

Abstract

The caregiving style between Chinese mothers and Filipino maids in Hong Kong was compared. 42 adults (21 mothers and 21 Filipino maids) and 44 children (12 girls and 9 boys were with their mothers and 11 girls and 12 boys were with Filipino maids) were selected as the targets of the study. The children was aged from four to eight (average at 5.7 years old). Two kinds of research methods: field observations and questionnaires were used to explore the amount of interaction and style of discipline between the two groups of caregivers. In addition, the “improper” behaviors of children who were with their mothers and those who were with Filipino maids during observation were examined. The results indicated that there is more interaction and caregiving, included both verbal and non-verbal caregiving, from mothers than Filipino maids to children. The conversation between mothers and children is also more, whereas children with Filipino maids showed more improper behaviors. On the other hand, children gave more non-verbal care to Filipino maids than mothers but rated their mothers and Filipino maids equally in most kinds of discipline. These results suggest that children have a good perception of their Filipino maids, even though they do not appear to be as focused on caregiving and interacting with children as the children’s own mothers.