in their definitions of abuse opens a dialogue of these issues and invites further assessment of the impact of caretaker behaviors on the social and psychological well-being of children.

Previous research conducted by Hong and Hong (1991) and Buriel, Mercado, Rodrigues, and Chavez (1991) have looked at cross-ethnic group comparisons. In the study conducted by Hong and Hong (1991), the researchers presented a series of vignettes (adapted from Boehm, 1964, and Giovanni & Becerra, 1979) depicting parental conduct that may or may not be considered abusive to Chinese, Hispanic, and white students. The respondents were asked to assess how severe they judged these behaviors to be. They found that the Chinese students tended to judge parental conduct less harshly, grant greater latitude to parents in making decisions on how one should rear their children, and tended to recommend agency intervention less frequently than Hispanics and whites. The Chinese were also more likely to use physical force as part of their child rearing practices.

Similarly, Buriel et al. (1991) presented vignettes measuring disciplinary practices and attitudes toward child maltreatment to mothers who were born in Mexico and the United States, although all of the mothers were of Mexican descent. They found that mothers born in Mexico were more likely to use disciplinary practices of spanking and verbal reasoning than scolding and no TV. However, both groups

preferred to use restricting television viewing or not allowing a child to play with a friend as disciplinary practices rather than spanking, scolding, and verbal reasoning. They found no differences in attitudes toward child maltreatment among the two groups.

Current Study

The current study aims to investigate the similarities and differences of child rearing experiences and views of child abuse in two culturally distinct countries, the United States and Taiwan, Republic of China. The following study is a replication and extension of the studies conducted by Hong and Hong (1991) and Buriel et al. (1991). Note that, while including different ethnic groups, the studies by Hong and Hong (1991) and Buriel et al. (1991) were all conducted in the United States. These researchers suggested that differences in views of maltreatment among ethnic groups might have been due to different cultural and family values, although these values were not empirically assessed.

The purpose of the current study was to evaluate similar attitudes regarding child maltreatment but cross-culturally. In addition, child rearing experiences were assessed. While differences in views of maltreatment may be due to cultural differences, these differences are likely to be expressed in child rearing practices.

Seventeen brief vignettes were used to measure young adults' attitudes toward child maltreatment. As previously noted, these hypothetical vignettes were adopted from the studies of Buriel et al. (1991) and Hong and Hong (1991) and describe parent-child interactions

that could be interpreted as harmless or harmful to the child. The current questionnaire was constructed by compiling these seventeen vignettes and by including an additional multiple choice item for each vignette, such as: "the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue." These items were designed to assess the respondents' judgment about the seriousness or abusiveness of the interaction and their feeling of the need for seeking outside intervention.

In addition to rating these vignettes, subjects were asked to report on their child rearing experiences. The subjects' child rearing experiences were measured by the Parent-Child Relationship Questionnaire (Hower & Edwards, 1979), modified and renamed for this study as the Parent/Caregiver-Child Relationship Questionnaire. This scale has 40 items consisting of 8 subscales which include: psychological control, psychological autonomy, firm control, lax control, acceptance, rejection, power assertion, and induction. The current questionnaire was adapted to include subjects' perceptions of their maternal and paternal caretakers child rearing practices separately.

It this study, four hypotheses were advanced: 1) Young adults in the United States and Taiwan would differ significantly in their ratings of the abusiveness of most vignettes. 2) Young adults in the United States would be significantly more likely to recommend outside intervention when the vignettes were rated as seriously abusive (6 or 7) than would young adults in Taiwan. 3) Young adults in the United States and Taiwan would differ on the dimensions of psychological autonomy,

firm control, lax control, power assertion, and induction with regard to the parent/caregiver-child relationships. 4) Young adults in Taiwan and the United States would show no differences in their views of the parent/caregiver-child relationship on the dimensions of psychological control, acceptance, and rejection.

METHOD

Design

A single-factor, quasi-experimental, two-group multivariate design was used to test the hypotheses. The quasi-independent variable was country of residence with two levels. The subjects were assigned into one of the two levels (Taiwan or the United States), based on their residence and nationality. The study included four sets of dependent variables: 1) level of abusiveness ratings concerning child maltreatment on the seventeen hypothetical vignettes depicting parent-child interactions, 2) recommendations for outside intervention for each vignette, 3) scores regarding perceptions of maternal child rearing experiences on the dimensions of: psychological control, psychological autonomy, firm control, lax control, acceptance, rejection, power assertion, and induction, and 4) a similar set of scores regarding perceptions of paternal child rearing experiences on the same eight dimensions.

Subjects

The subjects included 192 students from California State University at San Bernardino (hereafter the United States group) and 200 students

from National Chengchi University in Taipei, Taiwan (hereafter the Taiwan group). All subjects were recruited for this study on a voluntary basis. Among the United States group, 158 of the 192 subjects were females (82.3%) and 34 of the 192 subjects were males (17.7%). The mean age of the United States subjects was 27 years and 4 months. The mean number of years of education completed by the United States subjects was 15.24 years. The distribution of ethnicity of the United States subjects were as follows: 57.9% Caucasians, 21.9% Hispanic, 6.8% African-American, 1.9% Native American, and 5.2% categorized themselves as "other". The marital status of this United States group consisted of the following: 62.5% were single, 29.2% were married, 6.8% were divorced, and 1.0% were separated.

The Taiwan group consisted of 201 Chinese students. Among the Taiwan group, 122 out of 210 were males (60.7%) and 79 out of 201 were females (39.3%). The mean age of the Taiwan subjects was 20 years. The mean number of years of education completed by the Taiwan subjects was 12.66 years. All of the Taiwan subjects were of Asian ethnicity, more specifically, Chinese. All of the Taiwan subjects tested in this study were single.

Materials

A self-administered questionnaire format was used to gather information for this study. The questionnaire consisted of two Likert-scored assessment scales and a demographics sheet.

The demographic sheet included questions concerning the subject's socioeconomic status, ethnicity, gender, age, marital status, education, place of birth, and current residence (Appendix A).

The rest of the questionnaire was composed of two self-assessment measures. The Parent-Child Interaction Questionnaire (adopted from Buriel et al., 1991 and Hong & Hong, 1991) consists of seventeen vignettes depicting parental conduct which were used to assess the respondent's perception of situations which might or might not be considered abusive or negligent (Appendix B). The respondents were asked to evaluate each case on a seven-point scale, which ranged from "1" indicating no abuse/neglect and "7" indicating very serious abuse/neglect. In the current study we also asked the respondents to choose among four alternative courses of action for each vignette, with "A" indicating nothing needs to be done about this situation, "B" indicating the family should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue, "C" indicating that the family should be encouraged to seek professional help, and "D" indicating that a child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

On the second self-assessment questionnaire, the subjects' child rearing experiences were measured by the Parent/Caregiver-Child Relationship Questionnaire. The questionnaire assessed child rearing experiences using a modified version of the Parent-Child Relationship Questionnaire originally developed by Hower and Edwards (1978). This scale consists of 80 items (40 for female caregivers and 40 for male caregivers) which yields 8 subscales including: psychological control,

psychological autonomy, firm control, lax control, acceptance, rejection, power assertion, and induction. The respondents were asked to evaluate each statement on a five-point scale, with "1" indicating never true of my primary caretaker (e.g., mother and/or female guardian, father and/or male guardian) and "5" indicating very often true of my primary caretaker (Appendix C). All questionnaires used in this study were translated into Chinese by a native Chinese-speaker who also spoke English fluently, for the subjects in Taiwan.

Procedure

An announcement was made during class in primarily undergraduate Psychology courses at California State University, San Bernardino, and at National Chengchi University in Taipei, Taiwan, requesting volunteers to participate in a psychology research project. Volunteers were told that all answers are confidential, and only group data will be reported. After signing the informed consent sheet (see Appendix D), the volunteers were given a questionnaire packet consisting of a demographics sheet, seventeen hypothetical vignettes of parent-child interactions, and eighty statements describing parental child-rearing practices. The subjects were asked to answer each item as truthfully as possible. The volunteers were treated according to the Ethical Guidelines for Psychologists (APA, 1992) at all times. Subjects were allowed to complete the questionnaire during class time at the instructor's discretion; they were also allowed to take the questionnaire home and turn them in at a later time. After completion, the subjects were given a debriefing statement (Appendix E and Appendix

F) informing them as to the purpose of the study. The debriefing statement also included information about counseling, in the event that completing the questionnaire opened unresolved feelings. In addition, information concerning how to obtain a copy of the results was given. Extra credit slips were given to each volunteer upon completion as a "thank you" for his or her participation.

Scoring and Analyses

The portion of the questionnaire which contained the demographics was used to identify the two groups (Taiwan versus United States) for analysis. Those who reported place of birth and current residence as Taiwan were placed in one group, and those who reported place of birth and current residence as the United States were placed in the other group. Those reporting place of birth and residence other than the above were not used in the study.

The respondents evaluated each of the seventeen vignettes, on a seven-point scale, with "1" indicating no abuse/neglect and "7" indicating very serious abuse/neglect. Thus, each vignette had a score range of 1 to 7. In addition, the respondents were asked to choose among four alternative courses of action for each vignette, with "A" indicating nothing needs to be done about this situation, "B" indicating the family should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue, "C" indicating the family should be encouraged to seek professional help, and "D" indicating that the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family. The four options A to D were recorded as 1 to 4 for analyses.

Each item on the Parent/Caregiver-Child Relationship Questionnaire has a score range of 1 to 5. Each of the eight dimensions (psychological control, psychological autonomy, firm control, lax control, acceptance, rejection, power assertion and induction) consists of five items and has a minimum and maximum possible score of 5 and 25, respectively. Items 21 and 27 are reverse scored.

Student's t-test and Pearson chi square ($\chi 2$) tests were used to test the proposed hypotheses. A probability of $p = .05$ was adopted for concluding statistical significance for this study.

RESULTS

The results of the study are summarized as follows:

Group differences in the ratings of the degree of child maltreatment on the Parent/Caregiver-Child Interaction Questionnaire

The first hypothesis stated that young adults in the United States and in Taiwan would differ significantly in their ratings of abusiveness for most of the vignettes. Seventeen t-tests for independent samples were conducted to assess between group differences on perceptions of parent-child interaction which may or may not be considered child maltreatment. The data shows that there are significant differences in perceptions of child abuse and neglect between the United States subjects and Taiwan subjects. As shown in Table 1, the overall pattern appears to be that the United States subjects judged the vignettes of parental conduct of children to be significantly more abusive than Taiwan subjects. Specifically, United States subjects rated the

following fourteen of the seventeen vignettes as significantly more abusive than subjects in Taiwan: 1) "encourage to steal" $t(384) = 3.01$, $p < .01$, 2) "beating and branding for stealing" $t(384) = 8.27$, $p < .01$, 3) "girl dressed as a boy" $t(384) = 4.44$, $p < .01$, 4) "left alone by parents" $t(384) = 5.15$, $p < .01$, 6) "sleeping in parents' room" $t(384) = 5.21$, $p < .01$, 7) "using drugs" $t(384) = 12.03$, $p < .01$, 8) "beating for not doing homework" $t(384) = 11.41$, $p < .01$, 10) "sleeping with lonely mother" $t(384) = 4.93$, $p < .01$, 11) "sleeping in parents' bed" $t(384) = 3.93$, $p < .01$, 12) "scratched to make feel better" $t(384) = 14.48$, $p < .01$, 13) "pulling arm and dislocating shoulder" $t(384) = 3.56$, $p < .01$, 14) "spanking throws child against wall" $t(384) = 2.90$, $p = .01$, 15) "place hand on hot burner" $t(384) = 5.27$, $p < .01$, 16) "name-calling for incorrect homework" $t(384) = 2.52$, $p < .01$.

The United States subjects tended to rate the vignettes from "moderate abuse and neglect" to "very severe abuse and neglect" (3.59 to 6.94), while Taiwan subjects tend to rate the vignettes from "no abuse or neglect" to "very severe abuse and neglect" (2.36 to 6.62).

The vignettes where the differences were reported to be the greatest between the two group were the following vignettes: "using drugs" and "beating for not doing homework." The United States subjects rated "using drugs" as "severe abuse" (M=6.02) and the Taiwan subjects rated this as "moderate abuse" (M=4.32). The United States subjects rated "beating for not doing homework" as "very severe abuse" (M=6.54) and the Taiwan subjects rated this as "moderate abuse" (M=5.02).

Table 1

Between Group Differences in the Ratings of the Abusiveness of Parent-Child Interactions Questionnaire

Vignette	Nationality: United States N = 185 Degree of Abuse/Neglect	Nationality: Taiwan N = 201 Degree of Abuse/Neglect	t value
01 Encourage to steal	M=5.61 SD=1.32	M=5.14 SD=1.65	t(384)=3.01 *
02 Beating and branding	M=6.84 SD=.46	M=6.11 SD=1.12	t(384)=8.27 *
03 Girl dressed as boy	M=5.71 SD=1.12	M=5.08 SD=1.58	t(384)=4.44 *
04 Left alone by parents	M=5.58 SD=1.33	M=4.84 SD=1.47	t(384)=5.15 *
05 Ignore rashes and sores	M=5.31 SD=1.31	M=5.48 SD=1.32	t(384)=1.27
06 Sleeping in parents' room	M=4.47 SD=1.62	M=3.59 SD=1.71	t(384)=5.21 *
07 Using drugs	M=6.02 SD=1.22	M=4.32 SD=1.52	t(384)=12.03 *
08 Beating for not doing homework	M=6.54 SD=.88	M=5.02 SD=1.60	t(384)=11.41 *
09 Refuse to take to counselor	M=4.35 SD=1.52	M=4.55 SD=1.48	t(384)=1.31
10 Sleeping with lonely mother	M=3.88 SD=2.01	M=2.92 SD=1.84	t(384)=4.93 *
11 Sleeping in parents' bed	M=3.59 SD=1.87	M=2.89 SD=1.63	t(384)=3.93 *
12 Scratched to make feel better	M=4.98 SD=1.90	M=2.36 SD=1.65	t(384)=14.48 *

13	Pulling arm and dislocating shoulder	M=4.89 SD=1.73	M=4.28 SD=1.63	t(384)=3.56 *
14	Spanking throws against wall	M=5.44 SD=1.49	M=4.98 SD=1.60	t(384)=2.90 *
15	Place hand on hot burner	M=6.94 SD=.31	M=6.62 SD=.77	t(384)=5.27*
16	Name-calling for incorrect homework	M=5.84 SD=1.08	M=5.53 SD=1.32	t(384)=2.52 *
17	Hugging, touching breast	M=6.43 SD=.89	M=6.45 SD=.95	t(384)=.22

*$p < .01$

Among the seventeen vignettes, three were rated as equally abusive by the subjects in Taiwan and in the United States. These were the two vignettes concerning parents blatantly ignoring their children's mental and physical health: vignette number five "ignore rashes and sores" and vignette number nine "refuse to take to counselor;" and vignette number seventeen "hugging, touching breast."

As mentioned earlier in the results section, overall, the United States subjects viewed the vignettes as significantly more abusive than Taiwan subjects. However, there were several vignettes that were viewed most unfavorably by both groups and there were several behaviors that evoked the least concern by both groups. For example, both United States and Taiwan subjects viewed vignette number two - "beating and branding for stealing" as the most serious form of child maltreatment. Of least concern for both groups were vignettes six, ten, and eleven - uncommon sleeping arrangements. In addition, these three vignettes had the greatest variance within each of the two groups on the degree to which the vignettes may or may not have been perceived as abusive. Both

Taiwan and United States subjects appeared to disagree on the extent or the degree to which these vignettes were perceived as harmful to children. The standard deviations were as follows: "sleeping with lonely mother" (United States: SD=2.01, Taiwan: SD=1.84), "sleeping in parents' bed" (United States: SD=1.87, Taiwan: SD=1.63), and "sleeping in parents' room" (United States: SD=1.62, Taiwan: SD=1.71).

Group differences on recommendations for outside intervention

The second hypothesis stated that subjects in the United States would be significantly more likely to recommend outside intervention when the vignettes were rated as seriously abusive (6 or 7) than would subjects in Taiwan. Chi-square tests were used to evaluate this hypothesis. The percentage of subjects who said that they would contact external sources for intervention (i.e., "the family should be encouraged to seek professional help" or "the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family") when the vignette was perceived as serve abuse or very severe abuse (6 or7) was computed. Table 2 shows these results. As can be seen from Table 2, the results of the Chi-square test indicate that differences in seeking outside intervention between United States and Taiwan subjects were observed for 5 of the 17 vignettes: "beating and branding" (Taiwan, 90.3%; United States, 98.4%; $\chi 2(1)=11.32$, $p<.01$), "left alone by parents" (Taiwan, 60%: United States, 92.8%: $\chi 2(1)=28.97$, $p<.01$), "sleeping in parents' room" (Taiwan, 61.2%; United States, 86.2%; $\chi 2(1)=7.20$, $p<.01$), "pulling arm and dislocating shoulder" (Taiwan, 79.6%; United States, 95.2%; $\chi 2(1)=7.90$, $p<.01$), and "spanking throws against wall" (Taiwan, 80.7%; United

States, 98.2%; $\chi 2(1)=17.98$, $p<.01$). In general, the United States subjects were more likely than Taiwan subjects to seek outside intervention when the vignette was rated as abusive (6 or7).

The vignette which showed the greatest difference between the two groups on the percentage who recommended outside intervention, was the vignette indicating "left alone by parents".

It was noteworthy that of the three vignettes which addressed uncommon sleeping arrangements, no difference was found between two of the vignettes: "sleeping in parents' bed" and "sleeping with lonely mother." A difference between Taiwan and the United States groups was found only in one vignette "sleeping in parents' room" (vignette six), in which the parents sometimes make a lot of noise.

The vignettes "pulling arm and dislocating shoulder" and "spanking throws against wall," both depicted accidental and unintentional acts which resulted in physical abuse to the child. As mentioned earlier, the United States subjects were more likely to recommend outside intervention for this form of abuse than Taiwan subjects. However, there was no difference between the two groups when the resulting physical abuse was intended, that is, "to teach a lesson," as in vignette two, "beating and branding". Note that both recommended outside intervention very highly, 98% and 90%.

Table 2

Recommend Outside Intervention When Vignettes Were Rated Seriously Abusive on the Parent-Child Interactions Questionnaire

Vignette	Nationality				$\chi 2$
	United States		Taiwan		
01 Encourage to steal	97.5%	(117[a]/120[b])	93.4%	(85/91)	2.12
02 Beating and branding	98.4%	(187/190)	90.3%	(140/155)	11.32*
03 Girl dressed as boy	100.0%	(117/117)	92.1%	(82/89)	N/A
04 Left alone by parents	92.8%	(103/111)	60.0%	(43/70)	28.97*
05 Ignore rashes and sores	95.7%	(90/94)	92.5%	(98/106)	.96
06 Sleeping in parents' room	86.2%	(50/58)	61.3%	(19/31)	7.20*
07 Using drugs	99.3%	(141/142)	95.7%	(45/47)	N/A
08 Beating for not doing homework	99.4%	(172/173)	96.7%	(89/92)	2.91
09 Refuse to take to counselor	96.2%	(46/52)	96.4%	(54/56)	.01
10 Sleeping w/lonely mother	90.6%	(48/53)	92.0%	(23/25)	.04
11 Sleeping in parents' bed	88.6%	(31/35)	100.0%	(16/16)	N/A
12 Scratched to make feel better	100.0%	(96/96)	76.9%	(10/13)	22.78
13 Pulling arm and dislocating shoulder	95.2%	(79/83)	79.6%	(39/49)	7.90*
14 Spanking throws against wall	98.2%	(112/114)	80.7%	(71/88)	17.98*
15 Placing hand on burner	100.0%	(191/191)	98.9%	(181/183)	N/A
16 Name calling for incorrect homework	100.0%	(130/130)	95.4%	(104/109)	N/A
17 Hugging, touching breast	98.8%	(167/169)	97.2%	(172/177)	1.18

*$p < .01$

[a]number — number of subjects recommended outside intervention

[b]number — number of subjects who perceived a particular vignette as severe or very serve abuse/neglect

N/A — $\chi 2$-test was not performed, due to small number of subjects in some cells

Group Differences in child-rearing experiences

The third hypothesis which stated that young adults in the United states and Taiwan would differ on the parenting dimensions of psychological autonomy, firm control, lax control, power assertion, and induction was supported. As shown in Table 3, t-tests comparing students from the United States and from Taiwan indicated that their experiences of parental child-rearing practices differed on the dimensions of: psychological autonomy (mothers: $t(348)=5.76$, $p<.01$, fathers: $t(317)=5.79$, $p<.01$), firm control (mothers: $t(348) = 7.37$, $p<.01$, fathers:$t(317)=4.24$, $p<.01$), lax control (mothers:$t(348)=11.65$, $p<.01$ fathers:$t(317)=11.43$, $p<.01$), power assertion (mothers:$t(348)=10.30$, $p<.01$, fathers:$t(317)=7.60$, $p<.01$), and induction (mothers: $t(348)=2.17$, $p<.05$, fathers: $t(317)=3.31$, $p=.01$). The differences between United States and Taiwan subjects in responses on dimensions of parental child-rearing behaviors were evident for both maternal and paternal behaviors. The detailed results are given as follows:

Taiwan subjects perceived both of their parental child care providers as exhibiting more psychological autonomy than the United States subjects. Taiwan subjects rated the dimensions of psychological autonomy as "often" (fathers: M=18.69, mothers: M=18.27) while United States subjects rated it "sometimes" (fathers: M=16.08, mothers: M=15.85).

Table 3

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of United States and Taiwan Subjects on the Eight Dimensions of Parental Childrearing Practices

		Nationality		
Childrearing Attitudes	Gender	United States	Taiwan	t-value
Psychological Autonomy	Mother	M=15.85 SD=4.38	M=18.27 SD=3.47	t(348)=5.76 **
	Father	M=16.08 SD=4.15	M=18.69 SD=3.87	t(317)=5.79 **
Firm Control	Mother	M=17.77 SD=3.79	M=14.99 SD=3.26	t(348)=7.37 **
	Father	M=17.66 SD=4.33	M=15.74 SD=3.75	t(317)=4.24 **
Lax Control	Mother	M=13.41 SD=3.97	M=17.94 SD=3.30	t(348)=11.65**
	Father	M=12.74 SD=4.13	M=17.59 SD=3.45	t(317)=11.43**
Induction	Mother	M=16.14 SD=4.97	M=17.13 SD=3.44	t(348)=2.17 *
	Father	M=14.80 SD=5.06	M=16.47 SD=3.94	t(317)=3.31 **
Power Assertion	Mother	M=11.86 SD=4.76	M=7.72 SD=2.52	t(348)=10.30**
	Father	M=11.93 SD=4.88	M=8.35 SD=3.52	t(317)=7.60 **
Psychological Control	Mother	M=13.49 SD=4.45	M=11.76 SD=3.10	t(348)=4.27 **
	Father	M=12.23 SD=4.38	M=11.55 SD=3.27	t(317)=1.59
Acceptance	Mother	M=16.99 SD=5.29	M=16.33 SD=3.61	t(348)=1.39
	Father	M=15.05 SD=5.08	M=15.02 SD=3.71	t(317)= .06
Rejection	Mother	M=10.23 SD=4.96	M=10.13 SD=3.38	t(348)=.24
	Father	M=10.28 SD=5.04	M=10.13 SD=3.41	t(317)=.32

*$p < .05$
**$p < .01$

Subjects in Taiwan perceived both of their parental child care providers as exhibiting more lax control than the United States subjects. Taiwan subjects perceived rated the dimension of lax control as "often" (mothers: M=17.94, fathers: M=17.59) while United States subjects rated it as "sometimes" (mothers M=13.41, fathers: M=12.74). The dimension of lax control was found to have the greatest between-group difference.

Subjects in Taiwan perceived both of their parental child care providers as exhibiting more induction than those in the United States. Taiwan subjects rated induction as a high "sometimes" (mothers: M=17.13, fathers: M=16.47) while United States subjects rated it as a low "sometimes" (mothers M=16.14, fathers: M=14.80). Moreover, of the five significantly different parental conduct dimensions, United States subjects had the greatest degree of variance on this dimension of induction (mothers: SD=4.97, fathers: SD=5.06).

Subjects in the United States perceived both of their parental child care providers as exhibiting more firm control than Taiwan subjects. United States subjects rated firm control as "often" (mothers: M=17.77, fathers: M=17.66) while Taiwan subjects rated it as "sometimes" (mothers M=14.99, fathers: M=15.74).

Subjects in the United States perceived their parental child care providers as exhibiting more power assertion than Taiwan subjects. United States subjects rated power assertion as a high "only once in a while" (mothers: M=11.86; fathers: M=11.93) while Taiwan subjects rated it as a low "only once in a while" (mothers M=7.72; fathers M=8.35).

The fourth hypothesis stated that United States and Taiwan subjects would not differ in their perceptions of their parental child care providers' behaviors on the dimensions of psychological control, acceptance, and rejection. The results indicated that subjects in Taiwan and the United States did not report any differences on child-rearing perceptions on the dimensions of acceptance and rejection for both maternal and paternal child care providers, providing support for the fourth hypothesis. However, it was found that female caregivers in the United States and in Taiwan did differ significantly on the dimension of psychological control ($t(384)=4.27$; $p < .01$), thus partially disconfirming the fourth hypothesis. The United States subjects perceived their maternal child-rearing patterns of psychological control as being exhibited to a greater extent than Taiwan subjects'; they rated psychological control as occurring "sometimes" ($M=13.49$) while Taiwan subjects rated it as "only once in a while" ($M=11.76$). There was no difference between fathers in the United States and Taiwan on this dimension of psychological control.

On the eight dimensions of childrearing practices, the United States subjects gave the highest rating to the dimension of firm control (mothers: $M=17.77$, fathers: $M=17.66$). For the Taiwan subjects, the parental conduct dimensions which were given the highest rating were psychological autonomy (mothers: $M = 18.27$, fathers: $M = 18.69$) and lax control (mothers: $M = 17.94$, fathers: $M = 17.59$). Both the United States and Taiwan subjects rated rejection as the lowest of the eight

dimensions (United States mothers: M = 10.23, United States fathers: M = 10.28, Taiwan mothers: M = 10.13, Taiwan fathers: M = 10.13).

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to examine the similarities and differences in views of maltreatment and child-rearing experiences of young adults in the United States and Taiwan.

The first hypothesis concerned subjects' perceptions of the degree of abusiveness of parent-child interactions which might or might not be construed as harmful to the child. The results of this study confirmed the prediction that United States subjects and Taiwan subjects would differ in their views of the abusiveness of potentially harmful parent-child interactions. Overall, United States subjects tended to rate parent-child interactions for most of the vignettes in this study as more abusive than Taiwan subjects. The results were consistent with previous findings which suggested that Chinese students tended to judge parental conduct less harshly than Caucasian or Hispanic students (Hong & Hong, 1991; Buriel, Mercado, Rodrigues, and Chavez, 1991). The results of the current study also support the findings that reports of child maltreatment in Asia are lower than in the United States (Sidel, 1972, Stevenson, 1974, and Goode, 1971), because some behaviors which maybe viewed as abusive in the United States might not be considered abusive in Asia. For example, certain behaviors, such as "scratching with spoon to make feel better" are not seen as abusive in Taiwan but viewed as moderately abusive in the United States. The findings may

reflect the fact that in Asian culture, parents are afforded greater latitude in child-rearing behaviors. These results also suggest that child rearing practices and disciplinary customs may be related to culturally sanction practices. Depending on the society and cultural context, parent-child behaviors have different valence and are thus evaluated differently. The results of this study suggest that establishing cross-cultural definitions of child maltreatment may be more complicated than it appears.

Despite the overall differences in ratings, it is important to note that some similarities between the views of United States and Taiwan subjects are evident. For example, both the United States and Taiwan subjects considered "beating and branding", an intentional act which left permanent physical disfigurement, as the most serious form of child maltreatment.

Both the United States and Taiwan subjects viewed "uncommon sleeping arrangements" as the least concern. The fact that "uncommon sleeping arrangements" were of the least concern may require further assessment since it suggests that both cultures may be less willing to be aware of the potential for sexual abuse. In addition, the large variance between members of each group when evaluating this vignette suggests that there is great disagreement and diversity in attitudes concerning parents' perceptions of children and their sleeping arrangements.

The United States and Taiwan subjects did not differ in their rating for vignettes "ignoring rashes and sores" and "refusing to take

to counselor." In these two cases, the parents committed an "omission," that is, they blatantly ignored their children's mental and physical health. Acts of "omission" were not judged differently by the United States subjects than Taiwan subjects. Both cultures may believe that parents have the "last word" in matters concerning their children.

The agreement evident with regard to the "most" and "least" serious forms of abuse is encouraging and suggests that there may be a few basic cross-cultural "standards" regarding maltreatment. Unfortunately, in this study, we did not address the potential impact of these interactions on long-term adjustment and therefore, do not know if those behaviors on which the groups differed actually have different impact depending on their perceived level of abusiveness. It is possible that differences in views regarding child maltreatment across cultures may have differential impact on adjustment, an issue that should be addressed in future research.

Considering our second hypothesis, the results of the current study supported the claim that young adults in the United States would be more likely to recommend outside intervention when the vignettes are rated as seriously abusive (6 or 7) compared to young adults in Taiwan. This set of results confirms the findings from previous literature which suggests that Asians differ in their attitudes toward reporting. As Hong and Hong (1991) and Sue and Sue (1990) suggested, Asians are more inclined to keep personal issues within the family and are less likely to use outside intervention or services. For Asians, it may be that admitting familial problems is very shameful and thus deters reporting. It is

also possible that for Asians, the maintenance of the family takes precedence over the needs or well-being of the individual, thus, contributing to attitudes toward underreporting. As a result, incidents of child abuse in Asian countries may be underreported compared to incidents in the United States because the culture inhibits/disapproves of taking issues outside the family. It is also noteworthy that autonomy was found to be a highly valued characteristic of parental conduct for the Asian culture, and this perspective is emulated in their tendency to resolve problems within the family without involving outside agencies.

Our third hypothesis stated that young adults in the United States and Taiwan would differ on the dimensions of psychological autonomy, firm control, lax control, power assertion, and induction. This hypothesis was confirmed. This study found that Taiwan subjects gave higher ratings than United States subjects on three of these five dimensions for both maternal and paternal childcare providers, that is for the dimensions of psychological autonomy, lax control, and induction. On the dimensions of firm control and power assertion, United States subjects gave higher ratings than Taiwan subjects to both maternal and paternal childcare providers.

These findings from the current study differ from what might be expected based on the literature by Sue & Sue (1990):

1) According to Sue and Sue (1990), the family unit is maintained at the expense of the individual. One's identity is not seen apart from the group but is defined within the family constellation. This suggests

that the United States subjects would rate autonomy higher than Taiwan subjects. However, contrary to this expectation, we found that Taiwan subjects perceived their parents to exhibit parenting styles which provided opportunities for the development of psychological autonomy to a greater extent than United States subjects. The reason for this finding is unclear and may be related to the gender distribution of subjects in that the majority of the Asian student population was comprised of male subjects but the opposite was true for the United States student population. 2) According to Sue and Sue (1990), Asian communication flows vertically from those of higher power/prestige to those of lower status who are expected to respond with silence. The results of the current study suggest the opposite. We found that Taiwan subjects rated their parents higher on items such as: "allowed me to hold by own point of view," "let me decide for myself what is right and wrong," "would allow me to have secrets from him/her," and "encouraged me to explore my own ideas." They also gave higher ratings than the United States subjects to their parents use of inductive reasoning, as exemplified by questionnaire items: "explained the reason for rules" and "explained why she punished me."

Note that our findings confirm Lau's (1991) suggestion that an individualistic orientation may be more characteristic of Asian society than has been suggested by the previous literature, namely, an orientation of Asian culture toward a "family identity." The results of the current study together with those from Lau (1991) not only suggest a shift in Asian identity, but it also suggest a shift in Western

societies perceptions of their own family dynamics. In other words, Western families may have placed more emphasis on "family identity" than previously thought.

On the dimension of power assertion, a between-group difference was found: United States subjects perceived their child care providers as more likely to utilize power assertion than Taiwan subjects. This finding differs in part from Hong and Hong's (1991) finding which suggests that in general, Chinese were more likely to utilize physical force for rearing their children, which might be considered a form of power assertion. This finding, however, is consistent with the Taiwan students' reports of greater autonomy in their childhood. Once again, gender may be a mediating factor and will be evaluated in future analyses. This finding, together with prior results regarding less autonomy, more firm control, and more power assertion among United States subjects suggests that they either had parents who used more authoritarian parenting styles or that their expectations along these dimensions differed from those of Taiwan students. These findings are interesting and unexpected and call for further evaluation. While unexpected, they are consistent with Lau's (1991) work which suggests that the stereotypes held regarding individuation/autonomy versus family orientation among Chinese may not be accurate.

Hypothesis four predicted that no between-group differences would be observed on the dimensions of psychological control, acceptance, and rejection. This hypothesis was confirmed with an exception that United States subjects' perceptions of their maternal child rearing experiences

with regard to psychological control were different from that of Taiwan subjects'.

In summary, the current study provides useful information about the similarities and differences between Taiwan and United States subjects. Overall, young adults in the United States were more likely to rate hypothetical vignettes involving parent-child interactions as more abusive than Taiwan subjects. Despite the overall difference in ratings, both groups viewed permanent physical disfigurement as the most serious form of child maltreatment and "uncommon sleeping arrangements" as the least serious form of child maltreatment. When the vignettes were rated as seriously abusive, United States subjects were more likely than Taiwan subjects to recommend outside intervention. This study also found that United States and Taiwan subjects differ on child-rearing experiences on the dimensions of autonomy, firm control, lax control, induction, and power assertion. Taiwan subjects tend to experience higher levels of psychological autonomy, lax control, and induction than United States subjects. In contrast, United States subjects tend to use the dimension of firm control and power assertion to a greater extent than Taiwan subjects. There was no difference between the two groups on the parental conduct dimensions of acceptance and rejection. These findings are interesting and somewhat unexpected since Chinese families are often portrayed as more structured and hierarchical than United States families (see Sue & Sue, 1990). In addition, of the eight parental conduct dimensions, both groups perceived their parents as unlikely to use rejection as a parenting practice.

It is important to note that the distribution of male and female subjects in the two groups is quite distinct. There is a greater number of males in the Taiwan sample and a greater number of females in the United States sample. This gender difference may be a possible confounding factor in that gender may mediate abuse perceptions and child rearing experiences. That is, parenting practices towards males and females may differ. For example, parents may grant greater latitude and autonomy to males than females. In addition, females may be more sensitive to potential abuse than males. Therefore, the results of the current study should be interpreted with caution. Additional studies are needed in order to assess the impact of gender on the perceptions of parenting practices and evaluations of potentially abusive interactions. Investigation of this is currently underway.

APPENDIX A

Demographics

Please answer the following questions about yourself as fully as possible.

Gender: _____ male _____ female

Age: _____ (years old)

Marital Status:
_____ single
_____ married
_____ separated
_____ divorced
_____ widowed

Current Household Income:
_____ Under $10,000
_____ $10.001 to $20,000
_____ $20.001 to $30,000
_____ $30.001 to $40,000
_____ $40.001 to $50,000
_____ over $50,001

Education: _____Number of years of school completed

Ethnicity:
_____ Asian (specify) _____
_____ African American
_____ Caucasian
_____ Hispanic or Latino
_____ Native American
_____ Other (specify) _____

Place of current residence (specify) _____

Place of Birth (specify country)_____

APPENDIX B

Parent-Child Interaction Questionnaire

Listed below are seventeen vignettes depicting parental conduct that might or might not be viewed abusive or negligent parent/child interactions. First, you're asked to indicate how you would evaluate each vignette by circling one of the numbers which range from "1" (no abuse/neglect) to "4" (moderate abuse/neglect) to "7" (very serious abuse/neglect). The alternatives are as follows:

Circle one number:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Then, you're asked to indicate which of the four alternative courses of action you think should be taken for each vignette. The alternatives are as follows:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

1. These parents frequently go to the supermarket with their nine-year-old girl. They often encourage the girl to steal small items and sneak them out in her pockets. They tell her that this is okay because the large supermarkets will not suffer any loss from these small items. They also say this is a clever way to get some free treats.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

2. A 12-year-old girl stole some comic books from a store. She had been caught stealing in school before. When her parents found out that she had been stealing again, they beat her with a cane and burned a mark on her arm. They said the mark would remind her not to steal again.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

3. These parents have only one child, a girl, eight years old. They keep her hair cut short like a boy's and frequently dress her in boy's clothing. They keep telling their girl that they really wanted to have a boy instead of a girl.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

4. These parents frequently leave their nine-year-old boy at home by himself. The parents are away the whole day, coming home late at night. The boy is asked to eat the food from the refrigerator, warming it up if he wants. He usually just eats it cold. He goes to bed by himself because his parents will not be back by his bedtime.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

5. A ten-year-old boy has rashes and sores on his arms. His parents do not seem to be concerned. They ignore the teacher's advice to take him to a doctor, saying that children have such problems all the time and they are not serious.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

6. In describing his home, a ten-year-old boy tells his class that he sleeps in the same bedroom with his parents. He says that sometimes his parents make a lot of noise at night.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

7. These parent use drugs frequently. They often take drugs in the living room in the evening when their eight-year-old girl is watching TV. If the girl should ask, they would tell her that it is something for adults, not for children.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

8. A nine-year-old boy comes to school. The teacher notices that there are red marks on his palms and legs. When asked, he tells the teacher that yesterday he went over to a friend's house to play instead of going home to do his homework. When his father found out, he hit him on the palms and legs repeatedly with a cane. He says that his father does this whenever he does not do his homework.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

9. An eight-year-old girl is very withdrawn in school. She does not join in any play activities with other children, and seldom speaks to anybody. She often appears to be sad. The parents are asked to take her to a child counselor or a psychologist. They refuse, saying that the girl is simply shy and there is nothing wrong.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

10. Whenever the father is away from home, this mother will ask her eleven-year-old son to sleep in the same bed with her. She tells her son that she is lonely and does not want to sleep alone.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

11. This eleven-year-old girl tells her friends that she sleeps in the same bed with her parents. When asked, the parents say that they have been doing this since the girl was a little child. They say that they are used to it and feel comfortable with it.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

12. An eight-year-old girl comes to school and the teacher notices that there are red marks all over her neck and back. When asked, the girl says she was not feeling well last night, and her mother scratched her repeatedly on the neck and back with a spoon to try to make her feel better.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

13. A child was running away from his mother in an attempt to escape from being spanked. The child had reached the front door when the mother caught up with the child and pulled him back into the house by his arm. By pulling, the child's shoulder became dislocated.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

14. A father, in disciplining his child, spanked the child across the buttocks. From the force of the blow the child hit an adjacent wall head first, which resulted in a bleeding cut on the child's head.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

15. A parent is angered with the child for no apparent reason. In this anger the parent places the child's hand on a hot burner of the stove.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

16. This ten-year-old girl's parent yells at her when she doesn't do her homework correctly. They call her "stupid, idiot" and tell her that she will never succeed in life.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

17. Whenever this 13-year old girl comes home from school, her father hugs her in a way that makes her feel uncomfortable, often touching her breast in the process.

Circle one number:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no abuse or neglect			moderate abuse/neglect			very severe abuse/neglect

Circle one letter indicating the action to be taken:

(A) nothing needs to be done about this situation

(B) the family members should meet and discuss what needs to be done about the issue

(C) the family should be encouraged to seek professional help

(D) the child protective agency should be notified to investigate and help the family.

APPENDIX C

Parent/Caregiver-Child Relationship Questionnaire

Below are a series of questions on how your primary caregiver(s), who may have been your mother, father and/or another adult serving as your primary caretaker, acted toward you during your elementary and high school years. There are a total of 80 questions. The first 40 questions are about how your mother or primary female caregiver acted toward you and the second 40 questions are how your father or primary male caregiver adult acted toward you.

Answer the following questions based on **one** of the following:

Raised by both male and female caregivers

If during your elementary and high-school years, you were raised by both a male and female caregiver, **answer questions 1 to 80.**

Raised by female caregiver only

If during your elementary and high school years, you were raised by a female caregiver only, **answer questions 1 to 40 (skip questions 41 to 80).**

Raised by male caregiver only

If during your elementary and high school years, you were raised by a male caregiver only, **answer questions 41 to 80 (skip questions 1 to 40).**

Please answer the questions about your primary care giver by circling the number that corresponds to the answer that most closely describes your primary care giver. For example, if the statement was **never** true of your care giver, you would circle **1**, (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). If the statement was sometimes true of your caregiver, you would circle **3**, (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). If the statement was very often true of your caregiver, you would circle **5**, (1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

Female Caregiver

My primary FEMALE care giver	Never	Only once in a while	Some-times	Often	Very Often
1. felt hurt when I didn't follow her advice.	1	2	3	4	5
2. spanked me as punishment.	1	2	3	4	5
3. let me know what was expected.	1	2	3	4	5
4. spent a lot of time with me.	1	2	3	4	5
5. set very few rules.	1	2	3	4	5
6. was too busy to answer my questions.	1	2	3	4	5
7. explained why she punished me.	1	2	3	4	5
8. allowed me to hold my own point of view.	1	2	3	4	5
9. wanted to know how I spent my time away from home.	1	2	3	4	5
10. had difficulty being strict.	1	2	3	4	5
11. still supported me when I made a poor decision.	1	2	3	4	5
12. tried to reason with me when she thought I was wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
13. acted distant from me as if I disappointed her.	1	2	3	4	5
14. complained about me.	1	2	3	4	5
15. used force to make me conform.	1	2	3	4	5
16. would allow me to decide for myself on important matters without interfering.	1	2	3	4	5
17. made it easy for me to confide in her.	1	2	3	4	5
18. expected a lot from me.	1	2	3	4	5
19. acted as though I was in the way.	1	2	3	4	5
20. would explain the reason for her rules.	1	2	3	4	5
21. punished me.	1	2	3	4	5

Female Caregiver

My primary FEMALE care giver	Never	Only once in a while	Some-times	Often	Very Often
22. made me feel bad if I didn't spend time with the family.	1	2	3	4	5
23. thought my ideas were foolish.	1	2	3	4	5
24. made me feel as though my behavior reflected on her as a parent.	1	2	3	4	5
25. would physically restrict or punish me to make me obey.	1	2	3	4	5
26. made me feel that what I did was important.	1	2	3	4	5
27. would say, "just because I said so," when I questioned her rules.	1	2	3	4	5
28. let me do pretty much as I wanted to.	1	2	3	4	5
29. allowed me to have secrets from her.	1	2	3	4	5
30. made it clear who was boss.	1	2	3	4	5
31. took my point of view into consideration when making regulations.	1	2	3	4	5
32. would force me to obey by withdrawing privileges.	1	2	3	4	5
33. let me decide for myself what is right and wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
34. let me off easy when I did something wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
35. punished me by making me feel guilty and ashamed.	1	2	3	4	5
36. explained how my actions made others feel.	1	2	3	4	5
37. was strict.	1	2	3	4	5
38. encouraged me to explore new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
39. seemed annoyed with me.	1	2	3	4	5
40. made me stay in my room as punishment.	1	2	3	4	5

Male Caregiver

My primary MALE care giver	Never	Only once in a while	Some-times	Often	Very Often
41. felt hurt when I didn't follow his advice.	1	2	3	4	5
42. spanked me as punishment.	1	2	3	4	5
43. let me know what was expected.	1	2	3	4	5
44. spent a lot of time with me.	1	2	3	4	5
45. set very few rules.	1	2	3	4	5
46. was too busy to answer my questions.	1	2	3	4	5
47. explained why he punished me.	1	2	3	4	5
48. allowed me to hold my own point of view.	1	2	3	4	5
49. wanted to know how I spent my time away from home.	1	2	3	4	5
50. had difficulty being strict.	1	2	3	4	5
51. still supported me when I made a poor decision.	1	2	3	4	5
52. tried to reason with me when he thought I was wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
53. acted distant from me as if I disappointed him.	1	2	3	4	5
54. complained about me.	1	2	3	4	5
55. used force to make me conform.	1	2	3	4	5
56. would allow me to decide for myself on important matters without interfering.	1	2	3	4	5
57. made it easy for me to confide in him.	1	2	3	4	5
58. expected a lot from me.	1	2	3	4	5
59. acted as though I was in the way.	1	2	3	4	5
60. would explain the reason for his rules.	1	2	3	4	5
61. punished me.	1	2	3	4	5

Male Caregiver My primary MALE care giver	Never	Only once in a while	Some-times	Often	Very Often
62. made me feel bad if I didn't spend time with the family.	1	2	3	4	5
63. thought my ideas were foolish.	1	2	3	4	5
64. made me feel as though my behavior reflected on him as a parent.	1	2	3	4	5
65. would physically restrict or punish me to make me obey.	1	2	3	4	5
66. made me feel that what I did was important.	1	2	3	4	5
67. would say, "just because I said so," when I questioned his rules.	1	2	3	4	5
68. let me do pretty much as I wanted to.	1	2	3	4	5
69. allowed me to have secrets from him.	1	2	3	4	5
70. made it clear who was boss.	1	2	3	4	5
71. took my point of view into consideration when making regulations.	1	2	3	4	5
72. would force me to obey by withdrawing privileges.	1	2	3	4	5
73. let me decide for myself what is right and wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
74. let me off easy when I did something wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
75. punished me by making me feel guilty and ashamed.	1	2	3	4	5
76. explained how my actions made others feel.	1	2	3	4	5
77. was strict.	1	2	3	4	5
78. encouraged me to explore new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
79. seemed annoyed with me.	1	2	3	4	5
80. made me stay in my room as punishment.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX D

Participant Informed Consent Form
Child-Rearing Experiences and Views of Parent/Child Interactions Among American and Taiwan Young Adults

The purpose of this study is to investigate young adult's views of care giver/child interactions. The questionnaire that follows is part of a research project that is being conducted at California State University, San Bernardino. Participation will involve approximately 30 minutes. The questionnaires will assess child-rearing experiences, parent/child interactions and the extent to which the interactions are perceived as abusive or negligent, and, if abusive, what action should be taken. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. While it is extremely helpful to this study to have you answer all questions, you may leave any question blank if you wish not to answer it. Your participation is voluntary and you may stop at anytime without penalty.

Your name will not be included in any of the data, and ANONYMITY WILL BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES. All information collected in this study will be treated as confidential, with no details released to anyone outside the research staff.

This study is being conducted by Susan Donahoo under the direction of Dr. Faith H. McClure, Ph.D., Psychology Department, California State University, San Bernardino. Permission has been granted for data collection by Dr. Linda Lai under the supervision of Dr. Chi-Pang Chiang at National Chengchi University in Taipei, Taiwan. You may contact Professor Faith McClure at (909) 880-5598 any time with your questions, comments, or concerns. You may also contact the California State University, San Bernardino Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies, 880-5058. This study has been approved by the Psychology Department Human Subject Review Board. A brief written summary of the group results will be made available during June, 1995, through the Psychology Department at California State University, San Bernardino.

_____ _____

Signature Date

APPENDIX E

Debriefing

Thank you for participating in this study. As indicated in the informed consent form, the purpose of the study is to investigate child-rearing experiences and perceptions of care giver/child interactions which may or may not be perceived as abusive or negligent among adults in the United States and Taiwan. It is hoped that information gathered in this study will help in our understanding of how culture impacts parent/child rearing practices and views of parent/child interactions.

If this questionnaire has caused you any discomfort or distress, the CSUSB Counseling Center provides free therapy to students. You may reach the Counseling Center at 880-5040 or go to their office which is located in the Health Center.

If you have any concerns, questions about this research project, or would like to find out what the results of this study (which will be available in June, 1995) please contact:

Dr. Faith McClure
California State University, San Bernardino
Psychology Department
5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, CA 92407
Phone: (909)880-5598

Susan Donahoo
Phone: (909)987-6725

APPENDIX F

Debriefing

Thank you for participating in this study. As indicated in the informed consent form, the purpose of the study is to investigate child-rearing experiences and perceptions of care giver/child interactions which may or may not be perceived as abusive or negligent among adults in the United States and Taiwan. It is hoped that information gathered in this study will help in our understanding of how culture impacts parent/child rearing practices and views of parent/child interactions.

If this questionnaire has caused you any discomfort or distress, or if you have any questions about this research project, or would like to find out what the results of this study (which will be available in June, 1995) please contact:

Dr. Chi-Pang Chiang
National Chengchi University
Taipei, Taiwan

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