Title:
Parent's Cross-Cultural Perceptions of the Health and Well-Being of Their Family

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Cross-Cultural, Health and Wellness and Parental perspectives

References:


Abstract Summary:
The focus on this presentation is on the cross cultural perceptions for parents on the health and wellness needs of their children and familial unit.

Learning Activity:

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Abstract Text:

**Background:** Globally, the WHO is focusing on the social determinants of health to improve healthcare, as well as promoting the health of children and their family members. However, frequently research has been limited to exploring a specific culture versus looking across cultures at the health needs of children and their family members. In order to promote the global health of children and their family members, additional research is needed across cultures. One way to gain insight into how to address the social determinants of health is to explore the perceptions of parents’ regarding health concerns within their own familial unit. Due to their family role of managing the health and well-being of the family, parent’s perceptions provide additional insight into the health and well-being of their family. The aim of this investigation was to examine parents cross cultural perceptions of the health and well-being of their family. A secondary aim was to explore any concerns or issues parents might have regarding promoting and maintaining the health of the family.

**Methods:** Using a Socio-ecological Model, a descriptive cross-sectional investigation was conducted with parents (N = 414) from Thailand (n = 215) and the US (n = 199). Participants completed a survey developed for this project, addressing demographic data as well as their perceptions of the health and wellness needs of their children and family. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and chi-square analysis.

Results: Demographics are reported by country: Parents employed: Thai (60%), U.S. (100%); female: Thai (68%), U.S. (72%); Age: Thai (82% 30-39 yrs), U.S. (45% 40-49 yrs); Ethnicity: Thai (99.5% Thai), U.S. (90% Caucasian). Thai parents were significantly more likely to include their children in decision-making related to the children’s healthcare ($\chi^2 (1) = 161.706, p < .001$); the exercise the family gets ($\chi^2 (1) = 19.206, p < .001$) and the child’s bedtime ($\chi^2 (1) = 69.096, p < .001$) than U.S. parents. Thai parents reported feeling significantly more pressure to purchase unhealthy snacks when their children are having friends over ($\chi^2 (1) = 35.431, p < .001$) than U.S. Parents. Thai parents were found to be significantly more likely to think they don’t have enough time for making healthy lunches for school or work ($\chi^2 (1) = 5.960, p = .015$), or have time to eat meals together ($\chi^2 (1) = 16.348, p < .001$) when compared to U.S. families.

However, U.S. parents were significantly more likely to feel the family does not have time to make healthy meals ($\chi^2(1) = 14.293, p < .001$) compared to Thai parents. Additionally, U.S. parents were significantly more likely to make the decisions about which foods the family eats ($\chi^2 (1) = 6.889, p = .009$) than Thai parents. Thai parents were more likely to make the decision about their families exercise ($\chi^2 (1) = 4.379, p = .036$) than parents in the U.S. Thai parents reported they were more likely to decide their child’s bedtime and sleep ($\chi^2 (1) = 8.059, p = .005$); Though for those parents who did decide the bedtime/sleep, Thai parents were more likely to work with their children ($\chi^2 (1) = 69.096, p < .001$) on the sleep time than parents in the U.S.

**Conclusions:** Significant differences were found between cultures in parent’s perceptions of the health and wellness needs of children and their family members. No specific questions related to cultural beliefs, or income were addressed in this investigation. However, in order to promote the global health of children and their family, additional strategies may be needed to address cultural perceptions, as well as...
economic resources, that could influence decisions to ensure the health and wellness of children and their family.