

## ABSTRACT

The present study examined the role of theory of mind and family interaction in empathy development of 39 Cantonese-speaking preschool children (20 males, 19 females; aged 5.1 to 6.3 years) in Hong Kong. It was hypothesized that family factors such as secure attachment style, sibling relationship and nurturing parenting style provided the very foundation for the development of empathy. With these family factors, theory of mind skill and language skill of a child were enhanced which in turn facilitated the development of empathy. However, results did not support these predictions. They did not show any correlations between empathy on the one hand, and theory of mind and family factors on the other, such a lack of results reveals methodological and measurement errors in the present study. More objective and scientific methods in measuring empathy were suggested.