

Abstract of thesis entitled:

Testing a Tripartite Model of Parenting and Children's Achievement

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A tripartite model of parenting proposed by Darling and Steinberg (1993) conceptualizes parental influence in three distinct components: parental goals, parenting emotional style, and parenting practices. The present study examined the extent to which such a conceptualization is helpful in understanding the processes of parental influence in relation to academic achievement in children. Data from 157 parent-child dyads in Hong Kong were obtained (children's ages ranged from 10 to 12.5 years). Parent and child reports on the three parenting measures showed moderate to high levels of convergence. Yet children in general reported higher levels of socialization goal importance and lower levels of perceived achievement demands than their parents did. Multitrait multimethod (MTMM) confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) suggested that the proposed parenting constructs exhibited convergent and divergent validity. In subsequent model comparisons, it was found that the tripartite model had superior fit over three other alternative models which possessed advantages in parsimony. Hence, the segregation of the three parenting concepts tended to be appropriate and useful in understanding different sources of parental influence. Results from structural equation modeling also revealed that the three parenting concepts represented functionally distinct processes of socialization. Specifically, parents who held socialization goals as important exercised more education-specific practices and tended to create an emotionally positive environment directed towards the attainment of those goals. While parenting practices were directly related to child academic achievement, parental goals and parenting emotional climate served as distal sources in explaining parenting behaviors and their relations to child outcome.