
Young Chinese Children's Authority Concepts

Jenny Yau, *Azusa Pacific University*, Judith G. Smetana and Aaron Metzger, *University of Rochester*

Abstract

Using multilevel analyses, we examined the influence of domain (moral, conventional, and personal) and the familiarity of different authority figures (mother, teacher, person in charge, and stranger) in public, school, or home settings in 123 four to seven-year-old Chinese children (M = 5.6 years) in Hong Kong. Children affirmed authority more for moral and conventional than personal events, based primarily on punishment avoidance and conventional justifications. Children judged that they should obey mothers more than all other authorities and the person-in charge in the associated setting and the teacher more than strangers. At school, teachers were seen as having more authority over moral and conventional events than mothers whereas at home, mothers had more authority than teachers over all issues. With age, children increasingly evaluated mothers' authority as generalizable across contexts for the moral event; reflecting the importance of familiarity, mothers were seen as having more authority to extend her regulation outside the home, including for personal events, than teachers' authority outside the school.

Keywords: authority concepts; culture; Chinese children; social reasoning

Introduction

Recent research reveals that children's concepts of authority involve complex social-cognitive judgments. Children do not necessarily accept all commands from adults, but rather make evaluations based on the nature of the event, the attributes of the authority figure (e.g., their knowledge and social position), and the context in which the command is given (for a review, see Laupa, Turiel, & Cowan, 1995). Researchers have assessed their relative importance by examining children's evaluations of the legitimacy of authority and the need for obedience when different factors are varied (Laupa, 1991, 1994, 1995; Tisak, Crane-Ross, Tisak, & Maynard, 2000).

This research was based on social domain theory (e.g., Nucci, 2001; Smetana, 2006; Turiel, 2006). Research from this perspective has shown that across cultures, young children consider moral transgressions, which pertain to violations of justice, others' welfare, and rights (such as hitting and stealing) as more serious, more wrong, and

Correspondence should be addressed to Jenny Yau, Doctoral Studies of K-12 Education, Azusa Pacific University, 701 East Foothill Boulevard, PO Box 7000, Azusa, CA 91702. Email: jyau@apu.edu

more independent of rules and authority than social-conventional transgressions, or the arbitrary norms that guide behaviors in different social contexts (such as bad manners; see Smetana, 2006; Turiel, 2006 for reviews). Children treat personal issues (such as choices of toys, clothing, or friends), however, as outside of authorities' legitimate jurisdiction because they pertain to personal preferences and choices, control over the body, and privacy (Nucci, 1996, 2001).

The previous research has indicated that children's evaluations of the permissibility of behaviors, and accordingly, their acceptance of an authority figure's mandates, varies according to the domain of the event (Tisak, 1986). Children judge that parents and teachers have more legitimate authority to make rules prohibiting moral than conventional or personal transgressions and consider moral and conventional issues to be more legitimately regulated by parents or teachers than personal events (Nucci & Weber, 1995; Tisak, 1986). Children do not positively evaluate the legitimacy of all authority commands, however; they also co-ordinate the domain of the event with the type of directive and view authority as legitimate only for acceptable behaviors. Children give priority to ensuring fairness and welfare and preventing harm (Killen, 1990; Laupa, 1994; Laupa et al., 1995).

Children's understanding of different factors in their decision-making also changes with age. Cullen (1987) found that young children (five-year olds) have developed concepts of familiar school figures with designated authority, such as teachers and the school patrol girl, whereas older children (8 and 11-year-olds) affirmed a broader range of authorities (including the mayor, police, and prime minister). Laupa and Turiel (1986), and Laupa (1991, 1994, 1995) found that 4–13-year-olds evaluated school authority figures according to three attributes: Adult status, knowledge, and social position. Social position was most crucial and adult status was least influential in children's rationales for obedience, even among preschoolers (Laupa, 1991, 1994). In the school setting, young children were more likely to accept peers who were given an authoritative social position as legitimate authorities over a lady without a formal position. Similar findings were obtained when adult or sibling authority was examined in the home (Laupa, 1995), because the role, responsibility, and superior knowledge inherent in the social position carried more weight in young children's judgments than adult status.

Nevertheless, Laupa (1991) pointed to the 'non-differentiation' characteristic in young children's reasoning, as they did not realize that an adult or peer with an assigned social position can be incompetent in the knowledge needed to solve problems. Young children do not always consider social position to be as important as do older children (Laupa et al., 1995). Thus, Laupa (1991) concluded that young children's understanding of social position is limited.

Children also perceive the role, power or expertise of an authority to be context-specific. Children considered a legitimate school authority to be the one holding the appropriate social position, issuing an appropriate directive, and in the appropriate context. For instance, Laupa and Turiel (1993) found that children judged that school principals should not have authority outside the school context and that mothers were generally considered to have more authority in the home than in the school and vice versa for teachers (Tisak et al., 2000). However, under certain circumstances, such as acting to prohibit physical harm, children allowed a principal's action to transcend contexts. Similarly, young children accepted mothers' authority to stop moral and conventional transgressions, regardless of the context (Laupa, 1995). Thus, the research suggests that parents and teachers claim a broader jurisdiction than do other

authorities and that their authority may transcend their usual context when regulating inappropriate behavior.

This tendency may be due to children's familiarity with the authority figure. Close relationships may be more important than social position in the young child's thinking about obedience in particular social contexts. For instance, principals have higher status and more power than teachers, but teachers are more familiar, and children may accept their authority more readily across contexts. Because of their intimate relationships with their children and their responsibility for caring for and raising them, young children may accept their parents' authority more readily than anyone else's. On the other hand, in some cultures (e.g., in China), it is not uncommon for parents to warn their young children to behave in the presence of public authority figures like the police, security guards, or waiters. Therefore, although they do not know these people personally, children are familiar with the power inherent in the uniform they wear and tend to observe their authority more readily than other strangers'. Thus, familiarity can be perceived as relational or conceptual. Nevertheless, the impact of familiarity on young children's judgments has not been examined yet.

Moreover, very few studies have studied young children's judgments about authority in other, more hierarchical, non-Western cultures. Few studies have explored children's concepts of authority in Asian cultures. Zhang (1996), as cited in Laupa and Tse (2005), found that Chinese children were more obedient to parental authority than were American children. Other studies (Kim, 1998; Kim & Turiel, 1996; Laupa & Tse, 2005), however, have shown that Asian children differ from American children in how they weigh different authority attributes. Perhaps due to the strong emphasis on hierarchical relationships in their cultures, children in Korea, as well as Chinese children in Macau, have been found to emphasize adult status and knowledge over social position more than do American children (Kim & Turiel, 1996; Laupa & Tse, 2005). Using ambiguous moral stories (which did not pertain to physical harm), Kim (1998), however, found that Korean children viewed both adult and peer authorities to have legitimate authority when their commands were consistent with children's evaluations of the acts. Children recognized actors' social standing but gave priority to affirming morality. In all of these studies, Chinese children, like children in Western cultures, differentiated between the legitimacy of authority and obedience to authority, but they showed a greater focus on punishment avoidance and sanctions when reasoning about obedience. Thus far, however, the studies of Asian children have primarily focused on somewhat ambiguous events (e.g., turn-taking, playing ball) and have not specifically examined the authority of different adults of varying familiarity in different contexts. They also have not examined authority judgments regarding personal issues.

In the present study, we examined young Chinese children's decisions to obey authority and their rationales for obedience to authority in hypothetical moral, social-conventional, and personal situations. We focused on young children because the prior research has shown that they do not yet have a mature understanding of social position. The situations varied the social position and familiarity of authorities across different social contexts and domains to better understand how young Chinese children prioritize different factors in their judgments. Previous research with young children has focused primarily on mothers and school authorities; in the current study, we broadened the range of adult authorities to include some familiar but public authority figures who typically do not have a close relationship with children.

The present study was conducted in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is situated in the southeast of China, and most of its almost 7 million inhabitants are Chinese-speaking

Cantonese (Hong Kong SAR Government, 2003). Chinese societies across Asia still strongly support traditional values of interpersonal relationships, harmony, and cooperation (Cheng, 2004; Gabrenya & Hwang, 1996; Wu, 1996), but their ideologies are, to different extents, modified by modern Western values stressing individuality and competition. Though the culture of Hong Kong has been described as materialistic and pragmatic (Cheng, 2004; Leung, 1996; Morris & Lo, 2002), it still maintains a strong emphasis on family life. Chinese traditionally believe in the importance of discipline in early childhood, and at an early age, children are socialized to learn to act or stop according to adults' commands (Wu, 1996) so that they can develop self-constraint and compliance (Chen et al., 2003). In a recent survey of Hong Kong Chinese parents' perceptions of the ideal child, parents were found to focus on family, academic-related, and normative behaviors, upholding the basic values in obeying parents' directives, and proper conduct (Shek & Chan, 1999). Starting at home and continuing at preschool, young children are disciplined for obedience and compliance and are expected to learn the social norms from adult models (Wu, 1996; Yau, 2007).

On the other hand, a growing body of research has demonstrated that Chinese children and youth sometimes give priority to personal issues (see Helwig, 2006 for a review). For instance, Helwig, Arnold, Tan, and Boyd (2003) found that Chinese adolescents do not always endorse adult-unilateral decision-making. Rather, for some issues, they preferred democratic decision-making, based on concerns for personal choice and autonomy. Yau and Smetana (2003) found that young Chinese children in Hong Kong made distinctions among moral, conventional, and personal events, based on relatively sophisticated justifications. That even very young children distinguished personal events is interesting, given that researchers have described Chinese culture as de-emphasizing personal desires, freedoms, and rights in favor of obligations to the family (Markus, Mullally, & Kitayama, 1997). An analysis of Hong Kong Chinese children's authority concepts during early childhood could advance our knowledge of how young children co-ordinate different factors in a cultural and social environment that stresses compliance and obedience to authority.

In the present study, we examined how young Chinese children (four to seven-year-olds) coordinated the attributes of the adult, the setting in which the command was given, and the nature of the event in evaluating judgments regarding obedience to adult commands. More specifically, we examined how young children weigh these factors when evaluating the need to obey, the conditions under which young children accept and reject commands from adult authorities outside their appropriate contexts, and age and gender differences in judgments and justifications during early childhood. Due to the strong emphasis on moral conduct and social norms in Chinese culture, we hypothesized that children would focus more on the nature of the events for moral and conventional transgressions than personal choices and that they would recognize the authority of adults having the appropriate social positions in the appropriate contexts. In other situations, such as facing a personal choice or an authority figure that is not typically associated with the context, we predicted that familiarity would influence young children's acceptance or rejection of authority. Hence, as mothers have the closest relationships with children, we expected that they would be most accepted and strangers would be least accepted as authorities across contexts. We also anticipated that with increasing age, children's justifications for obedience would be more differentiated, even in early childhood. As previous research from the social domain perspective has yielded few gender differences (see Smetana, 2006 for a review), we did not expect to find consistent gender differences here.

Methods

Participants/Sample

Participants in this study were 123 young Chinese children, 62 males and 61 females, in Hong Kong. They ranged in age from four to seven years ($M = 5.60$, $SD = 1.24$), with relatively equal numbers of boys and girls across the age span. Age was used as a continuous variable in our analyses. The children were recruited from three kindergartens and one elementary school in Hong Kong. Hong Kong kindergartens include both preschool and kindergarten classrooms, and most children enter elementary school at the age of six. Although some of the participants in this study had just started school, others had completed kindergarten and had just started Grade 1. They were mainly from lower-middle class backgrounds, based on parents' educational levels and occupations. About 64 percent of the parents had attained secondary school education level. Although 60 percent of mothers stayed at home, the majority of fathers were service workers. Boys and girls did not differ significantly in age or family background. Preliminary analyses indicated that parents' education was not associated with children's judgments beyond a chance basis.

Measures and Procedures

Participants were individually interviewed in Cantonese in two 15-minute sessions one to two days apart. They were administered nine hypothetical stories that varied the domain of the issues (moral, social-conventional, or personal) and the context (in public, at school, or at home). Thus, all children received all events, spread evenly over the two sessions. The events were drawn from previous research (Smetana, 2006). The moral event, hitting, pertained to an act affecting the welfare of others. The social-conventional event, not saying 'Thank you' after being helped, involved a violation of the agreed-on uniformities in social interactions, that is, being impolite. The personal event, choice of clothing, was personal in that its consequences only affected the child. The stories were illustrated with pictures, and by changing the backdrops of the pictures each event was shown to take place in a different context, including at school, at home, and in public, that is, the story character hitting another child at school, at home, and on the beach; the child not saying 'Thank you' after being helped at school, at home and in a restaurant; the child choosing a favorite dress or shirt, at home, in school, and in the shopping mall to wear or to buy.

In each setting, four adult authority figures differing in their social position and familiarity to the story character were presented in random order. The authority figures included a person-in-charge in the particular context, a teacher, a mother, and a stranger. The person-in-charge represented the social position with knowledge and power (e.g., the lifeguard on the beach, the manager of the restaurant, the boss of a shop in the mall, the principal of school, and the security guard in an apartment building). In real life, young children would be expected to recognize these individuals' social positions, but they most likely do not know these authority figures personally. In contrast, young children recognize teachers' and mothers' power and knowledge at school and at home, respectively, and also know them very well, thus reflecting differences in familiarity between the person-in-charge. The stranger had neither social position nor familiarity with young children. The gender of the child story character, as well as the person-in-charge and the stranger were matched to the gender of the

participant, but mothers and teachers were always depicted as female, as nearly all preschool teachers in Hong Kong are female.

The combination of the three contexts and three types of events resulted in nine stories. These were presented with type of event and context intermixed (e.g., children might hear a story about hitting on the beach and then not saying 'thank you' at home), although the order of the nine stories was counterbalanced. For each story, children were interviewed in turn about all four authority figures, although the order of presentation of authority figures was varied. The strangers were portrayed in a non-threatening way so that children would not be biased by their appearance. In each situation, the participant was asked to indicate whether the story character had to obey the authority figure and to provide justifications for their judgment. The following is an example of a story presentation and interview questions for the moral event (hitting) depicted on the beach.

A picture was shown of a girl, Ling, hitting another girl on the beach. Four figures—Ling's teacher, a lifeguard, a stranger, and Ling's mother—were shown in turn. Each figure was depicted as passing by and witnessing Ling's act. The participant was told, (1) 'Now, a lifeguard walks by and sees Ling hitting. The lifeguard tells Ling not to hit. Should Ling obey the lifeguard? (*Obedience judgment*)'. (2) 'Why does/doesn't Ling have to do what the lifeguard tells her? (*Justification*)'. The same procedures were repeated for the other contexts and events. Obedience judgments were coded binomially as either 1 (Yes, the child should obey) or 0 (No, the child does not have to obey).

Justifications for Obedience. Based on previous research (Laupa, 1991) and analyses of 20 percent of the responses, responses were coded in 10 categories: (1) *Others' welfare*—for example, 'It hurts others'; (2) *Avoidance of punishment or seeking of authority's approval*—for example, 'I'll be punished', 'This is pleasing to her'; (3) *Politeness*—for example, 'It's impolite', '___ teaches us to be polite'; (4) *Appeal to a caring and nurturing relationship*, emphasizing the appreciation of and gratitude towards the authority figure—for example, 'She is the Mom. She gives birth to him', 'He likes the teacher', 'She takes care of us'; (5) *Appeal to the authority's status and associated duties*—for example, 'He is the boss', 'He will call the police if someone gets hurt', 'The teacher is responsible for looking after the pupils'; (6) *Appeal to adults' knowledge*—for example, 'He is an adult. He has the knowledge', 'She knows what is right or wrong'; (7) *Inferring others' intentions*—for example, 'She thinks this is good for him and would like him to try', 'Maybe he is a bad person'; (8) *Personal preference*—for example, 'He likes it', 'She can choose what she likes'; (9) *Appeal to unfamiliarity*—for example, 'He doesn't know that stranger'; (10) *Undifferentiated*, insufficient information to be coded—for example, 'I don't know'. Twenty percent of the responses were translated into English for reliability coding by the second author. Interrater reliability (kappa) in coding justifications, obtained between two coders, was .94. Once reliability was obtained, the remaining responses were coded in Cantonese by the first author. For analyses, justifications pertaining to politeness, appeals to status and adults' knowledge were combined into a *Conventional* category, and appeals to the caring and nurturing relationship, and inference of others' intentions were combined in the *Psychological* category.

Statistical Analyses

Children's judgments regarding whether the child character should obey the authority figure, as well as their justifications for these judgments, were analyzed using

multilevel modeling (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Multilevel modeling was particularly appropriate for the present data (and is preferable to analysis of variance), given that the dependent and independent variables were dichotomous, and the data structure was nested. Models were fitted to the data using the computer program hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) 6.02.

Obedience Judgments. Children's repeated, dichotomous judgments of whether the story actor should obey the authority figure were the dependent variables in the models. Over the two brief, 15-minute sessions, children made judgments regarding 36 different conditions, each having three manipulated components (e.g., who made the command, the setting in which the command was given, and the domain of the event). The Level 1 models used a within-subjects design, with multiple judgments nested within individual children. The predictors or independent variables in the model were dummy coded judgments by domain, authority figure, and context. Dummy codes for judgments for each condition were created to allow for tests of models where all three manipulations (e.g., for personal issues, mothers at home vs. mothers at school and mothers in public) were compared. In these analyses, the intercept was dropped from the model, and thus, the Level 1 coefficients were interpreted as the mean level of judgments to obey authority for each scenario. Children's age and gender were the Level 2 variables. Because the data were non-linear, a non-linear test with a logistical link function (Bernoulli) was used, and unit-specific output was interpreted. An example of the model is provided in the Appendix.

A series of models examined hypotheses for each manipulation separately. Each model held the other variables constant (e.g., testing whether mothers were obeyed more often over personal events in public, at home, or at school). Contrast codes were applied to the independent variables to allow for statistical tests on constrained fixed effects, or the differences in mean value of the coefficients. The appropriateness of these constraints on the models was measured by a chi-square, with a significant chi-square indicating that the specified contrast codes were a good model fit (e.g., the coefficients were significantly different). Because different models were run, results were discussed for those models where significant differences between Level 1 coefficients were found or were significant.

Obedience Justifications. A similar analytic strategy was employed to examine children's justifications for their obedience judgments. Multilevel models were run with the justification category as the outcome variable, the same 36 dummy coded conditions as the Level 1 variables, and the child's age, and gender as Level 2 variables. Again, the intercept was removed from the equation, and contrast codes were applied to the individual conditions to test whether children's use of the justifications differed for the various conditions.

As children's justifications varied by their choice of obedience or disobedience to the authority figure, models were examined separately for judgments affirming and rejecting authority in the different situations. Models were only run when there were sufficient data for the statistical program to reliably fit a model, eliminating the infrequently used justifications. Moreover, main effects models were reported when the given effect was found across different conditions (e.g., children used moral justifications more often for moral issues, regardless of the contexts and authority figures).

Table 1. Percentage of Judgments Affirming Adult Authority

	Moral		Conventional		Personal	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Public</i>						
Stranger	68	47	57	50	49	50
Person-in-charge	93	26	90	30	77	42
Teacher	94	23	92	28	81	39
Mother	95	22	93	25	86	35
<i>School</i>						
Stranger	54	50	53	50	48	50
Person-in-charge	98	16	97	18	83	37
Teacher	97	18	97	18	84	37
Mother	92	28	92	28	86	35
<i>Home</i>						
Stranger	55	50	52	50	47	50
Person-in-charge	88	33	84	37	75	44
Teacher	88	33	87	34	79	41
Mother	98	16	95	22	88	33

Results

Children's Obedience Judgments

Level 2 Effects. The Level 2 effects represent age and gender differences for children's obedience judgments for the specific conditions. Because these analyses utilized a Bernoulli conversion, all Level 2 effects are presented both with the resulting coefficients (population-average model), as well as its conversion to an odds ratio ($OR = \exp \wedge \text{coefficient}$). There was a significant age effect for the different settings involving moral issues. With increasing age, children were more likely to consider that mothers should be obeyed for the moral event in public and at school, $\beta_s = 1.84, .99$ ($ORs = 6.30, 2.68$), $ps < .05, .01$, and they were more likely to consider that persons-in-charge should be obeyed for moral events in public, $\beta = .68$ ($OR = 1.98$), $p < .05$. Older children were also more likely to obey the person-in-charge for conventional events in public, $\beta = .92$ ($OR = 2.50$), $p < .01$. Only one significant gender effect was found: More girls than boys judged that mothers should be obeyed for moral issues in public, $\beta = 2.08$ ($OR = 8.01$), $p < .05$.

Models for Judgments (Overall). Overall, most children affirmed adult authority across all conditions (see Table 1). In two-thirds of the situations, positive obedience judgments ranged from 83 percent to 98 percent, with the highest percentages concentrated around moral and conventional events. Affirmation of authority for personal events was lower (around 50 percent).

Models Comparing Settings. No main effects were found for children's judgments of obedience in different settings, and comparisons of the types of event for each

authority figure by the settings indicated that only two models were good fits to the data. More children judged that the actor should obey teachers for moral events at school than at home, $\chi^2 = 3.89, p < .05$. Children judged that the child should obey strangers in response to moral events more in public than at school or at home, $\chi^2 = 6.66, p < .01$. For mothers and persons-in-charge, children's judgments did not differ significantly by context for the different types of events. Hence, context influenced children's acceptance of authority only when the teacher and the stranger were involved in settling moral transgressions.

Models Comparing Authority Figures. Fewer children judged that the actor should obey strangers (55 percent) than persons-in-charge (86 percent), teachers (88 percent), or mothers (91 percent), $\chi^2 = 10.33, p < .01$. Models comparing events by authority figures indicated that mothers were evaluated as having more authority at home than all other authority figures (see Table 1 for means). Children judged that persons-in-charge, teachers, and mothers had more authority than strangers in public, at school, and at home, both for the moral, $\chi^2 = 31.20, 63.57, 12.57, ps < .001$, respectively, and conventional event, $\chi^2 = 46.23, 46.32, 40.04, ps < .001$, respectively. Likewise, when evaluating events at home, children judged that mothers had to be obeyed more for the moral, $\chi^2 = 12.57, p < .01$, and conventional event, $\chi^2 = 5.14, p < .01$, than teachers or persons-in-charge. In contrast, when evaluating obedience to commands about personal events, children gave more negative responses to strangers than to other authority figures (persons-in-charge, teachers, and mothers) in public, at school, and at home, $\chi^2 = 26.31, 20.02, 20.81, ps < .001$, respectively. In summary, across all authority figures, children rejected obedience to authority more for the personal than the moral and conventional event, yet across conditions, they judged that mothers were to be obeyed more, followed by persons-in-charge and teachers (who were not differentiated). As expected, children judged that they had to obey strangers less than all other authorities.

Model Comparing Domains. More children judged that the actor should obey adults' commands for the moral (83 percent) and conventional (82 percent) than the personal event (75 percent), $\chi^2 = 13.16, p < .001$. Comparing events by domain for each authority figure in each of the settings, we found that children were more likely to judge that the person-in-charge should be obeyed in public and at school for both the moral and conventional than the personal event, $\chi^2 = 17.90, 18.67, ps < .001$. At home, children judged that the persons-in-charge (i.e., the security guard of the apartment building) should be obeyed more for the moral than the conventional or personal event, $\chi^2 = 4.41, p < .05$; whereas children judged that teachers should be obeyed more for the moral and conventional than the personal event across settings, $\chi^2 = 11.52, 15.39, 4.75, ps < .01, .001, .05$, in public, at school, and at home. Children judged that mothers should be obeyed more for the moral and conventional than the personal event in public, $\chi^2 = 9.37, p < .01$, but more for the moral than the personal event at home, $\chi^2 = 5.56, p < .05$. They also judged that strangers' commands should be obeyed most for the moral, less for the conventional, and least for the personal event in public, $\chi^2 = 8.31, 8.23, ps < .01$.

Justifications

Welfare Justifications. Welfare justifications were used only to justify why children should obey the authority (see Table 2); they were never used to justify disobeying

Table 2. Justifications (in Proportions) for Judgments to Obey Authority

	Moral			Conventional			Personal		
	Public	School	Home	Public	School	Home	Public	School	Home
<i>Stranger</i>									
Welfare	17	12	12	2	2	2	0	0	0
Conventional	9	7	7	16	15	14	6	7	7
Punishment	29	21	24	26	23	21	21	21	21
Psychological	6	4	5	7	7	8	14	14	12
Personal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unfamiliar	1	3	2	2	1	1	0	0	1
Undifferentiated	7	7	5	6	7	7	8	6	7
<i>Person-in-charge</i>									
Welfare	18	11	12	2	3	1	0	0	0
Conventional	28	28	22	42	36	30	17	23	12
Punishment	39	49	43	36	44	45	34	39	38
Psychological	3	3	4	3	6	3	14	12	13
Personal	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Unfamiliar	0	0	2	0	3	2	0	1	3
Undifferentiated	6	7	5	7	6	3	11	8	8

Table 2. Continued

	Moral			Conventional			Personal		
	Public	School	Home	Public	School	Home	Public	School	Home
<i>Teacher</i>									
Welfare	14	12	11	0	1	0	0	0	0
Conventional	7	3	8	15	21	15	5	5	6
Punishment	52	53	47	47	42	39	39	46	39
Psychological	16	23	18	21	23	26	30	26	26
Personal	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Unfamiliar	0	0	0	1	3	1	0	1	1
Undifferentiated	5	6	4	8	8	7	7	6	7
<i>Mother</i>									
Welfare	17	8	12	2	3	1	0	0	0
Conventional	9	5	8	18	15	18	8	6	12
Punishment	48	46	49	43	39	46	44	43	45
Psychological	16	26	22	25	26	25	26	25	24
Personal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unfamiliar	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Undifferentiated	5	6	5	6	8	5	7	11	7

authority, nor were they used to justify obedience to demands regarding the personal event. Thus, the following analyses pertained only to justifications affirming decisions to obey the authority.

Effects for age (e.g., Level 2) were found in some conditions. Interestingly, younger children were more likely to use welfare justifications to justify obedience to familiar authorities outside their usual context, that is, mothers' authority over moral events at school, $\beta = .68$ (OR = 1.98), $p < .01$, and teachers' authority over moral events in public, $\beta = -.20$ (OR = .82), $p < .01$. Older children, however, were more likely to use welfare reasons to justify strangers' authority over moral issues in public, $\beta = .16$ (OR = 1.17), $p < .05$, and at school, $\beta = .24$ (OR = 1.27), $p < .001$. Significant sex differences indicated that girls were more likely than boys to use welfare reasons to justify strangers' and teachers' authority, $\beta_s = .59, .40$ (ORs = 1.80, 1.49), $ps < .01$, respectively, for moral events in public and teachers' and mothers' authority for moral events at home, $\beta_s = .46, .53$ (ORs = 1.58, 1.70), $ps < .001$.

As expected, children used welfare justifications more for scenarios involving moral than conventional issues (main effect model, $\chi^2 = 89.61$, $p < .001$). For persons-in-charge, mothers, and strangers, children used welfare justifications more when the moral issue occurred in public than when it occurred in school or at home, $\chi^2 = 9.74, 31.73, 29.84$, $ps < .01, .001, .001$, respectively. Thus, overall, children appeared to accept authority as transcending contexts when their justifications pertained to welfare concerns.

Punishment Justifications. Children frequently justified adult authority by appealing to punishment, and multiple models showed that children's use of punishment justifications differed by context, authority figure, and domain. As with welfare justifications, punishment justifications were rarely used when children did not affirm adult authority, so the following analyses pertain only to children's judgments to obey adult authority (see means in Table 2).

We consistently found that older children used fewer punishment justifications than did younger children (e.g., Level 2 effects). Across all locations and authority figures, older children referred less to punishment than did younger children, $\beta_s = -.09, -.20, -.13$ (ORs = .91, .82, .87), $ps < .05, .01, .05$ for the moral, conventional, and personal event, respectively. Compared to girls, boys gave more punishment justifications for situations involving strangers' authority and the personal event, $\beta_s = -.19, -.12$ (ORs = .82.88), $ps < .05$.

Across all domains and contexts, children used fewer punishment justifications for strangers than for persons-in-charge, teachers, or mothers, $\chi^2 = 253.39$, $p < .001$. Considering context, punishment was used more to justify obedience to the persons-in-charge regarding the moral event at school than in public, $\chi^2 = 9.09$, $p < .01$, and the conventional event in public than at home, $\chi^2 = 4.56$, $p < .05$. For the person-in-charge, children also reasoned about punishment more for the moral than the personal event at school. For teachers, punishment was used more for the moral than personal event in public, and more for the moral than the conventional and personal event at school, $\chi^2 = 4.49$ and 3.99 , $ps < .05$.

Conventional Justifications. Conventional justifications also were examined only for scenarios where adults' authority was affirmed (again, see Table 2 for means). Level 2 effects for age indicated that across all contexts and authorities, children gave more conventional justifications with age, $\beta_s = .31, .24, .32$ (OR = 1.36, 1.27, 1.38), $ps < .01$

for the moral, conventional, and personal event. Boys gave more conventional reasons for the conventional and personal events than did girls $\beta_s = .16, .34$ (ORs = 1.17, 1.40), $ps < .05, .01$.

Across contexts and authorities, children gave more conventional justifications for the conventional than for the moral or personal event, $\chi^2 = 278.02, p < .001$. Children also gave more conventional justifications for persons in charge than for strangers, teachers, and mothers, $\chi^2 = 423.07, p < .001$. Considering context, conventional justifications were used more for the teacher's authority over the conventional event at school than at home and in public, $\chi^2 = 15.74, p < .001$, and more for the teacher's authority over the moral event at home or in public than at school, $\chi^2 = 6.57, p < .01$. For persons-in-charge, conventional reasons were used more for the conventional event in public than at home, but more for the personal event at school than in public or at home, $\chi^2 = 13.25, 4.34, ps < .001, .05$. In contrast, conventional reasons were used less for mothers' authority over the moral event at school than at home or in public.

Psychological Justifications. Psychological justifications were analyzed only for situations involving obedience to authority figures (see Table 2), as they were used infrequently when authority was rejected. Across conditions, children's use of psychological justifications for obedience regarding the moral, conventional, and personal events increased with age, $\beta_s = .30, .33, .44$ (ORs = 1.35, 1.39, 1.55), $ps < .01$, respectively. For the personal event, girls used psychological justifications more than did boys, $\beta = .22$ (OR = 1.25), $p < .01$.

Psychological justifications for judgments to obey authority were used more frequently for the personal than the moral and conventional event, $\chi^2 = 174.49, p < .001$. In addition, children used psychological justification more when evaluating teachers' and mothers' authority than when considering strangers or persons in charge, $\chi^2 = 643.77, p < .001$.

Personal Justifications. Personal justifications were primarily used only when children judged that the actor should not obey authority, and they were rarely used for conventional or moral events. Overall, personal justifications were used to reject obedience to authority more for personal than for conventional and moral issues, $\chi^2 = 1474.34, p < .001$. Therefore, the analyses involved comparisons across conditions for judgments rejecting adult authority for personal events (means are in Table 3). Older children used more personal justifications for personal issues, $\beta = .24$ (OR = 1.27), $p < .01$, and girls used more personal justifications for the personal event than did boys, $\beta = .70$ (OR = 2.01), $p < .001$. In addition, children used personal justifications for personal events when rejecting the authority of persons-in-charge more often in public than at school or at home, $\chi^2 = 17.47, p < .001$.

Discussion

Using multilevel analyses, we examined the influence of social domain, familiarity, and authority position on young Chinese children's concepts of authority in different social contexts. The results of this study indicated that when evaluating authority commands, young children considered the nature of the event (whether it was moral, conventional, or personal), their familiarity with the authority figure (examined here in terms of mothers, the person-in-charge, teachers, or strangers), and the context (in public, in school, or at home). The results revealed that young Chinese children judged that

Table 3. Justifications (in Proportions) for Judgments not to Obey Authority

	Moral			Conventional			Personal		
	Public	School	Home	Public	School	Home	Public	School	Home
	<i>Stranger</i>								
Conventional	2	6	3	2	6	6	5	4	6
Psychological	4	8	8	5	5	6	11	5	6
Personal	20	3	2	2	1	1	8	6	6
Unfamiliar	21	25	30	31	33	34	24	32	32
Unfam/Undiff	3	4	2	3	3	2	3	6	3
<i>Person-in-Charge</i>									
Conventional	2	0	4	0	3	10	2	4	9
Psychological	1	0	2	3	0	1	3	8	0
Personal	2	2	1	1	1	1	14	8	9
Unfam/Undiff	4	1	6	6	0	5	5	4	7
<i>Teacher</i>									
Conventional	3	0	7	5	3	9	3	3	7
Psychological	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	1
Personal	2	2	1	1	1	1	12	10	9
Unfam/Undiff	2	2	5	3	0	3	2	4	4
<i>Mother</i>									
Conventional	1	3	0	3	6	1	1	3	1
Psychological	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Personal	2	2	1	2	1	1	9	7	9
Unfam/Undiff	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4	2

Note: Unfam/Undiff = Unfamiliar/Undifferentiated, which were combined here because of low frequencies.

obedience to authority was required for moral and conventional events but was less obligatory for personal events. Children's relationship to the authority figure and only slightly, the setting, also influenced judgments. Children accepted commands from adult authorities outside their appropriate contexts for the moral and social conventional event or for the personal event if they knew the authority figure. As has been found among children in Western cultures, children were more likely to reject an adult authority's commands when the event involved infringements on their personal domain, particularly when the authority figure was unfamiliar.

Chinese children, who were from a traditionally hierarchical culture emphasizing authority (Lau, 1996), obedience to parents' commands (Wu, 1996), and compliance to class rules (Wang & Mao, 1996), did treat some personal issues as personal. Although children predominately judged that the hypothetical story characters should obey adult authorities across issues in all three domains, they affirmed obedience more for moral and conventional issues than for personal issues across settings, especially when strangers were issuing the commands. Thus, the findings are consistent with Yau and Smetana (2003) in demonstrating that young Chinese children do have concepts of personal choice, even at young ages, and do not endorse compliance to all authorities' commands across all contexts. Consistent with previous research on social domains (reviewed in Smetana, 2006), children in this study did draw boundaries to legitimate adult authority and viewed some issues as under personal jurisdiction. Nevertheless, they did not consistently judge that the hypothetical story character should disobey demands for obedience regarding a personal issue (Nucci, Killen, & Smetana, 1996; Nucci & Weber, 1995). Our results are very similar to those obtained with young children in Colombia (Ardila-Rey & Killen, 2001), another collectivist culture, which also showed high rates of compliance to teachers' commands regarding personal events. The personal domain emerges during the preschool period, and judgments regarding personal choices become more consistent (Killen & Smetana, 1999; Nucci et al., 1996) and better co-ordinated with judgments regarding locus of and legitimate authority at around the ages of four to five (Ardila-Rey & Killen, 2001). Consistent with this research, we found that as age increased, children in the present study more frequently referred to personal preferences to justify disobedience for personal events. Thus, when children develop more distinct personal boundaries, they may more consistently reject an authority's demand for obedience. In the present study, children's personal concepts were pitted directly against an authority's command, which may have contributed to the relatively high endorsement of obedience in those situations. This interpretation is supported by the finding that children were substantially more willing to disobey an adult stranger than more familiar adult authorities issuing personal commands.

Mothers elicited judgments of obedience more than did the other authority figures, followed by the person-in charge in the associated setting and the teacher. Children evaluated strangers as least likely to be obeyed. Children's acceptance of teachers' and mothers' authority was not limited to school and home, respectively. At school, teachers were seen as having more authority than mothers over moral and conventional events whereas at home, mothers had more authority than teachers over all issues. Contrary to findings by Tisak et al. (2000) and reflecting the importance of familiarity, Chinese children in the present study granted mothers more power than the teacher to extend her regulation outside the home, including personal events.

Furthermore, when examining judgments of obedience to the person-in-charge, no significant differences were found across contexts and events between obedience to the in-charge adult and the teacher. Although children may not personally know the

different in-charge authorities examined here, their justifications indicated that they were familiar with the duties of persons in these positions (e.g., 'He is the boss here' and 'She works here') and readily accepted their authority. Strangers, who lacked social position and were unfamiliar, were seen as having the least authority across all situations. Conventional reasoning appealing to (lack of) duties or roles, such as, 'She doesn't work here', 'She is neither my teacher nor Mom', as well as justifications coded as unfamiliar (e.g., 'The child doesn't know him') were primarily used to justify not obeying strangers. Children did judge, however, that strangers' commands should be obeyed for moral and conventional events in public, perhaps because the serious nature of the transgression was seen as overriding or because the legitimate authority of other more familiar authorities, like mothers and teachers, was not seen as appropriate in public. Chinese children are socialized to respect adults and their knowledge. When children judged that strangers should be obeyed for personal events, it was mainly due to children's assumptions that strangers had good intentions toward the child (coded here as psychological justifications).

Children's psychological justifications also included appeals to a caring and nurturing relationship (e.g., 'She takes care of us') and the authority figure's good intentions (e.g., 'He meant it for your own good'). These responses were used most often to justify obedience to mothers and teachers (and, as noted before, to justify strangers' authority over personal events). Children's use of psychological justifications increased with age; this suggests that children's conceptualizations of the relationship, including love and nurture from familiar figures, may account for their acceptance of demands for obedience, even for personal issues. Laupa (1991) noted that young children are undifferentiated in their thinking about authority and that with increasing age, social position becomes more important. The results of the present study suggest that undifferentiated reasoning may reflect the effects of familiarity (which were instantiated here in psychological justifications) and that this appeared to override other factors. This may also explain why young children's obedience judgments were not constrained by social position or contexts (e.g., young children's acceptance of a principal's authority across contexts). When legitimizing authority, young children may consider whether they can trust that person to tell them the right thing to do and may link a familiar authority's social position with feelings of trust and respect. In situations with a person in charge or a stranger, familiarity, or children's perceptions of adults' good intentions, may also influence their judgments of obedience. The more distant the relationship with an authority figure, the more children may link social position merely with power or knowledge.

These findings shed light on the effects of familiarity. In Chinese culture, early secure attachment relationships with parents (Hsu, 1981) and respect for school authorities serve as the basis upon which obligations of obedience to authority are built. In a cultural context with strong values and great expectations for harmonious interrelatedness (Chao, 1995), children are socialized to interact in a friendly, cooperative manner and to give priority to social relationships (Bush & Haiyan, 2002), as manifested in good manners, respect, and consideration of others' good intentions. An authority figure's familiarity is thus generated from interactions and role expectations and is important in young children's judgment of acceptance of authority.

Interestingly, in the present study, we found that girls used psychological justifications more than boys to affirm adult authority over personal events, although girls were more likely than boys to use personal justifications to reject adult authority over personal events. The tendency to reject obedience to authorities regarding personal

events indicates girls' concepts of the personal domain, but their affirmation of authority regarding personal issues based on psychological reasons also suggests the role of familiarity. As girls are more oriented towards relationships than are boys, they appeared to conform to adults' expectations more readily.

On the other hand, despite the rich evidence from previous research that young Chinese and American children distinguish between moral and conventional events (Yau & Smetana, 2003; see Smetana 2006 for a review), children in the present study did not differ significantly in their affirmation of adult intervention for both the moral (hitting) and conventional (not saying 'thank you') event. Moreover, they applied punishment and conventional justifications to the moral, conventional, and personal acts, although they did use conventional justifications more for the conventional than other events. Although young children clearly distinguish between moral and conventional acts when asked why acts are wrong, previous research on children's authority concepts has also found that young children appeal to punishment when asked to justify obedience to authority (Laupa, 1991; Tisak et al., 2000). Children in the present study demonstrated an overwhelming concern with punishment (e.g., 'She will tell his mother; then he will be grounded', 'The lifeguard will tell her teacher and she won't be able to play during recess') and a recognition of the authority's role in regulating social behaviors (e.g., 'The teacher is responsible for looking after the pupils', 'She knows what's right or wrong'). In addition, it is possible that some children viewed the conventional event as having second-order moral consequences, as some children in the present study mentioned hurting others' feelings for not saying, 'thank you'.

Although filial piety in contemporary Chinese societies is not practiced strictly in the traditional sense, Chinese parents still emphasize compliance and obedience and place a high value on parental teaching and strict discipline in the very early years to foster good parent-child relationships and good moral character (Chao, 1995; Chen et al., 2003; Shek & Chan, 1999). The prevalent use of punishment justifications found in this study, particularly among boys, is consistent with the finding that verbal threatening, like 'I'm going to tell the teacher or the police', is used more commonly by mothers of boys than girls in disciplining their children (Wu, 1996). Young Chinese children's orientation to authority and punishment avoidance found here is consistent with cultural values emphasizing parental discipline and obedience to authority. However, at the same time, children in the present study did not endorse compliance to all authorities' commands across all contexts. As demonstrated in previous research on social domains (reviewed in Smetana, 2006) and on young children's moral, conventional, and personal judgments in Hong Kong (Yau & Smetana, 2003), children did draw boundaries to legitimate adult authority and viewed some issues as under personal jurisdiction.

In the present study, setting or context played a less decisive role than other factors in children's authority evaluations. With increasing age, mothers' authority was seen to extend more to moral events in public and at school whereas the authority of the persons-in-charge was seen to extend more to moral events in public. These findings suggest that mothers' authority to enforce moral issues with their children became more generalizable with age. Mothers and strangers, who are at the extremes in terms of familiarity, were either obeyed or disobeyed according to the domain of the event, and with the exceptions noted above, setting did not significantly influence evaluations. Judgments regarding both the teacher and the person-in-charge did not differ significantly outside of the home; both were seen as legitimately enforcing moral and conventional expectations. With authority figures who did not have close relationships with the child, such as the person in charge or strangers, context and social position

were more important in children's judgments. Adults with social positions had more authority over moral and conventional issues in appropriate contexts than in unrelated settings; thus, as others have found, authority was bounded by the social context.

The high rate of judgments of obedience found in this study is consistent with Chinese cultural values, but as a review of research from several cultures has shown (Helwig, 2006), individuals from different cultures do not follow a purely cultural orientation. The strong orientation to obedience observed here may reflect several aspects of the study design, as our methods differed from the previous research on authority concepts in several ways. First, the previous research focused on more ambiguous events (e.g., turn taking and playing ball) whereas we used very clear transgressions (hitting and not saying 'thank you'). Furthermore, other research has included questions regarding the legitimacy of authority as well as obedience and has shown that children may endorse obedience even when authority is not seen as legitimate. Finally, some studies have pitted different authority attributes against each other whereas in the present study, children judged each event, authority figure, and context separately. Thus, our study, which also included unambiguous transgressions and focused only on obedience judgments, can be seen as a strong test of children's authority concepts. Despite these features, there was significant variation in young Chinese children's evaluations that authority should be obeyed.

In the previous research on authority concepts, multiple judgments were obtained for each hypothetical event, but in the present study, we used a larger number of scenarios but only one judgment and justification for each. Thus, although children in the present study responded to many different scenarios, the interview for each scenario was quite brief and went very quickly, and the interviews were split into two sessions. In addition, the procedure was familiar, as teachers in Hong Kong often use stories to evaluate story protagonist's behaviors in classroom situations. A limitation of the present study, however, was that we used only a single event per domain. Thus, the present results should be replicated using multiple events per domain. In addition, in the present study, we varied the persons-in-charge by context; however, some of these authority figures may be more familiar to young children than others. Observational measures could help validate the responses found here. Finally, we matched the gender of the authority to the child's gender for the stranger and person-in-charge, but teachers (and mothers) were always depicted as females. Future research should determine whether the gender of the authority influences results.

The present study compared young Chinese children's evaluations of familiar authority figures, like mothers and teachers, with strangers and persons in charge in different social contexts. The results demonstrated that with age, young Chinese children in Hong Kong become more differentiated in their evaluations of particular authorities, although even the youngest children showed some awareness of the boundaries of legitimate adult authority. The findings of this study illustrated interactions between children's developing concepts of social knowledge in different domains and their orientations to authority. Future research should compare the authority judgments of Chinese children growing up in different Asian cultures (e.g., mainland China vs. Taiwan).

References

- Ardila-Rey, A., & Killen, M. (2001). Middle class Colombian children's evaluations of personal, moral, and social-conventional interactions in the classroom. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 25*, 246–255.

- Bush, T., & Haiyan, Q. (2002). Leadership and culture in Chinese education. In A. W. Walker, & C. Dimmock (Eds.), *School leadership and administration: Adopting a cultural perspective* (pp. 173–186). New York: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Chao, R. (1995). Chinese and European American cultural models of the self reflected in mothers' child rearing beliefs. *Ethos*, 23, 328–354.
- Chen, X., Rubin, K. H., Liu, M., Chen, H., Wang, L., & Li, D. (2003). Compliance in Chinese and Canadian toddlers: A cross-cultural study. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 27, 428–436.
- Cheng, R. H. M. (2004). Moral education in Hong Kong: Confucian-parental, Christian-religious and liberal-civil influences. *Journal of Moral Education*, 33, 533–551.
- Cullen, J. L. (1987). Relating to authority in the elementary school years. *Child Study Journal*, 17, 227–237.
- Gabrenya, W. K. Jr., & Hwang, K. (1996). Chinese social interaction: Harmony and hierarchy on the good earth. In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The handbook of Chinese psychology* (pp. 309–321). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Helwig, C. C. (2006). The development of personal autonomy through cultures. *Cognitive Development*, 21, 458–473.
- Helwig, C. C., Arnold, M. L., Tan, D., & Boyd, D. (2003). Chinese adolescents' reasoning about democratic and authority-based decision making in peer, family, and school contexts. *Child Development*, 70, 502–512.
- Hong Kong SAR Government Information Centre (HKSARGGIC). (2003). Retrieved on March 15 2006, from http://www.info.gov.hk/hkbi/eng/13/ch13_1.html
- Hsu, F. L. K. (1981). *Americans and Chinese passage to differences* (3rd ed.). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Killen, M. (1990). Children's evaluations of morality in the context of peer, teacher-child, and familial relations. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 151, 395–410.
- Killen, M., & Smetana, J. G. (1999). Social interactions in preschool classrooms and the development of young children's conceptions of the personal. *Child Development*, 70, 486–501.
- Kim, J. (1998). Korean children's concepts of adult and peer authority and moral reasoning. *Developmental Psychology*, 34, 947–955.
- Kim, J. M., & Turiel, E. (1996). Korean children's concepts of adult and peer authority. *Social Development*, 5, 310–329.
- Lau, S. (Ed.) (1996). Seft-concept development: Is there a concept of self in Chinese culture? In S. Lau (Ed.), *Growing up the Chinese way: Chinese child and adolescent development* (pp. 357–374). Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.
- Laupa, M. (1991). Children's reasoning about three authority attributes: Adult status, knowledge, and social position. *Developmental Psychology*, 27, 321–329.
- Laupa, M. (1994). 'Who's in charge?' Preschool children's concepts of authority. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 9, 1–17.
- Laupa, M. (1995). Children's reasoning about authority in home and school contexts. *Social Development*, 4, 1–16.
- Laupa, M., & Tse, P. (2005). Authority concepts among children and adolescents in the island of Macao. *Social Development*, 14, 652–663.
- Laupa, M., & Turiel, E. (1986). Children's conceptions of adult and peer authority. *Child Development*, 57, 405–412.
- Laupa, M., & Turiel, E. (1993). Children's concepts of authority and social contexts. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 85, 191–197.
- Laupa, M., Turiel, E., & Cowan, P. A. (1995). Obedience to authority in children and adults. In M. Killen, & D. Hart (Eds.), *Morality in everyday life* (pp. 131–165). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Leung, B. K. P. (1996). *Perspectives on Hong Kong society*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
- Markus, H. R., Mullally, P. R., & Kitayama, S. (1997). Diversity in modes of cultural participation. In U. Neisser, & D. Jopling (Eds.), *The conceptual self in context: Culture experience, self-understanding* (pp. 13–61). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Morris, P., & Lo, M. L. (2002). Shaping the curriculum in Hong Kong: Contexts and cultures. In A. Walker, & C. Dimmock (Eds.), *School leadership and administration* (pp. 141–155). New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

- Nucci, L. (2001). *Education in the moral domain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nucci, L. P. (1996). Morality and personal freedom. In E. S. Reed, E. Turiel, & T. Brown (Eds.), *Values and knowledge* (pp. 41–60). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Nucci, L. P., Killen, M., & Smetana, J. G. (1996). Autonomy and the personal: Negotiation and social reciprocity in adult-child social exchanges. In M. Killen (Ed.), *Children's autonomy, social competence, and interactions with adults and other children: Exploring connections and consequences* (pp. 7–24). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Nucci, L., & Weber, E. K. (1995). Social interactions in the home and the development of young children's conceptions of the personal. *Child Development*, 66, 1438–1452.
- Raudenbush, S. W., & Bryk, A. S. (2002). *Hierarchical linear models: Applications and data analysis models*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Shek, D. T., & Chan, L. K. (1999). Hong Kong Chinese parents' perceptions of the ideal child. *The Journal of Psychology*, 133, 291–302.
- Smetana, J. G. (2006). Social domain theory: Consistencies and variations in children's moral and social judgments. In M. Killen, & J. G. Smetana (Eds.), *Handbook of moral development* (pp. 119–154). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Tisak, M. S. (1986). Children's conceptions of parental authority. *Child Development*, 57, 166–176.
- Tisak, M. S., Crane-Ross, D., Tisak, J., & Maynard, A. M. (2000). Mothers' and teachers' home and school rules: Young children's conceptions of authority in context. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 46, 168–187.
- Turiel, E. (2006). Moral development. In N. Eisenberg (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology, 6th edition, Volume 3: Social, emotional, and personality development* (W. Damon, Series Editor) (pp. 789–857). New York: Wiley.
- Wang, J., & Mao, S. (1996). Culture and the kindergarten curriculum in the People's Republic of China. *Early Child Development and Care*, 123, 143–156.
- Wu, D. Y. H. (1996). Chinese childhood socialization. In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The handbook of Chinese psychology* (pp. 143–154). Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
- Yau, J. (2007). Reforming the instructional directions for promoting young children's moral and social growth: A qualitative analysis of six Chinese teachers' responses to preschool children's transgressions from the domain theory perspective. *International Journal of Educational Reform*, 16, 130–155.
- Yau, J., & Smetana, J. G. (2003). Conceptions of moral, social-conventional, and personal events among Chinese preschoolers in Hong Kong. *Child Development*, 74, 647–658.
- Zhang, W. (1996). The development of the concept of parental authority in five- to 13-year old children. *Chinese Psychological Science*, 19, 101–104.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the preschool teachers and children at Lok Sin Tong Stephen Leung Kindergarten, Wisdom Castle Kindergarten and Nursery, Salem Kindergarten-Shaukeiwan and Lok Sin Tong Lau Tak Primary School for their cooperation with this research.

Appendix. Model Example

Outcome variable = judgment (yes/no)

Level 1 Model (with Bernoulli conversion)

$$\text{Prob}(Y = 1/B) = P$$

$$\text{Log}[P/(1-P)] = P1*(\text{scenario1}) + P2*(\text{scenario2}) + P3*(\text{scenario 3})$$

Level 2 Model

$$P1 = B10 + B11 * (\text{SEX}) + B12 * (\text{AGETOT})$$

$$P2 = B20 + B21 * (\text{SEX}) + B22 * (\text{AGETOT})$$

$$P3 = B30 + B31 * (\text{SEX}) + B32 * (\text{AGETOT})$$

This document is a scanned copy of a printed document. No warranty is given about the accuracy of the copy. Users should refer to the original published version of the material.