

Editorial Statement: From the Guest Editors

As the editors in charge of this special issue 'Home Education in China: Trends and Problems', we would like to express our gratitude to Dr. Chen Xinren and Dr. Mustafa Yunus Eryaman, the editors of IJPE, and their colleagues at the editorial board, for inviting us to become the guest editors of this issue. They enabled us to have a global 'Call for Manuscripts' related with Chinese home education.

Education may generally be divided into school education, home education and social education. After the formation of schools in the ancient times, education gradually transformed into highly organized and institutionalized practices and processes, with clear goals, professional teachers, fixed timetables and classrooms. These characteristics of education have been identified as the superior aspects of schooling in Chinese education in the last few millenniums (Mao, 1984; Chinese Education Society, 1967; Lee & Tam, 1990; Kwok, 1995; Tao, 1985; Koo, 1981). However, when the advancement of a technological civilization and industrialized economy has reached a high level in modern societies, some aspects of school education have been gradually identified as 'harmful' for individual and social transformation and progress. People begin to realize the importance of home education to eliminate the 'harmful' aspects of the modern and institutionalized education.

Home education has been continuously developed along with the concepts of lifelong education and learning society in modern societies. Parents' participation in school activities has already become an important aspect of educational reforms in the developed countries (Manzon, 2004; Ng, 2003; Olson & Fuller, 2003). During the development of the contemporary information society with the social and technological progresses, home education has been seen not only as an extension or supplement of school education, but also as an important and closely related part of formal education and social education. On the other hand, home education has always been non-institutional. There was no systematic control or fair and reasonable appraisal system of home education in different parts of the world up till now. This lack of fair and reasonable appraisal system has affected the healthy development of home education to a certain extent. As a response to this problem, in many countries, the discussions on the practical and theoretical aspects of development and evaluation of home education become an important issue for educating the younger generations (Chung, 1998).

China has a long tradition of home education (Sze, 1996). Many profound ideas and effective experience have already been spread to overseas, and become a valuable part of Chinese culture. Since the 1980s, China's home education enterprise and its related research have been restored and developed under the Government's open reform policy. Many successful practices and pioneered ideas have been developed, and they influenced the growth of younger generations positively (Cheng, 1983; Ma & Ko, 1998; Lee, 2005). However, there are also many problems along the developmental path of home education in China. For example, some families emphasize on intelligence more than morality, art more than sports, and they concern too much about talent education of children, etc. All these issues need to be critically discussed and analyzed.

Chinese home education influences the lives of more than one billion people in Mainland China and the lives of thirty million or more Chinese people who live overseas. We believe that our discussions on the theory and experience of Chinese home education, no matter whether it is in the Mainland or overseas, will contribute to the progress of human civilization, and will be a valuable reference for people and educators from other countries. Perhaps these are the reasons why Dr. Chen Xinren, Dr. Mustafa Yunus Eryaman and the editorial board of IJPE invited us to edit this special issue.

We would like to remind the readers of the journal that in this special issue, 'home education' refers to an informal education at home. It is considered to be an important aspect of education in China. However, it is different from home schooling which draws quite some attention from the public among the Western world in recent years. Home schooling is pretty rare in China.

The first article of this issue, 'Development and research in Chinese home education,' is written by one of the guest editors, Professor LUO Feng. The author hopes to help the readers develop a macro level understanding of home education and its research in China. The author analyzes the background, the reasons of revival, special features, and major contents of home education research in the late 70's and early 80's of the 20th century, and explores the development in the succeeding three decades, 1980s, the 90's and the beginning of the 21st century.

The second article 'Inheritance and development of the tradition of Chinese piety education' is written by Professor XU Kunyuan of Yunnan Normal University and Mr. Zeng Rudi, a researcher of Kunming Teachers' College. The authors of this article argue that in order to continue and develop the fine Chinese tradition of filial piety education, we should strengthen the filial piety perspective in home education. This would improve and enhance the moral growth in young people's mind, raise their noble emotion and establish society's harmonious need. Regarding the tradition of "filial piety education", one would need to have a critical mind and attitude to inherit.

The third article 'Home education of a bright student: a case analysis on Lu Wei' is written by Ms. Chen Yuexiang & Zhou Hongfang, the Principal and a senior language teacher of Zhuhai Hoi Wah Elementary School in the Guangdong Province. They explore the life history and home education of Lu Wei, the top student in the 2004 Guangdong Province College entrance examination. The authors argue that the following issues of Lu's home education played an important role in Lu's success: emphasis and nurturing of intellectual development in the early years of life, mutual support, respect and care among family members. Parents' personal examples played a crucial role in Lu's success.

The fourth article 'A discussion on the development of educational resources for college students as family tutors' is written by Mr. Zhao Da Wei, a graduate student of the Northeast Normal University in China. The author analyzes the current situation of university students' involvement as tutors in families and the historical background of the matter. The author believes that the tutoring should not only be seen as an important mean to reduce the financial constraint of the university students. After systematic investigations, the author suggests that the

office of student affairs in Chinese universities should play a substantial role by providing opportunities for these students to become better tutors.

After sending out the 'call for paper' about a year ago, we received a total of nine manuscripts from Mainland China, Australia, Hong Kong, and Singapore. We would like to express our appreciation to the authors, reviewers, and those who are concerned with the development of this special issue. In particular, we would like to thank Ms. Jiang Yue Nor, the Secretary General of Chinese Home Education Society who helped to put our Call for Paper advertisement in the Home Education Communication Magazine.

Dr. HO Kwok Keung,
Editor of New Horizons in Education
(www.cpe.ied.edu.hk/newhorizon), Hong Kong

Prof. LUO Feng,
Professor of Higher Education Research Institute,
Guangzhou University, China

References

- Mazon, M. (2004). Building alliances: Schools, parents and communities in Hong Kong and Singapore.
Hong Kong: CERC, University of Hong Kong.
- Olsen, G. and Fuller, M.L. (2003). Home-School relationships: Working successfully with parents and homes.
New York: Allyn and Bacon.

Articles and books written in Chinese

- Cheng, K.(1983). Discuss about the special feature of home education. *Society*, No.5.
- Chinese Education Society (1967). Study on school system. Taipei: Ching Chung.
- Chung, C.W. (1998). Lifelong learning and home education. *Education Research*,No.8.
- Koo, S.S. (1981). A complete history of education system of China. Kiangsu: Education Press.
- Kwok, K.C. (1995). Ancient schools and colleges of China. Beijing: Science & Technology Press.
- Lee, T.H. & Tam, F.Y. (Ed.) (1990). Chinese Education History. Sing To: Sze Chuen Press.

Lee, H.T. (2005). Guide and research of Chinese pre-school home education. *Research in Pre-school Education*. No.6.

Ma, W.M. & Ko Y.P. (1998). *Research in educational sociology*. Shanghai: Educational Press.

Mo, L.Y. (Ed.) (1984). *Summary of Chinese education history*. Beijing: Educational Science Press.

Ng, S.W. (2003). Home-school relationships in Hong Kong: evolving role of parents. *New Horizons in Education*, No. 48, pp.12-21.

Sze, C.S.(1996). *Basic characteristics of ancient Chinese home education*. Fukien United Association of Ladies. (Ed.) *Overview of Chinese home education*. Fukien: Educational Press.

Tao, Y.C. (1985). *Comparative studies of Chinese education history: ancient period*. ChiNam: ShangDong Educational Press.