

# Intergenerational comparison of parenting practices in China

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## [Abstract]

This thesis outlines an exploratory study which aimed at understanding the influencing factors of parenting practices change among three generations. The theoretical position of this research draws on the work of pragmatism of Bourdieu (1986) who proposed the cultural capital as well as Lareau (2021), who brought forward the concerted cultivation and natural growth parenting practice methods. Based on this theory, a qualitative semi-structured interview method is conducted for this empirical study to make a distinction for the preference of parenting practice between family and school education by comparing three generations' exercises. For the interview, 15 interviewees are selected based on the recommendation from two Chinese teachers. The main findings of this study includes: parents with high educational backgrounds (regardless of which generation they are from) always pay more efforts on parenting practice and tends to have concerted cultivation as well as have higher educational expectations for their children. Moreover, families which have high education for a few generations continuously are inclined to emphasize the importance of family education inheritance. Overall, the thesis emphasizes that parents of different generations should adapt to changes in the environment and make appropriate adjustments to their children's parenting exercises correspondingly to fit their children's development at that time.

**Keywords:** Parenting Practices, School Education, Family Education; Concerned Cultivation

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I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and words and is, to the best of my understanding, never been submitted before as the work of another. The influence of other researchers has been properly cited and referenced. The study is conducted under ethical approval by the Lund University. Therefore, all respondents are guaranteed anonymous and are all voluntary to participate in this research.



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# Glossary

1. *Mengxue*: Elementary learning (ChinaKnowledge.de, 2011)  
*Elementary learning in traditional china be referred to “teaching for the ignorant”.*
2. *985 Project University*: (Apply to Chinese Universities a Cease Service, 2008)  
*“985 Project” is a project aimed at increasing the development speed and gaining more reputation for China’s universities. Through the “985 project”, China demonstrated its ambition to build world-class universities in the 21st century. Only 39 project 985 universities in China*
3. *Ordinary Universities*: (Apply to Chinese Universities a Cease Service, 2008)  
*Nowadays, there are about 2047 universities (not including universities in 211 project and 985 project) Ordinary universities can be divided into several categories such as general university, technical university, specialized university such as medical, foreign language and teacher-training university.*
4. *Suzhi: Quality* (Anagnost, 2004).  
*The discourse of suzhi circulates in reform-era China as a form of common sense adhering to bodies as a measure of their worth as human capital.*
5. *“key”school*: (Liu, 2016)  
*this school has better facilities and better-qualified teachers*
6. *Chinese Land Reform (tugai)* (Huang, 1995; Chinese posters. Net, 2021)  
*A campaign by the CCP leader Mao Zedong during the late phase of the Chinese Civil War and the early China. The campaign involved mass murder of landlords by tenants and land redistribution to the peasantry. Land seized from Landlords was brought under collective ownership, resulting in the creation of "Agricultural production cooperatives". The social class is divided into poor farmer, middle peasants, rich farmer as well as landlord and other.*
  - 6.1. *Landlords: the family of landlord fell a prey to Chinese Land Reform. The landlord class had been largely eliminated from China by the end of reforms.*
  - 6.2. *Poor farmer: Originally this class at the bottom of society, this class were protected during the period of Chinese land reform. Become a social class with good composition. In Mao Zedong's period, such born citizens with this class were easiest to get the opportunity to aspiring middle class.*
7. *Four Olds (posijiu)*: (Xu, 2010)

*As a term, the Four Olds used during the Cultural Revolution by the student-led Red Guards in the mainland of China. the pre-communist elements of Chinese culture attempted to destroy. The Four Olds were: Old Culture; Old Ideas; Old Customs and Old Habits.*

# 1 Introduction

Recent concerns about parenting practices have generated a considerable body of research. The fields covered by parenting practices could be roughly divided into the aspects of school education institutions (i.e.: early year education; extracurricular activities, etc.) and the aspects of family education (Wiseman , & Zhao , 2020). The action of the school education could be contributed to an increase in attaining higher educational attainment by children (Laraeu, 2011; Hill, Liang, Price, Polk, Perella & Savitz-Romer, 2018; Bodovski, 2010; Bodovski & Farkas, 2008; Bourne, Bukodi, Betthäuser & Goldthorpe, 2018; Breinholt & Jæger, 2020; Fang, Huang, Curley & Birkenmaier, 2018; Naftali, 2014; Pensiero, 2011; Pang & Richey, 2007; Pine, & Yu, 2012). The action of the family education could be displayed in the dimensions of the familial educational expectation by their children; of the familial cognitive ability and of the family institution, respectively (Amato & Fowler , 2002; Augustine, 2017; Laraeu, 2011; Bodovski, 2010; Bodovski & Farkas, 2008; Bourne, Bukodi, Betthäuser & Goldthorpe, 2018; Chu, 2017; Nihal, Yildirim, Elvan, Öztürk & Recepoglu, 2019). The main aspects of parental cognitive ability are reflected in support, monitoring, and discipline further. These dimensions are all related to the child's further educational attainment (Amato & Fowler, 2002). Therefore, the bulk of educational research concerns structures, characteristics of and activities within the educational system as an internal factor, which could be enabled children to enroll in educational institutions as well as to obtain further educational achievement with full resources and opportunities (Wiseman, & Zhao, 2020). However, the external factors of educational systems are also significant, such as parenting practices by parents. In the nineteenth century, sociologists unraveled a paradox that cultural capital is just as strong an area which is valued as the educational capital area (Bourdieu, 1986). Socio-economic status, meanwhile, impacted the manner of parenting practices (Laraeu, 2011). However, the evolution of intergenerational parenting practices has received little attention. Liu's (2016) conducted the shift of parenting practices aroused considerable controversy for the different manners of intergenerational parenting practices because there is also much continuity between the triads of the generation's parent-child relationships (Liu, 2016). Indeed, these issues remain controversial on which often conflicting views are still apparent. Through parenting practices is most influenced by cultural

capital and socio-economic status (i.e.: familial educational achievement). The Chinese undergoing rapid modernization have also affected the parenting practices of parents who were born from diverse generations to a certain extent (Liu, 2016).

In last four decades, tremendous social reform and undergoing rapid modernization happened in China over urban and part of rural area. Such changes were made possible, among others, by the transformation of practices of the Chinese child and parent-child relationship, especially in the field of educational policy. In fact, the educational attainment by Chinese parent has greatly improved over the past seven decades. In 2020, 729,000 graduates earned a degree of postgraduates, which is around five times compared with 1980 (i.e.: 476 earned a degree of postgraduates) (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2020a; 2020b). Meanwhile, the number of graduates with undergraduate degrees is 7,972,000 in 2020, compared to 21,000 graduates who earned an undergraduate's degree in 1949 (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2020a and 2020b) (see *Table 1*). While many factors contribute to such an increase of people earning an undergraduate and graduate degree, however, an important underlying reason is also increasing impact on the parenting practices by intergenerational parents.

## 1.1 Research Problem, Aim

The aim of this thesis is to investigate what's the meaning of parenting practices by diverse generations in urban China has changed. The semi-structured interview is drawn on from Fujian and Shanxi Province parents through WeChat. Previous research on parenting practices has been mostly quantitative, including in the children's developmental outcomes (Redford, Johnson & Honnold, 2009; Dermott & Pomati, 2016; Bodovski & Farkas, 2008). This thesis adopts Liu's (2016) method with a cross-generational qualitative approach to explore the particularity of the past by comparing it with the present. This research project seeks to address the following questions: one is how does the shift of intergenerational comparison parent's views on parenting practices will affect children's growth? The other is how do educational and socioeconomic attainment of the parent and grandparent generation relate to their own parenting practices of offspring? The focus of this thesis is to explore how three generations of Chinese parents insist on implementing child-rearing practices. And why the views of three generations of Chinese parents are partial to implement parenting practices. Especially the three generations of Chinese parents, how the parenting practices behave in different socio-economic statuses. In

addition, this thesis also explores the role of parents and children's cultural capital in the parenting practices under the three generations of Chinese parents.

To date, many researchers examined the causes of parenting practices with quantitative research method (Redford, Johnson & Honnold, 2009; Dermott & Pomati, 2016; Bodovski & Farkas, 2008) and these work typically aimed to determine the relative significance of the parenting practices and social origin on the educational attainment through observing the differences in personal education levels caused by social origin, or by establishing a “concerted cultivation” manner to promote children emotionally “preciousness” with their parents. However, these approaches cannot fully accommodate the fact that parenting practices change together with the transformation of the relationship between the child and parent. Over the course of the twentieth century, which kind of cultural logic of child rearing could be accepted as part of manner of children's parents is a hot topic in the sociological and educational research. Indeed, there are still paying more attention to the way formative years of children from the views of adults including educators, parents, the general public, and even adults are concerned with developing manner of their kids (Naftali, 2014 pp. 01-02; Guo, et al, 2019 ; Liu, 2016). In turn, new cultural logics of child-rearing rose up luxuriantly of late gradually as well as pedagogy. However, the new cultural logics and pedagogy are still interwoven with diverse indigenous, ancient opinion of social and familial older generations, at the same time, they coined hybrid and conflictive models of governing the children (Naftali, 2014 pp. 04).

Regarding thesis purpose, this thesis concurs with the result by Lareau’s recent ethnographic research that draws on the concept of “concerted cultivation” to explain how different socio-economic background in China of parents shapes their child-rearing practice and therefore the child’s educational and socio-economic attainment. (Laraeu, 2011). Meanwhile, this concept dawns on Bourdieu’s theory about cultural capital (Bourdieu 1979; Bourdieu 1986; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979). More specifically, cultural capital provides a framework for studying the dissemination of inequality through generations, which is used for theoretical conceptualization and empirical operationalization (Pensiero, 2011). “Concerted cultivation” refers to how parents' conceive the nature of their children's growth and define the strategies for child-rearing to foster children with socioeconomic disparities. In other words, concerted cultivation is reflected in how parents practice deliberately and systematically to cultivate their children's abilities (Laraeu, 2011). Laraeu (2011) indicates that one of the aspects of concerted cultivation including coordinating children's leisure time in various organized activities, indeed, that it is not any specific activity, but the aggregate set of activities that could cultivate children's abilities. Meanwhile, this research also adopts Liu’s recent cross-

generational research principle, the concept of “priceless child” to explain how the meaning of the parent-child and child relationship in urban china has changed (Liu, 2016). Cross-generational research is employed to contribute to the thesis's structure for exploring possible alteration on the diverse generational parent's manner of parenting practices in China. Liu's notion is intended to estimate the impact of inheritable parenting practices on the diverse generational parents within the special socio-economic status as well as to affect their parenting practices for their children. Moreover, it shows, as cognitive ability, that the self-evidence contributes to the child’s growth experience as well as the parental parenting practices from the perspective of both the children and parent (Brannen, 2004). To further exacerbate the situation, “Priceless child” reflects the "rise" and "preciousness" of "priceless children" in China that have been affected by the rapid changes in Post-Mao social transformation, including the one-child policy (Liu, 2016). Liu (2016) indicated that, compared with the two older generations, urban children in China have become emotionally "precious" to their parents, and they have enjoyed (or at least desire to have enjoyed) democratic relationships and express intimacy with their parents.

## 1.2 Scope

In an attempt to address the proposed research questions, this thesis adopted the interpretivism research philosophy. The scope of this thesis adopts Laraeu’s ethnographic study, operationalized the cultural logic of concerted cultivation using four theoretical concepts from Laraeu and Bourdieu: cultural capital, cognitive ability, parental involvement (socio-economic status), and the organization of daily life. These are combined with four theoretical concepts and manner of parenting practices; therefore, the five codes are defined on the factors respectively such as early year education; extracurricular activities; educational expectation as well as cognitive ability, and family institutions. The early year education and extracurricular activities are inferable employed to expressions of the school educational institution. Moreover, the other three codes, such as educational expectation as well as cognitive ability, and family institutions, are inferable employed to expressions of family education. Moreover, using semi-structured interviews from the fifteen respondents, this thesis qualitatively tests Laraeu’s theory that applicable parenting practice (i.e: concerted cultivation) is positively impacting the children hereafter because their parents could appropriately adjust the educational expectations

of their children. However, it has limitations in terms of Laraeu's study that she presented an American status. Thus, this thesis would make a suitable adjustment for which it could have a good fit with Chinese model. And then, qualitative interview approaches are employed for gathering data at a specific period of time (Della and Keating, 2008). Indeed, semi-structured interview forms are employed in the procedure of the collection of research data, which forms were applied at the beginning of the research work (Louise & While, 1994). According to the gap presented in these business literatures, this research intended to examine the effects of parenting practices within both manners of school education and family education on three generational Chinese parents. This research will then propose a rational assessment of the relationship between parenting practices and perspectives of the diverse generational parents.

### 1.3 Outline of the Thesis

The structure of the paper is as follows. After briefly reviewing theories of Liu (2016) and Laraeu (2012) in section 2, data collection method is described in section 3. Section 4 analyses the result finding that emerged from the interviews. Finally, the conclusions are summarized in section 5.

## 2 Literature Review and Theory

The literature review chapter is divided into two parts. The first part reviews the current status of childcare practice in China, cites and explains the academic theory of " Pricing the Priceless Child" (Liu, 2016) and "concerted cultivation" and of "natural growth" (Laraeu, 2012). The second part evaluates the impact of socio-economic status on parenting practice.

### 2.1 Background and Theory

#### 2.1.1 Parenting Practices in China

From the view of Chinese family socialization practices, the child-rearing practice has not been paid much attention to yet generally. It becomes a serious matter and being investigated by many sociologists recently. Parents who live in Chinese urban area have paid more attention to foster their children. Moreover, a great variety of available examples prove the transformation of child-rearing practice based on socioeconomic disparities. For example, the increasing economic and technologic development drives the appearance of new professional class, and restructure the employment structure, which conduced to differentiation of social status (Yang, 2007).

China has re-opened its gates to outside since 1978, which means that it is closer than any time to achieve its target of becoming a global political and economic state. With the increasing economic state, most Chinese have solved the problem of nutritional deficiency and clothing, while beginning to focus on spiritual wellness further, especially on their children's further attainments (Naftali, 2014 pp. 05). A similar situation appeared in Western countries at the end of the 20th century. Middle-class parents were very aware that the country's financial situation continued to decline. They, therefore, worry about the economic prospects of themselves and their children. This uncertainty makes them feel that it is significant on the parenting practices in various ways in order to increase their future possibilities (Laraeu, 2012). From a bigger picture, Chinese phoenix-like increase influences on the global affairs stage and it has been gradually turned "sick man of Asia" into one of the great powers (Greenhalgh, 2010).

Greenhalgh (2010) indicated that Chinese are promoting to cultivate her “soft power” with the appeal of her culture with engaging in a global influence, which “soft power” is frequently employed the idioms of a charm offensive, when build up her “hard power” of economic and political powers. The most representative "soft power" can be embodied in the discussion of "quality". The discussion of population quality (*suzhi*) first appeared in a national document on surveys of rural poverty in the 1980s. Investigations in rural areas made a major contribution to rural poverty that the root cause of China’s failure to modernize was China’s “low quality” (*suzhi di*). This view represents a shift in China's national policy focus from adjusting the fertility rate (the one-child policy) to improving the overall "suzhi" of the nation. In other words, the shift from quantity to quality (Anagnost, 2004). In addition, with the tempestuous social reform before post-Mao China, the rise of a new feature of the Chinese social hierarchy occurred, this phenomenon attracts great concern from many sociologists. Some researchers indicate that this further differentiates the social class in China (Lu, 2002; Li, 1995). Hereby, unequal rights or opportunities of enrolling in school to obtain knowledge is a sensitive issue for people between 20 and 90 years old due to the taking off of the Chinese miracle economy. The differentiation of social status resulted in injustice toward the utilization of education equal as a concrete issue.

In parallel with Chinese miracle economic growth, the deterioration of aging population day by day and the only-child policy both promote an increased scarcity value for the child (Naftali, 2014 pp. 08; Liu, 2016). On one hand, part of Chinese intellectuals still against contempt for the issue of Chinese population and recognize the issue of population as a centrality to obstruct Chinese rise (Greenhalgh, 2010). On the other hand, throughout history, innovations made by humans to solve various problems for improving the standard of life have been extended and accumulated as knowledge; especially the topic of childhood (Guo, Huang, & Zhang, 2019). Hereby, the cultural logic of child-rearing serves as a significant trajectory for discussions of national citizenship and identity, which again loom debates about the proper manner to educate and raise Chinese children (Naftali, 2014 pp. 02; Guo, at al, 2019).

In a landmark study for Chinese child and parent-child relationship, argued that Chinese urban children have become extremely "precious" to their parents and even grandparents, especially in the middle-class Chinese trend supports the "priceless children" (Liu, 2016). The contemporary Chinese children are often taken care of by their grandparents in most cases, and that this practice is looked down upon because most grandparents embody backwardness and low education. Parents, as aspiring middle classes, prefer to invest in school education to nurture their children in order to solve the problem of low-educated grandparents.

It is irrelevant to the familial background that parents of middle-class in Chinese all endeavor to provide the best future for their beloved children by investing in school education, and also are willing to give the opportunity of their children to enjoy their comfortable daily life (Liu, 2016). From the socio-economic status, the childhood experiences by the current Chinese youngest parents as a family's educational project are in sharp contrast to the oldest generation's childhood experiences, which the oldest generation greatly contributed to the family's livelihoods, regular housework chores, and minimal school education. This is also in sharp contrast with the middle class in the corresponding period of time. In Chinese urban middle-class families, schoolwork is more important than housework chores, and their children's academic competitiveness is prioritized than housework skills (Liu, 2016). Although school education is increasingly important for middle-class children, they are actively involved in housework and sometimes in livelihood activities. The situation is similar to contemporary American middle-class families (Laureau 2003). As Liu (2016) states, this characteristic of the contemporary Chinese family reflects the labor market changes and functional changes of school education, which makes educational attainment essential to achieve employment prospects. These interconnected changes show that, compared with the previous two generations, urban children have become economically useless and even costly (Liu, 2016). Another concern is that mostly mothers are in charge of the education of the child and this is their daily chore until the child finished school. The responsibility of most fathers is to support the family. This is particularly noticeable in the middle class. While the rest of the socio-economic status shows that parents are raising the family together, mothers still have to take care of their children's studies mostly.

### 2.1.2 Concerted Cultivation and of Natural Growth

For several decades, the problem between socioeconomic status and academic performance has been the focus of Occidental education literature (Laraeu, 2011; Liu, 2016; Pensiero, 2011; Bodovski & Farkas, 2008; Durham, Farkas, Hammer, Tomblin, & Catts, 2007). Lareau (2011) has made important efforts to study the life-course mechanism based on this connection. Laraeu's *Unequal Childhoods, Class, Race, and Family Life* is an ethnographic research on middle-class child-rearing practices, which takes the United States as an example. In her monograph, she concludes that there is a strongly and positively relationship between socioeconomic status and academic performance. Laraeu (2011) points out that the parental behavior of raising children has a profound impact on their children's academic attainment,

even holding constant gender, race, and influence. The specific manifestation is how the socio-economic differences in child rearing styles produce unequal child outcomes, thereby distinguishing children's leisure activities in organized participation and children's participation in cognitive stimulation activities. She claims that child-rearing practice with "Concerted Cultivation" imparts advantages to middle-class children and provides them with important cultural capital for effective negotiation within the education system. In contrast, the approach of raising children for the lower-level parents could be defined as an achievement of natural growth. It focuses on fulfilling children's the material demands, while ignoring the approach that children's special abilities could be cultivated through enrolling education or participating in stimulating activities. The lower-class parents believe that providing food and safety are sufficient to ensure their children with prosperous growth and success. The essential factor is that they have to face some problems with economic difficulties, the prevalence of single-parent families among ethnic minorities, the poor and minority students' low motivation to receive education, as well as historical discrimination in social institutions. And even there exist external factors on the lack of appropriate neighborhoods, inadequate relationships, as well as community resources, and school quality. According to Lareau (2011), the concerted cultivation and natural growth manner both conducted diverse development trends with three main dimensions which are the organization of daily life, language use, and social connections.

For dimensions of the organization of daily life, middle-class and upper-class parents are partial to realize the significance of their child-rearing practices for their children's growth, and they arrange their children's leisure time through a variety of organized activities. By this, they are able to cope with various issues during children grow up through paying attention to cultivating children's learning ability. In contrast, lower-class parents engage their children to participate in fewer organized activities, which is conducive to strong ties close to siblings. The idea that extracurricular leisure activities bring educational returns is not new, which has long been supported by research on "cultural repertoires"/ "cultural reproduction" (Bourdieu 1979; Bourdieu and Passeron 1979; Bourdieu 1986). The perspective of cultural reproduction/repertoires has different interpretations from different social classes. Lareau draws on Bourdieu's theoretical basis for cultural capital to explain the meaning of cultural repertoires and cultural reproduction, and further explains that the organization of daily life is an important part of parenting practice.

Cultural capital could be defined as the skills and knowledge that individuals can use to give them an advantage in social life (Bourdieu, 1979, 1986; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1986, 1990). He states that the concept of cultural capital refers to a collection of symbolic elements,

such as skills, taste, mannerisms, material belongings, etc., which are acquired by becoming part of a specific social class (Redford, Johnson & Honnold, 2009; Breinholt & Jæger, 2020; Redford, Johnson & Honnold, 2009; *Revise Sociology*, 2016). Sharing similar forms of cultural capital with others (i.e.: a degree from an Ivy League school) will create a sense of collective identity and group status. These similar groups of people often say a conversation of "people like us" intentionally or unconsciously. In addition, Bourdieu (1979, 1986) argued that the uneven distribution of cultural capital will make the distribution of economic capital unnatural, making it look like the proper property of the cultured and educated person, thereby ensuring and concealing this inequal phenomenon to spread continually. Therefore, the uneven educational system is a core apparatus that led to the uneven distribution of the cultural capital because the condition of inequality is embodied both in its official set-up and curriculum (Bourdieu, 1979, 1986). According to Bourdieu (1979, 1986), cultural capital has three aspects: embodiment, materiality, and institutionalization. A person's accent or dialect is an example of cultural capital in an embodied aspect, while luxury cars are examples of cultural capital in a material aspect (Breinholt & Jæger, 2020). In its institutionalized aspect, cultural capital refers to certificates and qualifications that symbolize cultural ability and authority, such as degrees or titles (Breinholt & Jæger, 2020). All three aspects certify that unfairness is a true manifestation of what appears to be fair. It proves that families with high social status would definitely get more cultural capital while getting more educational achievements through cultural capital (Redford, Johnson & Honnold, 2009). As the middle-class and upper-class groups, they hold their own cultural capital formed by traditional cultural tastes. In sharp contrast with the lower classes group, their cultural capital is defined as a lack of proper taste, and cultural repertoires are considered vulgar and inconsistent to compare to the mainstream. Because in American schools, the mainstream cultural atmosphere is the guidelines set by the upper class. Therefore, children from low social backgrounds who lack social activities will experience school learning in a relatively harsh environment and obtain poor grades. By contrast, children from upper-class social backgrounds will naturally learn both from the school and family environment while achieving better attainment (Bourdieu and Passeron 1979).

The language use has always been a traditional field for studying inequities that are invisible in family life. The middle-class and upper-class parents are more willing to spend time talking and playing with their children, as well as tending to use richer vocabulary. In general, they tend to focus on caring for the child's feelings and take the child's perspective into account. Therefore, they will sensitively feel the child's emotional changes and explain the children's views (Bodovski & Farkas, 2008; Durham et al, 2007). Lareau (2011) addressed

those parents who adopt consistent child-rearing practices by using finer language with their children and pay attention to their children's points of view when talking with them. In addition, these parents prefer to discuss rather than use commands to ask children to follow their opinions. On the other hand, parents who follow the natural growth manner, are partial to use instructions as their primary discipline with their children are hardly allowed to question their opinions. The organization of daily life and the language use are key dimensions that define child-rearing practices. The third dimension is social connections, which are related but less important. It could be said that the children with concerted cultivation, as the child-rearing practices, usually grow up with among children of the same age, while children with natural growth, as the child-rearing practices, play with kin of different ages (Lareau, 2011).

The consequences of different manners of child-rearing could be summarized as a sense of entitlements or a sense of restraint. Children who grow up within a concerted cultivation manner, learn to be confident when face the outside affairs as well as deem that school is a dependent environment where children could intervene problems and even ask query about their issues. These parents are willing to instill their own cultural capital, as a potential and continuous output, into their children as well as to show their parents' preference for behavior of manners, obedience, and responsible. Furthermore, these parents adopt their child-rearing practices for exercising manner of self-direction by their children that is to develop a high degree of self-control and curiosity for their children, instead of a docile pupil obedient to the wishes of their parents who are overly worried by rule-compliance, such as in the aspect of initiative and critical thinking. In contrast, natural growth strategies are partial to constrain children's creativeness, which is reflected in the jerkiness of interaction with schools and professionals (Pensiero, 2011; Bodovski & Farkas, 2008; Bowles & Gintis, 2002). Lower-class parents tend to teach essential elements that be valued in the low-skilled labor market, such as obedience, reliability, and perseverance, rather than independent/critical thinking (Pensiero, 2011, Bowles & Gintis, 2002).

### 2.1.3 Intergenerational Mobility

The term "Pricing the Priceless Child" was first introduced in the social science literature by Zelizer (1994) in her book *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children*. A more recent study conducted by Liu (2016) reviewed and evaluated research on childhood modernization. In which she found a common theme around the profound transformation in the economic and sentimental value of "prices of priceless children" (Zelizer, 1994, pp.3; Liu,

2016). Such a transformation has created the basic conditions for contemporary children (Zelizer, 1994, pp.3). This economically meaningful "worthless", nevertheless, in terms of "the emotionally "priceless children" create the basic conditions for contemporary children (Zelizer, 1994, pp.3). Zelizer (1994) has found the fraught with paradox by " Pricing the Priceless Child " - emphasizing that economic and cultural factors are the source of psychological changes. This emphasis is often lacking in the previous North American literature toward dealing with the issue of childhood, which is often attributed to different patterns of parenting practices skills or childhood trauma. By focusing on the interrelationship between economic and non-economic factors, it provides a counterpoint to the economic paradigm. There is no doubt that price has the power to transform value, and few people conceptualize the reciprocal transformation of prices by value. The effect of commercialization has its precise counterpart- the reciprocal "sanctification" process, through which value is determined by the price, the investment of it with social, emotional significance or religion. Thus, forming a unique environment for testing the historical relationship between value and price with their independence and interdependence is important. The power of the market is sought to overestimated (Zelizer, 1994, pp.18-21).

Liu (2016) put forward two external environmental factors in her recent research, which the factors that drive the rapid "rise" of Chinese "Pricing the Priceless Child". On one hand, the advancement of social modernization and the rapid accumulation of personal wealth in society has enabled the youngest generation (1990) to have an unprecedented life experience includes the material and even the spiritual coexistence. The one-child policy has intensified the family attention on the youngest generation. Moreover, there are raising value of youngest generation due to the idleness of grandparents in retirement. After undergoing rapid modernization, this intergenerational mobility has made urban children extremely "precious" to their families in China. The discourse about natural growth is mostly used to describe the older generational own childhood, even if there are differences in age, gender, family conditions and social location. From their discourse, it is not difficult to find that they have received less parental involvement, intervention, attention, and investment from their parent, which are is in sharp contrast to their grandchildren's Childhood. (Liu, 2016). They reviewed their childhood in the natural habitat of their families and communities as the natural growth. These principles have strong and unchallenged norms. Upbringing is previously achieved through modeling and acquiring "tacit knowledge" (Liu, 2016). Because children learn to obey since they are young, parents do not need to deliberately control them in the later years of the children. In addition, they have to livelihood with their parents together hence they have little time to do mischief (Liu, 2016). On the other hand, intergenerational mobility on the child-rearing practices has

also promoted the preciousness of "priceless children". It is embodied in the intergenerational mobility of the meaning of the parent-child relationship in Chinese cities. From the big picture, for China, the society of the post-Mao Zedong era has undergone drastic changes, including the one-child policy, which has exacerbated the "rise" and preciousness of priceless children. Chinese priceless children, therefore, add contextual nuances when analyzing current global trends related to childhood (Liu, 2016).

Some scholars opposed "Pricing the Priceless Child", as a bias against, that the vague information conveyed by "Pricing the Priceless Child" is author's expectation. As human beings, perceiving and caring for children may be another simpler response. A further rationale will be extended theory and sample to a certain extent in the part of the research finding in chapter 4, so the author will elaborate on this point of view in more detail later. This research is based on the definition of "prices of invaluable children", by examining the changes in the relationship between parent-child between intergeneration in China and exploring its impact on intergenerational parenting practices.

## 2.2 Theoretical Approach

### 2.2.1 Socio-economic status

The empirical research has shown that the socio-economic status of families is associated with parental expectations for the children's education in Western countries (i.e.: especially the United States). Davis-Kean (2005) found that the socio-economic status of parents is indirectly related to students' academic achievement via their expectations. Similarly, Zhan (2006) conducted the research with data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth for United States and found that household income and mothers' education are significantly related to parental expectations of their children's educational achievements. Specifically, household income is positively correlated with mother's expectations. Better-educated parents have higher expectations of their children's education than parents with lower levels of education (Bodovski & Farkas, 2008). In other words, the concerned cultivation by the middle-class or upper-class parents is a core mechanism through which they could begin to shift their social class status to their children by ensuring their children's early academic success (Bodovski & Farkas, 2008; Augustine, 2017). However, Zhan (2006) overlooks that fatherhood is also significant for parenting practices whatever diverse socio-economic status was.

Corresponding evidence shows that parents attach great importance to education and increasingly expect their children to obtain post-secondary degrees (Tan & Yates 2010). There is also evidence to support the view that parental expectations and a positive family relationship affect students' academic attainment (Andres, Adamuti-Trache, Yoon, Pidgeon & Thomsen, 2007; Bodovski & Farkas, 2008). However, parental expectations could also negatively influence children's achievement and motivation, if it is too high or totally different than what the child is good at. As Fang et al (2018) state, parents' educational expectations are part of the intermediary between the family's socioeconomic status and their academic performance, and it depends on different model specifications. To a large extent, parents' educational expectations are only one aspect of parents' behavior and behavior, and parents' behavior may be affected by the socioeconomic status of the family. Peers are also important. Focus on the contemporary Chinese parental expectations of their children has exceeded the scope of their children's basic enrollment and higher education, which means that the current scope includes the expectations of completing secondary school with distinction and enrolling in "key" schools. On one hand, parents with high expectations admit that they tend to have stricter requirements on their children's academic achievement; on the other hand, they also provide more opportunities for extracurricular activities for their children's future. Parental expectations will also affect children's self-expectations and motivation to achieve their studies (Zhan, 2006).

This research on the intergenerational parent-child relationship compares three generations of upbringing to contribute to the development of Chinese parents' parenting practice. First, this thesis qualitatively assessed the importance of Lareau's consistent concerted cultivation through semi-structured interviews. Secondly, we incorporate early year education, extracurricular activities, parents' expectations, cognitive abilities, and family instructions into the model. This thesis enables us to understand the impact of parents' socio-economic background and cultural capital on the outcome of children in a better way. Finally, semi-structured interviews are used to provide an up-to-date view of changes in intergenerational parent-child relationships. Although many previous studies have solved these problems, and the sample size is small, it is likely that there are personally oriented choices. However, this thesis uses a relatively comprehensive sample of diverse social classes as well as gender, which is still representative.

## 3 Methodology and Data analysis

This chapter discusses the procedure involves in collecting and analyzing data from semi-structured interviews (Bryman 2016, pp. 468-498). Firstly, it highlights the appropriate methodological approaches and research design for this study. Secondly, a description and rationale of the sample and data collection processes is provided. Thirdly, it illustrates how the interview measures are constructed and data are analyzed. Finally, the explanation for ethical consideration is included.

### 3.1 Research design

In qualitative research, the way of researcher's performance in the field is inseparably connected to the quality of the data. In an attempt to address the proposed research questions, this thesis adopted the interpretivism research philosophy. That is, the interview is developed through reviewing and summarizing existing parenting practices research. Subsequently, these generated answers are coded, confirmed, and processed (Bryman, 2016, pp. 470). Subsequently, these interviews are recorded and confirmed. The recordings collected will then lead to new findings that extended the existing opinions, thus providing opportunities for further research (Galletta, 2013). This study employed qualitative interview approaches to collect data at a specific period of time (Della and Keating,2008), which provides a method to flexible construct. As Bryman (2016, p.470) and Galletta (2013) state, this method leads to get valuable, unique, and interpretable answers. Indeed, semi-structured interview forms are employed in the procedure of the collection of research data, which forms were applied at the beginning of the research work (Louise & While, 1994). The reason for employing the qualitative interview method as the thesis methodology is that the interview approach is to record and analyze data in a flexible approach with its unique flexibility, which could be helpful to understand the dynamics of the human social world that researchers will encounter when conducting investigations (Galletta, 2013).

The semi-structured interviews are the relatively unstructured wilderness, and semi-structured interviews' ability to provide insights into how research participants view the world are critical to researchers (Louise & While, 1994). The term qualitative interview is used to describe a form of interview, which is more or less synonymous with semi-structured interviews (Bryman, 2016; Louise & While 1994). The purpose of this study is to explore the intergenerational changes in the performance of educational expectations. The author would like to adopt the semi-structured interview with 15 people of intergeneration's and of different ages who are sift-willing to introduce their educational expectations for their children as parents (Louise & While, 1994). Based on this, their views on the concept and construction of intergenerational education expectations are summarized as well as their opinions on parenting practice are recorded.

This work draws on the methodology used by Liu's article "*The rise of the "priceless" child in China*" (Liu, 2016). In conjunction, this study used the life history interviews in early 2021 to examines the casual relationship between parenting practices and the intergenerational mobility of parents. The target respondents are selected out with interviews of 8 females, their parents, and their children in their life histories: and 7 males, their parents, and their children. The continuous interviews were carried out over six weeks (from the end of January to the beginning of March). The proceeding of interview for each respondent be carried 2-3 times out with each time interview lasted 1.5 to 3 hours. The first and second round of interviews are to narrow the distance with the respondents, so as to receive some normal family stories for each family member. Purposive sampling is employed in the sampling survey. The target respondents were born in Fujian province and Shanxi province and migrated to another bigger city (i.e.: Beijing and so on.). On one hand, the youngest respondent is Fuzhou natives who have just become fresh mothers (31 years old), and she got a son (3 years old) in 2019. They graduated from one "ordinary" school of mediocre reputation and high reputation "key" school (i.e.: this school has better facilities and better-qualified teachers). Another criterion that respondents must have a grandmother/grandfather and children to conduct an interview. In my case, then I chose parents through personal contacts with some teachers who have been engaged in high school education in Fuzhou for 30 years and in Shanxi for 10 years. These teachers introduced the author's project to their class and asked volunteers to participate or introduced them to join as volunteers that the teacher considered appropriate. These participants could be traced back to parents and grandparents. The socio-geographic origins of the two generations are different: some grew up in Fuzhou (capital of Fujian province), some grew up in rural or other urban areas.

The participants' demographics included variable levels of degree obtainment, ages, gender, ethnicities, employment setting and status (see *Table 2*; *Table 4*; *Table 5*)

The semi-structured interviews served as the primary data collection method, guided by an eight-question interview protocol developed by the researchers. The interviews began with open questions, for example, "Have participants order some extracurricular activities to participants' children when participants' next generation was in their period of kid to of teens? Which kind of extracurricular activities did participants order to participants' children? Why did participants choose this kind of extracurricular activity? Have you asked participants' children's opinions when you order extracurricular activities? Have you referred participants' children to read extracurricular books? Have participants made an educational expectation for your children?" Several additional questions were added in order to answer the primary research questions: (1) Parental education backgrounds' perceptions of their children's educational expectations require; (2) what factors the participants perceive have improved their child-rearing development in the parental role; and (3) how participants attempt to gain the knowledge and develop the child-rearing skills they perceived were necessary for the parental role; (4) how participants face unhealthy competitive mindset regarding participants' ambient pressure of other parents, to push participants' child to study hard for getting highest score than other parental children? Using the heuristic process provided the researchers with a discernible method to interpret the results. The questions are adjustable accordingly based on the previous answers given by the interviewee.

Following the empirical research conducted by Liu (2016) and Lareau (2012), the interview guide contains questions in the following two themes: school education and family education. The school educational institutions contain two codes as follows: early year education (for example, the role of early year education); extracurricular activities (for example, arranging activities; respecting children's choices; extracurricular readings by expansion of knowledge). The family education contains three codes as follows: Educational Expectation (for example, the choice of educational logic; adjustment of educational expectations); cognitive Ability (for example, Differentiated Instruction; teaching children in accordance with their aptitude), and Family Tradition (for example, the attitude towards the inherited the family education tradition) (see *Table 3*). The guide was written by the author through drawing on the theory of Lareau, (2012), Liu (2016) as well as Bourdieu, (1979, 1986), Chu (2017), and Pine & Yu (2012). The guide was proposed after a pilot interview with two high school teachers who did not participate in the study. In order to obtain substantive details, all interviewees were interviewed on WeChat to encourage a comfortable exchange of information. The last interview

was recorded; a complete verbatim record, as well as field notes recorded during the interview, allowed the researchers to analyze each situation in the future.

In sum, it is worth noting that the reviewed literature theories are developed in western context. Thus, this study assessed their applicability in the context of parenting practices. The qualitative interviews are recorded to obtain inserting information. These results contribute findings that allow practical implications to be made. This study employed a qualitative interview method to examine the relationship of intrinsic and extrinsic parenting practices and its influence on the intergenerational mobility of Chinese parents.

## 3.2 Sample

### 3.2.1 Recruitment

The sample for the study includes a parent who was born in mainland China. Inclusion criteria were: age equal or above 30 years old, fluent in speaking Chinese, and willing to participate in the study. The role of research participator in their family could be a grandparent or parent currently. It indicates that, indeed, children should be a part of the member of a household. The households that had less than three years of experience in the household were excluded.

A total of 40 valid interviews with Chinese citizens were recorded, focusing on the parenting practices by the intergenerational parent-child and grandchild. Most of the respondents reported they attained education level at master degree and bachelor degree (80%), such as bachelor degree (seven persons); master degree (five persons); the remaining of three persons finished their Diploma in Vocational Education (two persons) ad Middle school diploma (one person) (see *Table 4*). It should be pointed out that Chinese born in the 1930s and 1940s experienced the war during their grow up, this leads to a small number of people could have higher education. Moreover, these Chinese who were born in the 1970s to the 1980s, are the backbone of current Chinese society. Respondents born in these two generations accounted for a large part of all respondents, in order to explore the intergenerational parent-child relationship. this research found most of the respondents are aged 30<sup>th</sup> generation (three respondents), 70<sup>th</sup> generation (four respondents), and 80<sup>th</sup> generation (three respondents). Followed by, two of the respondents belong to the 60<sup>th</sup> generation. Other respondents' generation is located in the 40<sup>th</sup> generation (one respondent); the 50<sup>th</sup> generation (one respondent); and the 90<sup>th</sup> generation (one respondent). Overall, most of the respondents served state institutions, such as civil servants, teachers, and bankers. The rest of the respondents serve

private enterprises or are engaged in self-employed businesses. Only one of the respondents is a thrifty housewife. Besides, the respondents were selected through two teachers (one in Fuzhou and one in Taiyuan), so most of the respondents settled in Fuzhou City and Shanxi Province.

The more special situation appears in several women. A respondent born in the 1930s, followed her husband to live and work in Fuzhou after graduating from university; another respondent from the 1940s was shifted working and living environment to Beijing headquarters with her husband after graduating from university. One of the respondents in the 1980s lived with her husband in Langfang City, Hebei Province after marriage. It is worth mentioned that her work environment is in Beijing, but her live environment is in Langfang City. The last respondent born in the 1990s lived with her husband in Shanghai after marriage (see *Table 4*).

### 3.2.2 Sampling strategy

In order to adopt samples with different characteristics, every two decades is recognized as a generation, from 1930 to 1990, who recruited a similar number of parents or grandparents from the one generation. These three generations were born in three diverse historical periods. Respondents who were born between 1930 – 1949 experienced the war. Their growth stages were in the social environment of natural disasters, famines, economic stagnation, political instability, and poverty. Those respondents who were born after 1950, grew up in the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Most of their children were born between 1970 and 1990. These generational childhoods were in the pre-reform era under Mao Zedong - socialist collectivism, mainly during the period of Great Leap Forward (1958 - 1960) and the period of Cultural Revolution (1966 - 1976) (Liu, 2016). The childhood of parents, in general, born between 1970 to 1980 spanned the end of the Mao Zedong era and the beginning of China's economic reform era. Most of their children were born between 1980 and 1990, and they were single children due to the one-child policy which is a unique generation in China (Liu, 2016). They spent their childhood from the mid-1990s to the late 2000s in the Chinese post-socialist period.

The policy of reform and opening up enabled China to further integrate with the world economy, and personal wealth increased sharply. Given the rapid development of information and of communication technology within the global environment, child-rearing is getting more and more attention from Chinese parents. For the sake of clarity, it is necessary to group the parents into three generations, so that the subsequent articles will be clearer. Parents

before 1959 referred to the first generation, parents before 1979 referred to the second generation, while the remaining parents are divided into the third generation.

The target respondents come from Fujian province and Shanxi province. This work is conducted in second-tier and third-tier cities because the GDP of Fujian province is high in comparison with Shanxi province. To a certain extent, the people who are living in the region with developing economies could highlight the need for education by their children (Shareef, Khawaja & Azid, 2017; Liu, 2016; Bourne, Bukodi, Betthäuser & Goldthorpe, 2018; Bodovski & Farkas, 2008). On the other hand, the education level of Chinese coastal cities is generally higher than that of China's inland areas. These inequalities are mainly reflected in the growing gap in higher education between urban and rural residents (Lei & Shen, 2015). Parental education level is another important factor that affects educational expectations and attainment. Therefore, respondents who respectively live in two cities with economic gaps are selected to obtain the binary relationship between intergenerational parent-child relationship and educational expectations and early year education.

### 3.3 Data collection procedure

The author had in-depth communication with the two teachers to explain the specific criterion of this task. In the first step, the two teachers selected nearly 50 candidates from their past students through communication with the two teachers. the author reaches out to initial respondent by sending the invitation of interview's link directly. Secondly, the author further selected 20 interviewees after understanding the basic family information of 50 candidates. These 20 interviewees are all sampling objects that meet the author's criterion, and all respondents are encouraged to participate throughout the data collection process. Moreover, respondents chose to voluntarily participate in this research based on what their views are fit to the respondents' descriptions. Finally, 15 respondents were finalized. Using Bryman's guidance (see *Figure 1*), the researcher carried out 40 "semi-structured interviews" (i.e.: audio-recorded) in Sweden through the social software platform: WeChat. WeChat is valued to receive feedback from the voluntary participants. WeChat is the fastest growing online communication app in China with more than 200 million users within the first two years of its launch (2012 to 2013), the number of users now searched to 1.1 billion in 2020 (Business of Apps, 2021). WeChat, as an only communication tool, not be hindered in any way. The list of

codes in *Table 3* is covered in each meeting as a guide. The interview plan is not based toward a list of relatively strict predetermined prompts and questions. The open-ended and discursiveness of the interview, on the contrary, be allowed an iterative process of refinement, while it means that the lines of thought addressed by the early interviewees could be absorbed and presented to the later interviewees (Bryman, 2016, p.487, p.472).

Two teachers conducted a pilot test to help the design of the interview questions for providing this work with most effective results. The questions of the interview were initial drafted in the English language as it has been adopted by Western literature. In addition, a native English speaker helped to construct the final version by reviewing the draft questions of the interview to check such as grammar, structure, repetitive errors and wording. At the same time, two Chinese nationals who use Mandarin Chinese as their first language were required to assist in the translation of the questions of the interview. The revised interview questions distributed to target respondents (Chinese parents) written in simplified Chinese to overcome language barriers and improve clarity. In the last step, the revised interview questions will be re-translated into English for publication purposes.

### 3.4 Data analysis

Within 2 days after the interview completion, each audio recording was converted to a verbatim transcript. This work draws on Liu's empirical research by used thematic analysis for data analysis. First, the recorded interview files and verbatim transcript are compared carefully to ensure accuracy and familiarity with the data. Then, for each topic of the interview, the content of the interview was carefully reviewed, meaningful themes in line with the research objectives were determined, and each piece of data was categorized into related codes. In this process, the researcher sought more reliable themes while minimizing the possibility of researchers' bias through rigorous thinking and comparative analysis of experienced theories. The ambiguous codes and the relationship between the themes were established as accurate as possible. Analysis was performed for two cycles until no more new codes or sub-codes came up. Moreover, these analyses prove that the data saturation has been set up. Finally, the data is divided into 5 codes based on two themes: (1) early year education, (2) extracurricular activities for their children, (3) intergenerational educational expectations, (4) intergenerational differentiated instruction and cognitive ability on the family education, (5) inherited the family education tradition (family institution). Parents' responses to these five codes were compared

with grandparents' responses. According to the semi-structured interview, five codes induced in the interview question to receiving the respondent's answer. This infers the dualism relationship between school education and family education by the diverse parents' parenting practice. Thus, it could be concluded that the attitudes of parents of diverse generations to parenting practice have shifted.

### 3.5 Ethical consideration

This study complied with The University of Lund research ethics policy. At the beginning of the interviews, statements about participant privacy protection, practical implication to the respondent, the purpose and importance of this research are highlighted. Simultaneously, establishing meaningful relationships with research participants while maintaining the necessary and even the critical analytic framework is a delicate process. There are neither simple answers nor one-size-fits-all guidelines for this process (Lareau, 2011, pp.313). The author would also add that it is important to be non-judgmental as far as possible. Try not to indicate agreement or disagreement with the interviewee. He or she may even try to get you to respond to his or her views. The anonymous interview guaranteed respondents' confidentiality and is conducted on a voluntary basis. Meanwhile, this study will only serve to fulfill the purpose of the research.

## 4 Emperical Analysis

This chapter discusses the results of the interview and explains as well as analyzes them to test the associated codes. It consists of three parts. First, descriptive statistics about the demographic information of the interviewee are provided. Then, the reliable analysis is conducted. In this part, school and family education are discussed in detail where two codes and three codes are included for school and family education, respectively. In addition, the correlation analysis of fatherhood is considered.

### 4.1 Respondent demographic information

A total of 40 valid interviews with Chinese citizens were recorded, focusing on the parenting practices by the intergenerational parent-child and grandchild. China experienced economic reform rapidly since the launch of the Open-Door Policy in 1979, and the field of radical reformation of society leads the country to changes from an agricultural to a knowledge, industrial, and information-intensive economy. The tremendous social reforms with modern China served to a debate concerning intergenerational reproduction of social inequalities in education and socioeconomic attainment. One of the participants (number 15) told that her grandparents were the victim of the social transformation while later her parents became profiteers of the same social transformation. This example has a certain degree of particularity, but also a certain degree of universality. The family's socio-economic status belonged to the working class when participant 15 was a child. Her parents immigrated abroad for establishing their family enterprise when she enrolled in junior high school, and the family financial situation has gradually improved then. This is one of the examples as the unusual generation, children who were born in 90<sup>th</sup> generation, lives and grows in a family with their parents operate their own family enterprise. These children also have other siblings under the one-child policy. The socio-economic status of her family had risen to the middle class during her college years. The family socio-economic status of other participants has remained stable (see *Table 5*). Please refer to appendix A for the family background of other interviewees.

## 4.2 Reliability analysis

Before conducting other analyses, a reliability test is used to analyze all items in each code. This is based on the conclusions of semi-structured interviews with all respondents to assess the internal consistency and reliability of each code.

### 4.2.1 School education

#### 4.2.1.1. Code 1: Early year education

Early year education refers to the educational regulations for preschool children and early grades of elementary school children. It broadly covers the education received by children from birth to eight years old. The education policy in the UK is regarded as the frontier and early year education is widely regarded as the best time to establish key dispositions and ability skills in order to get future achievement and success in schools. (Rogers, Brown & Poblete, 2020). Before the modern education system was introduced in the West, China was already practicing early year education from longtime ago. The ancient Chinese education institution : specific early childhood education is called *Mengxue*. *Mengxue* literally means "the enlightenment education" in ancient Chinese, it literally means education for the illiterate or dull, and it was the previous children's institution that accepted Confucian teachings in ancient China (He, 1998; Pine, & Yu, 2012). Its core function is to spread Confucian values, the pillar ideology of ancient China, and the knowledge and skill system related to it, to the youngest members of society (Pine & Yu, 2012). The historical evolution of *Mengxue* produced a system of pedagogy and educational aspirations, which was yet officially recognized by the Chinese government until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Pine, & Yu, 2012). It still implicitly affects the educational concepts and practices of Chinese parents, although its official abolition has been past one hundred years.

Looking at various stages of the transformation from the early 1900s to the present, the early year education moved from ancient *Mengxue* to a pedagogy strongly influenced by the east. And then, from the middle of the twentieth century, it was influenced by Russian theories and practices. Since the 1980s, early year education has begun to combine global north educational institutions with Chinese cultural traditions (Pine & Yu, 2012). The distinctive historical periods affected the adoption of child-rearing practices in early year education by

parents who were born at distinctive generations. The first generation of parents drew on the discourse of "never heard about early year education" to describe what they did to their children. The children's experiences of grandparents varied by age, family conditions, and social-geographical location (Liu, 2016). Most of the respondents talk about their participation in their children's early year education, however, there is little intervention and attention to their children's child-rearing practices. It is in sharp contrast with the childhood of the second and third generation of parents.

"In our era of childhood, the country has just settled down. As the first generation of intellectuals in the People's Republic of China (PRC), we have to dedicate our youth to the construction of the motherland. Therefore, our children are given to our parents or handed over to the educational institutions (i.e.: preschool and kindergartens) for helping them to look after their children most of the time." (Participant 01; 03 and 04)

"I would implement "early year education", which is attributed to my parents' education to me. So, I invited my friend to teach my children at home. "(Participant 02)

"As a fresh mother, I didn't know what to do. What's more, there were many children at that time, so the children grew up naturally." (Participant 05)

In 1978, China opened its door to the world toward social and economic development, while discovering that everything outside is new. Therefore, the pursuit of a good education system is the key to progress after the Cultural Revolution (Pine & Yu, 2012). The Ministry of Education issued the Guidelines for Preschool Education (draft) in 1981, which retains the Soviet structure of 1951 and extend the scope of the curriculum to healthy behavior, physical exercise, moral lessons, language, common sense, art, and so on (Pine & Yu, 2012). Favorable environmental factors have promoted the second generation of parents to attach importance to early year education. Most of the respondents mentioned their children's early year education also mentioned their participation, intervention, and a lot of attention to their children's child-rearing practices. It is worth noting that the respondents who answered that they participated in the early year education of their children are all in the coastal areas of China where the economy is relatively developed faster than other cities. On the other hand, the family

backgrounds of the respondents who attach great importance to education, are all born from the middle class.

"My parents have implemented early year education at home within the parenting practices of my childhood. I am definitely participating in, even more, interfere with the early year education of my children." (Participant 06)

The dynamic new research results rooted in the west have had a profound impact on Chinese early year education (Pine & Yu, 2012). The impetus of new research in the Global North. In the 1980s and 1990s, the increased momentum to promote changes in the manner of Chinese early year education, and at the same time be referred to the third generation of parents (Pine & Yu, 2012).

"During my own childhood, they did not know how to educate me in a scientific manner because my parents didn't have a high educational background yet. So, I am willing to foster my children with the best education because I do not want to repeat the mistakes my parent had in my childhood." (Participant 06)

"During my childhood, my parents did not mention what is early year education to me. I wish that my children could have a happy childhood. Therefore, I did not arrange early year education courses for my children." (Participant 14)

The enormous alteration in the general environment has caused different attitudes towards early year education among the three generations of parents. The research on the intergenerational mobility of Chinese parents who were born in diverse generations have been influenced by the mixed set values both from the traditional Chinese Confucianism and Western influence (Pine & Yu, 2012). The bilateral influence, of course, has a certain degree of conflict about how to determine the parenting practices that suit their children is the core topic for contemporary Chinese parents. With the rapid growth of basic education, the way that parents of the younger generation get information about child-rearing practices is no longer limited to hand down by family education. This has also accelerated change in the thinking of the younger generation of parents on child-rearing practices. The socio-economic status is shown a positive impact on parenting practices. Despite the massive political and social upheavals in the 20<sup>th</sup>

century, the model of early year education in China has shifted over the years. It has shifted from being didactic-centered and teacher-centered to more open and child-oriented.

#### 4.2.1.2 Code 2: Extracurricular Activities

Lareau (2012, pp.248) believes that the financial resources of parents contribute to class differences in raising children. Because children's activities are expensive. The socio-economic status of the family is particularly important at this time. Middle-class children have the "invisible" cultural capital given by the family. Breinholt and Jæger (2020) conducted an empirical study on the impact of cultural capital on educational performance. Through the analysis of the data, they found that cultural capital had a positive impact on children's future academic performance through signals. Participant 02 describes similar idea as follows:

"Even though I was born in the war era, the tacit knowledge passed on to me by my parents help me to grow up. When I was young, there were no so-called extracurricular activities yet. My parents would invite teachers to my home to teach me one-on-one, including how to play the piano and write calligraphy, paint Chinese painting, and so on. I also taught my children and grandchildren this knowledge without reservation. These extracurricular activities in my childhood also filled my old life. I don't have to live with my children all the time because there are many interesting things can be done." (participant 02)

"My father taught me many after-school hobbies, such as playing the piano, painting Chinese painting, and so on. My mother taught me to cook and manage the family. Now I also teach these things to my children. Of course, what is different from my generation is that when my child was born, China's education system was already very complete, so I always asked teachers to educate my children for extracurricular activities." (participant 06)

"When I was young, my parents were very busy with work and we're busy with making money to feed my family. But they signed me up for a lot of extracurricular activities during the weekend. These extracurricular activities don't help me too much in my current life, however, they improve my test scores." (participant 15)

Overall, parents of different generations have different views on extracurricular activities. However, there is a general tendency that the respondent think extracurricular activities are a core part of child-rearing practices that must be completed. It could conclude that the socio-economic status still affects the first and second generation of parents for less attaching importance to extracurricular activities. However, this impact is less common among third-generation parents.

## 4.2.2 Family education

### 4.2.2.1 Code 3: Educational Expectation

The coding of educational expectations was employed in this study. Educational expectations are defined as a psychological manifestation of future education, that is, people think that they would like to enter, and targets that people are willing to achieve in social reality (Hou & Leung, 2011; Rojewski, 2005). Rimkute et al. (2012) conducted positivistic research on the expectations of parents for their children's future education, and concluded that the high academic performance of adolescents and high level of parental education predict the high educational expectations of adolescents. They have also contributed to parents' expectations for their children's future education. As adolescents approach the point where they must make the final choice for their future education, the educational expectations of adolescents and their parents are also clearly blended together. Besides, Nihal's et al. empirical research (2019) conducted also prove previous opinions. Although a difference between current academic achievement and expected academic achievement of their children exists, the parents as usual mentioned that they expect their children's academic achievements or attainments to be attributed to their children's own efforts or abilities. Moreover, parents' expectations are not based on the current academic achievement of their children; even so, based on the parents' aspirations.

"For my eldest son, I give a relatively high educational expectations for him when he was in high school. Because I graduated from a university with Project 985, while I got a position of civil servant in a government agency. And then I got an opportunity to walk out of my hometown with a small village. I expected my children, he could inherit my family status and could become a lawyer. Unfortunately, he did not get a good score

in the national college entrance exam and only enroll in a general university. Then, the educational expectation has been adjusted with his educational performance correspondingly. The new policy has liberalized the second child in mainland China. My wife and I had a second son in 2019. My expectation for the second son's education achievement when he enrolls in schools is the same as the eldest son's requirements. Let's see how his education performance and then I will make appropriate adjustments to adapt to his change. However, these adjustments are a desperate decision because of his weaker educational performance. The educational performance comes from his side, and I can't take the exam for him." (Participant 09)

Basically, similar dialogues appeared in Participant 03, Participant 04, Participant 07, Participant 10, Participant 11, and Participant 12. It is worth noting that Participant 04, mentioned that she is helpless for her granddaughter's weaker performance.

"My children's academic performance is very good, and they are all serving in the government agency. The son of another daughter, my grandson, has excellent educational performance. I don't worry about him very much. Only one of my granddaughters has undesirable educational performance that it's very poor!!! She only enrolls in a college. Her mom and I are both worried about her future. Besides, the competition in current China is fierce, how can she find a good job with her educational achievement?" (04)

In turn, expectations for education refer to other educational options that students have considered. Young people's expectations are influenced by their ambitions, and low ambitions may lead to limited choices (Hou & Leung, 2011; Rojewski, 2005).

"My expectations for my child's educational achievement have always been maintained at a relative level. Her life needs to be done by her herself. As a parent, I only provide her with external equipment to develop her cognitive abilities, and only give support to her when she encounters issues. Her preferences and her job are both all determined by her. I want to cultivate her cognitive ability, and when she has to face difficulties, she has to cope with them. Her educational performance could have little influence on her future life if she learns the cognitive ability to recognize the world." (Participant 07)

"My child's academic performance has always been very good, and he was admitted to the university with project 985. I have trained him to make decisions by himself since he was young. It can also be regarded as deliberate parenting training. It is similar to child-rearing practices of concerted cultivation as you said. " (Participant 09)

“My parents didn't have opportunities to access the education, so they don't help me too much about my education preference. I have to learn the knowledge by myself for advancing my social status. Lower family background makes less help for me when I met with adversities in the social environment.” (Participant 12)

On the other hand, differences in educational resources are also important. Lareau (2012, pp. 248-250) believes that the advanced education level of middle-class parents gave them a lot of knowledge. The higher education background has promoted the acceptability of child-rearing practices with concerted cultivation, especially in the intervention of institutions outside home. The educational background of middle-class parents also gives them the confidence to criticize education professionals and interfere in school affairs (Lareau, 2012, pp. 249).

"Parents who born in the 80<sup>th</sup> generation and 90<sup>th</sup> generation currently have their own educational philosophy. They often interfere with the teacher's teaching manner. The parents born in the 60<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> generation, on the contrary, few parents could have a word on the teacher's education policy." (Participant 09)

This also shows that for the working class and poor class parents, the educator is in the upper-class society. For middle-class parents, they are equal or subordinate to educators (Liu, 2016). In addition, Lareau (2012, pp. 249) also pointed out that middle-class parents are often willing to follow the advice of professionals because middle-class parents are more sensitive to changes in the standard of raising their children than working-class parents.

"When I was young, my parents didn't have opportunities to access the education, so they don't help me too much on the teaching. They often told me that I should obey the teacher's education policy because they didn't understand what kind of education method is beneficial to me currently. So, when I became a mother, I attached great importance to the education of my child and hoped that he would not be like me. I often

visit and ask for parenting advice from professionals or ask experienced friends around me. In addition, I often read the parenting books as the reference." (Participant 15)

In general, the first generation of parents generally believes that their parents do not have high educational expectations of them. A possible reason is that extra environmental factors with reform or war could affect stable livelihood. Their bitterness comes from the familial educational programs, which is contrary to the extreme childhood deprivation of grandparents or the material or cultural needs of their parents (Liu, 2016). However, participants 03 and 02 expressed their parents' high educational expectations for them. The possible reason may be attributed to the socio-economic status of the family: Participants 03 and 02's parents are both in the upper class. Their families hold their own family institutions, so they are required to learn cultural knowledge in order to defend their family with socio-economic status. On the contrary, respondents usually say: "Nothing special. Like all other families, this is normal." when second-and third-generation parents are asked about their parents' expectations of childhood, however, it means that their parents were partial to them going to a good university and were investing in this target.

As Croll (2006) has shown in research dating back 15 years, parents still have high expectations for their children's education and income, expectations that seem to be unaffected by the parent's education and income or by the gender of their children. On the other hand, most Chinese parents were still partial to whether their children's current academic performance is excellent. These expectations are consistent with Nihal et al (2019). They are the wishes of the parents, not the preferences of the children. Finally, the parent's cultural capital does affect the child's educational performance. This result also supports Liu's (2016) theory that most Chinese parents have adopted the parenting practices of "deliberate cultivation and training". Overestimated the abilities of their children; choose the future path for their children according to their own preferences, etc., are all common problems of Chinese parents, even if there are still some parents who are partial to cultivating their children with critical thinking. But the pressure of external social competition makes it breathe sentimentality for Chinese parents.

#### 4.2.2.2 Code 4: Cognitive Ability and Differentiated Instruction

Parents' occupations and working conditions, especially the complexity of work, also affect the aspects of their child-rearing beliefs (Lareau, 2016, pp. 248). Furthermore, it conducted that the

adult's experience itself influences the individual's view of child-rearing beliefs. To avoid hard economic struggles, middle-class parents often were preoccupied with the difficulties and pressures of their work and life (Lareau, 2016, pp. 248). In the hardship of personal experience, they are more inclined to view childhood as an opportunity to play, but also as an opportunity to develop their talents and ability, which may be valuable in the process of self-actualization when children take place in adulthood. This concept is similar to the Chinese Confucianism of "teach students according to their aptitude."

“Watching my children become mothers, watching our parents pass away, watching people of our age who undergone both the period of chaos caused by war and the period of a peaceful era. The family property that our ancestors hoped we would defend it; we didn't defend it yet. So, the expectations of our children were relatively high at the beginning. however, we still consider the children's own ideas. As parents, and now grandparents, we can only teach our children how to go angling instead of giving them fish directly. After learning the method, any difficulty can be solved easily by themselves." (Participant 02)

"Every child is a different individual, with a different temper and personality. It is necessary to understand which characters are their temper and personality, so I could find the problem in a better way while helping my child quickly when they encounter or solve problems. At the same time, it could help children to improve their cognitive abilities through problems." (Participant 07)

“It's been 30 years since I become a high school teacher. Parents who belong to my students, often communicated with their children in an authoritative way. They never listened to or asked their children's opinions. Some of these parents come from the middle class and they are busy. Much working time leads them do not have much time to educate their children yet; the other is working-class parents, they do not have a high education background, could not provide extra facilities to assist their children, the economic condition would be the top consideration as parental concernment. Thus, children born in this way have to find their own direction in learning." (Participant 09)

On the contrary, for working-class families, it is the declining quality of work and the pressure of economic shortage that determine their adult experience and affect their

childhood vision (Lareau, 2016, pp. 249; Liu, 2016; Nihal et al, 2019; Fang et al, 2018). For poor families, dependence on public assistance and severe economic shortages have affected their perceptions of adulthood and childhood (Liu, 2016; Lareau, 2016, pp. 249). The basic daily necessities could be more concerned by the working class and poor families: how to endure food shortages, despite the lack of reliable transportation, purchase clothes, and manage other daily necessities (Lareau, 2016).

Recalling their childhood, these adults admitted that they had gone through hard times (i.e.: Participant 01, Participant 05, Participant 08, Participant 10, Participant 11, Participant 12, Participant 13, and Participant 14), thus, they also recalled the time of childhood within the kind of worries that assist them to face the troubles continuity at present. Many people seem to want their own youngsters to spend a happy and relaxing time. However, there may lead to their children may not have enough time to face the burdens of life without preparation when they become adults.

Overall, the parents' concept of adulthood and childhood seems to be closely related to their life experience (Lareau, 2016). Such factors have not changed among different generations. A middle-class parent who was born in the 1930s, his children and grandchildren have correspondingly more free space to do what they like. Parents also tend to cultivate their children's cognitive abilities during child-rearing practices, so that they can understand what kind of work and life they are suitable for. Happiness became their theme during childhood. Such similar views were also discovered in the second and third generations. Therefore, the factors that affect parents' parenting strategies seem to go beyond the role of education itself, and cover the professional and economic experiences by these adults as well (Lareau, 2016).

#### 4.2.2.3 Code 5: Inherited the Family Education Tradition (Family Instruction)

Lareau proposed the concept of "cultural logic", which is described as a set of paired beliefs and behavior form part of the child-rearing practice. Where does this cultural logic come from? It may be a question worth exploring. Whatever the so-called "cultural logic" is necessary for child-rearing practice that also sometimes confused by children when children need to leave the family into the world of social institutions. Because they found that these cultural practices are not given equal value feedback during, they grow up. Lareau(2012) argues that to a certain extent, middle-class children benefit from the similarity between cultural repertoires in the family and the standards adopted by institutions, in ways that are invisible to children and to

their parents. The standards adopted by institutions are politically oriented to a certain degree, and the formation of culture in the family may be reflected by inheriting the tradition of family education.

"What kind of content is taught in school textbooks is uniformly negotiated by the professors on the national education agency, and the content of textbooks are written by the politically-oriented. In contrast, family education is controllable, and most of context could be properly adjusted through the daily performance of children."  
(Participant 14)

What is Chinese family education? Family education is an important part of the ethical and moral education system in ancient Chinese society. The most famous autobiography handed down to ancient China is *The Family Instructions of Yan Clan*, which has accumulated a large number of family instructions and provided family guidance for ancient families in addition to *Mengxue* (as a school education). Family instructions is a special book for ancient literati to explore how to defend their family's social status. Because some people in ancient China were not able to engage candidates for successful examinations, in order to conduct those who did not have opportunities to enter official careers for preserving the well-being of their offspring (Chu, 2017).

An interesting assumption behind their proposal is that the current state of the family depends on the blessing of the family instructions, as well as family instructions also is as a blessing of his ancestors for offspring. The author is worried that their offspring may lose their status when the author passed away, which could provide advice to the confused offspring on how to maintain their family prosperous and resist disasters already (Chu, 2017). According to Chu (2017), readers who are willing to read these family instructions could certainly feel the goodwill of their ancestors, meanwhile, they will also feel pressured to become offspring with good behavior. The authors of family instructions are mainly literati who provide advice to male offspring on how to manage the family (Chu, 2017). Therefore, family instructions include contents from the perspective of a historical literati. The core contents are a wide range of topics, such as managing servants and estate, social relations between relatives and neighbors as well as career choices, and preparation for the examinations (Chu, 2017). These practical family instructions represent and strengthen the power of patrilineal family institutions (Chu, 2017). The family instructions handed down, and the context is imbued with Confucian moral persuasion, and religious ideas, especially Buddhist. Without the support of occidental theories,

the concept of family institutions continually refers to current Chinese families, most of them are used in middle-class families or are attached great importance to families prosperous.

"I would implement "early year education", which is attributed to my parents' education to me, which should be regarded as the inheritance of family education tradition. My parents told me that the family education tradition must have continuity and rely on hand down every generation of parents to do parenting exercises. "(Participant 02)

The cooperation of ancestors and descendants should be conducted to uphold the prosperity and continuation of the family. Not only should they be able to maintain the family's property and reputation, but also, they should have heirs who will enable the family to continue to enjoy social status. (Chu, 2017).

"The family instructions are a very important reference for educating children. When my grandmother was alive, she taught me a lot of principles to deal with affairs, including how to manage the family, how to educate children, and so on. My dad wrote a family instruction by himself, which he gave to me when I got married. All these instructions support me to face issues better after leaving the protection of my parents. So, I argued that the family instructions are very useful for my family. It must be inherited by my children and be left to future generations." (Participant 07)

The analysis of the interviews suggests that few members of the first generation of parents thought that family instructions were important. The only respondents, who attach great importance to the family description may be inseparable from his family background. It may indicate that families with higher social-economic status pay more attention to the role of family instructions in order to maintain the prosperity of the family. An opposite trend occurs in the second generation of parents, most of the parents attached great importance to family instructions as a favorable factor in the way of educating their children. The only respondent who didn't care about it, said:

"My parents only told me to be kind when I was a child, and the way I educate my children is based on my summing up the child-rearing parenting experiences of myself and the friends around me. So, I haven't thought about this issue." (Participant 11)

Participant 14 replied similarly. In general, most of the second and third generation of parents attach great importance to the help of the family institutions on the issue of parenting. The parents who do not care because they were born on the economic backwardness, so that they have not realized its importance (Lei & Shen, 2015).

In sum, for inheriting the family education tradition, the first generation of parents only strongly recommended the importance of inherited the family education tradition on the No. 02. Other respondents have not considered (No. 01, No. 03, and No. 04 or do not care about this issue (No. 05) yet. This is a possible reason that No. 3 described the reforms of the Four Olds (*posijiu*) during the Maoist period. Most of the second generation of respondents are very supportive of inherited the family education tradition for the continuity of the family, except for the No. 11 who has not considered this issue. This kind of feedback also appeared in the third generation of parents, only No. 14 did not mention it.

## 4.3 Correlation analysis

### 4.3.1 Father's Role on the Child-rearing Practices

Lareau (2012, pp. 237) discussed "intensive mothering" in her book that may reflect expressed in the cultural logic of parenting practices within the families of different class status, even if their behaviors are quite different. This proves the important position of mothers within familial parenting practices. Consistent with filial piety, the relationship between Chinese parents and children is hierarchical, emphasizing respect and obedience to parents (Liu, 2016, pp. 16-17). And fathers are often the characteristics of strictness, while mothers are the representative of kindness. In general, the father is considered to be a person who is far away and does not participate in child-rearing practices (Liu, 2016, pp. 16-17).

When we discussed the role of the father in child-rearing practices, there was basically no literature that pointed out the core status of the father within the Chinese family, and many fathers must still be the main breadwinner (Musumeci & Santero, 2018; Tan, 2016). The mother is the key figure in decision-making child-rearing practices. It could be summed up as China's patriarchal model of women's leadership has shaped a new egalitarian gender order (Tan, 2016). A lot of the discussions on the role of fathers in child-rearing practices are conducted around Swedish parents. At the same time, the issue of reconciliation is increasingly seen as a male issue (Musumeci & Santero, 2018). For (at least in the West) contemporary

fathers and family policies that target the dual-earners and dual careers model, achieving coordination between paid work and caregiving responsibilities has become one of the main challenges. It is worth noting that among the 15 participants interviewed, two dads are key figures in decision-making child-rearing practices.

"After graduating from university, I joined a foreign-enterprise company in Shanghai with higher income than my classmate. However, my wife was willing to maintain her job as the financial controller on a listed company in Fuqing (a county-level city of Fujian Province, China). To raise our children, I had to quit my job in Shanghai and go back to Fuzhou to develop my career because I thought that children are very important. I was not born in a middle-class family; thus, I have to rely on hard work for my achievements by myself. These achievements have supported my children to speed a carefree life. So, there are always one of the members in the family who have to sacrifice some of their careers for their children because children are a very important members who enhances their future possibilities." (Participant 10)

Tan (2016) concluded that Chinese fatherhood's social status is constantly changing, which is manifested in the gradual transition from a men-headed country to a women-headed society. What is the traditional Chinese father role? Historical Chinese society was mixed by the integration of Han culture, Confucian culture, Taoist culture, Buddhist culture, and the culture of 56 ethnic minorities (Tan, 2016). The ideal father at that time was a "responsible but emotionally distant and role model" (Li & Lamb, 2012, pp. 25). In many cases, fathers are educators and knowledgeable family members; their children will ask their fathers for help with homework, answering questions, and solving problems (Lamb, 2013, pp. 245). However, what is the role of the father in modern China? The term "new good man" is often used to call by contemporary Chinese fathers. The meaning of "new good man" believes in a very popular motto: good men should obey their wives' orders. In some Chinese communities, traditional male chauvinism seems to have disappeared forever (Tan, 2016). In contemporary China, various social changes imply changes in the roles of men and women inside and outside the family. Participant 10 is a good example. In addition, the concept of "strict father, kind mother" is facing challenges brought about by the symptoms of social change in China. A lot of evidence shows that fathers are more tolerant than mothers (Tan, 2016).

"My child is a boy. As a PE teacher, I may be able to accompany my child to grow up better than his mother. In addition, my parents are not able to accompany me to grow up, so I am willing to accompany my child to grow up and participate in his life as much as possible." (Participant 12)

In contemporary China, various social changes, especially the massive resources of media, all hint at the transformation of Chinese paternal society from fatherhood to women-headed societies with Mao Zedong declared that "women hold up half the sky" (Tan, 2016). Moreover, the young father's attitude does not necessarily lead to changes in their own father's behavior. In addition, in terms of women's role in changing fatherhood, Chinese women are more independent than before in Chinese society. These factors are the reasons that lead Chinese male parents to take the role of the leader in child-rearing practices.

In general, the first generation of parents, mothers are still the leaders of their children in child-rearing practices. This phenomenon has produced a substantial change among the second and third generations of parents. This is consistent with the theory of Tan (2016) that patriarchy tends to be gradually eliminated: more and more women enter the labor market; family members must share housework and work together to ensure that their children receive a good education. There are counter-movements, too. And women often 'have to' stay home for the children's education paradoxically. There is quite a variety in parenting styles and that it is difficult to draw general conclusions, even with only 15 respondents with their family. Perhaps the author doesn't want to generalize in this thesis but offers a glimpse into the rich world of modern parenting and at the same time show, three generations in a family handle the changes in the exterior world.

# 5 Conclusion

Based on the results obtained by analyzing the recordings of participants, this chapter critically evaluates the intergenerational changes regarding the parent practice tendency over school or family education. It discusses the key points that emerged from the findings related to the literature review. In addition, it also proposed the added value of this research and the significance of the parent-child relationship.

## 5.1 Research Aims

It is very important to distinguish between the following two fairly broad issues: how does the shift of intergenerational comparison parent's views on parenting practices will affect children's growth? The other is how do educational and socioeconomic attainment of the parent and grandparent generation relate to their own parenting practices of offspring? The focus of this article was to explore whether three generations of Chinese parents insist on implementing child-rearing practices as their children grow up. Especially under the intergenerational comparison between parent-child relationships, socio-economic levels play a role in parent-child training. In addition, this research also explores the role of parents and children's cultural capital in child-rearing practices under intergenerational comparison between parent-child relationships.

Through the coding and analysis of the data, it indicates that each generation of Chinese parents does not pay attention to parenting practice carefully. With the passage of time, the second and third generation of parents is paying more and more attention to parenting practice. Several possible inferences will be drawn: First, socio-economic status does affect the first- and second-generation parenting practice, however, this is not clear over third generation; second, parents tend to cultivate the cognitive ability of their children's regarding what is suitable for them. Third, parents of different generations have attached great importance to the use of family institution manuals, and this trend will become more and more dominant. Fourth, Chinese fathers take on more family responsibilities in parenting practice.

## 5.2 Research Objectives

-Re-understand what kind of parenting practice is adopted by parents of different generations or not to adopt any parenting practice.

-Obtain favorable results with reasonable probability

The themes that appear in the current research are similar to the concepts in other studies. However, different insights and new information have also obtained. The first theme reflected from the experience of early parenting exercises is "how to choose concerned cultivation or the accomplishment of natural growth", which means that concerned cultivation has the opportunity to cover the middle class; natural growth only covers the working class (Lareau, 2012). However, the conclusions based on facts have found that in today's China, the working class also has a child-rearing practice method of concerned cultivation. Based on the special geographical location (Fujian and Shanxi province, respectively), the differences in the socio-economic status of the participants highlight whether or not they attach importance to parenting exercises. Participants' cultural assets also highlight the gaps in their cognitive abilities to a certain extent. What is even more frustrating is that the unfair family background has once again ruthlessly widened the gap between the children. Every family wishes that their children will face the challenges of society with a prepared situation. However, there is a preconceived assumption, that is, how parents do the practice parenting?

The research results show that the three aspects of family socioeconomic status, cognitive ability and cultural capital are positively related to the parenting practice of Chinese parents. The family institutions may help new parents to construct a complete cultural logic for parenting practice. According to the results of the study, the intergenerational comparison between parent-child relationships will affect their perceptions of parenting habits. The educational and socio-economic achievements of parents and grandparents have a significant positive correlation with the parenting style of their offspring. Through the interviews of 15 interviewees, the author learned that parents' views on their children and their children's status in the social structure play a vital role in the process of social reproduction. These possible factors represent the view of Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) that the chance of success guides individual actions and ultimately produces certain results. Choose parents of different social levels and different generations to explain the understanding and views of parents of different generations on parenting exercises based on a more comprehensive perspective. Therefore, it

enhances the applicability and feasibility of this practical proposal and provide a valuable analysis for each option.

### 5.3 Practical Implications

Socio-economic status positively affects family education on the issue of parenting education. It shows that no matter whether the social situation is turbulent or not, it will not affect middle-class and upper-class parents to adopt reasonable parenting exercises to cultivate their children's ability. At the same time, socioeconomic status also positively affects the cognitive ability of parents. A further understanding is expressed that parents born in middle-class and upper-class family backgrounds have more cognitive ability, in order to understand the current situation of the child, so as to facilitate the parenting practice of the child. Make appropriate adjustments to the content to adapt to the growth of the child. For the impact of the school education system on parenting practice, Chinese parents have subtle changes. Parents of any social class are very concerned about the impact of school on parenting practice, which may be related to China's special social competition. Liu (2016) indicated that the transition from "natural growth" to "deliberate training", the great emphasis on formal education has made children an education project for the entire family, Requires a lot of investment, intervention, supervision and control. Nevertheless, the structural position of the family does not determine the way they raise their children. As Lareau (2012) and Bourdieu (1986) state, the uncertainty of social-economic status and family institution manual usage is inevitable. It is important to keep this "relative autonomy" of individuals in mind when formulating social structure status and biographical results (Lareau, 2012). Even the familial social-economic status affects the children's achievement to a certain extent, however, children's cognitive ability is the main factor that affects the children's success. Becoming a qualified parent does not necessarily educate qualified children. Throughout the research process, parental express insecurity, anxiety and fear of failure about their children's future. These inappropriate feelings are reflected in more deliberate collaborative cultivation. The way to alleviate anxiety may be that, by parenting practice, parents should continue to cultivate the children's cognitive abilities to handle difficulties. Another way to alleviate anxiety is that parents need to find the correct parenting practice method corresponding to their children.

Two areas rarely mentioned in previous articles were found in this paper. These areas are the influence of father's parenting practices and family instructions on parenting

exercises in family education. It shows that more and more fathers in China are beginning to pay attention to their children's parenting practice, and the reason is that they have replaced their mothers as the leader of parenting practice. In terms of family manuals, the changes in the post-Mao era have only affected the impact of family manuals on parenting exercises to a certain extent. It is worth noting that more and more parents believe that family manuals have a positive impact on parenting exercises.

## 5.4 Future Research

At present, we are not a non-fatherhood society and family education still plays an irreplaceable role. We should inherit some Chinese culture such as do the filial duty, the living experience, and knowledge summarized by our ancestors in the parental practice. It would, indeed, be great if there could be done more work on fatherhood; how fatherhood is understood in the 'new' generation and what fathers actually do etc; it would also be great if more research could be done about the genre of family instruction that seems to still be well alive.

Nowadays, as the economy develops, we have more spare time and some part of it should be allocated to child-rearing to maintain the sustainability of the family. Child-rearing is not a task for schoolteacher only, but all the family members, especially the parents. Moreover, it would be nice if more researchers dedicate their efforts to parenting practices from different perspectives. For example, the psychologist may give recommendations from a psychology development perspective and provide the guidance of parenting practices to make sure that they don't face the psychological problem when they turn to adults. The educationist may look at parenting practices from the educational way to make sure to what extent and how the parents can intervene with their child, especially if the child doesn't perform a good academic grade.

This study is also subject to several limitations. For example, potentially, there may be alternative explanations for the associations among family savings for children, parental educational expectations, and children's educational achievement, which has not been examined in this study. These three concepts are likely to have dynamic relationships, affecting each other. Studies using a rigorous experimental design (Kim et al., 2015, 2017) suggest that asset building for children has a causal effect on parental educational expectations. In addition, parental expectations may not be the only path through which family assets affect child development. Second, parents may overestimate children's educational achievement in the survey, and self-

reported academic performance on children's math and language arts may be less reliable than information retrieved from school administrative data. Finally, the sample was drawn from 2 provinces only, representing a small part in Mainland China. The relationships among family assets, parental educational expectations, and child development may vary in provinces not included in the study. These limitations could be further addressed in future research.

## 5.5 Chapter Summary

Liu (2016) put forward "deliberate concerted cultivation " to explain the childhood life of the youngest generation. "Accomplishment of natural growth" is called the desire of many contemporary Chinese children. Formal education is the overwhelming focus on child-rearing practices. Participant 15 described their parents worked hard to support them and equipped them with "human capital" or high "*Suzhi*" education to represent their love with their children. Meanwhile, the only thing missing that they should be companionship with their children. This generation of parents succeeded in the financial accumulation, but they failed in terms of family affection. On the other hand, in the middle class, parents have higher education attainments, fierce competition, greater wealth, as well as the concept of "good life" and characterized by a strong belief in education. The "accomplishment of natural growth " has become synonymous with obsolete and impossible (Liu, 2016). In short, compared with the first generation of parents and the second generation of parents, for the youngest generation, " Accomplishment of natural growth" is almost impossible. "Deliberate concerted cultivation " has become a normal mode of child-rearing practices.

In fact, the living experience (such as the educational background) and the resource (for example, the economical resource, the vocational condition) integrates with each other and leads to the middle class to do the Concerted Cultivation. However, the natural growth will be the general parenting practices approach for the working class and lower class, which is quite understandable since they should put much time into earning money for feeding their family. However, the structure of the family doesn't determine the parenting practices.

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# Appendix A

Table 1 Number of Graduates by Level in China (Unit: per person)

Degree \ Year	1949	1980	2020
Degree of postgraduates	107	476	729,000
Degree of undergraduate	21,000	147, 000	7,972,000

Source 1 National Bureau of Statistics of China, (2020a; 2020b)

Table 2 Demographic Data of Sample.

Demographic	Study sample
Age Range	31-87
Gender	Females (8), male (7)
Ethnicity	Chinese
Obtained degree	MSc (4), BSc (8), DVE (2), MSD (1)
Employment status	Retirement (6), on-the-job (9)
MSc = Master of Science; BSc = Bachelor of Science; DVE = Diploma in Vocational Education; MSD = Middle school diploma	

Table 3 Interview Guide for Semi-structured Interviews

Theme	Codes and Questions	Constructs of Theory
School Educational Institutions	Code 1: Early Year Education	<i>Mengxue</i> (Pine, & Yu, 2012)
	Code 2: Extracurricular Activities	1. Accomplishment of natural growth (Laraeu, 2011) 2. Cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1979, 1986) 3. Practices of concerted cultivation (Laraeu, 2011)

Family Education	Code 3: Educational Expectation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cultural logic of child rearing (Laraeu, 2011)</li> <li>2. Cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1979, 1986)</li> <li>3. “Democratization” of parent-child relationships (Liu, 2016)</li> </ol>
	Code 4: Cognitive Ability (Differentiated Instruction)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1979, 1986)</li> <li>2. “Democratization” of parent-child relationships (Liu, 2016)</li> </ol>
	Code 5: Family institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Family institutions (Chu, 2017)</li> <li>2. "Cultural logic” (Lareau, 2012)</li> </ol>

*Table 4 Descriptive Respondent Demographic Information*

Participant	Participant's generation	Gender	No. of children	Residence	Place of birth	
First generation	01	30 <sup>th</sup> generation	Man	2	Fuzhou	Fuzhou
	02	30 <sup>th</sup> generation	Man	3	Fuzhou	Fuzhou
	03	30 <sup>th</sup> generation	Woman	2	Fuzhou	Chengdu
	04	40 <sup>th</sup> generation	Woman	3	Beijing	Fuzhou
	05	50 <sup>th</sup> generation	Woman	5	Xiaoyi	Xiaoyi
Second generation	06	60 <sup>th</sup> generation	Man	1	Hongkong	Fuzhou
	07	60 <sup>th</sup> generation	Woman	1	Hongkong	Fuzhou
	08	70 <sup>th</sup> generation	Man	2	Fuzhou	Putian
	09	70 <sup>th</sup> generation	Woman	1	Fuzhou	Sanming
	10	70 <sup>th</sup> generation	Man	1	Fuzhou	Longyan
	11	70 <sup>th</sup> generation	Man	2	Xiaoyi	Xiaoyi
Third generation	12	80 <sup>th</sup> generation	Man	1	Fuzhou	Suizhou
	13	80 <sup>th</sup> generation	Woman	1	Taiyuan	Xiaoyi
	14	80 <sup>th</sup> generation	Woman	1	Langfang	Xiaoyi
	15	90 <sup>th</sup> generation	Woman	1	Shanghai	Fuqing

Table 5 Descriptive Respondent Socio-economic Status Information

Participant	Education level	Occupation	
First generation	01	BSc	Civil servant
	02	BSc	Architect
	03	BSc	Chemist
	04	BSc	Civil servant
	05	MSD	Self-employed
Second generation	06	MSc	Civil servant
	07	MSc	Banker
	08	MSc	Civil servant
	09	MSc	High-Schoolteacher
	10	BSc	CEO of private company
	11	DVE	Civil servant
Third generation	12	MSc	Pedagog
	13	DVE	Primary-Schoolteacher
	14	BSc	Staff of private company
	15	BSc	Housewife

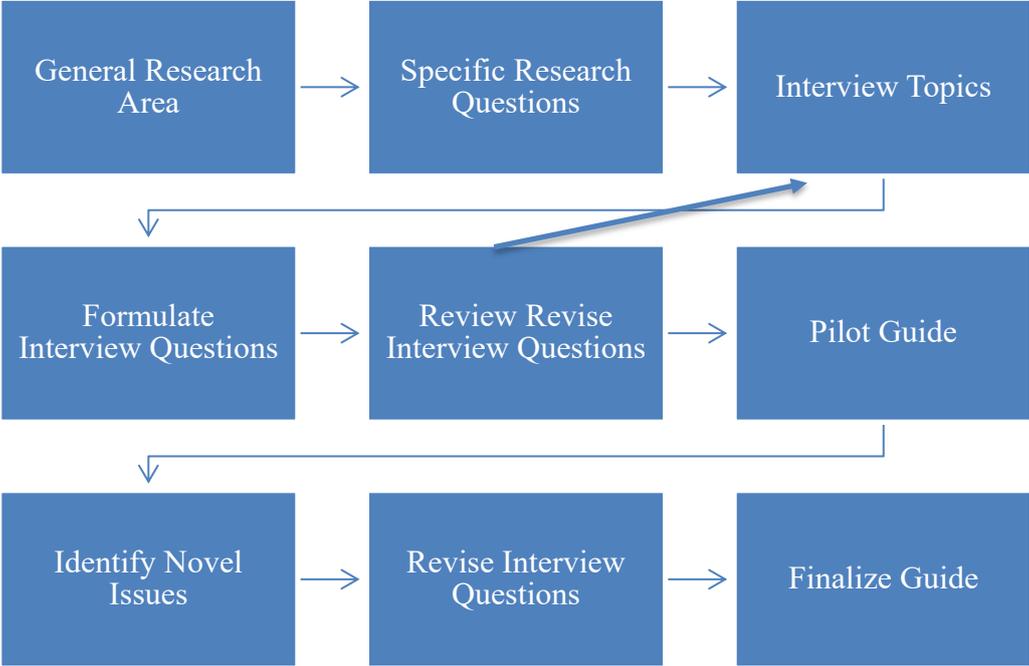
Table 6 Reliability Statistic Result: Comparison of diverse codes between participants

Code Participant	EYE	Extracurricular Activities	Educational Expectation	Differentiated Instruction	Family institutions	
First generation	01	NO	NO	Higher	NO	HAVN'T THOUGHT ABOUT
	02	YES	YES	Higher	YES	YES
	03	NO	NO	Lower	NO	HAVN'T THOUGHT ABOUT
	04	NO	NO	Higher	NO	HAVN'T THOUGHT ABOUT
	05	NO	NO	Lower	NO	DON'T CARE ABOUT
Second generation	06	YES	YES	Higher	YES	YES
	07	YES	YES	Higher	NO	YES
	08	YES	YES	Higher	NO	YES
	09	NO	YES	Higher	YES	YES
	10	NO	YES	Higher	NO	YES
	11	NO	YES	Higher	NO	HAVN'T THOUGHT ABOUT
	12	YES	YES	Higher	NO	YES

Third generation	13	NO	NO	Lower	NO	YES
	14	NO	YES	Lower	NO	DON'T CARE ABOUT
	15	YES	YES	Higher	THINK OUT	YES

# Appendix B

Figure 1 Formulating Questions for an Interview Guide (Bryman, 2016, P476)



# Appendix C

## Respondent family background

### Participant 1:

He was born in the background of poor peasant in Fuzhou. He studied hard, earned a bachelor's degree in the 1950s, and later became a leader in a state-owned enterprise. He mentioned that he was a beneficiary of land reform. He has two sons who have got postgraduate degrees as well as both serve in government departments. He has 2 granddaughters: one of them is studies in the graduate school and the other studies in the high school.

### Participant 2:

He was born in a landlord's family in Fuzhou. He earned a bachelor's degree in the 1950s and later became an architect. He mentioned that his family was not affected too much because his parents are all specialists. He had three daughters, two of whom received postgraduate degrees as well as both served in government departments; the youngest daughter died at the age of 17. He has 2 granddaughters; one has a master's degree and the other earned bachelor's degree.

### Participant 3:

She was born in a landlord's family in Chengdu. She earned a bachelor's degree in the 1950s and later became a chemical scientist. She mentioned that her family was not affected too much because her father donated all the cash to the CCP for free. She has two sons who have obtained master's degree, and both of them serve in government departments. She has 2 granddaughters: one of them studies in the graduate school and the other studies in the high school.

### Participant 4:

She was born in a poor peasant family in Fuzhou. She earned a bachelor's degree in the 1960s and then became a radio expert. She has 2 daughters; one got a master's degree and the other got a bachelor's degree. The daughters all serve in the government department. She has a granddaughter and a grandson, both of them are undergraduates.

### Participant 5:

She was born in Xiaoyi city of Shanxi province, with a poor peasant family. She completed the Middle school diploma and then operated her own business independently. She has 2 daughters and 3 sons. All of her children graduated from universities. One of the sons

received a doctorate degree; the other two sons received bachelor's degree. One of the two daughters is a teacher; the other one serves private enterprises; two of the three sons serve private enterprises; the other is a university researcher. She has a granddaughter and a grandson. One of them stay in junior high school and the other stay in elementary school.

Participant 6:

His parent both are intellectuals. He received a master's degree in Fuzhou. He served in the government department. And then he secondment to the Hong Kong office, and their family moved to Hong Kong. He has one daughter under the one-child policy. His daughter graduated with a master's degree.

Participant 7:

Both of her parent are intellectuals. She received a master's degree in Fuzhou. She served in the State-Owned Commercial Banks. She secondment to the Hong Kong office since 2009 and moved to Hong Kong with her family. She has one daughter under the one-child policy. Her daughter graduated with a master's degree.

Participant 8:

He was born in the background of poor peasant family in Putian city of Fujian province. He studied hard, earned a master's degree in the 1990s, and later became a leader in a government department. He has two sons: one of them studies in university and the other one just born two years ago. The reason for having one more child is because of the two-child policy is applied in China currently.

Participant 9:

She was born in a working-class family in Sanming city of Fujian province. After receiving her master's degree, she served in a “key” high school, as a teacher, in Fuzhou. She has one son and only one child because of national policy. Her son studies in college currently.

Participant 10:

He was born in the background of poor peasant in Longyan city of Fujian province. He studied hard, earned a master's degree in the 1990s, and later became a CEO in a private company. He only has one son because of national policy. Her son studies in high school.

Participant 11:

He was born in Xiaoyi city of Shanxi province, with a poor peasant family. He completed the diploma in vocational and then served in the government department. He has one daughter and one son. His daughter studies in university and this son studies in middle school.

Participant 12:

He was born in a poor peasant family in Suizhou city of Hubei province. After receiving his master's degree, he served in a “*key*” elementary school, as a teacher, in Fuzhou. He has one kid (3years old).

Participant 13:

She was born in Xiaoyi city of Shanxi province, with a poor peasant family. She completed the diploma in vocational and then served in the junior high college, as a teacher, in Taiyuan city of Shanxi province. She has one daughter, who studies in middle school.

Participant 14:

She was born in Xiaoyi city of Shanxi province, with a poor peasant family. She earned the bachelor’s degree and then served in private company in Beijing. She has one son who is stay in elementary school.

Participant 15:

She was born in a poor peasant family in Fuqing city of Fujian province. After receiving her bachelor’s degree, she stayed at home till now as a housewife, in Shanghai. She has one kid, which is 3 years old.