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# The Exploration of the Sources of Parenting Beliefs in Taiwan

Hung-Chang LEE<sup>1</sup>, Mei-Ju CHOU<sup>2</sup>

## *Abstract*

This study aims to explore the different sources of parenting for preschool parents in Taiwan, and whether these parenting sources vary according to the parent's background. 18,972 young preschoolers from Taiwan were selected as research subjects. With an approximation of 0.5% random selection, 949 young children were selected, and 709 valid questionnaires were received back, with a valid retrieval proportion of 76.2%. The outcomes were concluded as follows: (1) The parenting sources of preschool parents are categorized as friends, education professionals and books, newspapers and broadcast TV, and life experiences or other influences. Among these factors, life experiences and other influences play the most significant role. (2) When compared with fathers, there is a significant difference with mothers placing more emphasis on "friends" and education professionals". Parents younger than 34 years old emphasize newspapers and broadcast TV" and "life experience or others influences" more than parents older than 45 years old. (3) The higher the parents' educational degree, the more emphasis on "education professionals and books", and "life experience or others influence". These conclusions can serve as references for academia. Suggestions for future research are also proposed.

*Keywords:* preschool parents, parenting belief, parenting concept, social environment, social class.

## **Introduction**

Since the mid-twentieth century, a lot of psychological, social, and educational scholars have been giving importance to the discussion of parenting related topics. In most parts of this study, parenting is discussed as rearing. It is important to note that the teaching of parenting beliefs describes rearing as a research topic that involves attitudes and behaviors (Yang, 1986). In addition, a related study

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also showed that parenting belief is an important factor influencing parenting behavior (Lin, 1999). For instance, Darling and Steinberg (1993) explained that parenting is complex; it is a combination of parental attitudes, behaviors, emotions, and interactions with children. Hence, parenting behavior can have a positive or negative effect on children. Second, parenting beliefs determine parents' expectations toward their children. Also, these beliefs determine the way parents practice their educational goals (Lin, 2003).

In fact, parenting beliefs cover a wide range. They include children, the concept of human nature, and the developmental stage of concept, cognitive parental responsibility, child behavioral attribution, parent-child relationship, and the meaning of life, etc. As Damon and Lerner (2006) interpreted parenting as parents raising and caring for their children's attitudes or activities, so Lin (1999) refers to parenting education as a belief of parental values or ideas, such as children's cognitive abilities, views and experiences, and corrections of the current conditions for the next generation.

Every parent has his or her own set of guidelines. These guidelines were probably inherited from the previous generation. In fact, this is how parenting beliefs and family education are learned and passed on to children. However, there are other modes for belief acquisition. These include parenting education seminars, experts, and scholars. Moreover, friends may also share their parenting styles with each other. Nevertheless, if we learned parenting beliefs from the true source or pipeline, this would help to contribute to the promotion of parenting education and concepts. This is important and worthy of attention and is the main purpose of this research paper.

Finally, this study promotes the idea that parents should want their children to learn and own a variety of ideas. It is important to note that this kind of parenting is not just limited to a specific level, but applies to a wide range of parenting beliefs. In addition, parenting knowledge, ideas, educational concepts and cognitive terms are considered to be synonymous in this extensive literature review and data collection.

## **Literature review**

### *Implications of parenting beliefs*

There is no consensus between Taiwan and other countries with regard to the definition of parenting beliefs. In the past, the definition of beliefs has often been linked with ideas, attributions, thoughts, constructs, perceptions, attitudes, goals, and such. This definition creates confusion. (Lin, 1999; Sigel & McGillicuddy-DeLisi, 2008). Despite this terminology, in general, parental views have an effect. The different terms used are based on different cognitive levels (Lin, 1999).

The following parental beliefs are from domestic and foreign scholars. In some literature, scholars have defined parenting beliefs as involving opinions or ideas that include notions of automatic and controlled cognitions (Goodnow, 1988). The belief of Sigel (1992) is based on cognitive behavior, which includes parents' beliefs in child development. Miller (1988) believes that parenting should also involve teaching children to acquire knowledge.

Sigel (1992) reviewed the studies on parenting beliefs regarding conceptualization from daily life to philosophical concepts. It is important to note that parental belief does not arise from a single pathway or definition. Thus, it may vary according to different research topics. In addition, parental belief may also have different relationships with different theoretical approaches. Just as Sigel and McGillicuddy-DeLisi (2008) mentioned, there are many forms of cognitive parenting. Thus, belief formation may also contain a lot of theoretical propositions. However, most agree that perception is a core belief of the child's psychological care initiative. The parent-child interaction, parenting behavior, and beliefs are all important factors.

Sigel's definition for faith is very similar to what this conceptual article believes in. The authors believe that faith is "to personally believe in something as truth or to believe in something as true knowledge with or without considering empirical evidence. Local parenting beliefs are similar. Huang, Tsai & Tsao (2010) consider the belief that parenting includes both child development and learning. The views of the scholars above can be summarized as follows: parenting belief is actually a parental behavioral development or life-held cognitive learning, ideas and opinions. The reason for this is that parenting beliefs affect parenting strategies that may also significantly influence the development of the child. Hence, the subject of parenting beliefs is quite worthy of attention.

### *Exploring the sources of parenting beliefs*

In order to learn the origins of parenting beliefs, this research study tries to ascertain the main factors that influence children, such as family, school, social environment, and cultural oriented-parenting beliefs (Otto, 2018). First, we must explore the experiences of growing up in families of origin. This usually includes parents or another primary caregiver who transfer experience, values, and self-identity that will influence the future composition of the family (Chen, 2012; Jiang & Chen, 2008; Lightfoot & Valsiner, 1992).

Many studies demonstrate that childhood experiences of parents affect their children's upbringing. (Chang, 2004; Huang, Tsai & Tsao, 2010; Wei & Yang, 2010; Washington & Dunbam, 2012). Second, the elders in the family must teach their relatives. The spouses' parental attitudes also affect the main factor of the parents' belief, and mothers were more authoritarian than fathers (Xie & Li, 2019). Wei (2011) surveyed 2,809 children aged 12 years old and below. The survey revealed that up to 65% of parents have parental knowledge imparted from elderly relatives and friends.

Wei & Yang (2010) obtained similar results with their survey findings in Taiwan with 1,039 parents of kindergarten. The main influences in parenting attitudes are family elders and spouses. Similarly Huang, Tsai and Tsao (2010) show that at home the father role and status has the greatest impact on the mothers' beliefs. The opinions of friends and colleagues is the primary channel for the exchange of experience and information (Yang, 2007). The studies by Wei (2011), and Wei and Yang (2010) also showed that the views of friends and family and peer discussions are important channels for acquiring parenting beliefs. In addition, the media itself has audio-visual cognitive learning, information interpretation, and value to convey other functions. So the mass media is often considered not only a tool by which a modern society acquires experience with the outside world, but also the most important tool for knowledge exchange (Liu, 2007).

Harkness, Super, and Keefer (1997) found that middle and upper class parents read relevant books and magazines in order to construct parenting beliefs and behavior. The findings of Wei & Yang (2010) also reveal that books or newspapers, periodicals, and other media are a major source for parenting beliefs. Moreover, the study of Wei (2011) also points out that almost half of parents obtain parenting knowledge mainly through the reading of parenting books.

Finally, parents attending parenting seminars in order to learn from experts and scholars is also a major source for parenting beliefs (Wei & Yang, 2010). Yang (2007) shows that expert advice, parenting-related activities, and the active reading of parenting books are some of the mediums for obtaining information. But the exchange of information between parents, or parents and others is also important. It cannot be ignored.

### *Different parental backgrounds*

Different parental backgrounds cannot be neglected. There has not been much research with regard to the influence of gender upon parenting beliefs. And most parents will continue to study the parental system as a unit. It is not the father and the mother deliberately distinguishing the impact of parenting behavior. Liu (2000) considers the influence of traditional gender roles: the father is often harsher and colder, while the mother is more protective and caring.

Second, every generation does not have the same ideology and concepts. Parents that were born in different generations have different upbringing beliefs (Liou, 1999). Usually, mothers from the older generation are more traditional culturally in their parenting approach (Wei & Yang (2010). This is based on a survey of 1,039 parents of kindergarten children in Taiwan. The survey findings also showed that the age groupings of the parents have significant differences, while Jhong's (2009) study showed that there was not much difference in parental attitude with regard to the parents. The author believes that modern parents have accepted the western concept of education, which starts to give importance to the well-being of children.

Furthermore, Palacios and Moreno pointed out that people who are living in the city are more open-minded and active. They are more receptive to diversity of information and experience, such as parenting, learning, and seminars. They are practical thinkers, unlike those who live in rural areas who are more conservative, have close-knitted relationships, and share the same values. (Williams, Williams & Lopez, 2000). And Li's (2003) study shows that urban parents are trendier, while rural parents are more demanding. In addition, You & Tsai's (1998) study found that the parenting styles of urban parents are more loving and caring, while rural parents are less loving and caring. Nonetheless, Wei & Yang's (2010) survey revealed that 1,039 kindergarten parents in central Taiwan living in both urban and rural areas both demonstrated no significant difference in parenting styles.

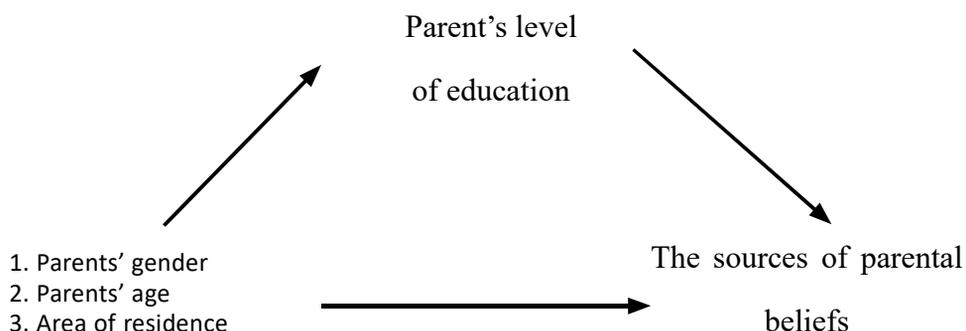
Finally, parents' educational level has an effect on their child rearing beliefs. Wei & Yang (2010) believe that the educational attainment of parents reveals significant differences in their parenting attitude. Lin's (1999) study showed that the educational level of parents showed significant difference in terms of the emotions, respect, and independence of the children. This is because the higher the educational level of the parents, the more they are knowledgeable about child learning and development. Moreover, educated parents are more interactive. Their education helps them to become better parents. (Sigel & McGillicuddy-DeLisi, 2008).

Similarly McGillicuddy-DeLisi (1982) also confirmed that parental education affects the parental style used in their children's upbringing. In addition, Liou (1999) also pointed out that highly educated parents are more willing to accept new information, and quicker to learn parenting methods. Usually they show more concern about parenting topics. They take the initiative to actively absorb new parenting information, and ask for advice from experts. Hwang's (1997) national survey tested the applicability of Kohn's theory of social class variables on parenting in Taiwan. The result showed that the parenting styles of the middle class and working class demonstrate significant differences when it comes to values. This is due to differences in educational attainment, not because of profession or working condition. However, Jhong (2009) showed that different educational levels of parents do not reveal significant differences in child rearing. The reason was because there are fewer children born into the family structure. Even the lesser educated parents are prioritizing and understanding their children the best they can.

## Research design and implementation

### *Research framework*

This study aims to explore the afore-mentioned research objectives and literature. Figure 1 shows the sources of parenting beliefs, emphasizing parental background factors.



*Figure 1.* Research framework

First, this chart explains the allocation of percentages with regard to the number of times sources of parenting beliefs were brought up. Second, the chart shows the percentage of cross-variance analysis in order to highlight the distribution and differences in different parenting backgrounds. Last, the chart is used as a regression analysis to understand the level of education as an intervening variable. Different parental backgrounds and levels of education affect the sources of parenting concepts.

### *Research subjects and sampling methods*

This study investigated the number of parents that attended both public and private kindergartens in Taiwan. It summed up to 3,283 preschools and 18,792 children (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Second, this investigation divided the samples into four regions. The sampling method used in this study is stratified random sampling with an accordance ratio of 0.5%, thus assuming a number of 949 samples taken. The actual number of questionnaires was 931, while the valid number of received questionnaires was 709 with an effective response rate of 76.2%. The respondents accounted for in this sample were 33% fathers and 63% mothers. With regard to age, most of the people ranged from 40-44(37%) and 35-39(29%). The confidence level in general

was about 52% of all samples. The majority (35%) of the living zones is in the northern part of Taiwan.

### *Research tools*

According to the research objectives, this study is a self-study tool. The purpose of this study is to collect basic information sources of parenting beliefs.

### *Variable description*

The sources for parenting beliefs are divided into 16 aspects in accordance with the related literature: (1) television; (2) spousal opinions; (3) newspaper stories; (4) network messages; (5) parenting books; (6) parenting magazines; (7) professional papers; (8) parental influences; (9) teachers' lectures; (10) expert presentations, input from (11) relatives, brothers; (12) friends or classmates; (13) community consultation, or learning from (14) personal life experiences; (15) neighbors, and workplace colleagues; (16) the parents of children's friends, and peers.

Second, factor analysis has been performed on these 16 items. For resulting eigenvalues greater than 1, there are four factors that can explain 61.6% of the variance. It subsequently carried Oblimin oblique rotation with the resulting factors. They include "friends and family" "Education figures or books", "the newspaper or broadcast television network", and "life experience or significant influence of others".

### *Validity and Reliability*

There are a total of 16 questions in this study concerning the sources of parenting beliefs. So in terms of credibility, Cronbach's reliability measurement was used. The value 0.869 was well understood from the reliability of the values above. In subscale, the factors of four of Cronbach's reliability were 0.840, 0.815, 0.727, and 0.642. This reflects a high level of reliability. The factor analysis of the 16 sources of parenting beliefs results in eigenvalues greater than 1, with four factors that can be explained as 61.6% of the variance. We can call this construct validity.

## Results and discussion

### *Parenting beliefs sources in the mean analysis*

Table 1 explains the sources for parenting beliefs compared with the average results. The sources of parenting beliefs compared with the average mean results reveal the following: personal life experiences (3.80), teacher's lectures (3.44), parenting books (3.40), parents' influence (3.33), and spouse opinions (3.20). In addition to parenting books, parenting beliefs come mostly from life experiences and significant people influencing their life.

Table 1. An analysis of the average sources of parenting beliefs

Analysis of the number	Mean	SD	N=655	Mean	SD
1. Radio and TV	2.67	1.12	09. Teacher lectures	3.44	0.99
2. Spouse opinions	3.20	1.04	10. Expert presentations	2.78	1.09
3. Newspaper reports	2.89	0.97	11. Relatives	3.08	1.01
4. Network messages	2.94	1.06	12. Friends or classmates	3.01	1.00
5. Parenting books	3.40	1.00	13. Community consultation	2.05	1.03
6. Parenting magazines	3.18	1.05	14. Personal life experience	3.80	0.80
7. Professional papers	2.33	1.08	15. Neighbors/workplace colleagues	3.02	1.04
8. Parents' influence	3.33	1.03	16. The parents of the child peer	2.83	1.08

Different backgrounds have different parenting beliefs. The source of variables for parenting beliefs can be seen in an average of four dimensions. Mothers are more reliant on their friends and families than fathers. Parents from the southern region are more reliant on their friends and families than parents from the northern region.

Table 2. The background variables and sources of parenting beliefs (ANOVA)

	Friends and family				Education figures and books				The newspaper and broadcast television network				Life experience or significant influence of others			
	mean	F/df	Eta/ Sig.	Post-hoc	mean	F/df	Eta/ Sig.	Post-hoc	mean	F/df	Eta/ Sig.	Post-hoc	mean	F/df	Eta/ Sig.	Post-hoc
Role				2>1				3>1								
Father	2.90 0.80	4.32 52	<b>.114*</b>		2.62 0.77	5.47 12	<b>.128*</b>	2>1	2.76 0.93	1.51 92	.067		3.52. 0.67	1.5972	.068	
Mother	3.05 0.86				2.81. 0.80				2.87 0.80				3.42. 0.68			
Other	2.96 1.01				2.93. 0.86				2.98 0.84				3.41. 0.62			
Parent's Age								2>5								1>5
Under the age of 29	3.12 1.04	1.73 84	.103		2.62. 0.76	.75 54	.068		2.92 0.87	4.25 44	<b>.160*</b>		3.73. 0.61	6.5174	<b>.196*</b>	2>5
30-34yrs	3.08 0.90				2.77. 0.81				2.92 0.87				3.51. 0.68			
35-39yrs	2.98 0.79				2.78. .076				2.89 0.84				3.42. 0.64			
40-44yrs	2.94 0.80				2.70 .084				2.68 0.86				3.43. 0.65			
Above 45yrs	2.75 0.82				2.68 .086				2.60 0.84				3.18. 0.82			
Area of residence				3>1								3>1				3>1
Northern Taiwan	2.83 0.76	5.14 23	<b>.162*</b>		2.67 .076	3.57 33	<b>.127*</b>		2.70 0.86	11.2033	<b>.222*</b>	3>2 4>1	3.35. 0.63	1.7773	.146	
Central Taiwan	2.99 0.86				2.99 .086				2.72 0.77				3.41. 0.64			
Southern Taiwan	3.15 0.88				3.15 .088				2.98 0.83				3.55. 0.74			
Outlying Islands	3.13 0.98				3.13 .098				3.30 0.82				3.66. 0.62			

Note: *S D*=Standard Deviation ; *MS*=Mean Square ; *df*= Degree of freedom

In a newspaper and broadcast television network, the portion of the population in the range of 30-34 years of age is significantly higher than that of those over 45 years. This study found that mothers and grandparents are more knowledgeable than fathers. They acquired their parenting knowledge from reliable people and books. Parents living in southern Taiwan, and the outlying islands got their parenting knowledge from reliable professional sources. This is significantly higher than central and northern Taiwan. Parents below 34 are dependent on the parenting style of the people around them, which is based on life experiences, as compared to parents over 45. In this regard the sources of parenting beliefs in southern Taiwan are also greater than those from parents from the north. These regional differences play a major role in parenting. Mothers refer to more parenting sources than father do. Mothers' sources are mostly friends, family, education, and professional people or books. 30 to 34 years-olds rely more on newspapers and broadcast television networks than those aged 45 and up. In addition, there is a difference between parents 34 and younger and 45 and up with reference to key persons and life experience.

*The background variables analysis of the educational attainment mean*

Table 3 explains that the study found the parents' level of education to be significantly higher than that of other caregivers (such as grandparents, relatives), which is understandable. Second, the level of education of 35- 44 years old parents is generally higher than that of those over 45 years or under 29 years. Moreover, becoming parents of nursery children from the age of 29 has already become a trend. It is important to note that northern Taiwanese parents have a higher educational level than southern Taiwanese parents.

Table 3. The background variables analysis of educational attainment

	Mean	SD	F	df	Eta	Sig.	Post-hoc
<b>Role</b>							
1.Father	1.85	.722	4.870	2	.117	*	1>3. 2>3
2.Mother	1.78	.623					
3.Other	1.42	.584					
<b>Parent's Age</b>							
1.Under the age of 29	1.55	.579	10.353	4	236	*	3>1,3>2
2.30-34yrs	1.69	.577					5?5,4>1
3.35-39yrs	1.93	.650					4>5
4.40-44yrs	1.90	.702					
5.Above 45 years	1.50	.667					

Area of residence							
1.Northern Taiwan	1.89	.666	5.212	3	.147	*	1>3
2.Central Taiwan	1.82	.667					
3.Southern Taiwan	1.69	.616					
4.Outlying Islands	1.60	.720					

We performed an advanced regression analysis on educational attainment. Table 4 reveals that the category “other” has the lowest educational level compared with mothers. Parents in northern Taiwan had a significantly higher level of education than those in southern Taiwan.

Table 4. Background on educational attainment of parents in the regression analysis

	b	β	t value
<b>Role</b>			
Mother (Control group)			
Father	.057	.041	1.045
Other (Ex. Grandparents)	-.377	-.103	-2.657*
Age	.025	.039	.980
<b>Area of residence</b>			
Southern Taiwan (Control group)	.		
Northern Taiwan	.187	.135	3.098*
Central Taiwan	.127	.084	1.954
Outlying Islands	-.083	-.031	-.778
Constant term		1.167	
Number of samples		708	
R Square		.035	

Note: \* $P < .05$

*Background variables regression analysis of the sources of parenting beliefs*

First, we have to investigate the effect of the age variable. Table 5 explains that researchers found that younger and more educated parents pay more heed to “broadcast television networks and newspapers”, and “life experience or significant others affected” as their parenting belief source. Second, mothers make use of the advice which comes from “friends and family” more than fathers. “Life experience or significant others’ influence” has also been given more importance. However, there was negligible importance given to “educational books”.

Table 5. Background variables regression analysis on the sources of parenting beliefs

	Friends and family			Education figures or books			Newspaper or broadcast television network			Life experience or significant influence of others								
	Step1	Step2	Step1	Step2	Step1	Step2	Step1	Step2	Step1	Step2	Step1	Step2						
	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β						
Age	-04	-04	-37	-38	-01	-01	.00	.00	-13	-13*	-13	-13*	-18	-19*	-19	-20*		
Mother(Control group)																		
Father	-22	-10*	-21	-10*	.24	.11*	.27	.13*	.07	.03	.07	.03	.07	.03	.31	.15*	.29	.14*
Other	-03	-00	-05	-01*	-16	-03	-28	-05	.03	.01	.05	.01	.05	.01	.01	.0	.06	.01
Southern Taiwan																		
(Control group)	-31	-15*	-30	-14*	-03	-02	.03	.02	-33	-16*	-34	-16*	-11	-05	-14	-06		
Northern Taiwan																		
Central Taiwan	-16	-07	-15	-07	-22	-10*	-19	-08	-33	-14*	-33	-14*	-11	-05	-12	-05		
Outlying Islands	.10	.03	.10	.02	-36	-09*	-39	-09*	.36	.09*	.36	.09*	.10	.03	.11	.03		
Education			-07	-05			-36	-24*			.06	.04			.15	.10*		
Constant term	.334		.452		.054		.625		.524		.421		.490		.252			
Number of samples	654		654		654		654		654		654		654		654			
R Square	.037		.039		.030		.085		.065		.067		.053		.062			

The parents of central Taiwan, northern Taiwan, and the outlying islands pay more attention to “educational books” for parenting advice than southern Taiwanese parents. However, parents in the southern Taiwanese pay more attention to “newspaper and broadcast television network” than north or central Taiwanese parents. Lastly, we find the higher the education level, the more attention the higher educated parents give to “educational books” and “life experience or the influence of the significant other”. In the central Taiwan region, parents who have higher educational levels give more importance to “educational books”, and “life experience and the influence of the people around them”. The source of this idea comes mainly from higher levels of parental education in the central region.

## Discussion

In this study, the exploratory factor analysis results of the parenting belief sources can be classified in four categories as “relatives and friends”, “education figures and books”, “the newspaper and broadcast television network,” and “life experience or significant influence of others”. These categories are related to theories from individuals, families, schools, and societal classification. The individuals’ “life experience or influence from significant others”, the family’s “relatives and friends,” the schools’ “education figures and books” and the society’s “newspaper and broadcast television network” render the relevant sources of parenting beliefs more specifically. First, the results of this study showed that the sources of parenting beliefs are mostly from “life experience or significant influence of others”. This includes: growing from personal life experiences, teachings from teachers, and influencing from parents. There is a profound impact with the related research regarding family experiences growing up. The children’s future family composition will be affected by transferred experiences, values, self-identity, and influences from parents or primary caregivers (Washington & Dunbam, 2012). The main factors affecting parenting attitudes are teachings from family elders and spousal ideas (Wei, 2011; Wei & Yang, 2010). Wei (2011) echoes these findings: Nearly half of the parents get parenting knowledge mainly through their own reading of parenting books.

If we look from a different background variable, we find the origin of parenting belief. Mothers have a different set of parenting beliefs than fathers. They receive many views from relatives and friends, as well as educational professionals and books. The main difference is that there are more women than men, and that men are less likely to have a social support network (Antonucci, 2016). With regard to age, the parenting beliefs of 30-34-year-old parents have their own resources. Parents aged 45 years and older have the newspaper and broadcast television network, as well as life experience or the impact of significant others. The difference between generations is highly evident. The young parents are

familiar with a variety of technologies used over computer networks. They have a lack of life experience, so they rely more on the influence of significant others.

Last is the category of educational attainment. The research found that the higher the education level, the more attention from “educational books” and “life experience or significant influence of others” in parenting beliefs. In the central Taiwan region, Parents who have higher educational levels give more importance to “educational books”, and “life experience and the influence of people around them”. The study of Harkness, Super and Keefer (1997) found that middle and upper class parents construct their own parenting beliefs and behavior by reading relevant books. Presumably, it is because of these parents’ higher levels of education that their parenting ideas are filled with more knowledge. In addition, reading newspapers and magazines also play an important role. Their beliefs are also formed to a considerable extent from their own experiences growing up and from the influences of 3-5 significant others.

When high levels of education concern themselves with parenting topics, they take the initiative and actively absorb diverse parenting information, or ask for the advice of experts and scholars. Thereby, these affect higher level parenting beliefs by buttressing parent-child interaction learning (Kosterelioglu, 2018; Liou, 2001; Sigel & McGillicuddy-DeLisi, 2008). In addition, the value system can be maintained if the parents’ level of education is higher (Jiang & Chen, 2008). Thus, the subject impacts the parent and the significant other as well.

## Conclusion

The sources of parenting beliefs can be divided into four aspects “friends and family”, “education figures or books”, “newspapers and broadcast television networks,” and “life experience or the significant influence of others”. Among these four, the primary source is “life experience or the influence of significant others”. Furthermore, the average sources of parenting beliefs are mainly growth in life experience, teachings from mentors, parenting books, parents’ concepts, as well as spouses’ opinions.

The parenting beliefs of parents in Taiwan also demonstrate regional differences. For instance, mothers give more importance to “friends” and “educational books” as their sources of parenting beliefs than fathers do. In addition, younger parents give more importance to “broadcast television networks and newspapers”, and “life experience or the influence of significant others” than parents aged 45 and above.

Parents from southern Taiwan and the outlying islands give more importance to “newspapers and broadcast television networks” as the primary source for their parenting beliefs when compared to parents from central and northern Taiwan. Meanwhile, southern Taiwanese parents give more importance to “friends”, and “life experience or the influence of significant others” as their sources of parental

knowledge, as compared to northern Taiwanese parents. In the central Taiwan region, parents who have higher educational levels give more importance to “educational books”, “life experience and the influence of people around them”.

### *Recommendations and limitations*

This study suggests giving importance to the process of growing up and learning from the positive experiences of children in order to help cultivate knowledge for future parents. In this study, we can understand the sources of parenting beliefs. A large proportion of the learning process arises from the influence of significant people. The experiences of parents growing up in their own respective families have a profound impact on how they teach and rear their own children. Therefore, it is necessary for parents and teachers to enhance parenting knowledge in order to positively influence their children or students.

In addition, sources of parenting beliefs vary with gender, educational level, and generation. Thus, it is necessary for parents of preschoolers to select an appropriate source for parenting education tailored to the unique characteristics of every parent. In this study, in addition to different levels of parenting education, there are also other sources that influence early childhood parenting beliefs. The results of this study show that R Square .04 to .09 is small, so the value is not high. In addition, role, age, educational level and area of residence also play important roles.

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