

MCFR 2015 Fall Conference

Addressing Gender in School, Work and Family

Poster Abstracts

How Christian Chinese Immigrant Homeschooling Mothers Negotiate their Cultural, Ethnic and Religious Identity in Everyday Parenting

Chun Zhang, PhD, University of Minnesota

Good parenting has a major influence on positive child outcomes (Baumrind 1983; Darling & Steinberg, 1993), and parents often seek information about how to raise their children according to their personal and cultural values. Young Chinese parents tend to seek information and materials originating in the West for good parenting references because of the lack of indigenous parenting studies (Goh, 2011) and because of their higher regard for Western society (Fong, 2004; Goh, 2011). However, Chinese immigrant families who live in the United States increasingly choose to homeschool their children for academic reasons and/or religious reasons (Fu, 2008; Sun, 2007). The purpose of this ethnographic study is to explore three evangelical Christian Chinese immigrant homeschooling mothers' cross-cultural parenting practices in the United States.

Child Welfare-Related Outcomes of American Indian Children in Foster Care

Ashley L. Landers, Doctoral Candidate, University of Minnesota

Child maltreatment is a threat to children's health and development. Children living in poverty, those from disadvantaged communities, and those with caregivers with substance abuse or mental health problems are at higher risk for maltreatment (CWIG, 2011). American Indian (AI) children are particularly vulnerable due to increased exposure to risk factors associated with maltreatment (e.g., poverty, low caregiver education, parental substance abuse, neighborhood problems) (NICWA, 2014). AIs are repeatedly among those experiencing the highest rates of victimization when compared to the national child population (DHHS, 2013a, 2013b). Geographically limited studies suggest that AIs exit foster care slower or are less likely to be adopted (Courtney & Hook, 2012a, 2012b; McDonald, Poertner & Jennings, 2007) and are less likely to reunify compared to children of other races (Needell et al., 2014; Webster, Shlonsky, Shaw & Brookhart, 2005). Although child welfare-related outcomes of children in other racial groups have been explored, little information is available about child welfare-related outcomes of AIs following long-term foster care. This study addresses that gap.

Teaching Intimate Relationships in Young Adulthood through Narrative Writing

Jane Newell, PhD & Tai Mendenhall, PhD, University of Minnesota

The development of intimate relationships (especially during young adulthood) is a major concern to researchers, practitioners, and educators alike. Traditional college students are in an optimal stage for the development of intimate relationships. Eight out of ten former students indicated that they made significant changes in their intimate relationships resultant from participation in this course. Findings from a second study analyzing autobiographical papers identified patterns in students' narratives revealing pertinent psychosocial processes. The pedagogical model used in the teaching of this engaged intimate relationships course is presented and the authors invite discussion about teaching young adults through autobiographical narrative.

Phenomenological Pilot Study on Family Cohesiveness in Military Families

Jennifer Rea, Doctoral Student, University of Minnesota

The present study of a pilot research project will explore how military families handle stressful military-related situations and what key resources they use to successfully adapt to these challenges. Specifically, the goals of this pilot project are to better understand how military families maintain family cohesiveness (the level of support and commitment family members have towards one another) and what resources are available to them. This study involves qualitative data collected through dyadic and semi-structured phenomenological interviews with three married military couples of the Minnesota Air National Guard. The findings of the research will contribute to further implications for military and non-military programs and resources as well as suggestions for future research on military families. In addition, it is hopeful that the findings of this study will suggest that the use of resources and having resources available during military-related challenges is a positive influence and support for military couples to maintain family cohesion. In conclusion, the present study has the potential to provide insight into the lives of military couples and the ways in which they use or do not use resources as a tool for family cohesiveness.

The Parent Learning Ecology: Parent's Cross-Boundary Pursuit

Shanting Chen, Undergraduate Student & Susan Walker, PhD, University of Minnesota

Learning ecology frameworks (Barron, 2006) depict the learner self-initiating understanding and application of content through multiple, dynamic social interactions and contexts. Parents are known to use a variety of information sources to learn about parenting (e.g., Hart Research, 2009), primarily family and friends, professionals and media sources. Little studied are the sources that parents use complementary to their participation in parent education programs, and how the negotiation of these sources inclusive of the program, affects the parent's learning. This study explores characteristics and parent value for members of the learning ecology, and seeks evidence for how learning occurs within the ecology through cross-boundary interactions.

Parent Educators' Expected Usefulness of Technology for Work: The Dual Impact of Workplace Supports and Self-Efficacy

Young-Hoon Ham, Doctoral Candidate & Susan Walker, PhD, University of Minnesota

Integrating technology in family life education (FLE) is a necessary skill for 21st century professionals. Yet although technology integration by educators has been well studied in other fields, research specific to FLE practitioners is limited. Using the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) this study's authors previously identified the significant role played by environmental conditions (e.g., technology training and assistance) and personal characteristics (e.g. perceived comfort with technology use) in family educators' attitudes accepting of technology. The current study adds focus by investigating 1) a specific population of FLE professionals (licensed parent educators), and 2) predictors of perceptions of technology usefulness in practice. It also examines the role played by three different workplace support systems (personal, climate, institutional) on FLE professionals' technology use and attitudes. We also consider the effect of self-efficacy, as an individual difference variable, and include dispositional variables as mediators.