

Throughout this essay will be the comparison of the multiple childhoods throughout Spain and China. Both countries have a diverse approach to education, leisure, housing and health care that make them unique. A child's ethnicity also impacts childhood experiences which includes, languages, rights and where they live. These aspects then contribute to the development of public policies. The pedagogical approach in both countries suggest children will have different outcomes as well as outlooks on life.

Sandstorm (2012) describe part of a child's ethnicity is language. In Spain, a child's pre-school experiences predicts the quality of their language and cognitive skills. If the quality of the process is highly rated and better child to teacher interactions than those in poor quality interactions and environments then those children will show evidently better receptive and cognitive language skills. However, in China language is often seen as a barrier for children. Tse et al. (2008) tell of the difficulties children are confronted with as in school's they write in modern standard written Chinese (MSWC) yet speak in Putonghua. Both of these languages are hardly used outside of Chinese schools as 80% of children born in mainland China speak Cantonese in their daily lives and at home. Only 5% of children speak Putonghua as their home language. However, as China have high expectations of their pupil's abilities, Spain follows developmental expectations that are not always effective. Sandstorm (2012) explains pre-school teachers have higher child to teacher ratios and developmental stages to follow which can often weaken children's language skills. China's high expectations are also harder to achieve as Tse et al. (2008) report that children do not have the opportunity to practice certain languages outside of school. Teachers are still fighting for the importance of Putonghua as they believe it should be more accepted by parents and pupil's and should eventually replace the learning of English.

Balsellsa et al. (2017) identifies another part of a child's ethnicity which is rights. In Spain, the child protection system involves decision making around four key aspects which include, screening, assessment, placement and reunification. The removal and reunification of a child depends on the short and long term factors on that child's life. Naftali (2009) discuss Spain and China are similar regarding children's rights as both countries follow the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). China provides their children with the right

to survive, develop to their full potential and to protect them from abuse, exploitation and influences that could be considered harmful. Children's views are important and they are encouraged to have a freedom of thought, expression and their privacy. Balsellsa et al. (2017) also establishes that children in Spain have the right to participate in decision making that would affect them. Professionals are encouraged to inform children of the process so that they can participate more effectively which would show better results. Spain fails to mention what age is considered a child and who else deserves to have rights in place. China does acknowledge this and Naftali (2009) points out that China's 1992 law supports minors who is someone under the age of 18.

Anderson (2016) expresses another part of a child's ethnicity is where they live. Spain has an impact on childhood experiences as a report card by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) shows for childhood income inequality, Spain was the sixth worst developed country. 36% of Spanish children live at risk of social exclusion, inequality or poverty. This shows that children are being allowed to drop to below average of children in the country. Spain has one of the highest unemployment rates from the global economic crisis in Europe which is impacting on the younger generations. However, this can be compared to China as the country's biggest impact on childhood experiences is abuse due to economic losses. NCBI (2015) describe the risk of chronic disease is increased from children suffered from psychological distress as they can adopt certain behaviours. 26% of children have experienced neglect, 8.7% of children have been sexually abused, 19.6% of children have experienced emotional abuse and 26.6% of children have suffered physical abuse. However, Anderson (2016) tells that even though Spain is experiencing financial struggles, the health and nutrition for children has improved. China have not been able to achieve this like Spain has as NCBI (2015) explain the physical abuse of children has cost China 0.84% of the gross domestic product as well as emotional abuse being 0.47% and 0.39% from sexual abuse which showed as 50 billion United States dollars in the year 2010.

Population Europe Resource Finder And Archive (2017) report of Spain's family policy in 2014. In 2012, the funding for children under the age of three to have childcare was discontinued. As this caused difficulties to working parents, certain schools offer childcare

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services as well as activities in the mornings and after school time. These are either privately paid or from parent associations. Working parents are also entitled to decrease their work schedules by a half to care for children until the age of 12 with a decrease in their salary. All couples are also entitled to marriage regardless of sex. This can drastically be compared to China's family policy as there is no freedom in choice of marriage or children compared to Spain. Yang (2007) identifies the one child policy as this policy encourages late child bearing and marriage with one child per couple. Seven of the provinces in China follow the one child policy, yet the other sixteen provinces follow a two or more child policy or as well-known as the girl exception policy. This policy suggests if the first born child is a girl, the couple can have a second child. However, if that child is another girl, then the couple cannot have any more children. There are twice as more single children in the one child policy areas compared to those in the two child policy areas. Yang (2007) also discusses these policies have significant effects on the children as they are linked to childhood obesity. Children often live with grandparents who overfeed the grandchild especially if they are boys. The policy suggests there are four grandparents to one child which often compete on who can give the child the most food.

Aguta (2014) establish education is an important aspect on diverse childhoods. Spanish education is formed of two main cycles which requires educational centres. The first cycle is voluntary as compulsory education starts at the age of six and finishes at the age of sixteen. Both cycles aim to improve and develop affective development, body control, communication and language signs, social relationships, physical development and the exploration of the child's environment. The second cycle intends to increase reading and writing, mathematical development, foreign languages, artistic approaches and the use of technology. This can be compared to China's education system as Zhou (2011) point out compulsory education starts at the age of three with children attending pre-school until the age of six. Whereas Spanish children start compulsory education at the age of six. Pre-school focuses on the natural development of children using scientific teaching methods in order to guarantee a child is happy and healthy. Spanish education fails to mention that one of their goals is to maintain the happiness of a child. Only children in developed areas get to start school at the age of three, as some areas start at four and poorer areas start at the age of five. This can be compared to

Spanish education as all children there have an equal opportunity to start education. In China, there is no mention of an education for children of the years three and under.

Another important aspect to diverse childhoods is health care as Rajmil et al. (2000) expresses that one quarter of Spanish children have health care coverage from the NHS or privately. Children under the age of five were more likely to have been hospitalised or visited a health professional in the last year compared to older ages. Children who have health care often visited the dentist, however, those children who are not covered have never been or rarely visited. This can be compared to China as Ren et al. (2014) describe the public health care insurance system to attempt to reduce barriers financially. This is a government funded system that includes medical assistance, rural new cooperative medical insurance, urban resident basic medical insurance and urban employee basic medical insurance. This allows coverage on children and minors who are considered independent. This can be compared to Spain, as some Spanish children have no health care, leaving their parents in financial struggles.

Diverse childhoods include many aspects such as children's housing. Expatica (2018) tell of living expenses in Madrid, Spain, compared to Hong Kong, China. This takes into consideration entertainment, personal, transportation, clothes, housing and food. Madrid is 42% less expensive to live in compared to Hong Kong. For a one bedroom apartment in Madrid, it could cost around 85,000 euros. For a five bedroom house it could cost around 310,000 euros, depending on the location of the property. This can be compared to China as the property options there are not what most people would consider normal. Hays (2015) explain the Guinness book of records showed China has world's most houses at 276, 947, 962 in the year of 1990. In the year of 2013, the average size property for a Chinese family was around 100 square metres. The most common property for a family to live in is called housing blocks which look like apartments which would be similar to Spain. Courtyard properties are also popular within families in China as these have four rooms which all face a garden. Roundhouses are similar and are made from mud which have many different families living in and all sharing a courtyard in the middle. Nomad tents are made out of animal skin and are extremely warm which can cause problems to the family in the summer. Compared to Spain, these properties take up less room than houses and can accommodate more people.

España (2018) report of leisure for children which can contribute to diverse childhoods. In Spain, children can visit a number of nature trails, museums, safaris, zoos and theme parks. The zoo aquarium in Madrid contains more than 500 species of animals. The zoo in Barcelona has been considered one of the best in Europe. Nature parks gives children the opportunity to observe animals and become more comfortable with animals around them. Safaris in Spain contain animals that are not caged where a car is a necessity to get close to the animals. There are many lakes that are surrounded by birds and footpaths that contain the remains and footprints of dinosaurs. Museums are also accessible and a way for children to learn. This can be compared to the leisure for children in China. Xusheng (2017) identify Chinese children spend most their free time playing on computer games and watching television unlike Spanish children who are often always outdoors. Children follow sport in China such as football but as multimedia is developing this is decreasing. Playgrounds are popular as children can use their imagination and play in life the games they have been playing through technology. Social media is limited for Chinese children due to blocked access to the internet, however, email is a popular form of communication within children. Compared to Spain, there are not many sight-seeing and leisure spots to attend.

OECD (2013) discuss the pedagogical approach in Spain. The teaching and learning international survey (TALIS) report in 2013 showed feedback and appraisals are rare and performances from children should be rewarded. However, this can be compared to China as Halpin (2014) establish children in classrooms often chant correct answers with the teacher giving praises individually and to the group. Pupils are invited to the front of the class to participate in giving answers to a questions. Group activity does not occur often, yet the group as a whole are very well behaved. OECD (2013) also identify in a Spanish classroom there is one teacher with 24 pupils on average. There is minimum room for professional development or support for staff members with only 8% of teachers believing their profession of teaching is valued in society. The limited feedback teachers got have led to positive changes within their teaching practice yet there is not enough of it. Teachers spend 15% of their time in lesson attempting to keep order in their classroom. They also spend 7 hours a week on average, planning their lessons. This can also be compared to China as Halpin (2014) discuss lessons

are always directed by the teacher with the teacher at the front and talking quite a lot to the class. Chinese schools have a large amount of numbers in classes all using exercising books. Teachers often view discussion and participation as a waste of time when the teacher has a high amount of content to cover. Pupils are expected to listen and absorb all the information.

UNICEF (2007) also establish the pedagogical approach in Spain. Within schools, well-being and inequality is often questioned with children being brought up to recognise differences. Children can associate negative behaviours or personality traits in poorer children and similarly towards rich children as well. This leads to staff struggling to set boundaries for children in order to maintain this. This can be compared to the pedagogical approach in China as Chen (2014) points out Chinese schools are focussed around each individual pupil and on moral and cultural potential which Spanish schools are lacking. UNICEF (2007) also express in Spain that families of children are involved with school life as families provide their expectations of what they want from their children which can be hard to live up to. Children are more motivated to please their parents rather than doing it for themselves or to be better than others. Children are being shown they are a priority over parents work or other commitments. This can be compared to China as Chen (2014) describe students depend on their teachers advice and guidance in order to gain knowledge and learn about the world, unlike Spanish children learning from their parents. The quality of teachers helps a child's transition from depending on the parent to the teacher in order for them to reach their full potential. Chinese teaching follows out dated structures as they rely too much on school examinations. They believe that learning only occurs through a repetitive, memorising and imitative process as lessons are always structured and well controlled.

To conclude, Spain and China have two different and complex versions of childhoods. Montgomery (2013) explains that although childhoods are different all over the world, every society acknowledges that children and adults are different. There are a range of expectations that are placed on children and this changes depending on the society and culture that children live in. Although Spain and China have different approaches to childhood, UNICEF (2005) report that both countries agree that during someone's childhood, it is a time for school and to play. Also, in order for a child to grow confident and strong they should be surrounded by

encouragement and love from the adults that surround them. Both countries acknowledge that the childhood period is precious and adults should enable children to live free from violence, fear and to be safe and protected from exploitation and abuse.

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