The Consequences of Pressure on Adolescent Students to Perform Well in School

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Abstract
The aim of this research was to explore the influence of culture and context on students' motivational orientations, sense of well-being, and academic performance, by investigating differences among three groups of high school students, namely, Hong Kong Chinese, Canadian Chinese and Canadian of European origin on motivational variables and performance. A second goal of this study was to examine the relationship among the motivational variables within each group. 571 grade 12 and 13 students from high schools in Hong Kong and Montreal Canada participated in this study. The results showed that Hong Kong students spent significantly more time studying, but they were more anxious, felt less competent, and received lower grades, than their Canadian counterparts. The relationships among the motivational variables were generally in line with those reported in Western studies. The results clearly showed the influence of culture and context of learning on students motivational orientation and sense of well-being. The undesirable consequences of pressure on students to achieve high grades were discussed. (HK J Paediatr (new series) 2004;9:329-336)

Key words: Adolescent psychology; Educational achievement; Motivation; School anxiety; Self-efficacy