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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to provide cross-cultural evidence of the relationship between student approaches to learning and stages of cognitive development and of the validity of Perry's theory of such development. The participants for this study were 67 U.S. and 193 Mainland Chinese students. The participants rated their ability on several scales, responded to the Zhang Cognitive Development Inventory (Zhang 1995) and the Study Process Questionnaire (Biggs 1987a, 1992) as well as demographic questionnaire. Selfreport measures of achievement scores were also obtained. There were four major findings. First, cognitive development and student learning approaches were related in predictable ways. Second, the cognitive-developmental patterns of the American and Chinese participants differed. Third, for both American and Chinese students, extracurricular activities positively contributed to their cognitive development. Finally, a statistically significant relationship between cognitive development and achievement was identified among American group, whereas no relationship was found between cognitive development and achievement among the

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Chinese group. Implications of these findings are discussed. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Zhang, Li-Fang, E-mail: lfzhang@hkucc.hku.hk