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Master's Thesis
Academic Year 2022

Helping Parents to Promote Children's Intrinsic
Motivation in Practicing Extracurricular
Activities through Influencing Parents' Behaviors:
A 5-Session Parenting Workshop Series



Keio University
Graduate School of Media Design

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A Master's Thesis
submitted to Keio University Graduate School of Media Design
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Media Design

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Abstract of Master's Thesis of Academic Year 2022

Helping Parents to Promote Children's Intrinsic Motivation
in Practicing Extracurricular Activities through Influencing
Parents' Behaviors:
A 5-Session Parenting Workshop Series

Category: Design

Summary

This research proposes a 5-session group-based parenting workshop that aims to help parents promote children's intrinsic motivation in practicing extracurricular activities by facilitating parents to modify their own parenting behaviors and improve parent-child relationships. This workshop series attempts to empower parents to adopt positive parenting styles and develop mutually respectful parent-child relationships through the group learning environment and experiential activities which emphasize hands-on learning and real-life application.

The present thesis uses a mixed methods research design including the pre- and post-workshop survey comparison and interview analysis to evaluate the effects of workshops, which were offered to Chinese participants with children in elementary school who are learning extracurricular activities in Zhangjiagang, Jiangsu province.

Results indicate that the workshops appear to be effective in positively influencing participants' parenting attitudes and behaviors, and improving parent-child relationships. Children's intrinsic motivation in practicing extracurricular activities was also assessed by reports from participants, which appears to indicate that positive changes in parenting behaviors and parent-child relationships bring an increase in children's intrinsic motivation for practicing. These findings imply a promising format of parent education that encourages real-life application that genuinely benefits parents and children.

Keywords:

workshop design, parent education, positive parenting, parent-child relationship,
intrinsic motivation

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Contribution and Research Questions

In East-Asian Culture, sending children to learn extracurricular activities has become a prevalent way to develop interests, build skills, and increase competitiveness (Lau and Cheng 2016). In China, where this workshop series was executed, approximately two-thirds of preschoolers in urban Mainland China participated in extracurricular activities, and a large representative survey on Hong Kong preschoolers revealed an extracurricular activity participation rate of 77% (Lau and Cheng 2016).

In China, the popular extracurricular activities include musical instruments, dancing and vocals, drawing and Calligraphy, and sports. The characteristic of these extracurricular activities is that they are highly organized and require lots of practice from children. The classes are usually offered on a weekly basis in a small group or one-on-one setting. To excel on the performance, the children need to practice on a daily basis. For children, it is a tough task to spend their leisure time after school to practice the extracurricular activities every day. Therefore, although parents may had the good intentions to broaden their children's horizons, to widen their opportunities and to better prepare them for future success when sending children to learn extracurricular activities, they turned to use a controlling parenting style that urges their children during practices in order for their children to excel on the extracurricular activities.

As a result, it is hard for children to feel the enjoyment from the practice. They may even experience a decline in intrinsic motivation. Researches suggested that positive parenting styles that are not controlling and authoritarian are positively correlated with school success and high intrinsic motivation (Arënliu et al. 2014). Therefore, this workshop series is designed to help parents to promote their chil-

dren's intrinsic motivation through modifying their own parenting behaviors.

There are related works striving to influence parenting practices such as text-based parent education materials, local and online parenting lectures, and parenting workshops. However, the text-based parent education materials and parenting lectures rarely provide hands-on learning opportunities for participants, resulting in lack of abilities in application of parenting skills. The Parenting Workshop Series (Bailey et al. 1995) developed by Cornell University targeted only participants in the United States and whose children experience abuse or neglect. Therefore, existing works rarely address the target of this workshop series whose children are learning extracurricular activities, and provide hands-on learning opportunities.

This research aims to answer the following research question:

1. How does the workshop design influence participants' parenting practices and their parent-child relationships?
2. How does the change in participants' parenting practices influence their children's intrinsic motivation to practice extracurricular activities?

1.2. Thesis Structure

The structure of the thesis is as follows:

1. Chapter 1 Introduction

- An overview of the background and the reason behind the design intention
- Research questions

2. Chapter 2 Literature Review

- Prevalence and significance of the problem
- Related works
- Gap between existing works and the present workshop design

3. Chapter 3 Workshop Design

- Details of the workshop design
- Rationales behind critical design decisions

4. **Chapter 4 Proof of Concept**

- The test of the workshop design
- The implementation of the test (workshops)
- The results of the test

5. **Chapter 5 Conclusion**

- Insights from this research
- Conclusion to the research questions

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1. Extracurricular Activities in the East-Asian Context

It has been more and more popular for parents to send their children to learn extracurricular activities such as sports, music and art classes outside of schools starting from as early as preschool.

In countries all over the world, including the United States (Kremer-Sadlik et al. 2010), Canada (Ashbourne and Andres 2015), China (Lau and Cheng 2016), and Japan (Yamamoto and Brinton 2010), organized extracurricular activities are so prevalent that they now constitute a significant socialization arena where children are expected to acquire early competencies that may help prepare them for later academic and professional success.

Researches showed following reasons why parents are invest time and money in their children's extracurricular learning. Studies investigating extracurricular activities in the United Sates suggested that because of the rising rate of children's obesity, the emphasis on participation in sports activities was increased (Andersen et al. 1998). In Italy, participation in extracurricular activities was encouraged because of its positive effects on psychological and physiological benefits (Guicciardi et al. 2006).

In the East-Asian context, children's participation in extracurricular activities serves more for the purpose of cultivating skills and increasing competitiveness (Lau and Cheng 2016, Yamamoto and Brinton 2010). Take Japan as an example, extracurricular activities are called "naraigoto" in Japanese. Parents are sending children to naraigoto not only for developmental purpose, but also for social and life skill building. In China, where this workshop series took place, education

is traditionally valued and continues to be a decisive factor for upward social mobility (Chen et al. 2010). Therefore, Chinese parents are more determined to invest in their children's education from a young age, even if those who do not have high social economic status.

In China, popular extracurricular activities children are learning include musical instruments (such as piano, Chinese Zither and Er Hu), arts (such as drawing, vocals, and language performance), Calligraphy, dancing, and sports (such as table tennis, swimming, and taekwondo). Typically, each extracurricular activity class is about one hour long with specific learning objectives and is delivered by an adult teacher in a small group or in a one-on-one setting. Most of the classes are scheduled on a weekly basis, and children are required to practice after class on an everyday basis.

2.2. Intrinsic Motivation

2.2.1 Definition of Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation refers to behavior that is driven by internal rewards (Deci and Ryan 1985). In other words, the motivation to engage in a behavior arises from within, not because of external rewards or punishment.

Researches showed that when students have intrinsic motivation for learning — when they engage not for external rewards but because they find the activity itself interesting and gratifying — they become more likely to attach meaning to their work, explore new topics, and persist in the face of learning challenges (Yeager and Bundick 2009).

Moreover, researchers have indicated that parent–child relationship is related to adolescents' learning engagement, in which learning motivation is an influential factor (Heatly and Votruba-Drzal 2019).

2.2.2 Negative Impact of Controlling Parenting on Children's Intrinsic Motivation

In the case of extracurricular activity learning, some parents' involvement is negatively impacting children's intrinsic motivation (Anderson et al. 2003). On one

hand, given the purpose that parents are sending children for extracurricular activities, the investment that parents are putting in children's extracurricular education, parents are imposing performance standards on children, expecting them to excel on the activity learning.

On the other hand, because of the amount of practices required by the extracurricular activities, it is hard for children to take the initiative to give up their free and leisure time every day to practice. Parents may therefore use external rewards or punishment to urge children to practice, resulting in a controlling style of parenting in parents who accompany their children learning extracurricular activities.

However, the parental pressure brought by parental control of the child's activity participation and the parents' imposed performance standards is negatively correlated with children's enjoyment and motivation for the activity (Anderson et al. 2003). Although parents may begin with the good intention, trying to develop interests and introduce their children to extracurricular activities that may bring them wider opportunities and success in the future, their controlling ways of accompanying and parenting are negatively influencing children's intrinsic motivation for that activity. In other words, it is hard for children to enjoy the activity, understand the meaning to learn and practice the activity, and to use the skills developed by the activity in the future. Rather, the children may have a backfire and regard the practices as tasks, leading to conflicts with parents when they do not want to practice, which also results in deterioration in parent-child relationship.

2.2.3 Self-Determination Theory as a Framework to Promote Children's Intrinsic Motivation

So how can parents facilitate their children to develop that intrinsic motivation to learn and practice the extracurricular activity? The Self-Determination Theory could be an answer. The Self-Determination Theory grew out of the work of psychologists Edward Deci and Richard Ryan, who first introduced their ideas in their 1985 book *Self-Determination and Intrinsic Motivation in Human Behavior* (Deci and Ryan 1985).

While people are often motivated to act by external rewards such as money, prizes, and acclaim (known as extrinsic motivation), the Self-Determination Theory focuses primarily on internal sources of motivation such as a need to gain knowledge or to gain pleasure and enjoyment in the process (known as intrinsic motivation).

This is especially common in parenting because parents tend to use external rewards to reinforce behaviors that they would like to see in their children and use external punishment to control behaviors that they do not want to see in their children. For example, parents may reward their children by allowing them to use their cellphone after practicing the extracurricular activity. In this way, the parents may see short-term effects by using this external reward because their children do go to practice because they are extrinsically motivated by the cellphone time. However, in the long run, children lack the intrinsic motivation to learn and practice extracurricular activities.

Self-Determination Theory identifies three basic psychological needs for people to have for intrinsic motivation: autonomy in learning, relatedness, and competence (Deci and Ryan 1985). The design of this workshop series refers to Self-Determination Theory as part of the theoretical support.

2.3. Positive Parenting

Parents who practice positive parenting do not use harsh punishment to correct “problematic” behavior. Instead, they proactively fulfill their children’s emotional needs through positive interactions (McCready 2021). Therefore, one way parents can help fulfill their children’s basic psychological needs is through positive parenting.

There are various mechanisms through which positive parenting promotes a child’s prosocial development. One of the ways is that positive parenting supports creativity, empowerment, and self-determination (Lonczak 2019). A reoccurring theme in the positive parenting literature is that a warm, yet firm parenting style is linked to numerous positive youth outcomes (Lonczak 2019). The positive parenting style is termed authoritative and it is conceptualized as a parenting approach that includes a good balance of the following parenting qualities: assertive,

but not intrusive; demanding, but responsive; supportive in terms of discipline, but not punitive (Baumrind 1991). Researches suggested that the authoritative parenting style characterized with high demandingness and high responsiveness tends to be more positively associated with school success and high intrinsic motivation compared to authoritarian and the permissive parenting style (Arënliu et al. 2014).

Therefore, the design of this workshop series will adopt positive parenting as one of the theoretical support to guide parents' parenting styles and to promote children's intrinsic motivation.

2.4. Gap

2.4.1 Related Work Contributing to Influencing Parenting Practices

The purpose of designing this workshop series is to help parents modify their parenting practices especially when they are accompanying their children to practice extracurricular activities. By modifying their parenting practices, the parents can therefore improve their relationships with their children and improve their children's intrinsic motivation to learn extracurricular activities. There are several existing works that contribute to influence parents' parenting practices.

Text-Based Parent Education Materials

There are multiple sources where parents can easily access parenting information. Examples include parent education books, social media posts, and blog articles. These sources of information are mostly text-based reading and teaching approaches. Parents are passively in-taking information from the sources without specific scenario analysis and opportunities to discuss and practice.

Although these resources sources are easy for parents to access, they are not optimal for parents who are not literate enough to read or those who are not able to fully understand the materials. Also, it is hard for parents to take action to apply the parenting skills written in the resources. Moreover, people are relying on social media today. It becomes a problem for parents because the information presented

in the posts and articles on social media may not be evidence-based. This brings potential harm for both the parents and their children. Therefore, text-based reading is not be enough for parents to positively modify their parenting practices.

Parent Education Lectures

More and more parents are paying attention to their parenting practices at home. According to this need, schools, local governments, and companies in China are providing various parenting lectures for parents. According to Sohu News (Sohu 2022), many brands started incorporating online parenting education sections, such as the Fandeng Reading App (<https://www.dushu365.com/home>) and New Oriental Education Technology Group Inc. (<http://www.xdf.cn/jtjy/>).

However, these resources are usually offered on a large scale with hundreds of audience with little interaction between the lecturer and the audience. Due to COVID-19, most of the resources were offered online, making interactions even harder. Therefore, it is hard for parents to get personalized advice from this kind of resources on their parenting practices at home.

Parenting Skills Workshop

Cornell University did develop a Parenting Skills Workshop Series (Bailey et al. 1995) that provides parents with opportunities to practice parenting skills in workshops. However, this workshop series was only executed in the United States and targeted parents of children in abuse or neglect.

Moreover, although schools, the government and companies in China started offering more parenting education resources to parents, few resources were offered in the format of a workshop that helps parents to participate in a group, adopts non top-down learning processes, offers practice opportunities, and provides personalized parenting strategies according to diverse needs in individual families.

2.4.2 Summary

In a nutshell, in terms of target population, although the format of workshops has been explored to modify parenting styles, few of existing parenting workshops target parents whose children are learning extracurricular activities.

In terms of purpose, parent education programs and other parent education materials are striving to solve issues such as parent-child relationship, abuse and neglect of children, and so on. Few of them are working on the promotion of children's intrinsic motivation to learn extracurricular activities.

In terms of region, there are few efforts taken in China that provide parent education services that both deliver evidence-based knowledge and hands-on learning opportunities. Also, few of them are targeting specifically on parents whose children are learning extracurricular activities.

In terms of the format, although there are researches exploring the role of parenting in children's involvement and affective experience in extracurricular activity learning (Anderson et al. 2003), the workshop is an under-evaluated format to help modify parents' parenting behaviors and influence children's intrinsic motivation.

Therefore, given the prevalence and significance of the problem that parents' parenting behaviors can influence children's intrinsic motivation in learning and practicing the extracurricular activities, while there are few works contributing to help parents positively modify their parenting practices, this 5-session Parenting Workshop Series is designed to fill the gap by introducing participants with basic parenting knowledge, creating a small group learning environment where lots of interaction happens among the group, giving personalized feedback from facilitators, and hands-on learning opportunities that help participants apply knowledge in to real life situations.

Chapter 3

Workshop Design

3.1. Overview

The ultimate goal of this workshop series is to help parents adjust their children's behavior, that is to promote children's intrinsic motivation to practice extracurricular activities, by facilitating parents to change their own parenting behaviors and improve their parent-child relationships. To achieve this goal, the workshop series provides parents of elementary school kids learning musical instruments with effective, research-based strategies and hands-on opportunities to practice the strategies.

Parents can influence their children's intrinsic motivation by taking care of themselves as a parent, communicating with their children, and fulfilling their children's needs for relatedness, competence, and autonomy (Deci and Ryan 2012). The five-week workshop series content design incorporates the Cognitive Behavioral Model (Fenn and Byrne 2013). It is also based on the Self-Determination Theory, one of the human motivation theories, and themes consistent with familiar parent education programs such as Positive Discipline (Nelsen 1996). The workshop themes are presented in a format that enables parents to practice parenting skills in a supportive group environment. Each 90-minute workshop becomes a setting for participants to practice communication and parenting skills in a format that emphasizes action in real-life situations. Learning methods include experiential activities such as participants helping each other practice the skill, and the use of the skill at home.

As mentioned above, the workshop series consists of five sessions based on based on the Self-Determination Theory and Positive Discipline. The themes of five sessions are 1) Kind and Firm, 2) Self-Care, 3) Perspective Taking, 4)

Encouragement, and 5) Shared Decision Making.

Table 3.1: Summary of Workshop Design

Workshop Goal: to help parents promote children's intrinsic motivation to practice extracurricular activities through facilitating parents on how to change their own behaviors.		
Workshop Themes	Theory	What Parents Can Learn
1. Kind and Firm	Positive Discipline, Unconditional love	1) conveying warmth and unconditional love instead of negativity 2) using positive discipline skills instead of punishments and rewards
2. Self-Care	Positive Parenting	3) managing parental stress 4) staying stable and grounded to bring about stable children
3. Perspective Taking	Self-Determination Theory: Relatedness	7) understanding and accepting children's feelings instead of judging their feelings 8) the whole family being a team
4. Encouragement	Self-Determination Theory: Competence	10) encouraging children's qualities and their process towards accomplishment instead of the results 11) respecting and appreciating children
5. Shared Decision-Making	Self-Determination Theory: Autonomy	15) helping children develop a sense of autonomy by allowing them to make choices and gain control

Table 3.1 above shows the summary of workshop design. Under the five themes, the workshop includes information on 1) conveying warmth and unconditional love instead of negativity, 2) using positive discipline skills instead of punishments and rewards, 3) managing parental stress, 4) staying stable and grounded to bring about stable children, 5) holding reasonable expectations for both themselves and their children, 6) deliberately looking for mindfulness moments in daily life, 7) understanding and accepting children's feelings instead of judging their feelings, 8) the whole family being a team, 9) encouragement being different from praise, 10) encouraging children's qualities and their process towards accomplishment instead of the results, 11) respecting and appreciating children, 12) allowing children to make and learn from mistakes, 13) building a secure parent-child attachment, 14) engaging in fun activities together, and 15) helping children develop a sense of autonomy by allowing them to make choices and gain control.

This chapter explains the philosophical framework underlying the workshop design, the content of each workshop, the learning methods using experiential activities in the workshops, and other essential design elements to picture the whole workshop design. All these parts taken together enable the workshop series to help parents promote their children's intrinsic motivation through changing their own behaviors.

3.2. Philosophical Frameworks

This part describes the models through which the workshop design creates the impact it aims to have. It will first explain the workshop impact model which walks through how the workshop promotes children's intrinsic motivation through parenting intervention. Then, it will explain how the workshop design incorporates the Cognitive Behavioral Model to change participants' parenting behaviors.

3.2.1 Workshop Impact Model

The workshop aims to help parents change their children's behavior, that is to have children intrinsically motivated to practice extracurricular activities, by facilitating the parents to change their own parenting behaviors. To create this impact, the workshop design follows the model shown in Figure 3.1.

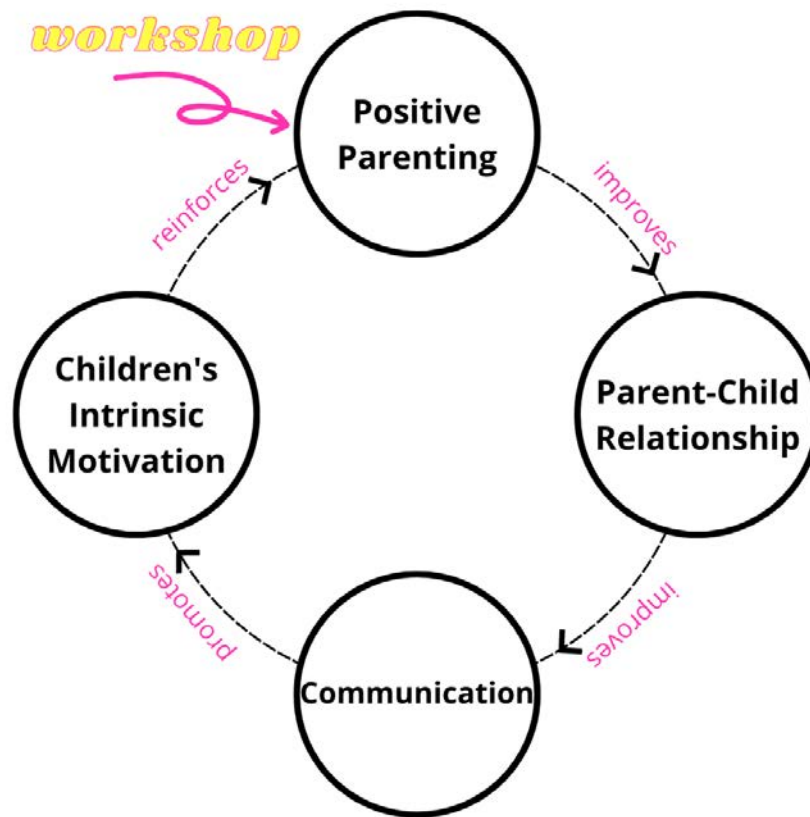


Figure 3.1: Workshop Impact Model

1. **The workshop helps parents learn positive parenting.**

First, the workshop helps parents learn positive parenting strategies through hands-on learning activities both during and after the five workshops with different themes dedicated to different aspects related to positive parenting. The detailed explanation follows in the 3.3 Content Design section.

2. **Positive parenting improves the parent-child relationship.**

Then, learning how to use positive parenting strategies and skills in real life help parents change their parenting behaviors at home. By actively participating in the workshop, parents understand how to convey warmth and unconditional love to their children, how to manage their own emotions,

how to respect and understand their children's feelings, how to encourage their children, and how to involve their children in the decision-making process. As a result, they get to build mutual respect between them and their children, and the parent-child relationship improves.

3. The harmonious parent-child relationship makes parent-child communication more effective and efficient.

After the parent-child relationship improves, the communication between the participants and their children gets more effective and efficient. More specifically, participants change the way they accompany their children especially when practicing the extracurricular activities. Rather than making the rules unilaterally, the parents start inviting the children to make plans for practice routine together. Rather than always asking for better performance and raising higher expectations after the practices, the participants start acknowledging children's efforts for practicing and appreciating the children's evolving strengths. Rather than scolding their children, the participants start learning to pause before losing temper and trying to hug their children to make both of them feel better.

Such changes in parents' parenting behaviors can lead children to understand that learning is not for their parents, but for their own good. They are working collaboratively towards the same goal with their parents.

4. Positive parental changes bring about increase in children's intrinsic motivation.

Most importantly, after parent-child communication improves, parents stop imposing external motivation for children to practice. Instead, children start taking the autonomy to practice and start understanding the meaning of learning and practicing.

3.2.2 Cognitive Behavioral Model

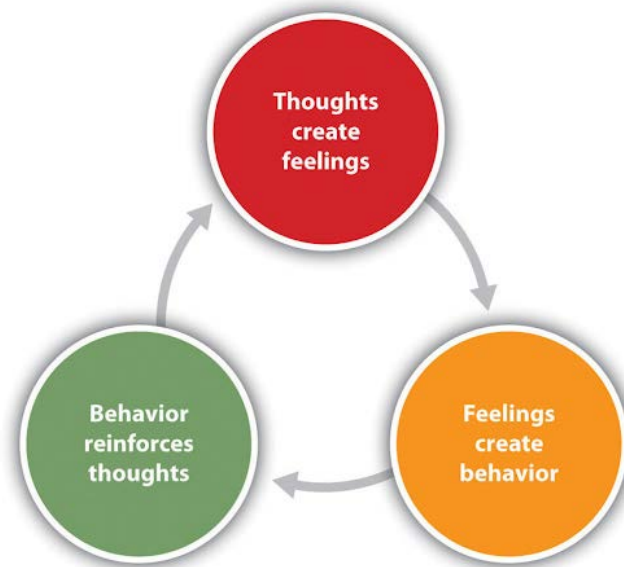


Figure 3.2: Cognitive Behavioral Model

The Cognitive Behavioral Model shown in Figure 3.2 hypothesises that people's emotions and behaviours are influenced by their perceptions of events (Fenn and Byrne 2013). In other words, people's feelings are influenced by thoughts, and people's behaviors are influenced by feelings.

Before participating in the workshop, the participants may have strong sense of obligation believing they must take care of everything for children and must supervise their children to succeed on every task. Such thoughts create feelings such as stress, anxiety, anger, and so on in parents which then create parenting behaviors such as urging the children to practice and to keep nudging the children on tasks they have to do. As a result, the children feel bored and annoyed, leading to a negative attitude towards extracurricular activity learning, the deterioration in parent-child relationship and ineffective parent-child communication.

The workshop design incorporates the Cognitive Behavioral Model to change parents' parenting behaviors by first changing their thoughts. The workshop aims to change parents' thoughts on their role as the parent and their perceptions of their children through various themes and experiential activities. They get new

perspectives on positive parenting strategies which help them modify parenting behaviors. To encourage parents to practice even outside of the workshop at home, each participant receives a 3.4.2 Family Interaction Journal to record their application of positive parenting practices after each workshop. Therefore, after practicing the new strategies at home and getting positive feedback from their children, they may experience positive changes in their emotions and improvements of behaviors in their children. The aim is to form a positive reinforcement cycle that helps reach the ultimate impact of this workshop series, that is to improve the parent-child relationship and to improve children's intrinsic motivation.

3.3. Content Design

The most important message the proposed design would like to deliver to the participants is that parents and children are allies and that a cooperative, caring relationship is the basis of a strong family and is a more effective way for parents to guide their children's behavior.

This section gives a detailed description of the content design of each workshop of the Parenting Workshop Series. Each workshop theme highlights a key issue in parenting or parent-child communication and all the workshops aim to promote children's intrinsic motivation through influencing parents' behaviors.

Workshop 1 KIND AND FIRM helps parents reflect on their past parenting styles and introduces this new way of positive parenting. Workshop 2 SELF-CARE helps parents realize the importance of taking care of themselves as a parent and guides parents in developing techniques for managing their emotions. Workshop 3 PERSPECTIVE-TAKING fulfills children's needs for relatedness by teaching parents how to listen, respect, and respond to their children's feelings. Workshop 4 ENCOURAGEMENT fulfills children's needs for competence by helping parents distinguish between encouragement and praise, and encouraging children's qualities and their process towards accomplishment instead of the results. Workshop 5 SHARED DECISION MAKING teaches parents how to fulfill children's needs for autonomy by sharing problem-solving and decision-making with their children.

These five themes are presented in a format that enables parents to practice five parenting skills in a supportive group environment. The group communication process is as important as the content of the classes because by sharing the same worries and same goals, participants are able to receive support and encouragement from other participants.

For each workshop, the section will provide a workshop outline, explain the rationale behind the theme choice, describe the expected learning outcomes for participants, and the process through which the workshop guides participants to reach the learning outcomes.

3.3.1 Workshop 1 Kind and Firm / Online

Theme Choice Rationale

Kind and Firm is a foundation as well as one of the criteria of Positive Discipline (Nelsen 1996) developed based on positive parenting. Some parents are kind, but not firm. Others are firm, but not kind. Many parents vacillate between the two—being too kind until they can't stand their kids who develop an entitlement attitude and then being too firm until they can't stand themselves who feel like tyrants.

In Positive Discipline, being kind does not mean being permissive, and being firm does not mean being controlling or authoritarian (Nelsen 1996). Instead, being kind means respecting the needs of children, and being firm means respecting parents themselves and the needs of the situation. Positive Discipline promotes that parents should be Kind and Firm at the same time to have mutual respect between parents and children.

Numerous studies show that parents who perform parenting as kind and firm positively influence their children's behaviors and academic performance. Teens who perceive their parents as both kind and firm are at lower risk for misbehaviors such as smoking, use of marijuana, use of alcohol, or being violent (Aquilino and Supple 2001, Piko and Balázs 2012). Other studies have correlated the teen's perception of parenting style (kind and firm versus authoritarian or permissive) with improved academic performance (Cohen and Rice 1997, Deslandes et al. 1997, Lam 1996).

There are three reasons why Kind and Firm is selected as the theme of the

Workshop Outline

Opening

- Informed consent
- Pre-evaluation
- Opening meditation

Main Activities

- Sharing Scenarios
- Introducing Kind and Firm
- Practicing Kind and Firm
- Reflection

Closing

- Recap
- "Homework"
- Closing meditation

first workshop. First, Kind and Firm is a topic that inspires participants to start talking in the first session when they are still feeling nervous and strange in this group. Kind and Firm talks about parenting styles, so it is an easy topic for participants to get started because they can think about their past interactions with their children.

Second, Kind and Firm promotes mutual respect and mutual understanding between parents and children, which are the basis of parent-child communication as well as parent-parent communication, so it's significant to bring this topic into consciousness in the first workshop.

Last but not least, Kind and Firm is a relatively more concrete tool that participants can understand and use right away compared to other themes later in the workshop series. In this way, it is easier for participants to feel the value of attending the workshop, thus increasing the possibility for them to come back next week.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- Parents understand what it means to be Kind and Firm.
- Parents understand that they should convey warmth and unconditional love instead of negativity to their children.
- Parents know how to be Kind and Firm.

The Process through which Parents Reach the Expected Learning Outcomes

1. ***Interactive question:*** *What conflicts did you have with your children while practicing extracurricular activities? How did you respond to your children?*

The first main activity in the first workshop is an interactive question. This activity is composed of three parts: writing a dialogue, sharing the scenario, and inspiring reflections. The participants are asked to share with the group a recent conflict their children had with them while practicing

the extracurricular activity by writing down the conversation they had with their children in that conflict in the form of a dialogue.

- Writing a dialogue: The activity asks participants to recall their conflicts with their children by writing them down because they are able to share their worries in a relatively private way without having to speak up and share with other participants right away so that they can feel more settled down in the new environment.
- Sharing the scenarios: Then, the participants are asked to voluntarily share their dialogues with other participants. The purpose of this step is to let all participants feel that they are not the only one who may feel struggled at home. They are here together in the workshop for the same goal, that is to improve the parent-child relationship, to have better communication with children, and to promote their children's intrinsic motivation.
- Inspiring reflections: After the participants share the scenario, the facilitator asks the participants to reflect on their dialogues while thinking:
 - Do you think your response was effective?
 - How did you and your child feel? Are you frustrated?
 - How do you feel after these conflicts? Any feelings of regret, or guilt for losing your temper?

The purpose of asking these reflection questions is to make participants realize that their original ways of dealing with the conflicts, especially children's reluctance to practice the extracurricular activity, not only were ineffective, but also brought negative impacts on their parent-child relationship.

2. *What is Kind and Firm?*

After having participants reflect on their past parenting practices taken during conflicts with their children, the workshop proceeds to introduce a positive parenting skill called Kind and Firm (Nelsen 1996) to parents. The purpose of this introduction is to help parents understand what Kind and Firm is and to help them realize how this new skill is more positive

than the parenting practice they used to do. Moreover, it is significant for parents to understand the basis of improving parent-child relationship, that is to convey warmth and unconditional love instead of negativity to their children.

To achieve these learning goals, the facilitator first defines being kind, being firm, and being kind and firm. As mentioned above in the Theme Choice Rationale section, being kind does not mean being permissive, and being firm does not mean being controlling or punitive. Instead, being kind means respecting the needs of children, and being firm means respecting parents themselves and the needs of the situation.

3. *Practicing Kind and Firm*

After explaining the concept of Kind and Firm, the workshop proceeds to the highlight, that is the practice of the skill. The purpose of the practice is to help parents apply what they learned just now to their personal scenarios in order to understand how to be Kind and Firm in real life situations. The practice consists of two activities: Analysis & Discussion and Brainstorming.

- Analysis & Discussion

First, the facilitator asks participants to take out the conflict dialogue they just wrote in the “Writing a dialogue” activity. Then, the facilitator invites parents to analyze their own words and actions in the dialogue by identifying Kind parts, Firm parts, or Neither parts. The purpose of this activity is to help parents better understand what Kind and Firm is and to connect this new concept with their real life situation.

Next, participants are asked to reflect again on whether their categorized words and actions were effective in resolving the conflicts with their children. The purpose of this quick review is to elicit the next activity, that is to try Kind and Firm.

- Brainstorming

In this activity, participants are asked to think about how they will respond to their children using Kind and Firm in that same conflict

scenario they wrote before. They brainstorm on paper as many Kind-and-Firm words, sentences, actions, or facial expressions as possible within five minutes. The facilitator provides an example word bank of Kind and Firm. Some examples include:

- I love you no matter what.
- respect
- together
- showing understanding of children’s feelings
- providing limited choices

The purpose of this brainstorming is to provide a practice opportunity by asking parents to start using Kind and Firm as if they are in a real life situation.

After the individual brainstorming, the participants are asked to take a photo of what they wrote and send the photo in the WeChat group to share their response. Figure 3.3 below shows the responses from one of the participants.

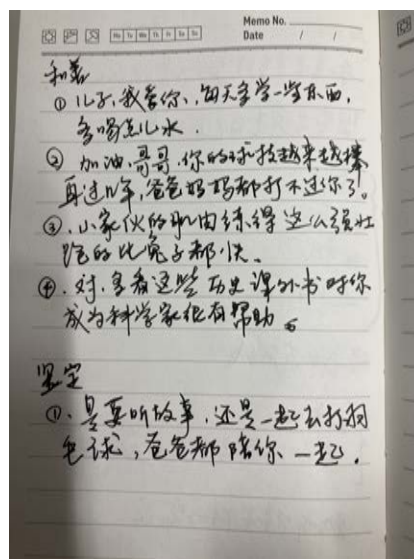


Figure 3.3: A Participant’s Brainstorming Work

After sharing in the WeChat group, the participants are asked to read

out the Kind and Firm words they've just written down. Just by writing down the words is not enough for them to apply the Kind and Firm skill in real life, so the workshop provides this further practice opportunity to ask participants to act as themselves to read out the words.

4. *Reflection*

The last step in the process is reflection, right after participants have practiced to read out their brainstormed Kind and Firm words. The facilitator asks participants to feel from the perspective of a child how they feel when hearing the Kind and Firm words they wrote, to feel the different feelings brought by new responses. The reflection part is significant in helping parents achieve the expected learning outcomes because it helps them start paying attention to their children's feelings, to positively reinforce their own use of Kind and Firm skill, and to start building a positive cycle of positive parenting.

Moreover, because the participants get to share their reflection in the group, they get to be reminded that they share same worries and same goals with other participants, helping them feel more related to each other and receive support and encouragement from other participants.

3.3.2 Workshop 2 Self-Care / Online

Theme Choice Rationale

There are mainly two reasons why Self-Care is selected as the theme of the second workshop, before introducing participants to other topics devoted to actual skills on how to promote children’s intrinsic motivation.

First, Self-Care is something all parents need, especially in a pandemic situation. Previous studies have found that people experience a complex array of negative emotions, such as depression, anxiety, anger, and distress during real-life stressful events (Feldman et al. 1999, Du et al. 2018). In the case of COVID-19, the ever-changing life conditions and external environmental changes can contribute to underlying stress, so it is significant for participants to learn how to take care of their own emotions and needs to stay grounded.

Second, learning to do Self-Care helps participants to take care of their emotions, especially when they feel they are going to “explode” facing conflicts with children. During the pandemic lockdown, parents and children spend more time together at home than before because both of them are “working from home”. Many parents report that they feel more anxious and can easily get mad and start yelling. If the children don’t perform as the parents wish, the parents quickly lose their temper. Doing so not only shows little effectiveness in their children’s learning motivation but also deteriorates their relationship with their children. Moreover, the way parents choose to handle themselves in explosive situations models ways for their children to behave when angry or upset.

Workshop Outline

Opening

- Opening Meditation
- Review of the last session

Main Activities

- Importance of Self-Care
- How to perform Self-Care?
- Practicing Self-Care: 15-min Mindfulness Activity
- Reflection

Closing

- Recap
- “Homework”
- Closing Meditation

Therefore, it is important for participants to learn Self-Care because it helps them stop before acting impulsively. As adults become more aware of the early signs of frustration, they begin to slow down their first response and think about alternatives to unconstrained behavior while planning a more rational response. The Self-Care skill is intended to help parents understand the effect emotions have on the body and deliberately look for mindful moments in their life to attend to their own needs.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- Parents understand that only stable and grounded parents bring about stable children.
- Parents learn to manage their parental stress.
- Parents learn to manage their response to strong emotions.
- Parents learn to take care of their own needs.

The Process through which Parents Reach the Expected Learning Outcomes

1. ***Interactive question:*** *What kind of practice is loving yourself? (Mentimeter)*

The workshop starts by leading parents to review the last session when we talked about showing warmth and unconditional love for children, leading into the topic of this workshop — parents should have unconditional love for themselves as well. To inspire discussions among parents, the facilitator asks this interactive question “What kind of practice is loving yourself?”

The purpose of asking this question is to help parents distinguish between what has been marketed as “loving yourself” and what it really means to love yourself. For some people, self-love means going shopping or pampering themselves with a massage or manicure. This is the commonly seen interpretation of “loving yourself” nowadays because industries have put this commercial value on taking care of one’s body by skincare, spa, and so

on. Yet, the elusive self-love that we seek requires something deeper than anything we can “do” for ourselves. Loving yourself means finding peace within ourselves — resting comfortably within the depths of our being. We might find temporary respite by doing something to nurture ourselves, but a deeper inner peace requires cultivating a certain way of being with ourselves — a warm and nurturing attitude toward what we experience inside.

In the online environment, such interaction can be achieved on Mentimeter, a presentation platform with real-time feedback. Parents’ responses to the question are shown in Figure 3.4. At this point, 4 out of 13 responses believed that “loving yourself” means attending to one’s inner needs.



Figure 3.4: Workshop 2 Mentimeter Responses

2. Importance of Performing Self-Care

After inspiring parents to think about their definition of self-love and self-care, and helping them understand that self-care means to listen to and take care of their deeper needs, the facilitator walks parents through why they should perform self-care. The key message is that only stable and grounded parents can raise stable children. One has to love him/herself first before he/she can love children and create a loving family environment. It is with

such foundation that healthy and positive parents-child relationships can flourish.

Many people do not prioritize taking care of themselves. In particular, parents usually prioritize children's needs over their own needs. Also, parents often have high expectations for themselves to be super mom or super dad who can take care of everything. As a result, they often feel overwhelmed, exhausted, and under a constant state of stress. As mentioned earlier, being under constant parental stress has several negative effects. First, for some parents, high levels of parenting stress contribute to psychological disorders, such as depression and anxiety (Feldman et al. 1999, Du et al. 2018). Second, parents may be more likely in explosive situations, resulting in more conflicts between parents and children.

3. *How to perform Self-Care?*

After helping participants realize the significance of taking care of their own needs, the workshop proceeds to explain how to perform Self-Care by two steps: holding reasonable expectations and deliberately looking for mindfulness moments in life.

- Holding reasonable expectations for their role as parents

To take care of their own feelings and needs, the participants need to first mitigate their anxiety. To mitigate this anxiety, they need to stop being too strict on their children as well as on themselves. Therefore, the workshop delivers this message to participants that they do not need to be over-involved in their children's learning to love them.

- Deliberately looking for mindfulness moments in life

Mindfulness is the practice of purposely bringing one's attention in the present moment without evaluation (Kabat-Zinn and Hanh 2009). In other words, practicing mindfulness means paying attention to one's sensations, feelings, thoughts, and environment in the here-and-now with an attitude of acceptance. Researches suggest that practicing mindfulness is effective in decreasing depression (Kuyken et al. 2015), increasing emotional regulation (Stiglmayr et al. 2014), and reducing

anxiety and stress (Association et al. 2019). Therefore, the workshop chooses the mindfulness practice as a way to help parents take care of their own inner needs through helping them focus on the present moment and do some mindfulness activities in daily life.

4. ***Practicing Self-Care: 15-min Mindfulness Activity*** After introducing the way to perform Self-Care, mindfulness, the workshop arranges fifteen minutes for participants to practice mindfulness. During the fifteen minutes, the participants immerse themselves in a hand-craft activity they chose without disturbance. The facilitator prompts the participants to do two things: 1) focus on their present feelings at the present moment and 2) to accept these feelings without judgements. The purpose of this activity is to show participants that they can deliberately look for some time that belongs only to themselves in their busy life.

The facilitator prepares three activities for participants to choose at the end of the previous workshop: Lego, Coloring, and Origami. The participants can choose whichever they like. The facilitator prepares the materials needed for each activity, and delivers the materials to each participant's door because of COVID. Figure 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7 below show examples of the participants' work during the fifteen minutes.

5. ***Reflection***

The last step in this process is reflection. The facilitator prompts the participants to reflect on their feelings, moods, and changes in their mental states during the past fifteen minutes. The purpose of the reflection is to guide participants to feel the positive outcomes of practicing such mindfulness and reinforce this practice after workshop. According to participants' real-time responses in the chat box (Figure 3.8), five out of eight participants were able to focus on the present moment and improve their moods:

- “My mood has become much better.”
- “I feel very calm.”
- “I only thought about me in my head.”
- “I was very focused without thinking about any other things.”



Figure 3.5: Workshop 2 Mindful Activity: Lego



Figure 3.6: Workshop 2 Mindful Activity: Coloring

- “Although I was doing something, but felt very relaxed.”
- “Usually at home I rarely have so long to focus on one thing.”



Figure 3.7: Workshop 2 Mindful Activity: Origami

塘小诸葛闹闹 19:56
心情大好

蒋妹 19:57
很平静, 哈哈

塘小诸葛闹闹 19:57
我的脑子里只有我自己的事, 没有其他的

朱梓彤 19:57
很专注, 没有想任何事情。

塘市小学 陆思源 妈妈 19:57
手上虽然在忙, 但是心情很放松

毛头小怪 19:58
平时家里很少有这么长时间可以做一件事情。

Figure 3.8: Workshop 2 Reflection Responses

3.3.3 Workshop 3 Perspective-taking / Online

Theme Choice Rationale

By introducing the Kind and Firm positive parenting style and preparing participants to stay grounded through Self-Care, the workshop series spent the first two sessions to build a solid foundation for the following learning on how to provide parenting support to promote children’s intrinsic motivation.

Starting from Workshop 3, the workshop series will guide participants through how to promote their children’s intrinsic motivation through parental support and changes in parents’ behaviors. Therefore, the themes of Workshop 3 to Workshop 5 are interconnected and mutually supportive, and they all stem from one theory — the Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan 2012).

Self-Determination Theory As explained in Chapter 2, the Self-Determination Theory suggests that people can become intrinsically motivated when their needs for relatedness, competence, and autonomy are fulfilled.

- **Relatedness** People need to experience a sense of belonging and attachment to other people.
- **Competence** People need to gain mastery of tasks and learn different skills. When people feel that they have the skills needed for success, they are more likely to take actions that will help them achieve their goals.
- **Autonomy** People need to feel in control of their own behaviors and goals. This sense of being able to take direct action that will result in real change plays a major part in helping people feel self-determined.

Workshop Outline

Opening

- Opening Meditation
- Review of the last session

Main Activities

- Empathy
- Role Play
- Reflection

Closing

- Recap
- “Homework”
- Closing Meditation

Moreover, it is believed that social-contextual support can facilitate children's intrinsic motivation. Therefore, the workshop uses the Self-Determination Theory to back up the theme choice of Workshop 3 to Workshop 5 to promote children's intrinsic motivation through changing parents' parenting behaviors.

Relatedness

The theme of Workshop 3 is Perspective-Taking, meaning that parents should learn to put themselves in their children's shoes, that is to not only accept but also understand their children's feelings. The workshop chooses Perspective-Taking as the theme because it is helping participants fulfill their children's needs for relatedness. Therefore, parents showing respect for children's feelings by accepting and understanding them helps fulfill children's needs for relatedness because it enables children to feel accepted and helps build a more secure attachment between parents and children.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- Parents accept and understand that children have a wide variety of feelings.
- Parents respect their children's feelings.
- Parents understand that they and their children are on the same team and that a cooperative, caring relationship is the basis of a strong family.

The Process through which Parents Reach the Expected Learning Outcomes

1. ***Interactive question:*** *When was the last time you put yourself in your child's shoes?*

The workshop starts by an interactive question to ask participants' most recent experience of perspective-taking. The purpose of asking this question is to introduce participants to today's topic, to remind them of their familiar experiences, and to get them start talking.

2. ***How to put myself in my child's shoes? — Empathy***

After sharing their experiences of perspective-taking, the participants are introduced with a skill — empathy. The facilitator plays the empathy video made by Brené Brown (Brown 2013) to familiarize participants with the concept in a more engaging way.

The purpose of introducing empathy to participants is to elicit the essence of perspective-taking, that is to empathize with their children and to stay out of judgment. It is likely that parents may say they often view problems from the perspective of their children, believing that they are doing a good job relating with their children. However, it is easy for parents to judge children’s feelings based on their own standards and values without noticing. Some parents have difficulty separating the way they themselves feel from what their children are telling them. The challenge in this skill is for parents to put aside their own feelings and listen carefully to hear how the child is feeling.

Therefore, it is significant to remind participants that they need to understand and really accept children’s feelings to make children feel accepted and be able to form the secure attachment between them.

3. *Practicing Perspective-Taking — Role Play*

Practice is the key strategy in teaching parents to use the new skill, so in Workshop 3 Perspective-Taking, the workshop uses Role Play as the practicing activity because role plays are both reflection of and preparation for real life. On one hand, the participants can role play as their children to put themselves in their children’s shoes and feel how their children usually feel when hearing parents’ words. On the other hand, the participants can role play as their future self who apply the skills they learned in the workshop in their own home as a practice.

In this activity, there are three rounds of role play. In the process, the facilitator assists as needed to keep role plays on track and remind participants to mimic their real life situation as much as possible.

The facilitator first asks participants to role play as their children. Participants work with their own real-life situation in the form of a dialogue and,

with the help of other group members role playing as the parent, to experience the feeling when hearing parents' words as a child. Following each role play pair is a reflection part when participants are asked to share how it felt when they hear what the actor (the person playing the role of the parent) said (what they normally said to their children).

In the second round, the participants still role play as their children, but the instead of saying what participants normally say in daily life, the actor (the person playing the role of the parent) acts using the Perspective-Taking skill. After the role play the facilitator asks the the person playing the role of the child how it felt when hearing the actor using the skill, especially the difference between feelings in the first round and the second round.

In the third round, the facilitator asks participants to experience success by role playing a positive resolution for that situation. The participants can imagine using the Perspective-Taking skill with their own children in their own home. After the role play, the participants are asked how it felt to use the Perspective-Taking skill. Practicing in the group gives each participant a positive, concrete experience with the Perspective-Taking skill.

3.3.4 Workshop 4 Encouragement / In-person

Theme Choice Rationale

The theme of Workshop 4 is Encouragement, aiming to help participants learn how to encourage their children to fulfill their children's needs for competence.

The parent is the child's first and most significant teacher. Children learn important information about themselves from their parents. Children's behavior and belief in themselves are strongly influenced by their parents' reactions. When their parents have confidence in them, children gain self-confidence. They are interested in learning new skills and are better able to handle the challenges of life.

By using Encouragement, parents learn to appreciate their child's abilities. Encouragement gives parents a way to express their good feelings toward the child. It also helps them recognize their child's efforts despite mistakes in behavior or learning.

When parents feel discouraged about the behavior of their children or the interactions within their families, they may find it difficult to practice Encouragement. They may name misbehavior as their child's most outstanding attribute. The workshop can help parents shift perspectives on what were seen as negative aspects of their children's personality into a more positive light.

No matter what a child's outward behavior may be, a parent's encouraging words to help a child feel good inside about something he or she has done or said. By paying attention in this positive way, a parent teaches a child to feel encouraged and fulfills his/her need for competence, thus promoting the intrinsic

Workshop Outline

Opening

- Opening Meditation
- Review of the last session

Main Activities

- What is Encouragement?
- The difference between praise and encouragement
- How to encourage children?
- Practice: Brainstorming & Discussion

Closing

- Recap
- "Homework"
- Closing Meditation

motivation.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- Parents learn to respect and appreciate their children.
- Parents learn to allow their children to make and learn from mistakes.
- Parents learn to distinguish between praise and encouragement.
- Parents learn to encourage children's qualities and their process towards accomplishment instead of the results.

The Process through which Parents Reach the Expected Learning Outcomes

1. *What is encouragement?*

The workshop starts by a discussion question: What kind of words do you think is encouragement? The purpose of having this discussion is for the facilitator and the group to understand participants' current understanding of encouragement as well as their past uses of encouragement at home with their children.

2. *The difference between praise and encouragement*

After the discussion question, the workshop proceeds to help participants distinguish between praise and encouragement, which may have opposite influences on children's motivation. Researches suggest that no-praise conditions tend to encourage intrinsic motivation (Koestner et al. 1987). This is a significant step before parents learn how to encourage children because what parents normally say in daily life may be praise instead of encouragement. For example, parents usually say praises such as "You are so smart!" "You got an A, well done!", thinking these expressions would encourage their children. However, the fact is that these expressions are indeed not encouraging, and parents need to learn to avoid using praise.

The facilitator uses the results of Carol Dweck's puzzle experiment (Heyman and Dweck 1992) as a more engaging way to explain the difference. Also,

the facilitator provides participants with a worksheet with a table containing example sentences for praise and encouragement as a supplement material. The table is shown in Figure 3.9 below.

	表扬 Praise	鼓励 Encouragement
指向 Addresses	做事的人：“好孩子。”“你真聪明。” The doer: "Good girl/boy." "You're smart."	行为：“妈妈很欣赏你勇于尝试的精神。”“你付出了努力。”“虽然暂时还没有看到成果，但是爸爸注意到你意识到了坚持的重要性，开始付诸行动，这就是好的。” The deed: "I appreciate your courage to try." "You have worked hard for this." "Although we haven't seen the outcomes, dad has noticed your persistence. Good job."
认可 Recognizes	只针对完美的结果&剥夺孩子的自我成就：“妈妈为你考了100分/考级拿了优秀而骄傲。” Only complete, perfect product: "I'm proud that you got 100 in the test/you got an A."	针对作出的努力和改进&承认孩子的品质和他作出的努力：“这个经历反应了你付出的时间和努力。” Effort and improvement: "This result reflects the time and efforts you devoted."
导致 Leading	孩子为他人的期望、要求而改变；总是寻求别人的认可来认同自己的价值。 Children to change for others.	孩子为自己而改变；看到并认同自己的价值。 Children to change for themselves. "Inner direction."
动力 Motivation	外在-别人怎么想？ External: "What do others think?"	内在-我是怎么想的？ Internal: "How do I think?"
长期效果 Long-term effects	依赖他人的评价 Dependence of others	自信，自立，自驱 Self-confidence, autonomy

Figure 3.9: Workshop 4 The Difference between Praise and Encouragement

3. ***How to encourage children?*** After learning about the difference between praise and encouragement, the participants proceed to learn how to express encouragement. The workshop provides a few positive parenting skills that help express encouragement: allowing children to make and learn from mistakes and learning to appreciate the children.
4. ***Practice: Brainstorming & Discussion*** In this activity, the workshop provides parents with opportunities to practice encouragement through a brainstorming activity that distinguishes between praise and encouragement.

The facilitator prepares post-its for participants and then prompts participants to brainstorm as many praise and encouragement expressions as possible in a given real life situation. Then, then facilitator invites the group to categorize their post-its under praise and encouragement. After this, the whole group discuss if they believe the expressions are categorized appropriately.

Figure 3.10 and Figure 3.11 show the scenes when participants are brainstorming and discussing.



Figure 3.10: Workshop 4 Participant Brainstorming



Figure 3.11: Workshop 4 Participant Discussion

3.3.5 Workshop 5 Shared Decision-Making / Online

Theme Choice Rationale

The theme of Workshop 5 is Shared Decision Making, aiming to help participants learn how to fulfill their children’s needs for autonomy by developing cooperation between parent and child. Parents are asked to be open-minded and allow children to become increasingly involved in determining the resolution to a shared problem. This is a skill to use when children can help with a decision or plan the solution. By giving parents a way to share responsibility with children, shared decision-making can reduce parents’ anxiety about feeling that they must control every situation (DiMarco 2022). Children gain the opportunity to learn personal responsibility and decision-making to increase their independence as well as to fulfill their needs for autonomy (Nelsen 1996).

Expected Learning Outcomes

- Parents learn to share the decision-making process with their children.

The Process through which Parents Reach the Expected Learning Outcomes

1. *Children’s needs for autonomy*

The workshop starts by explaining why children need to have the right to make choices from the perspective of psychological and physiological development. The facilitator introduces Erik Erikson’s Developmental Stages

Workshop Outline

Opening

- Opening Meditation
- Review of the last session

Main Activities

- Children’s needs for autonomy
- Providing limited choices
- Review of the previous sessions

Closing

- Closing
- Post-evaluation
- Closing Meditation

and children's brain development to explain children's developmental needs for autonomy, helping participants realize the importance of share decision-making with children.

2. ***Practice: providing limited choices***

After the introduction, the workshop proceeds to help participants practice how to share decision-making with children using one of the positive parenting skills, providing limited choices.

It is important to remind participants that they should have their children tell them the choice because once they have agreed on choices acceptable to both of them, it should not matter to the parent which choice the child makes. When children tell their choice they make a verbal commitment and are more likely to follow through. Be sure the decision is clear to both the parent and the child.

3.4. Experiential Activities

This part explains the major learning method used in the workshop series — experiential activities. The goal of this method is to build the strength and confidence of participants through hands-on practice so they become empowered to practice and use the skills they learn at home. The experiential activities are based around supportive group activities and the “homework” Family Interaction Journal.

3.4.1 Supportive Group Environment

In this parenting workshop series, the group communication process is as important as the content of the workshop sessions. The contents explained in the 3.3 Content Design section above are presented in a format that enables participants to practice five parenting skills in a supportive group environment. The ideal size of the group is six to eight participants because this is a reasonable number for participants to give enough attention to individual participant and for participants to get feedback from other participants.

Such supportive group environment allows people to receive the support and encouragement of the other members of the group. People participating in the group can see that others are going through the same thing, which can help them feel less alone, realize that other people share common problems, and get motivated to strive shared goals.

Group members can become role models for other members of the group. By observing some parent successfully coping with a problem, other members of the group can learn from that parenting strategy. If one has good strategies, he/she can share with the group as well, helping foster feelings accomplishment.

The supportive group environment helps create a safe place for participants. The group environment where participants share same problems and same learning goals allows participants to share their parenting concerns and practice parenting skills in a safe environment without worrying about being judged by someone else.

3.4.2 “Homework”—Family Interaction Journal

Each week after the workshop, participants are asked to practice what they learned in the workshop at home using the Family Interaction Journal. The Family Interaction Journal is a critical element in the workshop design and an indispensable learning process for the participants to reach the expected learning outcomes for each workshop. The purpose of the Family Interaction Journal is to encourage participants to practice and apply the newly learned skills at home with their children.

The Family Interaction Journal is specifically designed for this workshop series. The covers of the journal are shown in Figure 3.12 and 3.13 below.

The Family Interaction Journal is a thirty-six-page notebook with seven pages assigned to each week. Therefore, one page is for one day. As shown in Figure 3.14 below, the inner pages of the journal are designed to be divided into three parts — me, my children, and my partner or the whole family. The participants can write down their practice and application of the newly learned parenting skills in week following each workshop. They can also use the journal as a diary to record any interaction happening within their family.

In order to motivate participants to write the journal, clear expectations are provided on each page to encourage participants to use the skills at home. As shown at the bottom of Figure 3.14, a sentence prompting the theme of the past workshop is printed at the bottom of each page. The five sentences for the five workshops are:

1. Week 1 Kind and Firm: It is the “and” that brings Kind and Firm together.
2. Week 2 Self-Care: Did you take care of yourself today?
3. Week 3 Perspective-Taking: Put yourself in your children’s shoes.
4. Week 4 Encouragement: Children need encouragement, just like plants need water.
5. Week 5 Shared Decision-Making: When children are involved in setting the rules, they are more motivated to stick to them.

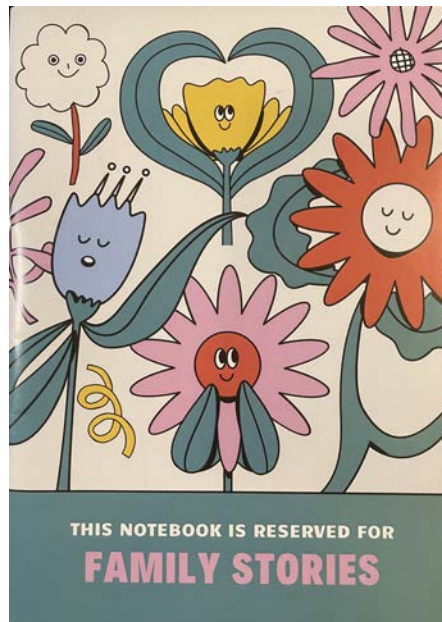


Figure 3.12: Front Cover

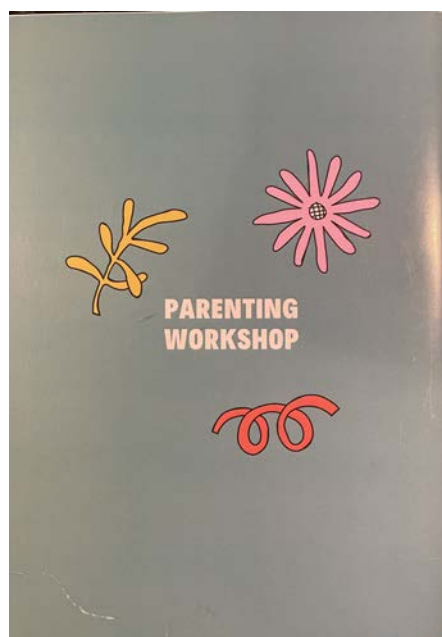
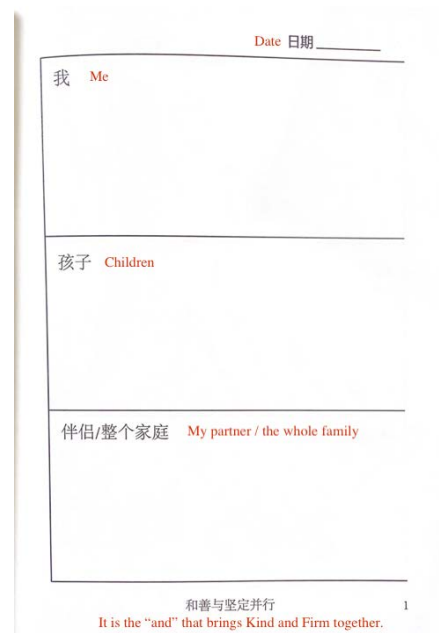


Figure 3.13: Back Cover



The image shows a sample inner page of a journal. At the top right, there is a line for the date: "Date 日期 _____". The page is divided into three horizontal sections by lines. The first section is labeled "我 Me" (I / Me). The second section is labeled "孩子 Children" (Children). The third section is labeled "伴侣/整个家庭 My partner / the whole family" (My partner / the whole family). At the bottom of the page, there is a quote: "和善与坚定并行" (Kindness and firmness go hand in hand) followed by "It is the 'and' that brings Kind and Firm together." and a small number "1" in the bottom right corner.

Figure 3.14: Sample Inner Page of the Family Interaction Journal

Before the beginning of the next session, participants are asked to take photos of their written journal and upload to their individual Tencent Docs (docs.qq.com) which is a Chinese online document platform that allows for multi-person collaboration. Each participant owns a private Tencent Docs shared privately with the facilitator. The facilitator then offers feedback on the document according to each participant's uploaded journal in the following few days. Doing so allows the facilitator to observe if participants practiced and used the learned skills outside of workshop. Meanwhile, the participants can get personalized feedback from the facilitator to better apply their parenting strategies.

3.5. Other Essential Design Elements

This section explains several essential elements of the workshop design. Although these elements do not affect the content conveyed in the workshop, they influence the experience of the participants in the workshop and can have a meaningful impact on their learning outcomes, so they are a critical part of the overall workshop design.

This section will talk about these essential design elements according to the timing of a workshop session, divided into pre-workshop and during-workshop.

3.5.1 Pre-workshop

Offline Room Setting



Figure 3.15: Offline Setting

A workshop venue is needed to conduct the in-person workshop. As shown in Figure 3.15 above, the offline workshop in this workshop series is in a warm and

welcoming room in order to create a relaxing environment for participants. There are a few features to consider when looking for the workshop venue:

- **Window:** The workshop room is better if there are windows, especially if the workshop is conducted during daytime, because the participants can be in an environment that exposes them to natural light and connects them to the nature outside of the room. A new study led by Monash University has revealed that getting enough natural sunlight each day can impact a person's mood and sleep quality (Burns et al. 2021).

If the workshop is conducted during nighttime, then the room is better if it has curtains so that people outside cannot see what is going on inside the room to protect participants' privacy.

- **Door:** The workshop room should be a space that can be enclosed. In other words, it should have doors because the facilitator can close the doors during the workshop to ensure an environment that is private and will not be disturbed.
- **Lighting:** If the workshop is conducted during nighttime, the room should have adequate lighting that supports participants to read and write.
- **Desk Arrangement:** The room does not have to be very spacious, but it should have enough room for participants to sit in a circle and write. On one hand, doing so allows each participant to see every other person in the group. On the other hand, circular seating arrangement allows equality between group members. This increases the participation rate of each group member, which in turn leads to more brainstorming within the group and allows a greater number of creative ideas to form (Morris 2199).

Drinks

In this workshop series, the facilitator prepares tea bags for participants to drink during the session.

- **Online session:** Because of COVID, the facilitator delivers the prepared tea bags to participants' homes. In online sessions, the facilitator asks participants to prepare the drinks before starting the workshop so that they

can help themselves during the workshop. Doing so helps create a relaxed atmosphere during the workshop and helps bring facilitators closer because it implies a safe environment for participants to talk.

- **In-person session:**



Figure 3.16: Tea Station

As shown in Figure 3.16 above, the facilitator prepares a tea station in the room for the in-person session. The purpose is for participants to relax and get to know each other better before the workshop starts. Also, it allows participants to get a brief break during the workshop if they feel hard to focus.

3.5.2 During-workshop

Language

The language used in the workshops should be ones that are comfortable for both the facilitator and the participants to use. The language used in this workshop series is Chinese and all the materials presented during the workshop are also written in Chinese because the facilitator and all the participants are Chinese.

If the workshop series is applied in other contexts with a different group of participants, the language can change to the ones that the facilitator and participants are comfortable to use.

Facilitator & Supervision

Facilitation by the facilitator plays a critical role in the workshop conduction and participant's learning experience. The workshop aims to influence children's behaviors, that is their intrinsic motivation to practice extracurricular activities, through influencing parents' behaviors. Such intervention more or less influences the participants' family interaction as well as their children's development. Therefore, it is significant to provide as much as positive support and avoid the potential harm that the workshop may impose on the participants and their children.

Based on American Psychological Association (APA)'s *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* (Association et al. 2016) Section 2.01, the facilitator should conduct the workshop series under a supervisor who has obtained the competence to provide services in parenting. Doing so not only protects the participants from potential harm but also protects the facilitator from being negatively influenced by the workshop conduction.

The facilitator of this workshop receives supervision from a licensed counselor who specializes in parenting education over the whole process of workshop design and conduction. The facilitator meets with the supervisor weekly to review and revise the workshop design according to participants' feedback after each workshop, to review the workshop recording and notes, to analyze the workshop conduction, and to resolve any uneasy feelings that the facilitator has after conducting the workshop so that the facilitator maintains a grounded state when facilitating the following workshops.

Ground Rules

At the beginning of each session of this workshop series, the facilitator goes over the ground rules for participants. These ground rules help build an environment that is safe for participants to talk, and easy for participants to engage in. The ground rules mentioned include:

- Please turn on your camera during the workshop.
- Please join the workshop in a relatively quiet environment.
- Please respect other participants and avoid interrupting them during discussion.
- Please do not spread the discussion in this workshop with anyone else outside the workshop to protect every participant's privacy.

Pre-workshop Meditation

In each session of this workshop series, the facilitator leads the participants to do a brief 2-minute pre-workshop meditation before entering the main activity of that day.

In this series, the workshops were from 18:30-20:00 every Saturday. Some participants have to work on Saturdays, so usually, when the workshop begins, the participants have already run many errands during the day. Moreover, all family members are generally at home because of the pandemic, so the participants might be in a noisy environment. The pre-workshop meditation is designed to help parents relax their tense bodies and minds, enabling them to stay focused at the present moment and preparing them for the following activities.

Closing Meditation

The facilitator leads the participants to do a brief closing meditation at the end of each session in this workshop series. During this meditation, the facilitator leads the participants to do movements that relax their shoulders and necks and to thank themselves for devoting time to improving their parenting. The facilitator also looks forward to meeting them in the following week. Doing so reinforces participants' actions for self-care and infuses the welcoming vibe of the workshop to increase participants' willingness to continue to join the workshop.

Background Music

Researches suggest that playing classical music before the cognitive tasks has positive effects on the performance (Hallam and MacDonald 2008). Considering

this benefit and with the goal to help participants relax, the facilitator plays relaxing music as the background music during the workshop.

The facilitator adjusts the volume of the workshop according to the activity. For example, during the pre-workshop and post-workshop meditations and activities that requires participants to write individually, the facilitator turns the volume up to moderate level. When the facilitator or participants talk, the facilitator turns the volume down to light.

Chapter 4

Proof of Concept

4.1. Workshop Implementation

4.1.1 Implementation Schedule

Table 4.1 above shows the implementation timeline. The author recruited the participants from January 2022 to February 2022. According to participants' best available time slot, the workshops were conducted from 18:30 to 20:00 UTC+8 every Saturday from February 19 to March 19, 2022.

Table 4.1: Implementation Schedule

Date	Task	Location
2022/01~02	Recruitment of participants	Zhangjiagang, China
2022/02/19	Workshop 1 Kind and Firm	Online
2022/02/26	Workshop 2 Self-Care	Online
2022/03/05	Workshop 3 Perspective-Taking	Online
2022/03/12	Workshop 4 Encouragement	Zhangjiagang, China
2022/03/19	Workshop 5 Shared Decision Making	Online

The city Zhangjiagang is the author's hometown. Located 140 kilometers from Shanghai, it is a county-level city under the administration of Suzhou, Jiangsu province, China.

4.1.2 Setting

Online

Due to the ongoing pandemic caused by COVID-19, the workshop was offered in a hybrid way, both virtually and in person. Workshops 1, 2, 3, and 5 were offered online, while Workshop 4 was offered in person. The virtual workshops were in a format that was accessible via computer or mobile device using Tencent Meeting. Figure 4.1 shows a screenshot of the ongoing online workshop.



Figure 4.1: Online Setting

In-person

As explained in the 3.5.1 Offline Room Setting subsection, the offline workshop was in a warm and welcoming workshop classroom located in a local community center (Fig 4.2) in Zhangjiagang, China.



Figure 4.2: Offline Setting

4.1.3 Participant Recruitment

Overview

The participants of the workshop series are targeted as only parents. Parents invited to participate in the study were recruited by the facilitator to take part in a free, 5-week workshop series on parenting strategies that help participants promote children's intrinsic motivation to practice extracurricular activities.

Participants were recruited in two waves from 2 sites, a local Children's Palace and a local elementary school in Zhangjiagang, China. A Children's Palace is a public facility in China where children engage in extracurricular activities. Outreach efforts for the workshops varied by site but consisted of contact with a local school and community leaders, a poster distributed using WeChat, and direct contact from the facilitator. The most common source of hearing about the workshop was through referrals from local school and community leaders (88.9%), and referrals from facilitator herself were less common (11.1%).

Parents were provided with information on the importance of full attendance in all five workshops, and agreed to participate in the study knowing they are expected to attend all five workshops. This agreement helped secure participants' continued participation and learning outcomes.

On the first day of the scheduled workshops, the facilitator introduced the study to all participants. Those who participated read and signed a consent form, and then filled out a three- to four-page survey collected online using Tencent Survey before they had participated in any workshop activities. Tencent Survey is an online questionnaire survey platform developed by Tencent CDC.

A total of 9 parents were initially surveyed, of whom one was excluded from the analysis because of his/her absence in four out of five sessions, resulting in a final sample of 8 participants. Of these participants, 8 completed the post-workshop survey at the final workshop (100%), and 7 received the post-workshop interview (87.5%). All the workshops were conducted in Mandarin, and all the surveys were in Chinese.

The following sections explain the recruitment criteria of this workshop series.

Inclusion Criteria

Participants must meet the criteria described below to be recruited in the workshop series.

- **Signed Informed Consent:** Participants must read, sign, and agree to the informed consent before the first workshop starts.
- **Full Attendance:** Participants must agree to have full attendance in all five workshops because attending all five workshops is expected to provide participants with a more complete understanding of positive parenting. This secures higher chance of success in promoting their children's intrinsic motivation in learning and improving their parent-child relationship.
- **Gender:** All genders are welcome to participate in the workshop. Most of the parents who accompany their children's extracurricular activity practices are mothers, so the workshop expects most of the participants to be female and only a small percentage to be male. Therefore, in an ideal recruiting, the workshop series encourages recruiting more male participants to include more balanced perspectives from both genders during workshops.
- **The Age Group of the Participants' Children:** Participants must have a child in elementary school. Children in this age group have the ability and time to learn extracurricular skills because there is not too much school work after school and their cognitive skills are more mature than in kindergarten. Therefore, parents of children in this age group are more likely to devote to accompanying their children to practice their extracurricular activities, hoping to cultivate their children to excel.
- **The Extracurricular Activities the Participants' Children Learn:** Participants must have a child who learns an extracurricular activity, including musical instruments, Calligraphy, dancing, sports, and so on.
- **Language:** For this study, participants must be able to speak fluent Chinese. If the workshop series is applied in other contexts with other participants, the language had better to be participants' first language because it

helps them work on experiential activities, communicate with other participants, and express emotions better.

- **Location:** For this study, participants must be in Zhangjiagang, China for the offline workshop.
- **Technology Requirements:** The participants must have access the internet to participate in online workshops and upload after-workshop Family Interaction Journal.

Exclusion Criteria

Participants who meet the criteria described below should be excluded from recruitment in the workshop series.

- **Active Psychiatric Conditions:** Participants who have active psychiatric conditions which, in the opinion of the workshop design team, would interfere with their ability to participate in the workshops because first, the workshop series would like to create a safe environment for participants to share and discuss. Second, some workshop activities may trigger emotional disturbances for participants, so it will be difficult and unsafe for them to deal with the situation if participants have psychiatric conditions.
- **The Age Group of Participants' Children:** Participants who do not have a child currently in elementary school are excluded from the study.
- **Full Attendance:** Participants who are not willing to participate in all five workshops are excluded from the study.

Protection of Participants

This workshop series protects the participants' rights and interests by the following ways:

- **Informed Consent:** Participants must read and sign the informed consent before the first workshop starts to understand the benefits and potential risks of participating in the workshop.

- **Voluntary Participation:** The participants' participation in the study is voluntary and unpaid. They have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. If they need to withdraw from the study under any circumstances, they can contact the facilitator in advance.
- **Emotional Disturbances:** Some workshop activities may trigger emotional disturbances for participants. If participants find it hard to deal with their emotional disturbances, the facilitator will try her best to provide emotional support. If the participants feel uncomfortable participating in the workshop, they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.
- **Privacy:** The privacy of all participants is protected. The information they provide in the study will be treated confidentially, and their names will not be used in any reports. Videos recorded during the workshop will be permanently deleted upon completion of the study. Some of the photos may be used for the thesis writing and defense, and the researcher will ask the participants individually for permission before using them. Participants are advised not to discuss or disseminate the interactions among parents and statements made by other parents outside the workshop to protect the privacy of all parents.

4.2. Measures

This workshop series uses five different surveys to collect quantitative data from different perspectives including 1) the Demographic Information Survey used to collect participants' demographic information, 2) the Emotional Scale used to evaluate the effect of workshop on participants' emotional states, 3) the Family Questionnaire used to evaluate the effect of workshop on participants' emotional involvement with their children, 4) the Adjective List used to evaluate the effect of workshop on parent-child relationship changes, and 5) the Post-workshop Survey used to understand participants' workshop experiences.

A pre- and post-workshop comparison of the survey responses is used to evaluate the effects of this workshop series. To understand the learning process of individual participant as well as the reason and process behind participants' changes in parenting behaviors, qualitative data is also collected using chat history of each workshop, parents' uploaded Family Interaction Journal, and post-workshop interview.

4.2.1 Quantitative Data

1. Demographic Information Survey (Figure 4.3)

This survey is used to collect participants' demographic information, including their:

- Age
- Gender
- Level of education
- Occupation
- Marriage status
- Number of children in the household
- Age of their children
- Extracurricular activities their children are learning

The aim of collecting these information is to understand if the participants can understand workshop materials (level of education), to understand the household composition (marriage status & number of children in the household) because this may influence the participants' parenting styles, and to understand what extracurricular activities their children are involved in because this affects their ways of practicing and the participants' ways to accompany their children to practice.

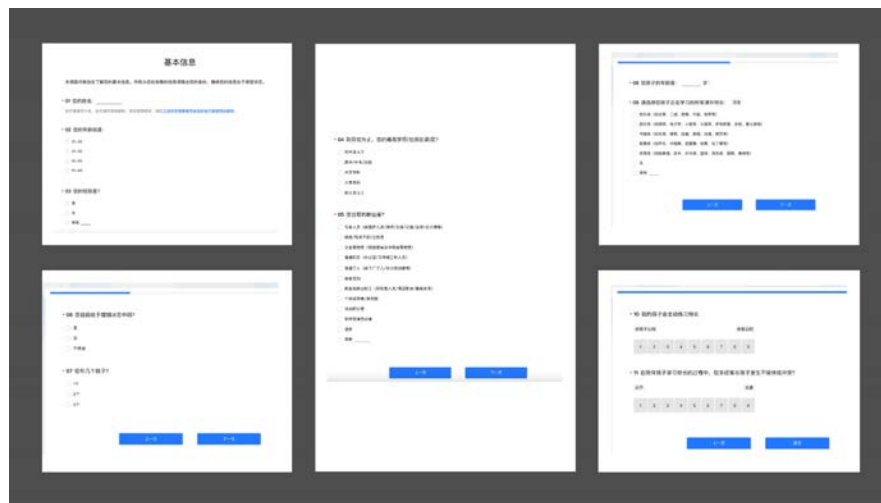


Figure 4.3: Demographic Information Survey

2. Pre- & Post-workshop Emotion Scale (Figure 4.4)

The Emotional Scale is adopted from the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) (Kessler et al. 2003), which is a 10-item questionnaire intended to yield a global measure of distress based on questions about anxiety and depressive symptoms that a person has experienced in the most recent 4-week period. The original version is in English, and the version distributed to workshop participants is a Chinese translated version by the City University of Hong Kong.

The workshop series believes it is important to understand participants' emotional conditions while participating in the workshop during the pandemic. We're interested to know if the workshops help parents feel less

anxious about their relationship with their children and their children's performance.

The Emotional Scale is distributed twice throughout the workshop series. The pre-workshop Emotional Scale is distributed at the beginning of the first workshop to understand the participants' emotional status before attending the workshops. The post-workshop Emotional Scale is distributed at the end of the last workshop to understand participants' emotional status after they complete all the workshops.

K10 Test

These questions concern how you have been feeling over the past 30 days. Tick a box below each question that best represents how you have been.

1. During the last 30 days, about how often did you feel tired out for no good reason?				
1. None of the time	2. A little of the time	3. Some of the time	4. Most of the time	5. All of the time
2. During the last 30 days, about how often did you feel nervous?				
1. None of the time	2. A little of the time	3. Some of the time	4. Most of the time	5. All of the time
3. During the last 30 days, about how often did you feel so nervous that nothing could calm you down?				
1. None of the time	2. A little of the time	3. Some of the time	4. Most of the time	5. All of the time
4. During the last 30 days, about how often did you feel hopeless?				
1. None of the time	2. A little of the time	3. Some of the time	4. Most of the time	5. All of the time
5. During the last 30 days, about how often did you feel restless or fidgety?				
1. None of the time	2. A little of the time	3. Some of the time	4. Most of the time	5. All of the time
6. During the last 30 days, about how often did you feel so restless you could not sit still?				
1. None of the time	2. A little of the time	3. Some of the time	4. Most of the time	5. All of the time
7. During the last 30 days, about how often did you feel depressed?				
1. None of the time	2. A little of the time	3. Some of the time	4. Most of the time	5. All of the time
8. During the last 30 days, about how often did you feel that everything was an effort?				
1. None of the time	2. A little of the time	3. Some of the time	4. Most of the time	5. All of the time
9. During the last 30 days, about how often did you feel so sad that nothing could cheer you up?				
1. None of the time	2. A little of the time	3. Some of the time	4. Most of the time	5. All of the time
10. During the last 30 days, about how often did you feel worthless?				
1. None of the time	2. A little of the time	3. Some of the time	4. Most of the time	5. All of the time

Figure 4.4: Emotional Scale

3. Pre- & Post-workshop Family Questionnaire (Figure 4.5)

The Family Questionnaire is originally developed by Wiedemann et al. (2002). The Family Questionnaire used in this workshop series is a Chinese revised version developed by City University of Hong Kong used to assess family atmosphere and parents' emotional over-involvement with their

children.

The Family Questionnaire was distributed twice throughout the workshop series. The pre-workshop Family Questionnaire was distributed at the beginning of Workshop 2 Self-Care to understand the baseline level of emotional involvement participants have with their children. The post-workshop Family Questionnaire was distributed at the end of the last workshop to see if there are changes in participants' level of emotional involvement with their children.

家庭問卷

Family Questionnaire (Wiedemann et al., 2002)

以下是一些家長普遍出現的情況。請根據您的情況，評定您在過去四星期有多經常以這些方法去對待該子女，並圈出適當的答案：

	過去四星期，我...	從不	極少	有時	經常
1.	我傾向為了他而忽略了自己	1	2	3	4
2.	我經常想像，如果我是他的話會是怎樣	1	2	3	4
3.	我總是想著「為何他會這樣」	1	2	3	4
4.	我因為他而不能入睡	1	2	3	4
5.	若果有關他的事情令我感到煩惱，我會把它藏於心裡	1	2	3	4
6.	我對自己的個人需要並不感到重要	1	2	3	4
7.	我非常擔心他	1	2	3	4
8.	我覺得自己很快就要倒下來生病了	1	2	3	4
9.	他佔了我生命中很重要的部份	1	2	3	4
10.	我經常為了幫助他而放棄了很重要的事情	1	2	3	4

Figure 4.5: Family Questionnaire

4. Pre- & Post-workshop Adjective Checklist (Figure 4.6)

The Adjective Checklist by Friedman and Goldstein (1993) is a self-report questionnaire for understanding the parents' attitudes towards and relationships with their children. The version used in this workshop series is the Chinese translated version by the City University of Hong Kong. There are twenty adjectives, 10 with a positive value (loving, good-natured, friendly, devoted, easy to get along with, cooperative, considerate, clear, accepting, and active), and 10 with a negative value (rude, mean, lazy, irritable, irresponsible, hostile, deceitful, contrary, bored, and angry) being presented

to the participants in this questionnaire. They have to score the adjectives twice. The first time, the participants have to assess their attitudes and behaviors towards their children; the second time, the participants report on the attitudes and behaviors of the children towards the participants themselves.

The Adjective Checklist is distributed twice throughout the workshops. The pre-workshop Adjective Checklist was distributed at the beginning of the first workshop and the post-workshop Adjective Checklist was distributed at the end of the last workshop.

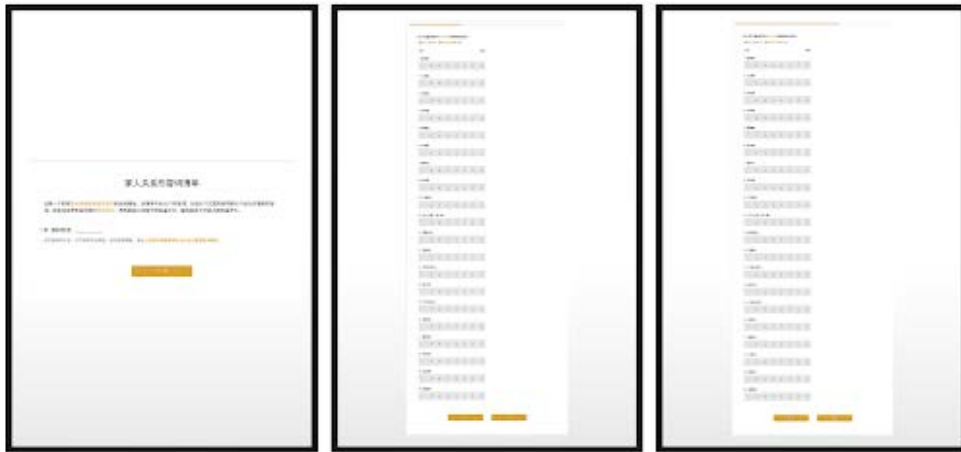


Figure 4.6: Adjective List

5. Post-workshop Survey (Figure 4.7)

The Post-workshop survey is distributed at the end of the last workshop. It asks questions that help us understand their workshop experience and their children's change in intrinsic motivation in the past five weeks.

The figure displays four panels of a survey form. The top-left panel includes fields for personal information such as name, age, and gender. The top-right panel features several Likert-scale questions regarding the workshop experience. The bottom-left panel contains a large text box for open-ended feedback. The bottom-right panel includes more Likert-scale questions and a final text box for additional comments.

Figure 4.7: Post-workshop Survey

4.2.2 Qualitative Data

1. Chat History of Online Sessions

For Workshop 1, 2, 3, and 5 which were conducted online, participants used the chat room function in Tencent Meeting as a real-time interaction method with the facilitator other participants. After the workshop, the chat history of the meeting was automatically saved and used as a qualitative analysis of participants' learning outcomes of workshop activities. Figure 4.8 below shows a collage of some of the chat history.

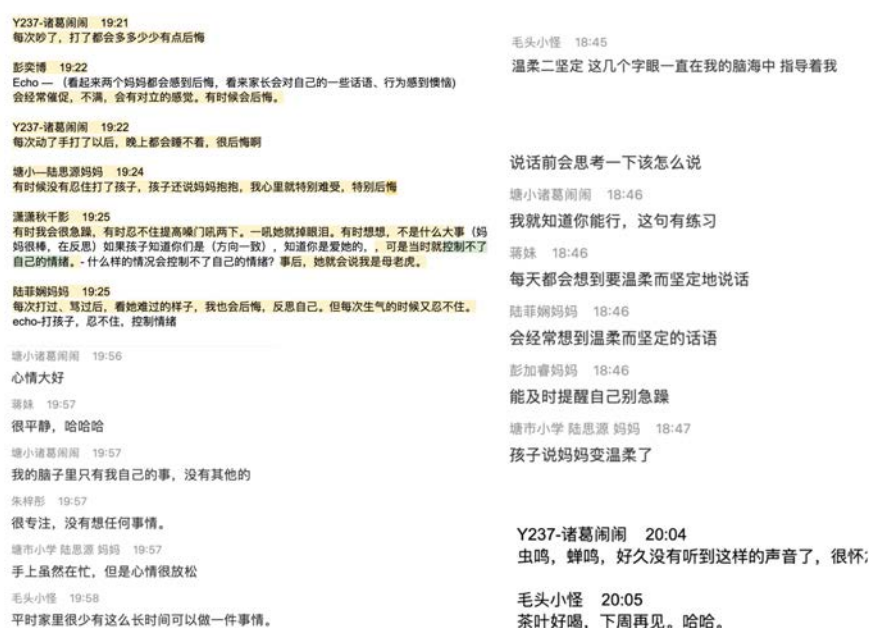


Figure 4.8: Chat History

2. **Family Interaction Journal** As described in the 3.4.2 section in Chapter 3, the Family Interaction Journal is a practice tool designed for participants to use at home after each workshop. They can record their practices of newly learned parenting strategies and any interaction happening in their families during the week.

Figure 4.9 shows the journal records participants uploaded after Week 1.

Each “column” photo belongs to one participant. We can tell from the size of the photo that some participants recorded more frequently than others. Also, some participants wrote more details each day while some participants wrote in a less detailed way.



Figure 4.9: Family Interaction Journal Uploaded by Participants

3. **Post-workshop Interview** After all five workshops were over, participants were invited to receive an interview that asks about their workshop experience, additional explanation behind their survey responses, and changes in their children’s intrinsic motivation.

Seven participants agreed to take the interview. The interviews were conducted online using Tencent Meeting. All the interviews were recorded and automatically converted into transcripts. The analysis was based on the transcripts. All interviews were scheduled within three days after the last workshop to ensure that participants had the freshest memories and feelings about the workshop to increase the validity of their responses.

4.3. Results

4.3.1 Demographics

According to the responses collected in the Demographic Information Survey, participants' demographic information is reported in Table 4.2. Nine parents signed up to participate in the workshops, but participant 9 only attended one out of five workshops and did not fill out the post-workshop survey, so participant 9's data was excluded from the analysis. The total number of participants in the analysis is eight.

Table 4.2: Participant Demographics

Participant No.	Gender	Age Group	Highest Level of Education	Occupation	Marital Status	No. of Children	Age of the First Child	Extracurricular Activities
1	F	41-50	Master's Degree	Teacher	Yes	2	12	Musical Instrument, Calligraphy, Sports
2	F	31-40	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	Yes	1	12	Musical Instrument, Sports
3	F	41-50	Bachelor's Degree	Corporate Manager	Yes	2	10	Musical Instrument, Calligraphy, Sports
4	F	41-50	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	Yes	1	12	Chinese Zither, Calligraphy, Dancing, Language Performance
5	F	31-40	Associate Degree	Independent Contractor	Yes	1	11	Musical Instrument
6	M	41-50	Bachelor's Degree	Sales and Related	Yes	2	9	Calligraphy, Vocals, Sports
7	F	31-40	Bachelor's Degree	Freelancer	Yes	2	10	Musical Instrument, Sports
8	F	31-40	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	Yes	2	10	Musical Instrument

Of the 8 participants, 7 (87.5%) were female, and 0 reported being a single parent. Half of participants were in the age group of 31-40 years old, and half of participants were in the age group of 41-50 years old. Highest level of education achieved was generally high in the participants, with 7 (87.5%) having received a bachelor's degree or higher. The number of children for participants ranged from 1 to 2, with 3 (37.5%) participants having 1 child and 5 (62.5%) participants having 2 children. The age of their first child ranged from 9 to 12 years old, with a mean of 10.75 years old which is the age of fourth grade in elementary school.

All (100%) of the participants have children learning at least one extracur-

ricular activity. Six out of eight (75%) participants have children learning two extracurricular activities or more. Seven (87.5%) of the participants have children learning musical instruments. Five (62.5%) of the participants have children learning Chinese Calligraphy.

Both musical instrument learning and Chinese Calligraphy learning require lots of practice, which is technical, repetitive, and boring. Moreover, the teachers usually ask students to practice every day. However, it is hard for children to take the initiative to practice and stay focused throughout the practice every day. Therefore, parents of children learning such extracurricular activities usually urge their children to practice every day, resulting in deterioration of the parent-child relationship and the lack of intrinsic motivation in children to learn that extracurricular activity. Therefore, the demographics show that the participants are the target population that we are looking for.

4.3.2 Primary Outcomes Corresponding to the Workshop Impact Model

The primary hypothesis was that participants' parenting practices would be positively influenced by the workshop, and the change in their parenting practices help promote their children's intrinsic motivation to practice extracurricular activities.

The author sorted through the scripts of post-workshop interviews and summarized emerging themes among seven interviewees. The post-workshop interview analysis together with the analysis of the Post-workshop Survey responses and chat history of each online workshop reveal several optimistic primary outcomes responding to the primary hypothesis.

1. Positive parenting attitudes and behaviors increased in participating parents.

- **“I can now calm myself down before problem solving with my child(ren).”** Seven out of eight participants stated that they could control their emotions better after attending the workshop.

A positive case in point involves Participant 2's interview response: “During the process of trying to change my parenting behavior, there were moments

when I felt I was going to lose my temper. However, I did feel I gain more control over my emotions gradually. That feeling of anxiety and anger is decreasing, which I think is a good sign.”

- **“I started conveying unconditional love for my child(ren).”** Four out of seven participants stated that they started conveying unconditional love for their children after attending the workshop.

A positive case in point involves Participant 3’s interview response: “I told my children that no matter what grade they got for their final exams, they would still get their Spring Festival gifts and play during the winter break, and I would still love them as always.”

Another positive case in point involves Participant 1’s interview response: “I stopped negotiating punishment or reward for practicing the Chinese Zither (a Chinese traditional musical instrument) with my daughter. Gradually, she stopped exchanging phone time with practice time with me.”

- **“I see mistakes as opportunities to learn.”** Seven out of eight participants stated that they became more patient, allowing their children to have more space to grow.

A positive case in point involves Participant 6’s chat history: “Before attending the workshop, I thought that my child should be perfect in all the homework, hand crafts, or any work that should be submitted or presented to other people. After the workshop, I started changing this perspective, and tried to give my child more autonomy on his work.”

- **“I feel comfortable problem solving with my child(ren).”** Two out of eight participants stated that they focused more on solving problems than simply being mad at the children after attending the workshop.

A positive case in point involves Participant 3’s interview: “I used to yell at my children when they made mistakes without listening to their explanation and understanding their belief behind the mistakes. After the workshop, I learned to manage my emotions and focused on resolving the problem together with them.”

- **The participant begins to put himself/herself in children’s shoes.**

Six out of eight participants said they began to put themselves in their children’s shoes.

This can be best evidenced by Participant 8’s Family Interaction Journal: “I used to be the authority figure whose commands could not be questioned. Now, I’ll stand from my children’s perspectives to understand their feelings and think about ways that are more acceptable to them.”

- **“I can appreciate my children’s strengths more than their mistakes.”** Four out of eight participants stated that they changed their all-or-nothing thinking towards the child, thus focused more on what their children were doing well rather than what they were not doing well.

A positive case in point involves Participant 3’s interview: “Before, I thought my younger child was not as excellent as the older child because he could not focus for too long, and used to be careless. After attending the workshop, I realized the importance of appreciating my child’s strengths, and I found so many strengths in my children.”

Another evidence can be Participant 6’s Family Interaction Journal: “There are fewer arguments happening between my older child and me. I used to interrupt my child’s complaints about schoolwork because I thought the teacher’s instructions must be correct. After the workshop, I started transforming this thinking, and started listening to my child’s words. This helped me see the autonomy and independent thinking in my child.”

- **The participant encourages his/her child(ren) more.** Three out of eight participants stated that they used more encouragement with their children than before.

A positive case in point involves Participant 2’s interview: “When my child was practicing the Chinese Zither, I tried to encourage her using what I learned during the workshop and what you (the facilitator) wrote in the feedback for the Family Interaction journal. I encouraged her efforts and her devotion in the practice by saying that she must have practiced very hard to play a such beautiful piece.”

These evidences prove that this parenting workshop series positively influenced participants' parenting attitudes and behaviors. Not only are participants becoming more positive in their parenting practices, they are also seeing improvements in their parent-child relationships.

2. The parent-child relationship improved.

- **“My child is more willing to share his/her interested things with me.”** Four out of eight participants stated that their child(ren) were more willing to share what they were interested in than before. This implies that the changes in parents show children that their thoughts and feelings are understood and acceptable by parents, encouraging them to share their thoughts with parents.
- **“Instead of exchanging practice time with all kinds of rewards such as phone time, my child started asking for rest time directly.”** Three out of eight participants stated that their children are more willing to voice out their needs than before. This implies that the child started voicing his/her needs out because he/she felt that parents would love him/her no matter what. They would still love him/her if he/she wanted to take a rest and parents would listen to his/her needs and respect their voices.
- **“I spent more time together with my child(ren).”** Four out of eight participants stated that there were more “Family Special Time” activities scheduled with their children. The activities include taking a walk together, doing sports together, washing dishes together, and chatting together. This implies that the participants are building stronger connection and attachment between their children through these time spent together.

Beyond the improvement in parent-child relationship, participants realized that **3. how they respond to their child(ren) (their parenting styles) influence how their child(ren) respond.** Five out of eight participants stated that they realized their own changes in parenting practices would change their children's behaviors.

4. Children are showing higher intrinsic motivation to practice extracurricular activities.

- **Pre-workshop v.s. Post-workshop survey response comparison**

The pre- post-workshop comparison shows that 62.5% more participants agree that their child(ren) practice extracurricular activities of his/her own accord. 87.5% of parents agree that their child is more focused while practicing extracurricular activities than 5 weeks ago. 100% of parents agree that their child(ren)'s extracurricular activity learning experience was more enjoyable than it was 5 weeks ago.

- **“My child started taking the initiative to practice.”** Four out of seven participants stated that their children started taking the initiative to practice the extracurricular activity without his/her parent's supervision.

A case in point involves Participant 2's interview: “I found that my child can practice on herself for an hour even if I am not at home.”

- **“My child started enjoying the practice without noticing the practice time.”** The child begins enjoying the practice, getting into a flow state when he/she is fully immersed in the music without noticing how long he/she has practiced.

This can be evidenced from Participant 2's interview: “Before, my daughter kept checking on the clock to see if the practice time is over. Now, I seldom hear her stop during the practice. After the practice, she shared with me that she felt time flew faster if she didn't keep looking at the clock. She felt more immersed in the practice.”

Taken together, the results provide some evidence that participants' parenting practices improved directly in conjunction with this parenting workshop series and participants' changes helped improve parent-child relationship and promoted children's intrinsic motivation in extracurricular activity practice.

4.3.3 Evaluation of Expected Learning Outcomes

Other than the primary outcomes, the workshop series also had expected learning outcomes for each workshop design. This subsection presents evidences that proves that the workshop design helped participants reach expected learning outcomes. The expected learning outcomes that overlap with the primary outcomes will be skipped here.

Workshop 1 Kind and Firm

Learning Outcomes

- Parents understand what it means to be Kind and Firm.
- Parents understand that they should convey warmth and unconditional love instead of negativity to their children. (explained above)
- Parents know how to be Kind and Firm.

Evidences

Participant 1: “I kept thinking about Kind and Firm.”

Participant 6: “The words Kind and Firm keep coming up in my mind to guide my parenting behaviors throughout the whole week.”

Participant 7: “I thought about Kind and Firm every time before I speak.”

Workshop 2 Self-Care

Learning Outcomes

- Parents understand that only stable and grounded parents bring about stable children.
- Parents learn to manage their parental stress.
- Parents learn to manage their response to strong emotions. (explained above)
- Parents learn to take care of their own needs.

Evidences

Participant 4: “I learned to appreciate my children’s strengths, and I felt less anxious after changing my expectation for them and for myself.”

Participant 6: “I feel more grounded and started paying attention to self-care.”

Workshop 3 Perspective-Taking**Learning Outcomes**

- Parents accept and understand that children have a wide variety of feelings.
- Parents respect their children’s feelings. (explained above)
- Parents understand that they and their children are on the same team and that a cooperative, caring relationship is the basis of a strong family.

Evidences

Participant 5: “We used to act against each other, but we are not doing that anymore. Now we feel like a team.”

Participant 7: “I learned to listen to my children’s needs, and I felt less anxious when doing so.”

Workshop 4 Encouragement**Learning Outcomes**

- Parents learn to respect and appreciate their children. (explained above)
- Parents learn to allow their children to make and learn from mistakes. (explained above)
- Parents learn to distinguish between praise and encouragement.
- Parents learn to encourage children’s qualities and their process towards accomplishment instead of the results. (explained above)

Evidences

Post-workshop Survey: All (100%) of the participants agreed that Encouragement helped them distinguish between praise and encouragement.

Workshop 5 Shared Decision-Making

Learning Outcomes

- Parents learn to share the decision-making process with their children.

Evidences

Participant 2: “We made the practice plan together. Her autonomy improved.”

4.3.4 Other Workshop Elements

According to the Post-workshop Survey responses, the workshop elements that helped participants apply parenting skills in real life the most were role play and the Family Interaction Journal.

Two out of eight participants stated in the post-workshop interview that the role-play activity enabled them to feel how their words and behaviors may influence their children, thus how they respond. Two out of eight participants stated in the interview that the Family Interaction Interview motivated them to consciously observe, record, and then be aware of their children’s changes as well as their own changes.

Also, all of the participants agreed that the pre-workshop meditation helped them relax mentally, focus on the present moment, and feel ready to enter the workshop.

In general, all participants had positive comments about the workshop.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion to Research Questions

This thesis set out to design a parenting workshop that helps promote children's intrinsic motivation to practice extracurricular activities through influencing participants' parenting behaviors. The research asked questions of 1) how the workshop design influences participants' parenting practices, and 2) how the change in participants' parenting practices influence their children's intrinsic motivation to practice extracurricular activities.

The analysis and results shown in Chapter 4 suggest that this parenting workshop series indeed increased positive parenting attitudes and behaviors in participating parents in the 5-week hands-on learning, under real-world conditions. The second purpose of the study was to determine whether changes in parents' parenting behaviors would promote children's intrinsic motivation in extracurricular activity practicing. The results suggest that parents indeed realized their parenting styles influenced their children's behaviors. Furthermore, participants' children are showing higher intrinsic motivation to practice extracurricular activities. This is a promising finding, providing evidence that the workshop design indeed works for this group of population and positively influences both the parents and children.

5.2. Discussion

5.2.1 Variables that Influence Workshop Effectiveness

By exploring data presented in Chapter 4, individual differences on the effect of the workshop can be found among participants. Some participants self reported

to have higher percentage increase in their own positive parenting practices while some participants have lower percentage increase. Some participants reported noticing more improvements in children's intrinsic motivation and other behaviors while some participants reported rarely noticing changes in their children. This part therefore discusses several variables that may influence the effectiveness of the workshop.

Online versus Offline

The first variable is the setting of the workshop. Post pandemic, online learning has gone through rapid development. Various tools have emerged to improve online learning experiences. Most of the participants agree that they feel comfortable sharing their stories with other participants, building connection with other participants, and conducting interaction with the facilitator and other participants online. The reasons include the facilitator's efforts to build a safe environment where judgements are discouraged, and the fact that some participants are more comfortable speaking up online.

However, there are participants who are more conservative in building connection and trust with other participants online. They feel more comfortable in the in-person session because they can chat to get to know each other more outside of the workshop. Therefore, whether the workshop is conducted online or offline may influence the effect of the workshop for individual participants.

Participants

Participants' individual abilities of comprehension may affect the learning outcomes. The post-workshop survey included a question that asked about participants' frequency of sharing the workshop content with partners to understand their level of comprehension. Parents with higher level of comprehension are associated with better learning outcomes.

Participants' abilities to apply what they learned during the workshop in real life also affect their learning outcomes. This can be reflected by their patience to try new parenting practices multiple times. Their children's behaviors don't change at once when participants themselves try to change parenting practices. It usually takes time for effects to show up. Some parents are patient to try multiple

times until they are able to observe changes in their children while some parents give up trying when things do not change after their first trial. Participants who are willing to try multiple times are associated with better learning outcomes.

If participants can recognize their children's changes also affect their learning outcomes. Because the present thesis does not evaluate children's changes by involving children themselves but relies on parents' description of their children's changes. Therefore, there may be a bias between individual parents that some of them recognize and acknowledge certain behaviors as changes while some of them do not think the behaviors count as changes. Therefore, such self-report bias may also affect participants' learning outcomes.

5.2.2 Differences between this Workshop Series and Other Parent Education Programs

The workshop design set out to provide hands-on practice opportunities for participants. According to post-workshop interview results, participants gave optimistic comments on this objective. They suggested that this workshop series is different from the other parent education programs they attended before. Some of the keywords they mentioned include theory, interaction, practice, real-life application, making steady progress, and safe environment.

The workshop design allowed participants to learn, practice, apply and reflect on parenting skills. Also, the topics for each workshop started small, not as broad as other lectures they had attended before, so participants could make steady progress in their interactions with their children. Two participants felt that the role-play enabled them to feel how their words and behaviors influence how their children feel and respond.

The workshop allowed the participant to interact with the facilitator and other parents, practice, and apply what they learned. The population size of the workshop was small, so each participant had more opportunities to talk and feels easier to engage. Also The atmosphere was relaxed, especially in the in-person one.

Furthermore, the workshop served as an external stimulation for the participants to elicit what they already learned before and tried to apply that in their everyday life.

Taken together, participants agreed that this workshop series equipped them with abilities to apply positive parenting practices in real life by hand-on learning activities.

5.3. Limitations & Future Works

A limitation of this workshop series is that its effect can be confounded by the facilitator's execution. The explanation of theories, parenting knowledge and skills, and facilitation of the activities can all influence the effect of the workshop. Therefore, this question suggests that a facilitator training should be added to the implementation of the workshops.

An additional uncontrolled factor is that the current evaluation of the effects of the workshop mostly relies on participants' self report. The self-report bias can confound the effects of the workshop as well. In future works, more objective observation can be added in the evaluation.

Furthermore, the current evaluation of the workshop series doesn't include the post-workshop period. Therefore, there lacks the evidence of the sustainability of its effects. Therefore, future works can add a follow-up test after the workshops are over to evaluate the workshop series's long-term effects.

Finally, there were no direct observations of the children of participants, but only by parental report. Some future research can begin to provide some evidence in these domains. For the time being, this parenting workshop series appears promising.

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