

**Parental Expectation towards Early Childhood Education in Hong Kong:
A Comparative Study between Hong Kong and Pakistani Parents**

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Statement of Originality

I, declare that this research report represents my own work under the supervision of *Dr. Li Jianbin*, and that it has not been submitted previously for examination to any tertiary institution.

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Abstract

Parental expectation has profound impacts on children's later achievements. The relationship between parental expectation and children's academic achievement is robust across cultures. Pakistani is one of the ethnic minority groups in Hong Kong. There is an achievement gap between Hong Kong and Pakistani children. Therefore, this research aimed to study the role of culture in parental expectation towards early childhood education between Hong Kong ($N = 214$; age: $M_{\text{age}} = 35.49$ years, $SD = 5.55$) and Pakistani Hong Kong ($N = 73$; age: $M_{\text{age}} = 34.69$ years, $SD = 5.19$) parents employing the parental expectation scale. The scale measured parental expectation on collective life, self-control, moral development, cognition and language, sensitivity of body, living habits, and aesthetic development. The East Asian Acculturation Measure was also used to measure the degree of acculturation of Pakistani parents and to examine the associations between acculturation and parental expectation. Results of MANCOVA showed the main effect of culture on parental expectation was significant on collective life and moral development; the main effect of gender on parental expectation was significant on living habit. More importantly, their interaction effect was significant across all dimensions. Further independent t-tests found that parental expectation towards Pakistani boys was significantly higher than Hong Kong boys in all dimensions while parental expectation towards girls was not significant in all dimensions between Hong Kong and Pakistani parents. Moreover, results of regression analysis found that the acculturation strategy of integration was positively associated with parental expectation on collective life, cognition and language, and aesthetic development; marginalization was positively associated with parental expectation on collective life, self-control, and aesthetic development. This study can deepen the understanding of the role of culture in parental expectation towards early childhood education and the role of acculturation in parental

expectation in ethnic minority groups in Hong Kong. The findings can also shed light on the improvement of early childhood services provided to both Hong Kong and Pakistani children.

Keywords: parental expectation, early childhood education, cross-cultural comparison, Hong Kong, Pakistan, gender

Parental Expectation towards Early Childhood Education in Hong Kong: A Comparative Study between Hong Kong and Pakistani Parents

Parental expectation towards education refers to parental belief and judgment about children's future educational achievement as reflected by school performance (Ma, Siu, & Tse, 2018). Parental expectation has significant impacts on children's academic outcomes (Areepattamannil & Lee, 2014; Neuenschwander, Vida, Garrett, & Eccles, 2007; Raleigh & Kao, 2010; Reese et al., 2016). Early childhood education (ECE) is the first stage of school education. Cognitive and socio-emotional development in this period is the cornerstone for future outcomes (Malhi, Sidhu, & Bharti, 2014). This indicates that parental expectation towards ECE is particularly salient.

The belief of “winning at the starting line” prevails in Hong Kong. Hong Kong parents emphasize the importance of education, even ECE, in increasing their children's future competence. In such a competitive society, ethnic minority (EM) children, especially South Asians, may be at disadvantages to compete with local children. There is an academic achievement gap between South Asian children and Hong Kong children (Cheung, Lai, Wu, & Ku, 2015). Therefore, to understand EM parents' expectation towards ECE is a crucial step to close the gap. There is a dearth of literature in parental expectation towards ECE of both Hong Kong and Pakistani parents. In this study, I compared the expectation towards ECE of Pakistani parents with Hong Kong parents. I also examined the role of acculturation in parental expectation. Moreover, qualitative in-depth interviews dominant in this area given the limited EM population (Bhowmik & Hue, 2018; Bhowmik, Kennedy, & Hue, 2018; Hue & Kennedy, 2014). This study attempts to employ a quantitative method to give a better generalization of the issue.

Why Pakistanis?

In Hong Kong, EM is generally studied in terms of a group; however, recent study

suggests that EM needs to be studied separately due to cultural differences among different EM groups (Cheung & Chou, 2018). Several reasons make the need to focus on Pakistani parental expectation towards ECE particularly salient. Firstly, Pakistani is one of the lowest academically achieving EM groups in Hong Kong (Cheung, Lai, Wu, & Ku, 2015). Secondly, they are the most underprivileged among the EM groups (Census and Statistics Department, 2017). There are around 19 000 Pakistanis in Hong Kong in 2016 (Census and Statistics Department, 2017). Among the EM in Hong Kong, Pakistani population has the highest poverty rate of 57% (Census and Statistics Department, 2017). The median monthly income is \$12 750 and 50% of the Pakistani population rely on social security benefits received from the Government (Census and Statistics Department, 2017; Tsung & Gao, 2012). Lastly, Pakistani parents have the lowest human capital in education (Census and Statistics Department, 2017; Cheung & Chou, 2018). The cultural deprivation theory asserts that families of low socioeconomic status possess inferior cultural capital which accounts for children's underachievement (Wax & Wax, 1964). Pakistani children's education may be adversely affected given limited cultural capital.

Parental Expectation

In psychology, the expectancy-value theory postulates expectation for success and task value being the primary determinants of task motivation and success (Eccles et al., 1983). Expectation for school success and value of schooling are shaped by parental expectation and child characteristics. Being children's primary socializing agent, parents transmit the expectation for children's school success and value of schooling to children which in turn influences children's self-efficacy and academic achievement. Meta-analytic findings revealed the effect size of parental expectation on academic achievement was the largest among various components of parental involvement (Fan & Chen, 2001).

In this study, I examined parental expectation towards ECE following the Hong Kong

Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide. According to the Guide, the aims of the curriculum are to foster children's balanced development in five domains (Curriculum Development Council, 2017). The five domains are cognitive and language development, affective and social development, physical development, moral development, and aesthetic development (Curriculum Development Council, 2017). Zhou, Ma and Hajime (2007) devised a questionnaire to examine parental expectation towards ECE. In this study, I employed this questionnaire to measure parental expectation towards cognition and language, collective life, self-control, sensitivity of body, and living habits. In order to assess parental expectation towards moral and aesthetic development, I devised questions to measure the two dimensions.

The Role of Culture and Child's Gender on Parental Expectation towards ECE

The Role of Culture on Parental Expectation towards ECE

The cultural difference theory points out that people raised in different cultural settings are likely to have different approaches to learning (Nieto, 1996). In Hong Kong, the heritage educational culture towards ECE of Pakistani families is in conflict with the dominant host culture. With different cultural background, Pakistani parents are likely to have different cultural meanings towards ECE when compared to Hong Kong parents and parental expectation towards ECE is likely to be different.

Although Confucian values are declining in Asian societies due to modernization, its heritage culture permeates contemporary Hong Kong society. Under Confucianism, collectivism is valued and the society is hierarchically ordered in which every person bears a specific role in the hierarchical social position (Fan, Zhang, & Wang, 2017). Harmony, which is a crucial Confucian value, is maintained when members in the society fulfill their obligations (Kim & Park, 2000). With respect to the family, family members bear the responsibility of bringing honor or face (*mianzi*) to the family from success or other possible

ostentatious achievements (Hwang, Francesco, & Kessler, 2003; Kim & Park, 2000). Parents have the social obligation to train their children on an achievement-oriented basis (Chao, 1994). Bearing this specific obligation, Hong Kong parents are willing to devote themselves selflessly for their children's education regardless of socioeconomic status (Kim & Park, 2000; Yuen, Park, Chen, & Cheng, 2017). The ethic of filial piety (*xiao*) embodies the governing principle of the role of children and repayment (*bao*) is emphasized (Chen, 2014). Repayment echoes the norm of reciprocity of social exchange theory that the receiver of a benefit is obligated to repay the benefactor so that balance is restored (Cooper-Thomas & Morrison, 2018). Repayment by children also serves the function of upholding family honor. Therefore, parents may place high expectation on children and invest heavily in them with the belief that parental investment is positively related to future honor brought to the family.

Among the Asian cities, Hong Kong is one of the most competitive and affluent. In "Science as a Vocation", Max Weber (1975) wrote "the fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization, and, above all, by the disenchantment of the world" (p.155). Weber depicted capitalist society as an iron cage that people are trapped in devoting their lives in money-making while anything else such as spiritual welfare is seen irrational (Maley, 2004). Under the competitive Hong Kong capitalist society, people pursue status and wealth under the great forces of neoliberalism which further exacerbates achievement-oriented parental expectation (Koh, 2014). When education is viewed with a lens of functional theory of stratification, it serves the meritocratic function of selection and social stratification in which education helps select and place members in different societal positions (Davis & Moore, 1945). In Hong Kong, the education system is highly competitive and students undergo the process of selection by standardized tests. Under the competitive environment, Hong Kong parents emphasize the instrumental function of education (Tan, 2014). With deep-rooted credentialism, parents place high expectation towards children's

education (Chao, 1994; Koh, 2014; Yuen et al., 2017). They are referred to as having “education fever” which means exaggeration of academic attainment pursuit on children (Kim & Bang, 2017). Many Hong Kong parents also believe in “winning at the starting line” which they perceive early academic learning for children in preschool crucial to later academic success and achievements (Yang & Li, 2018). In Hong Kong, there is nearly universal attendance in ECE though it is not mandatory (Education Bureau, 2019; Wong & Rao, 2015). It is not uncommon to see kindergarten students being extensively involved in different extra-curricular activities or even tutorial classes with a view of winning at the starting line.

In Pakistan, the state religion is Islam. Similar to a Confucian society, collectivism is emphasized in the Islamic high-context society (Al-Krenawi & Graham, 2000). Belief towards child-rearing in the two systems of thought is similar. Pakistani parents, especially mothers, bear the primary responsibility of being the trainer for better advancement of children (Rauf & Junaid, 2017; Stewart et al., 1999). Children are expected to be obedient and shoulder the responsibility of bringing family honor (*Izzat*) which is parallel to the Chinese concern for face (*mianzi*) (Stewart et al., 1999). Parental expectation towards children’s education is likely to be high because return of education is positively associated with honor brought to the family.

However, Pakistani parents tend to have a relatively lower parental expectation towards ECE when compared to Hong Kong parents owing to the country’s scant investment in education. Pakistan which is a developing country relies heavily on the agriculture sector. The country faces the challenge of low rates of literacy (United Nations Development Programme, 2019). However, the investment in education is low that only two percent of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was spent on education while many developing countries invested four percent of its GDP on education (Arifeen, 2015). For the ECE sector,

it is undeveloped. Formal education starts from grade one and education policies do not guarantee access to ECE in the public sector (Deeba & Anjum, 2012; Ministry of Education, 2003). Preschool education is provided by the private sector while *Kachi* which are unofficial classes for children aged from three to six are organized in government primary schools (Ahmad, 2011; Hussain & Sultan, 2010). Owing to the high cost of attending private schools and insufficient provision of *Kachi* classes, the enrolment rate in ECE has remained fairly low over the four years ranging from 39% in 2014 to 36% in 2018 (South Asian Forum for Education Development & Idara-e-Taleem-o-Agahi, 2019). Some parents are ignorant of such provision and they would prefer to send their children only when they reach primary school age (Bhowmik & Kennedy, 2016).

Moreover, for EM parents such as Pakistani parents living in Hong Kong, their expectation towards ECE is not only affected by their heritage culture, but also the cultures and norms in the host culture (Tam & Chan, 2015). Acculturation comprehends the process of change when individuals with different culture interact with each other and changes in host cultural patterns in either or both groups may occur (Berry, 1997). During acculturation, acculturating groups which are the Pakistanis need to deal with two issues, cultural maintenance as well as contact and participation. There are four acculturation strategies, namely assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization (Berry, 1997). Assimilation happens when individual adopts dominant culture over host culture; separation happens when individual rejects dominant culture but favors host culture; integration occurs when individual adopts dominant culture and at the same time maintaining host culture; marginalization happens when individual rejects both dominant and host culture (Berry, 1997). In Hong Kong, dominant education belief of “winning at the starting line” prevails and parents tend to hold high expectation towards ECE (Chao, 1994; Koh, 2014; Yuen et al., 2017). It is predicted that Pakistanis who are more assimilated or integrated may endorse the

dominant belief and have high expectation towards ECE than those who are separated or marginalized. Moreover, example of Latinos and African immigrants in the United States reveals that immigrant parents have high educational expectation for their children (Kumi-Yeboah & Tsevi, 2018). Those immigrant parents recognize the importance of pursuing college-level education for better future prospects.

The Role of Child's Gender on Parental Expectation towards ECE

The expectancy-value theory proposes that gender-related beliefs shape parental expectation (Eccles et al., 1983). Gender role ideology states the progression of gender roles from traditional, transitional to egalitarian (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2016). Traditional gender role ideology refers to the socially expected gender roles while egalitarian attitude emphasizes non-segregation of roles by gender. Transitional perspective lies in between traditional segregation and egalitarian non-segregation. Transition in gender roles is undergone in the Hong Kong context. Under the traditional Chinese culture, deep-seated gender roles portraying male as the breadwinner and women as the homemaker may still exist. However, due to feminist movement and change in the world economy, transition of gender roles from traditional to egalitarian ones is observed in Hong Kong. In the 1970s, rapid industrialization in Hong Kong created job opportunities for women and women started to participate in the workforce. In the modern days, women are highly educated as their male counterparts and some of them even take up crucial roles in the society (Census and Statistics Department, 2017). Although female labor participation rate is still lower than that of male, the gender gap was narrowed over the past few years. The participation rate of female has increased from 47% of the female population in 2001 to 51% in 2018 while that of male decreased from 73% of the male population to 69% in 2018 (Census and Statistics Department, 2017). The rise in dual-income family challenges traditional gender role ideology. In a recent study on the trends of family attitudes and values in Hong Kong, a

majority of participants agreed that female can participate in the workforce and women can also make important decisions on household matters (Chow & Lum, 2008). This movement towards egalitarian gender roles suggests that parental expectation towards ECE between boys and girls may not have significant differences.

However, traditional gender roles still prevail in Pakistan. Gender is not only limited to social construction but also social stratification. In the patriarchal Pakistani society, there is hierarchy in gender orders and significant gender stratification in which men take privilege over women in daily life (Khurshid, 2015). Despite globalization and modernization, the traditional thought of women is made for men still persists and women's role is confined to a good wife and good mother (Agha et al., 2018; Stewart et al., 1999). They are responsible for all the household chores for the extended family and cannot participate in decision-making. In the aspect of education, father generally makes decisions on children's education. There are economic incentives to prioritize boys' education for the family's economic future. Girls' education is rarely viewed as important since daughters normally contribute to their husband's family. Even if girls are fortunate to receive education, they usually drop out of school at the age of puberty for marriage (Raj, McDougal, Silverman, & Rusch, 2014). In one study, the level of Indian parental expectation for sons was significantly higher than that of daughters (Subramaniam, 2011). Given similar gender stratification, Pakistani parental expectation towards ECE on girls is likely to be lower than that of boys.

The Current Study

This study aimed to examine the role of culture, child's gender and acculturation on parental expectation towards ECE between Hong Kong and Pakistani parents. Based on the above literature review, I assumed that there are cultural differences in parental expectation towards ECE between Hong Kong and Pakistani parents. I also assumed that child's gender needs to be taken into account when examining cultural differences. Moreover, I assumed

that there will be association between acculturation and parental expectation. Number of child, parent's social economic status, parental role and parental age were considered as covariates in this study.

Method

Participants and Procedure

A convenience sample of 214 Hong Kong parents (46 fathers, 168 mothers, age range = 21 – 56 years, $M_{\text{age}} = 35.49$ years, $SD = 5.55$) and 73 Pakistani parents (29 fathers, 44 mothers, age range = 22 – 45 years, $M_{\text{age}} = 34.69$ years, $SD = 5.19$) participated in this study. I recruited the Hong Kong samples from kindergartens and the Pakistani samples from non-profit organizations in Hong Kong. Among the kindergarten children of Hong Kong parents, 125 of them were boys and 89 of them were girls ($M_{\text{age}} = 3.71$ years, $SD = 1.13$). For the children of Pakistani parents, there were 41 boys and 32 girls ($M_{\text{age}} = 4.12$ years, $SD = 0.83$). Table 1 summarizes the demographics of the two groups of participants.

[INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

Before data collection, I sequentially obtained approval by the human research ethical committee of the Education University of Hong Kong, written consent from kindergartens or non-profit organizations and parents. Kindergartens helped distribute paper-and-pencil questionnaires to Hong Kong parents while the Pakistani parents filled in paper-and-pencil questionnaires at the non-profit organizations. Due to illiteracy of some Pakistani parents, Pakistani interpreters in the non-profit organizations provided interpretation service to those parents. The average time of completing a questionnaire was 30 minutes. Voluntary participation and anonymity were highlighted. No reward was given after participation.

Measures

Parental Expectation towards ECE

I employed the scale of parental expectation towards ECE (Zhou et al., 2007)

to assess parental expectation. Hong Kong parents answered the existing Chinese version of this scale. I followed a back translation procedure (Van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996) to translate the scale into Urdu for Pakistani parents. I used the collective life (20 items, sample item is “lend toys to friends and play together”), self-control (20 items, sample item is “refrain from eating snacks when having a stomachache”), cognition and language (30 items, sample item is “write his/her name correctly”), sensitivity of body (20 items, sample item is “ride on a bike without auxiliary tires”), and living habits (20 items, sample item is “wash hands when hands are dirty”) subscales. To assess moral and aesthetic development, I wrote 10 items for each domain (sample item for moral development is “not to laugh at classmates of different races”; sample item for aesthetic development is “participate in different types of music and dance”). All items are rated on a 5-point scale (from 1 = *extremely low expectation* to 5 = *extremely high expectation*). A higher score indicates a higher parental expectation towards a specific dimension of ECE. In this study, the Cronbach’s α was higher than .90 in all dimensions for both samples, except the dimension of sensitivity of body for the Pakistani sample ($\alpha = .88$) (Table 2).

Acculturation

I used the East Asian Acculturation Measure (Barry, 2001) to assess acculturation of Pakistani parents. I followed a back translation procedure (Van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996) to translate the inventory into Urdu. This scale measured the four types of acculturation strategies proposed by Berry (1997), assimilation (8 items, sample item is “I write better in Chinese than in Urdu”), separation (7 items, sample item is “most of the music I listen to is Pakistani music”), integration (5 items, sample item is “I tell jokes both in Chinese and Urdu”), and marginalization (9 items, sample item is “I sometimes feel that neither Chinese nor Pakistanis like me”) in terms of communication styles and social interactions in different settings. All items are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale (from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 =

strongly agree), with a higher score indicating a higher orientation towards a specific type of acculturation strategy. The Cronbach's α was .93 for assimilation, .86 for integration, .94 for separation, and .84 for marginalization.

Demographic Variables

I collected demographic variables from the participants regarding their age, family monthly household income, child's age, child's birth order, number of child in the family, parental role (1 = *father*, 2 = *mother*), father's and mother's educational attainment (1 = *middle school or below*, 2 = *high school*, 3 = *diploma/ certificate/ associate degree*, 4 = *bachelor's degree*, 5 = *master's degree or above*), and child's gender (1 = *boy*, 2 = *girl*).

Data Analysis

I used SPSS 25.0 to analyze the data and .05 as the conventional level of significance. I first calculated descriptive statistics. In order to examine the role of culture and gender on parental expectation towards ECE, I carried out MANCOVA to examine the main effects of culture, gender and their interaction effect on parental expectation towards ECE, controlling for socio-economic status, parental role, parental age and number of child. I would take into account the effect size of the significance, with .01, .06, and .14 of η^2_p representing small, medium, and large effect size (Richardson, 2011). If the interaction effect is significant, I would further employ independent t-tests to examine cultural differences in parental expectation towards ECE by gender. Moreover, in order to examine the role of acculturation on parental expectation towards ECE of Pakistani parents, I calculated bivariate correlations to measure the associations between acculturation and parental expectation towards ECE, with .10, .30, and .50 of correlation coefficient representing small, medium, and large effect size (Cohen, 1992). Partial correlations controlling for socio-economic status, child's gender, parental role, parental age and number of child were also calculated. Lastly, I conducted linear regression analysis to further look into the association between acculturation and each

dimension of parental expectation towards ECE controlling for socio-economic status, child's gender, parental role, parental age and number of child.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents means and standard deviations of parental expectation towards ECE. Both Hong Kong and Pakistani parents had high expectation towards ECE in all dimensions. In particular, both samples had relatively high expectation towards living habits. The Pakistani parents also placed high expectation on moral development. However, the parental expectation towards sensitivity of body of both samples was below the mid-point.

[INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

The Role of Culture and Child's Gender on Parental Expectation towards ECE

Table 3 summarizes the result of MANCOVA. With regards to the main effect of culture, the results showed a significant multivariate effect, Wilks' $\lambda = .89$, $F(7, 248) = 4.23$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .107$. Significant differences were found between the two cultures in collective life, $F(7, 248) = 12.44$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .047$, self-control, $F(7, 248) = 4.71$, $p = .031$, $\eta^2_p = .018$, and moral development, $F(7, 248) = 13.06$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .049$. No significant differences were found in cognition and language, $F(7, 248) = 1.83$, $p = .178$, $\eta^2_p = .007$, sensitivity of body, $F(7, 248) = 2.09$, $p = .149$, $\eta^2_p = .008$, living habits, $F(7, 248) = 3.05$, $p = .082$, $\eta^2_p = .012$, and aesthetic development, $F(7, 248) = 0.74$, $p = .390$, $\eta^2_p = .003$.

With respect to the main effect of gender, the multivariate effect was insignificant, Wilks' $\lambda = .96$, $F(7, 248) = 1.35$, $p = .226$, $\eta^2_p = .037$. Significant differences were only found in living habits, $F(7, 248) = 4.26$, $p = .040$, $\eta^2_p = .016$. No significant differences were found in collective life, $F(7, 248) = 2.01$, $p = .158$, $\eta^2_p = .008$, self-control, $F(7, 248) =$

1.53, $p = .218$, $\eta^2_p = .006$, moral development, $F(7, 248) = 1.31$, $p = .253$, $\eta^2_p = .005$, cognition and language, $F(7, 248) = 1.83$, $p = .178$, $\eta^2_p = .007$, sensitivity of body, $F(7, 248) = 0.02$, $p = .893$, $\eta^2_p < .001$, and aesthetic development, $F(7, 248) = 1.16$, $p = .282$, $\eta^2_p = .005$.

For the interaction effect, a highly significant multivariate effect was revealed, Wilks' $\lambda = .90$, $F(7, 248) = 4.16$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p < .105$. Significant differences were found in all dimensions. The interaction effect was significant in collective life, $F(7, 248) = 26.84$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .096$, self-control, $F(7, 248) = 11.64$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .044$, moral development, $F(7, 248) = 11.66$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2_p = .044$, cognition and language, $F(7, 248) = 15.47$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .057$, sensitivity of body, $F(7, 248) = 7.40$, $p = .007$, $\eta^2_p = .028$, living habits, $F(7, 248) = 12.46$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .047$, and aesthetic development, $F(7, 248) = 13.71$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .051$. A medium effect size was found in collective life. A small effect size was found in other dimensions.

[INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

Given the significance of the interaction effect, I used independent t-tests to further examine cultural differences in parental expectation towards ECE by gender. As shown in table 4, parental expectation towards Pakistani boys was significantly higher than Hong Kong boys in all dimensions with a large effect size. For collective life, parental expectation towards Pakistani boys ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.70$) was significantly higher than that of Hong Kong boys ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.71$) ($t_{(160)} = -7.04$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.28$) Regarding self-control, parental expectation towards Pakistani boys ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.63$) was also significantly higher than Hong Kong boys ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.69$) ($t_{(162)} = -5.38$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 0.98$). With respect to moral development, expectation scores towards Pakistani

boys ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 0.47$) were significantly higher than that of Hong Kong boys ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.78$) ($t_{(115)} = -7.35$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.16$). For cognition and language, scores towards Pakistani boys ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.72$) were significantly higher than that of Hong Kong boys ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 0.84$) ($t_{(161)} = -4.99$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 0.93$). As for sensitivity of body, parental expectation towards Pakistani boys ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.56$) was significantly higher than that of Hong Kong boys ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 0.73$) ($t_{(163)} = -5.59$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.08$). For living habits, scores towards Pakistani boys ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 0.48$) were significantly higher than that of Hong Kong boys ($M = 3.99$, $SD = 0.83$) ($t_{(121)} = -6.25$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 0.97$). Regarding aesthetic development, parental expectation towards Pakistani boys ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.81$) was significantly higher than that of Hong Kong boys ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.95$) ($t_{(163)} = -4.46$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 0.84$).

However, no significant differences were revealed between Hong Kong and Pakistani girls in all dimensions. Regarding collective life, no significant difference was found between Hong Kong ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.67$) and Pakistani girls ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.76$) ($t_{(119)} = 0.94$, $p = .351$, Cohen's $d = 0.18$). For self-control, the difference in expectation towards Hong Kong ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.65$) and Pakistani girls ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.72$) ($t_{(117)} = 0.49$, $p = .627$, Cohen's $d = 0.10$) was insignificant. With respect to moral development, difference in expectation scores towards Hong Kong ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.68$) and Pakistani girls ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.79$) ($t_{(119)} = -0.01$, $p = .989$, Cohen's $d < 0.01$) was insignificant. Regarding cognition and language, no significant difference was revealed between Hong Kong ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.75$) and Pakistani girls ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.69$) ($t_{(118)} = 0.99$, $p = .324$, Cohen's $d = 0.21$). As for sensitivity of body, difference in parental expectation towards Hong Kong ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 0.73$) and Pakistani girls ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.54$) ($t_{(118)} = -0.76$, $p = .450$, Cohen's $d = 0.16$) was not significant. For living habits, no significant difference was found between Hong Kong ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 0.85$) and Pakistani girls ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 0.67$) ($t_{(118)} = 0.50$, $p = .621$,

Cohen's $d = 0.10$). For aesthetic development, difference in parental expectation between Hong Kong ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.95$) and Pakistani girls ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.89$) ($t_{(118)} = 1.65$, $p = .102$, Cohen's $d = 0.34$) was not significant.

[INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE]

The Role of Acculturation on Parental Expectation towards ECE

A bivariate correlation analysis was conducted to measure the associations between acculturation and parental expectation towards ECE. As shown in Table 5, assimilation and integration were positively related to all the seven dimensions and all the relations were significant. Assimilation was positively related to collective life ($r = .77$, $p < .001$), self-control ($r = .80$, $p < .001$), moral development ($r = .71$, $p < .001$), cognition and language ($r = .79$, $p < .001$), sensitivity of body ($r = .62$, $p < .001$), living habits ($r = .76$, $p < .001$), and aesthetic development ($r = .58$, $p < .001$). Integration was positively related to collective life ($r = .78$, $p < .001$), self-control ($r = .78$, $p < .001$), moral development ($r = .72$, $p < .001$), cognition and language ($r = .80$, $p < .001$), sensitivity of body ($r = .62$, $p < .001$), living habits ($r = .75$, $p < .001$), and aesthetic development ($r = .62$, $p < .001$). The effect size for all the above associations were large.

Separation and marginalization were negatively associated with all the seven dimensions and the associations were significant. Separation was negatively associated with collective life ($r = -.67$, $p < .001$), self-control ($r = -.74$, $p < .001$), moral development ($r = -.56$, $p < .001$), cognition and language ($r = -.65$, $p < .001$), sensitivity of body ($r = -.59$, $p < .001$), living habits ($r = -.61$, $p < .001$), and aesthetic development ($r = -.55$, $p < .001$). Marginalization was negatively associated with all the seven dimensions. It was negatively associated with collective life ($r = -.55$, $p < .001$), self-control ($r = -.49$, $p < .001$), moral development ($r = -.60$, $p < .001$), cognition and language ($r = -.57$, $p < .001$), sensitivity of body ($r = -.63$, $p < .001$), living habits ($r = -.59$, $p < .001$), and aesthetic development ($r =$

-.37, $p < .001$). The effect size for all the associations were large, except the relations of marginalization to self-control and aesthetic development which were reported to have a medium effect size.

[INSERT TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE]

A partial correlation analysis with number of child, child's gender, parental role, parental age and socio-economic status as covariates was conducted to further measure the associations between acculturation and parental expectation towards ECE. As shown in Table 6, assimilation and integration were positively related to all the seven dimensions and the relations were significant. Assimilation was positively related to collective life ($r = .58, p < .001$), self-control ($r = .64, p < .001$), moral development ($r = .53, p < .001$), cognition and language ($r = .65, p < .001$), sensitivity of body ($r = .48, p < .001$), living habits ($r = .53, p < .001$), and aesthetic development ($r = .38, p = .002$). Integration was positively related to collective life ($r = .59, p < .001$), self-control ($r = .61, p < .001$), moral development ($r = .56, p < .001$), cognition and language ($r = .65, p < .001$), sensitivity of body ($r = .45, p < .001$), living habits ($r = .54, p < .001$), and aesthetic development ($r = .45, p < .001$). The effect size for all the associations were large, except the associations between the two acculturation strategies and sensitivity of body as well as aesthetic development which were reported to have a medium effect size.

Separation and marginalization were negatively associated with all the dimensions but the associations were only significant in some of the dimensions. Separation was negatively associated with collective life ($r = -.46, p < .001$), self-control ($r = -.57, p < .001$), moral development ($r = -.29, p = .021$), cognition and language ($r = -.47, p < .001$), sensitivity of body ($r = -.47, p < .001$), living habits ($r = -.34, p = .006$), and aesthetic development ($r = -.41, p < .001$). Separation was associated with moral development with a small effect size. It was associated with collective life, cognition and language, sensitivity of body, living habits

and aesthetic development with a medium effect size. It was only associated with self-control with a large effect size. Marginalization was negatively associated with moral development ($r = -.33, p = .010$), sensitivity of body ($r = -.31, p = .014$), and living habits ($r = -.25, p = .047$). It was associated with moral development and sensitivity of body with a medium effect size while the association with living habits was reported to have a small effect size. For the other dimensions, the negative association was not significant.

[INSEST TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE]

To further examine the overall relationship between acculturation and parental expectation towards ECE, I conducted a linear regression analysis controlling for demographics. Table 7 summarizes the results. Regarding collective life, the model explained 70.9% variance. After controlling for demographic variables, integration ($B = .204, SE = .104, p = .049$) and marginalization ($B = .293, SE = .128, p = .025$) were positively related to parental expectation towards collective life. As for self-control, the model explained 71.1% variance. After controlling for demographic variables, marginalization ($B = .306, SE = .112, p = .008$) was significantly related to parental expectation towards self-control. For cognition and language, the model explained 75.1% variance. After controlling for demographic variables, integration ($B = .184, SE = .092, p = .048$) was significantly associated with parental expectation towards cognition and language. With respect to aesthetic development, the model explained 52.1% variance. After controlling for demographic variables, integration ($B = .339, SE = .144, p = .022$) and marginalization ($B = .381, SE = .177, p = .035$) were positively related to parental expectation towards aesthetic development. The influence of acculturation on parental expectation towards moral development, sensitivity of body and living habits was insignificant.

[INSERT TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE]

Discussion

The current research sought to compare parental expectation towards ECE between Hong Kong and Pakistani parents. The results revealed that interaction between culture and gender on parental expectation towards ECE was significant that parental expectation towards Pakistani boys was significantly higher than Hong Kong boys in all dimensions. Moreover, acculturation strategies of integration and marginalization were positively associated with some dimensions of parental expectation.

The Role of Culture and Child's Gender on Parental Expectation towards ECE

This study revealed that parental expectation towards Pakistani boys was significantly higher than Hong Kong boys while that of girls was not significant. A possible explanation is the differences in gender role ideology held by Hong Kong and Pakistani parents. Under the change in the world economy and feminist movement, transition from traditional gender stratification to egalitarian gender role ideology is undergone in Hong Kong. Women are not bound by household chores but actively participate in the workplace and take up crucial roles in the society. Since sons and daughters can both bring honor to the family by success or other ostentatious achievements, expectation differences between sons and daughters may not be significant. However, despite globalization and modernization, traditional gender role ideology is still held by Pakistani parents under the patriarchal Pakistani society (Agha, Syed, & Mirani, 2018). Hierarchy in gender order and significant gender stratification are observed. Female holds a subordinate position to male (Agha, et al., 2018). Pakistani parents believe that girls are to be married off and normally contribute to their husband's families while only boys can return the family with honor and move up the social ladder in the future. Therefore, there are economic incentives to prioritize boys' education for the family's economic future and they are likely to place higher expectation on boys' education.

The Role of Acculturation on Parental Expectation towards ECE

Acculturation orientation of parents is crucial to children's academic achievements.

Result of this study revealed that integration was positively related to some dimensions of parental expectation. Integrated parents participate in the host culture while at the same time retaining the protective factors of heritage culture. Though heritage Pakistani culture does not place much significant value on ECE, immigrant parents may learn about the high expectation of Hong Kong parents place on ECE owing to the belief of winning at the starting line. They can then flexibly adjust their degree of parental expectation and they tend to have high expectation towards ECE in order to fit in the competitive Hong Kong capitalist society. Moreover, integrated parents are likely to have higher self-esteem (Birman, 1998). This fosters self-efficacy of parenting and parents are likely to transmit their high expectation of children's school success and value of schooling to children.

Result of this study also revealed that marginalization was positively related to some aspects of parental expectation. Recent research suggested that marginalized immigrants were likely to pursue uniqueness and have positive mental health though they were detached from the host and heritage cultural groups (de la Sablonniere, Debrosse, & Benoit, 2010; Nigbur et al., 2008). They tend to understand and evaluate both host and heritage culture to develop their unique viewpoint (Debrosse, Sablonniere, & Rossignac-Milon, 2015; Jetten, Spears, & Postmes, 2004; Vignoles, Chrysochoou, & Breakwell, 2000). Apart from the high expectation towards ECE of Hong Kong parents and Pakistani parents' ignorance towards ECE, marginalized parents tend to have unique attitude towards education which gives rise to their high expectation. Since there is scant research examining this issue, further investigation is needed.

Implications

The research findings draw practical implications for practitioners from the Government and non-profit organizations to scale up support measures on the enhancement of Pakistani parental expectation. There are a number of educational intervention programs in

the United Kingdom to enhance parental expectation so as to improve children's academic achievement (Lupton & Kintrea, 2011). It is essential to enhance parental expectation of Pakistani parents so that children's academic achievement is likely to be boosted. Given the positive relation between integration and parental expectation, one possible way to enhance parental expectation is to foster integration of Pakistani parents into the host society. There are different initiation programs available for EM students. However, programs for parents are scant and relevant practitioners are recommended to scale up such programs. Once parents are more integrated into the local competitive education culture, they tend to have higher parental expectation which contributes to children's later academic achievement.

Moreover, research implication is discussed. Prior research generally focuses on general policies and resources available for minority students in education without taken into account the role of gender (Bhowmik et al., 2018; Bhowmik & Kennedy, 2012; Connelly, Gube, & Thapa, 2013; Hue, 2011; Hue & Kennedy, 2014; Kennedy, 2011; Ku, Chan, & Sandhu, 2005; Loper, 2004). In order to promote gender equality in education, it is suggested that the role of gender needs to be considered when conducting cultural studies since minority parents may place different expectation towards education on boys and girls.

Limitations

This study is not without limitations. Firstly, it is a cross-sectional study which limits the deduction of causality. Future studies can employ a longitudinal design to better understand casual relations. Secondly, the use of convenience samples of both Hong Kong and Pakistani parents limit generalizability of the findings. Future research can adopt stratified sampling in recruiting participants to better generalize findings. Thirdly, the present study is not a whole family design which has either father or mother answered the parental expectation scale. It limits the comparison of paternal and maternal expectation. A whole family design can be implemented in which both father and mother answer the parental

expectation scale so that paternal and maternal expectation towards ECE can be compared. Socio-economic status of a family and child's birth order have direct impacts on parental expectation towards education (Guo et al., 2018; McBride & Rane, 1997; Monfardini & See, 2016). Future studies can diversify the participants' background by employing a larger sample size and take these variables into account.

Conclusion

The achievement gap between Hong Kong and Pakistani students prompts the present comparative study of parental expectation towards ECE between the two cultural groups. The findings conclude that the interaction effect of culture and gender on parental expectation towards ECE was significant in all the dimensions of parental expectation towards ECE. Parental expectation towards Pakistani boys was significantly higher than Hong Kong boys in all dimensions while parental expectation towards girls was not significant in all dimensions between Hong Kong and Pakistani parents. Moreover, the acculturation strategy of integration was positively associated with collective life, cognition and language, and aesthetic development; marginalization was positively associated with collective life, self-control, and aesthetic development. The findings also suggest that the role of gender needs to be taken into account when examining parental expectation towards ECE.

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Table 1*Demographics of Participants*

	Hong Kong		Pakistan	
	<i>M / N</i>	<i>SD / %</i>	<i>M / N</i>	<i>SD / %</i>
Parental role				
Father	46	21.5	29	39.7
Mother	168	78.5	44	60.3
Parent's age				
20-29 years	26	12.3	14	19.4
30-39 years	137	64.9	45	62.5
40-49 years	46	21.8	13	18.1
50-59 years	2	1.0	0	0.0
Father's educational attainment				
Middle school or below	3	1.5	31	42.5
High school	109	52.9	42	57.5
Diploma/ certificate/ associate degree	47	22.8	0	0.0
Bachelor's degree	24	11.6	0	0.0
Master's degree or above	23	11.2	0	0.0
Mother's educational attainment				
Middle school or below	3	1.4	52	71.2
High school	109	51.4	19	26.0
Diploma/ certificate/ associate degree	53	25.0	0	0.0
Bachelor's degree	29	13.7	0	0.0
Master's degree or above	18	8.5	2	2.7
Family monthly household income (in HKD)	37213	24016	15923	7237
Child's gender				
Boy	125	58.4	41	56.2
Girl	89	41.6	32	43.8
Child's age	3.71	1.13	4.12	0.83
Child's birth order				
First	116	55.0	39	53.4
Second	81	38.4	26	35.6
Third	10	4.7	8	11.0
Fourth	4	1.9	0	0.0
Number of child in the family				
1	80	37.7	9	12.3
2	113	53.3	28	38.4
3	15	7.0	19	26.0
4	3	1.4	9	12.3
5	1	0.5	8	11.0

Table 2*Cronbach's α Coefficients, Means Scores and Standard Deviations of Parental Expectation towards ECE*

	Possible range	Hong Kong						Pakistan							
		Total (N = 214)			Boys (N = 125)		Girls (N = 89)		Total (N = 73)			Boys (N = 41)		Girls (N = 32)	
		α	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	α	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Collective life	1-5	.95	3.58	0.71	3.45	0.71	3.76	0.67	.98	4.03	0.80	4.35	0.70	3.63	0.75
Self-control	1-5	.94	3.49	0.68	3.42	0.69	3.60	0.65	.96	3.85	0.72	4.07	0.63	3.53	0.72
Moral development	1-5	.94	3.97	0.74	3.89	0.78	4.09	0.68	.96	4.40	0.69	4.64	0.47	4.09	0.80
Cognition and language	1-5	.97	3.60	0.81	3.49	0.84	3.75	0.75	.98	3.95	0.77	4.22	0.72	3.60	0.70
Sensitivity of body	1-5	.92	2.99	0.74	2.88	0.73	3.14	0.73	.88	3.43	0.58	3.58	0.56	3.24	0.54
Living habits	1-5	.97	4.05	0.84	3.99	0.83	4.13	0.85	.98	4.39	0.65	4.65	0.48	4.05	0.68
Aesthetic development	1-5	.98	3.35	0.96	3.21	0.95	3.55	0.95	.98	3.63	0.90	3.94	0.81	3.24	0.87



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Table 3*Multivariate Analysis of Covariance for Effects of Culture and Gender on Parental Expectation towards ECE*

	Culture			Gender			Culture X Gender		
	$F_{(7,248)}$	p	η^2_p	$F_{(7,248)}$	p	η^2_p	$F_{(7,248)}$	p	η^2_p
Collective life	12.44	<.001	.047	2.01	.158	.008	26.84	<.001	.096
Self-control	4.71	.031	.018	1.53	.218	.006	11.64	.001	.044
Moral development	13.06	<.001	.049	1.31	.253	.005	11.66	.001	.044
Cognition and language	1.83	.178	.007	1.83	.178	.007	15.47	<.001	.057
Sensitivity of body	2.09	.149	.008	0.02	.893	<.001	7.40	.007	.028
Living habits	3.05	.082	.012	4.26	.040	.016	12.46	<.001	.047
Aesthetic development	0.74	.390	.003	1.16	.282	.005	13.71	<.001	.051



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Table 4*Independent T-tests on Cultural Differences in Parental Expectation towards ECE by Gender*

	Boys				Girls			
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Collective life	-7.04	160	< .001	1.28	0.94	119	.351	0.18
Self-control	-5.38	162	< .001	0.98	0.49	117	.627	0.10
Moral development	-7.35	115.40	< .001	1.16	-0.01	119	.989	< 0.01
Cognition and language	-4.99	161	< .001	0.93	0.99	118	.324	0.21
Sensitivity of body	-5.59	163	< .001	1.08	-0.76	118	.450	0.16
Living habits	-6.25	120.85	< .001	0.97	0.50	118	.621	0.10
Aesthetic development	-4.46	163	< .001	0.84	1.65	118	.102	0.34



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Table 5*Bivariate Correlation Between Parental Expectation towards ECE and Acculturation*

	Assimilation	Separation	Integration	Marginalization
Collective life	.77**	-.67**	.78**	-.55**
Self-control	.80**	-.74**	.78**	-.49**
Moral development	.71**	-.56**	.72**	-.60**
Cognition and language	.79**	-.65**	.80**	-.57**
Sensitivity of body	.62**	-.59**	.62**	-.63**
Living habits	.76**	-.61**	.75**	-.59**
Aesthetic development	.58**	-.55**	.62**	-.37**
Possible range	1-7	1-7	1-7	1-7
<i>M</i>	3.07	5.32	4.26	2.17
<i>SD</i>	1.22	1.05	1.74	0.79

Note. ** $p < .001$ 

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Table 6*Partial Correlation Between Parental Expectation towards ECE and Acculturation**(with number of child, child's gender, parental role, parental age and socio-economic status as covariates)*

	Assimilation	Separation	Integration	Marginalization
Collective life	.58 ^{***}	-.46 ^{***}	.59 ^{***}	-.11
Self-control	.64 ^{***}	-.57 ^{***}	.61 ^{***}	-.12
Moral development	.53 ^{***}	-.29 [*]	.56 ^{***}	-.33 ^{**}
Cognition and language	.65 ^{***}	-.47 ^{***}	.65 ^{***}	-.22
Sensitivity of body	.48 ^{***}	-.47 ^{***}	.45 ^{***}	-.31 ^{**}
Living habits	.53 ^{***}	-.34 ^{**}	.54 ^{***}	-.25 [*]
Aesthetic development	.38 ^{**}	-.41 ^{***}	.45 ^{***}	-.04

Note. ^{***}p < .001.

^{**}p < .01.

^{*}p < .05.



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Table 7*Linear Regression Analysis on Parental Expectation towards ECE and Acculturation Strategies*

	Collective life ($R^2 = 70.9\%$)			Self-control ($R^2 = 71.1\%$)			Moral development ($R^2 = 63.4\%$)			Cognition and language ($R^2 = 75.1\%$)		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Block 1												
Block 1 (ΔR^2)	46.9%			42.2%			38.6%			52.2%		
Socio-economic status	.405	.116	.001	.365	.108	.001	.198	.098	.047	.310	.106	.005
Child's Gender	-.369	.162	.027	-.274	.150	.073	-.277	.138	.049	-.286	.149	.059
Parental role	-.429	.170	.014	-.338	.156	.034	-.436	.144	.004	-.648	.156	< .001
Parental age	-.011	.017	.520	-.019	.015	.219	-.010	.014	.492	-.002	.015	.875
Number of child	.168	.072	.022	.135	.065	.042	.100	.061	.102	.158	.065	.019
Block 2												
Block 2 (ΔR^2)	24.0%			28.8%			24.9%			22.9%		
Assimilation	.228	.163	.169	.210	.143	.148	.197	.144	.177	.261	.146	.079
Separation	.001	.116	.993	-.104	.101	.309	.182	.103	.082	.074	.104	.479
Integration	.204	.104	.049	.150	.091	.104	.171	.092	.066	.184	.092	.048
Marginalization	.293	.128	.025	.306	.112	.008	-.067	.113	.553	.189	.114	.103



Table 7*Linear Regression Analysis on Parental Expectation towards ECE and Acculturation Strategies (Cont'd)*

	Sensitivity of body ($R^2 = 56.4\%$)			Living habits ($R^2 = 67.3\%$)			Aesthetic development ($R^2 = 52.1\%$)		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Block 1									
Block 1 (ΔR^2)	39.3%			48.0%			33.7%		
Socio-economic status	.120	.085	.164	.179	.090	.051	.304	.139	.033
Child's Gender	-.052	.120	.665	-.352	.127	.007	-.363	.196	.068
Parental role	-.530	.125	< .001	-.485	.132	.001	-.311	.205	.134
Parental age	-.006	.012	.612	-.015	.013	.245	.013	.020	.533
Number of child	.134	.053	.014	.144	.056	.012	.188	.086	.033
Block 2									
Block 2 (ΔR^2)	17.2%			19.3%			18.4%		
Assimilation	.116	.138	.403	.204	.136	.141	-.196	.226	.391
Separation	-.124	.098	.212	.094	.097	.337	-.235	.161	.150
Integration	.008	.087	.930	.121	.087	.168	.339	.144	.022
Marginalization	-.075	.108	.488	.002	.107	.984	.381	.177	.035

