

Abstract

The present study examines fathers' and mothers' roles in Hong Kong Chinese families. It combines the use of both questionnaires and naturalistic observations in a public setting with a total of 30 families with 40 children aged 4 to 8 year-old. The following aspects were examined: power possession, caregiving behaviors and the frequency of parent-child interactions. No significant differences in behaviors were observed between fathers and mothers. Similarly, neither the parent nor the child questionnaires showed significant differences in their perceptions of fathers' and mothers' roles in families. Since research on Hong Kong Chinese father roles is minimal, this study provides a more realistic picture of contemporary fatherhood in Hong Kong. It is hoped that through the understanding of father roles in Hong Kong, the problem of distant father-child relationships can be tackled and an optimal and healthy environment for children growth can be targeted.