Helaine Selin  *Editor*

# Parenting Across Cultures

## Childrearing, Motherhood and Fatherhood in Non-Western Cultures

Parenting Across Cultures

# SCIENCE ACROSS CULTURES:
# THE HISTORY OF NON-WESTERN SCIENCE

## VOLUME 7
## PARENTING ACROSS CULTURES

*Editor*

HELAINE SELIN, *Hampshire College, Amherst, MA, USA*

Helaine Selin

Editor

# Parenting Across Cultures

Childrearing, Motherhood and Fatherhood
in Non-Western Cultures

*Editor*
Helaine Selin
Hampshire College
Amherst, MA, USA

Printed on acid-free paper

*To my amazing, wonderful, warm, loving, beautiful, talented children and to their amazing, wonderful, warm, loving, beautiful, talented children.*

# Contents

# Contributors

**Liane Peña Alampay** is Associate Professor at the Department of Psychology, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines. Her research is in the areas of parenting and child adjustment, adolescent development, and interventions for children and families at risk.

**Suha Al-Hassan** specializes in early childhood and special education. Currently she works as an Associate Professor and Dean of Queen Rania Faculty for Childhood at the Hashemite University in Jordan. She received her Ph.D. in special education/applied behaviour analysis from the Ohio State University. In addition to her academic experience, Suha has 10 years of consultancy work in Jordan. She has worked on the development of early learning development standards for the government of Libya, the assessment of learning readiness of first grade students in Jordan, evaluation of a better parenting program, evaluation of early childhood education programs, and she has co-developed standards for kindergartens and nurseries in Jordan.

**Patricia Anderson** is a Jamaican sociologist and currently an independent researcher. She previously held the position of Professor of Applied Sociology at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. Her doctoral training was in Sociology and Demography at the University of Chicago, and her research interests include labour market analysis, education, gender and poverty. patandy44@yahoo.com

**I.K. Annie** is Assistant Professor of Community Medicine in RUHSA (Rural Unit for Health and Social Affairs), Department of Christian Medical College, Vellore, India. She works in rural, underserved areas. Her area of interest has been in Community Based Rehabilitation of the most vulnerable and marginalized people in the service area.

**Emmanuel D. Babatunde** is a Professor of Anthropology at Lincoln University, PA, USA and Chair of Sociology, Anthropology, Criminal Justice and Human Services. Dr. Babatunde earned M.Litt. and D.Phil. degrees in Social Anthropology at Oxford University. He has had post-doctoral fellowships as the Sasakawa Foundation Japanese Studies Seminar, the American Association of Colleges and Universities Japanese Seminar and is a Fulbright Senior Program Specialist, with

expertise in globalization and the marginalization of Sub-Saharan Africa. He has written grants that seek to utilize strengths in African and African Diaspora cultures to solve social problems, such as food insecurity and poverty reduction grants in Nigeria and Nicaragua.

**Karen M. Benzies**  is a Professor with the Faculty of Nursing, and Adjunct Research Professor in the Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, at the University of Calgary. She received a Ph.D. from the University of Alberta and completed post-doctoral fellowships at Stockholm University and the University of Ottawa. She leads a program of research in early parent and child relationships with a focus on children at biological and psychosocial risk for developmental delays. Dr. Benzies' most satisfying accomplishments come from creating linkages among researchers, clinicians, and policy makers to improve the health and well being of young children and their families.

**Marc H. Bornstein**  is Senior Investigator and Head of Child and Family Research at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. He holds a B.A. from Columbia College, M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Yale University, and an honorary doctorate from the University of Padua. He is founding editor of the journal, *Parenting: Science and Practice*. His research interests include parenting and child development across diverse contexts. Marc_H_Bornstein@nih.gov

**Ioakim Boutakidis**  is an Assistant Professor of Child and Adolescent Studies in the College of Health and Human Development at California State University, Fullerton. His research as a doctoral student focused on Asian American parenting and academic achievement, as well as the role of bilingualism in adolescent outcomes. His current research continues this focus on ethnic minority youth, particularly Latino/a adolescents, in examining the role of self-beliefs and engagement in explaining academic performance differentials across ethnic groups in the United States.

**Dana A. Breakstone**  graduated from Colby College, Maine, USA with a B.A. in Psychology and Creative Writing. She was part of the post-baccalaureate training program at the Child and Family Research section of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development before moving on to a position at the University of Maryland College Park. Ms. Breakstone researches early social cognitive development and plans to earn a doctorate in clinical psychology. breakstoneda@mail.nih.gov

**Kevin Ray Bush**  is an Associate Professor of Family Studies and Social Work and Associate Dean for Partnerships, Research and Grants in the School of Education, Health and Society at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. His research interests focus on child and adolescent development in the contexts of family, school, community and culture. He has conducted studies with diverse US (Appalachian, African American, Asian American, and Latinos) and international (Chinese, Chilean, Mexican, South Korean, and Russian) samples of children, adolescents and parents. Dr. Bush earned his Ph.D. in Human Ecology from The Ohio State University.

**Cleonice Camino** obtained her Ph.D. at the University of Louvain (Belgium). She is Professor of Developmental Psychology at the State University of Paraíba (Brazil) and researcher of CNPq (Brazilian Research Foundation). She is also an Editorial Staff member of different journals for developmental and social psychology. She is currently researching topics on parental practices and their influences on moral and social values development, understanding development of human rights and educational practices to improve human rights.

**Leoncio Camino** obtained his Ph.D. at the University of Louvain (Belgium). He is Professor Emeritus of Social Psychology at the State University of Paraíba (Brazil) and researcher of CNPq (Brazilian Research Foundation). He is also an Editorial Staff member of different national and international journals in the fields of social and political psychology. He conducts research in social and political psychology and publishes studies concerning areas such as political socialization, social movements, electoral behavior and prejudice.

**Edie Cruise** has been a Research Personnel Graduate Fellow of the Government of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain, and has her European Doctorate of Psychology from the University of Castilla-La Mancha. Her research interests concern parental socialization and adolescent adjustment, specifically analyzing cultural differences in these areas between the United States and Spain. Her work has centered on the relation between parental socialization styles and adolescent adjustment, including self-esteem, anti-social behavior, drug and alcohol use and academic achievement in the United States.

**Camille Daley** is a sociology doctoral candidate and a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work, University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. She teaches courses in Social Policy and Social Research Methods. Her research interests include education, parenting, gender and psychosocial impacts of sickle cell disease. She is also Director of the Sickle Cell Support Club of Jamaica, which provides support to persons affected by sickle cell disease and raises public awareness about this often debilitating genetic illness. camille.daley@uwimona.edu.jm.

**Betsy Davis** is of Cherokee ancestry, a member of the Willamette Tsa-La-Gi Community and an Associate Research Scientist at the Oregon Research Institute in Eugene, Oregon. She received her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology/Research Methodology and Statistics from the University of Oregon. She has served as Principal Investigator on three NIDA (National Institute of Drug Abuse)-funded grants, two evaluating the effectiveness of culturally-adapted, family-based interventions for the treatment and prevention of substance use and HIV-risk and one creating methods for culturally appropriate tools to motivate and engage Indigenous peoples into family strengthening programs.

**Khanh T. Dinh** is Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Dr. Dinh received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Washington at Seattle. Her primary research interests are in the area of immigrant

psychology and communities, particularly focusing on acculturation and psychosocial adjustment of immigrant youth and families. She served as a Research Fellow for the Institute for Asian American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston and as a Scholar-in-the-City for the Patrick J. Mogan Cultural Center in Lowell, Massachusetts.

**Renda Dionne** is a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians and a Licensed Clinical Psychologist. She received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology in San Diego. Dr. Dionne has experience adapting, implementing and evaluating culturally-tailored child and parent programs. As an Associate Research Scientist at Oregon Research Institute, Dr. Dionne served as Co-Investigator on three NIDA-funded prevention projects with Dr. Betsy Davis. She has also served as Project Director on several Administration of Children, Youth & Family and Administration of Native American service delivery grants, working to strengthen families within the tribal regions of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

**Kathleen Fite** is a consultant, writer, and educator. She serves on the Gesell Institute Advisory Council and the Board for the Association of Childhood Education International. She is a Professor of Education at Texas State University-San Marcos and has taught public school as well as undergraduate students through doctoral levels classes at the university.

**Michelle Fortin** is the Executive Director of Watari Youth, Community and Family Services in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) area of Vancouver, British Columbia Canada. Ms. Fortin received her B.A. degree in Psychology from York University, Toronto, Ontario and a graduate diploma in individual and group counseling from the Counsellor Training Institute, Vancouver, BC. She served as a Co-Investigator on Dr. Betsy Davis' NIDA-funded HIV-risk prevention grant working with First Nations families in the DTES. Ms. Fortin focuses her work on developing services that are congruent to the needs of specific populations.

**Robert A. Fox** is Professor of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He is also founder of the Behavior Clinic which provides in-home, mental health services to children under 5 years of age who reside with families living in poverty. Dr. Fox has written numerous journal articles on his primary research area, namely, parenting young children including treatment outcomes for families served through the Behavior Clinic.

**Michael P. Fung** is a second-year doctoral student in counseling psychology at Marquette University Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA. He has worked as both a mental health clinician and career counselor at various non-profit institutions. Currently, Michael works as a research assistant/project supervisor at the Behavior Clinic in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, providing mental health services to Latino families with young children who present with severe behavior problems. His background includes a diverse array of cultural experiences, such as studying in France, providing residential care for individuals with developmental disabilities in Spain, and working at a domestic violence clinic in Nicaragua.

**Fernando García** is a Professor of Psychological Methods and Design of Research Studies in the Department of Methodology of the Behavioral Sciences at the University of Valencia, Spain, where he pursues a research agenda on methodology themes—robust statistics, power analysis and confidence intervals—and measurement techniques of self-esteem and family socialization. He also has conducted research examining the cross-cultural validity of the four-typology model of parental socialization.

**Enrique Gracia** is Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Valencia, Spain. He has published and conducted research on family issues such as family socialization practices, child maltreatment, and partner violence against women, with particular emphasis on public perceptions and attitudes, and social environment–related variables. He is Editor of the journal *Psychosocial Intervention*.

**Jena Derakhshani Hamadani** is a paediatrician and also received her doctoral degree in child development from the Institute of Child Health, University College London, UK. She is a scientist at icddr,b and is the Head of its Child Development Unit. She has conducted several observational and interventional studies on child development and is a consultant for several Early Childhood Development programs in Bangladesh and abroad. Dr. Jena has over 50 publications in peer reviewed journals.

**Puanani Hee** (phee@hawaii.edu) received her B.A. from Oregon State University. She is currently a graduate student in clinical psychology at University of Hawaii at Manoa.

**Susan D. Holloway** is a Professor in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley. She earned a doctoral degree in 1983 from the School of Education at Stanford University. Dr. Holloway has been interested in family life, child rearing, and education in Japan for over three decades. She is the author of *Women and Family in Contemporary Japan*.

**Ziarat Hossain** received a Ph.D. in Child and Family Studies from Syracuse University. He is an Associate Professor and program chair of Family Studies at the University of New Mexico. His research documents patterns of paternal involvement in understudied populations and has implications for deconstructing stereotypical findings on the levels of fathers' involvement in international and ethnic minority families in the United States. He served as president of the Society for Cross-Cultural Research.

**Rita Isaac** is Professor of Community Medicine in the Department of RUHSA (Rural Unit for Health and Social Affairs), Christian Medical College, Vellore, Tamilnadu, India. Currently she is the Director of RUHSA. Her areas of interest have been nutritional issues and intestinal function in HIV-infected individuals and in women's health, and nutrition in women and children.

**Jennifer E. Lansford** is a developmental psychologist and Research Professor at the Social Science Research Institute and Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University in Durham, NC, USA. Dr. Lansford's research focuses on the

development of aggression and other behavior problems in children and adolescents, with an emphasis on how parents and peers contribute to or protect against these outcomes in diverse cultural contexts. She leads the Parenting Across Cultures project, a longitudinal study of mothers, fathers, and children in nine countries.

**Jon Lasser**  is an Associate Professor at Texas State University-San Marcos in the School Psychology Program. His research interests include parenting, ethics, child development, and school psychology practice issues.

**Viviana Lemos**  received her Ph.D. in Psychology. She is the coordinator of a group linked to the Interdisciplinary Center for Research in Mathematics and Experimental Psychology (CIIPME) in Entre Ríos, Argentina. She is also the Director of the Center for Research in Psychology and Related Sciences (CIPCA) in the River Plate Adventist University (UAP). She teaches Research Methodology and Psychometrics and has done basic and applied research on the subject of emotional and social resources in children.

**Eli Lieber**  serves as the Co-Director of the Fieldwork and Qualitative Data Research Laboratory in the UCLA Center for Culture and Health and the president and CEO of Socio Cultural Research Consultants, LLC. Initially trained as a quantitative psychologist specializing in social-cognitive development and measurement at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, his post-doctoral training and subsequent work in both the USA and Asia have included teaming with colleagues from a wide variety of social science disciplines with focus on parenting, and the adaptation of families with attention to culture in the interest of healthy child development.

**Isabel Martínez**  is a Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain). She has been a research fellow of the Social Psychology Department at the University Federal of Paraiba (Brazil) and she has her doctorate in Psychology from the University of Valencia (Spain). She has conducted research and published studies concerning different areas of social influence, cultural values and family socialization. She has analyzed the relation of parental practices with different variables of adjustment in adolescents in Brazil, Spain and the United States, and she has examined the cross-cultural validity of the four-typology model of parental socialization in Brazil and Spain.

**James P. McHale**  is Professor and Chair of Psychology at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg. He received his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of California at Berkeley. His research interests are coparenting in diverse family systems, prevention, and infant-family mental health. He is co-editor (with Kristin Lindahl) of *Coparenting: A Conceptual and Clinical Look at Family Systems* (APA Books), and over 50 books and articles on the topic of coparenting.

**Tatyana Mestechkina**  is in pursuit of her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY. She obtained her Bachelors in Psychology from Stony Brook University in New York and her Masters in Psychology from Hofstra University. Her clinical interests include working with children, adolescents and families. For the past 3 years, she has been conducting Parent–Child Interaction

Therapy (PCIT), which is an empirically-supported treatment for conduct-disordered young children that places emphasis on improving the quality of the parent–child relationship and changing parent–child interaction patterns.

**Ayumi Nagase** is a graduate student in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley. She is currently working on her doctoral dissertation on parenting behaviors and child development. She came to the United States from Japan, and earned a master's degree from the University of California at Berkeley. Her research interest is parenting and its intersection with cultural and social institutions.

**Kingsley Nyarko** received his Ph.D. from the University of Munich, and is now a lecturer in the Psychology Department at the University of Ghana. His research interests have focused on parental involvement in children's and adolescents' education, the impact of divorce on children's and adolescents' education, the influence of the peer and parental relationship on children's self-esteem, and creativity. He also engages in youth empowerment activities through presentations at seminars, conferences and workshops.

**Gary W. Peterson** is Professor and Chair of Family Studies and Social Work at the University of Miami in Oxford, Ohio. His areas of scholarly interest are parent-child/adolescent relations, cross-cultural influences on adolescent development, and family theory. He is editor or co-editor of books on fatherhood, cross-cultural parent-adolescent relations, and adolescent development in families. Dr. Peterson's current research is concerned with how aspects of parent-adolescent relationships influence dimensions of adolescent social competence using samples from several countries, with a special focus on Mexican parent-adolescent relations. Dr. Peterson is a Fellow of the National Council on Family Relations.

**H.R. Prashanth** is Assistant Professor of Community Medicine and has a faculty position in RUHSA (Rural Unit for Health and Social Affairs) Department of Christian Medical College, Vellore, India. He has been involved in improving the outreach health service programme.

**Diane L. Putnick** is a developmental psychologist and statistician with the Child and Family Research section at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Dr. Putnick holds a B.A. from the University of Delaware and a Ph.D. from the George Washington University. Her research interests include child development and parenting across diverse contexts. putnickd@mail.nih.gov

**Karen Mui-Teng Quek** is an Associate Professor in the Couple and Family Therapy Program at Alliant International University in California, USA. She is a licensed professional clinical counselor as well as a marriage and family therapist. Her research interest is in the study of family and couple relationships, which examines the interplay of various diversity constructs in the context of evolving societal changes. Some of her recent publications include "Gender Equality during Transition to Parenthood: Longitudinal Study of Dual-Career Singaporean Couples" and "Cultural Values, Self-Disclosure and Conflict Tactics as Predictors of Marital Satisfaction among Singaporean Husbands and Wives".

**Nirmala Rao** is Professor, Faculty of Education and Director of Graduate Studies and Associate Dean, Graduate School, The University of Hong Kong. Dr. Rao received her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from Tulane University. She is a Developmental and Chartered (Educational) Psychologist internationally recognized for her research on early child development and education in Asian cultural contexts. This research has focused on the development, evaluation, and dissemination of evidence-based programmes for children during early childhood. She is currently leading the development of a pan-Asian measure of early child development.

**María Cristina Richaud de Minzi** is Director of the Interdisciplinary Center of Research in Mathematical and Experimental Psychology at the National Council of Scientific and Technological Sciences (CONICET). She received her Ph.D. in Psychology at the University of Buenos Aires. Her research concentrates on the study of parental styles, development of socioemotional processes (attachment and empathy) and their influence on cognitive development. She is conducting a research project and intervention program about the strengthening of psychological resources in children in situations of social vulnerability.

**Nicolette V. Roman** received her master's in Child and Family Studies from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) South Africa. She then completed a Ph.D. in Psychology (UWC). She currently heads the Child and Family Studies Programme. Nicolette's research focuses on individual and family psychological well being, family functioning and parenting research within the context of Self-Determination Theory. She has collaborative research projects with colleagues at the Universities of St Louis and Columbia in Missouri, USA, and the Katholieke Universiteit in Leuven.

**Jael Vargas Rubilar** has a master's degree in psychology and works at the Interdisciplinary Center of Research in Mathematical and Experimental Psychology at the National Council of Scientific and Technological Research of Argentina (CONICET) and at the Center of Research in Psychology and Related Sciences (CIPCA-UAP). Her research concerns parental styles and attachment, child development, and resilience and strengthening of psychological resources in children in situations of social vulnerability.

**Helaine Selin** has recently retired from being a Faculty Associate and Science Librarian at Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts, USA. She is the editor of the *Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures* (2nd ed. Springer 2008; winner of a Choice Outstanding Academic Book award; third edition is due in 2015) and six books in Springer's Science Across Cultures series: *Astronomy Across Cultures* (2000), *Mathematics Across Cultures* (2000), *Medicine Across Cultures* (2002), and *Nature Across Cultures* (2002), *Childbirth Across Cultures* (2009), and *Happiness Across Cultures* (2012). She has also co-edited the *Encyclopaedia of Classical Indian Science*. She has two fantastic children, one born in Malawi, Africa and one in New York and is the proud grandparent of 3.

**Miri Scharf** is a senior lecturer at the Department of Counseling and Human Development in the University of Haifa in Israel. She is interested in attachment and close relationships across the life span, parenting, and developmental trajectories of resilience and risk.

**Paul L. Schvaneveldt** is a Professor and department chair in Child and Family Studies at Weber State University, Utah. He has published several articles on Latin American families, focusing mostly on Ecuadorian children and families. He was a Fulbright Scholar in Ecuador working with a Marriage and Family Therapy program at Universidad Del Azuay in Cuenca, Ecuador. He has also been involved with humanitarian organizations serving as the Executive Director of Idaho-Ecuador Partners of the Americas and as a volunteer with Orphanage Support Services Organization in Ecuador.

**Hilal Sen** is a senior Ph.D. student in developmental psychology program at Koc University, Turkey. She graduated from Middle East Technical University with a B.A. in psychology and earned an M.A. in developmental psychology from Koc University. Her research interests involve the role of parenting and child characteristics in social and emotional development in early childhood. Her recent research explores the interplay between parenting cognitions and child-rearing behaviors, and the relations between theory of mind and social competence in children.

**Kelebogile Setiloane** is an Associate Professor of Nutrition in the Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition at the University of Delaware.

**Barbara H. Settles** earned a Ph.D. from Ohio State University and is Professor of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Delaware. She was National Council on Family Relations Vice-President for Public Policy, Groves Conference President, President, Family Research Committee of the International Sociological Association, founding member and corporate officer Family Science Association, and President of the Delaware/Panama Partners of the Americas. Her areas of research and publication include long term planning for family futures, work and family, gender and marriage equity, intergenerational relationships, family immigration and migration, family policy and family theory.

**Rudy Ray Seward** is Vice President of the International Sociological Association's Committee on Family Research. He has taught and researched the family at the University of North Texas. He earned his Ph.D. at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. He has authored a book, book chapters, and journal articles dealing with family issues, including demographic history, fathers, and work/life balance and edited two special journal issues on family issues. Currently he is researching changes and cross-cultural differences in parent–child relations and the impact of commuting on families.

**Daniel T.L. Shek** is Chair and Professor in the Department of Applied Social Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University; Advisory Professor of East China Normal University, Shanghai; Honorary Professor of Kiang Wu Nursing

College of Macau, Macau; Adjunct Professor of Division of Adolescent Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, University of Kentucky College of Medicine, USA. He is Chief Editor of the *Journal of Youth Studies*, Editorial Advisor of the *British Journal of Social Work*, and editorial board member of many other journals. He has served on many government advisory bodies, including the Action Committee against Narcotics, Commission on Youth, Fight Crime Committee, and Family Council.

**Jin Y. Shin** is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Hofstra University, New York. She has been conducting research on the outcomes of early intervention programs for families of children with special needs in Vietnam. Her publications explore the role of social support and stigma on parenting stress in Vietnamese parents who have children with intellectual disabilities. Her current work in Vietnam involves teachers who train parents of children with developmental delays through home visit programs and exploring the strategies of effective early intervention work in Vietnam.

**Pedro Solís-Cámara** is Professor of Social Psychology and founder of the Laboratory of Psychology: Research and Intervention at the Universidad de Guadalajara (Campus CUCiénega, Mexico). He is a member of the National System of Researchers of Mexico (National Science and Technology Council-CONACYT). Dr. Solís-Cámara's main areas of research are parenting and cognitive development. He published with Robert Fox the Parenting Young Children Programs as well as the Spanish version of the Parent Behavior Checklist, renamed as the Escala de Comportamientos para Madres y Padres de Niños Pequeños (Behavioral Scale for Mothers and Fathers with Young Children).

**Nguyen Duc Son** is an Assistant Professor in the department of psychology and education at Hanoi National University of Education in Vietnam. He has been conducting research in social psychology and personality psychology. He has been involved in studies on how Vietnamese students' personalities and their parent's parenting style correlate with their children's behaviors. His publications focus on the children's personality traits and parents' attitude on the children's education.

**Leslie Stanley-Stevens** is Professor of Sociology at Tarleton State University, Texas. She earned a Ph.D. from the University of North Texas. Dr. Stanley-Stevens surveyed and interviewed expectant mothers and fathers about their ideals and practices regarding work and family. Later she completed follow-up interviews of the same parents, now with small children, regarding paid work and raising children. Findings from these surveys and interviews have been the basis for numerous presentations and academic journal articles as well as her recently published book *What They Didn't Know When They Were Expecting: And How They Became Better Parents* (2012, Charleston, SC: CreateSpace).

**Rachel C.F. Sun** is Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong. She is a Principal Investigator of school misbehavior research studies, and Co-Principal Investigator of a positive youth development program and a university's leadership program in Hong Kong. Her research areas include academic achievement motivation, school satisfaction, life satisfaction, positive youth devel-

opment, problem behavior, school misbehavior, adolescent suicidal ideation and psychological health. In terms of community and academic services, she is an executive committee member of the Society of Boys' Centres, and a member of the editorial board of Research on Social Work Practice.

**Joan T.D. Suwalsky** is a developmental psychologist with the Child and Family Research section at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. She holds a B.A. in Child Study from Vassar College and an M.A. in Human Development and Family Studies from Cornell University. Her research interests include early parent–child interaction and socio-emotional development, with a special interest in these areas as they apply to adoptive families. suwalskj@mail.nih.gov

**Hanan Takash** is a specialist in mental health. An Associate Professor, she works as the Head of the Department of Special Education, and Vice Dean of Queen Rania Faculty of Childhood at the Hashemite University, Jordan. She has translated specialized books such as *Child Psychiatry* by Robert Goodman and Stephen Scott. She is interested in the fields of family violence, children's and adolescents' mental health, and stressors.

**Fahmida Tofail** is an associate scientist and consultant physician at the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b). Her research interest is focused on maternal and child health, nutrition, development and mental health. She is a faculty member of the Early Childhood Development course at BRAC, Dhaka University and Teacher's Development Institute, a fellow at the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, and has more than 30 scientific journal articles. She obtained her M.B.B.S. from Bangladesh, Ph.D. from the Centre for International Child Health, UCL, UK, and is currently conducting her post-doctoral fellowship at Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden.

**Pamela Akinyi Wadende** is a researcher, educator, and writer. She is a faculty member of the Psychology Department of Maseno University, Kenya. Her research interests include parenting, women's education and development. She has published widely in the field of education, gender issues, and community development.

**Yiyuan Xu** (yiyuan@hawaii.edu) received his Ph.D. from the University of Southern California. He is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at University of Hawaii at Manoa.

**Bilge Yagmurlu** obtained her Ph.D. from the University of Melbourne. She is a developmental psychologist with research interests focusing on the mechanisms underlying individual differences in children's social behavior and socio-cognitive abilities (theory of mind and social information processing). Part of her current work investigates the interplay of intrinsic child characteristics (e.g., temperament), parenting, and contextual factors in the development of competent and maladaptive functioning in young children. Another area concerns studies designed to explore parental belief systems and child rearing among mothers in Turkey and in immigration contexts. She also conducts research on psychosocial well-being of disadvantaged children and their parents.

**H. Melis Yavuz-Muren** obtained her Bachelor's degree in psychology and master's degree in developmental psychology from Koc University, Turkey. Currently she is a Ph.D. student in the developmental psychology program there. Her main research interests include the influence of positive parenting (maternal sensitivity, emotional availability) and child temperament on behavioral development. Her recent research also examines the role of culture and social context in parenting behaviors and cognitions, social competence in atypical populations (i.e., children with disabilities and autism spectrum disorder), and the association between parenting and child obesity.

**Relindis D. Yovsi** received her Ph.D. in Cultural and Developmental Psychology from the University of Osnabrueck, Germany, where she later worked as a Research Associate. She pursued a Masters in Public Health Methodology at the School of Public Health, Free University of Brussels, Belgium, and started working as an independent professional in early childhood care and development as well as in research and development. Her interests are holistic early childhood development, cross-cultural infant and young child feeding practices, maternal and child health, parenting-child relationship across cultures, and the development and implementation of comprehensive early childhood development programmes.

**Riffat Moazam Zaman** obtained her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Michigan State University. She is currently Professor in the Department of Psychiatry of the Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan. Prior to this she worked as a clinical psychologist at the Counseling Center at American University. Dr. Zaman has published on different aspects of psychotherapy in Pakistan and cross-cultural bioethics.

**Lijin Zhang** (zhangli6@nxu.edu.cn) received her Ph.D. from the Chinese Academy of Science. She is currently a Professor in the Department of Psychology at Ningxia University, China.

# Introduction

**Helaine Selin**

Parenting is certainly related to culture, but there is a combination of care and love and direction and concern that we imagine all parents have. And yet I find that not all parents believe or practice this. My own friends have different ways of encouraging their children—some even by shaming—and many parents have such high aspirations for their children that neither the children nor they are really satisfied. And we find, on our journey around the world in this book, that there are many ways of parenting, based on culture, character and hopes for the future generation. In many parts of the world, especially in rural areas, the style of parenting practiced is the same as that practiced by many generations before. If people are to live the same kind of lives, the same kinds of parenting still apply. But, as people move to the cities, as women join the labor force, as so-called modern life and mobile phones infiltrate into people's belief systems, the method of parenting has to change also. There is less reliance on other family members, especially grandparents, and there is a more limited social network for other activities. Children in many cultures are heavily directed into better schools and classes. What I thought was a basic belief—that parents always want more for their children—is perhaps a very Western approach. My immigrant parents were uneducated and wanted their children to be educated, have professions and make a place in the world. (Well, that was not necessarily for me, as girls were still expected, as I grew up in the 1950s, to be mothers first and maybe that's all they were expected to be). For my own children, I, a hippie mother of the 1970s, wanted them to love one another and everyone else. I thought of my parenting style as "benign neglect". And they turned out to be high achievers, successful, talented, and sensational. And, of course, loving to their spouses and children and me.

I thought when I began working on this book that I would find some commonalities in parenting. And I did. But I also found enormous variety in the styles, techniques,

H. Selin (✉)
Hampshire College, West St. 893, 01002 Amherst, MA, USA
e-mail: hselin@hampshire.edu

and methods of parenting. I found differences in parenting relating to gender—often girls are ignored, considered a liability, and not educated or even loved. At the same time, it is the mothers who are most involved in raising and caring for children, and the children often are closest to their mothers. Often in the chapters there is reference to Baumrind's parenting styles, which she introduced in 1967 and revised in 1987 (Baumrind 1967, 1987), to include authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, traditional and rejecting-neglecting parenting. Many authors try to relate these styles to the countries they are writing about, although most find them difficult in relation to non-Western cultures. Parenting style is a combination of attitudes toward the child that creates an emotional climate in which parents act.

Another theme that surfaces is the difference between individualistic and collective cultures. As Sen, Yavuz and Yagmurlu say in their chapter on Turkey, "individualistic cultures value personal goals over communal goals, and endorse independence, self-reliance, initiative, and economic freedom more. Group harmony, cohesion, interdependence, and obedience are the attributes valued more highly in collectivistic societies." I also found that television and especially mobile phones have made their way into cultures that were previously cut off from the rest of the world. Perhaps this technological change will move people away from traditional ways of parenting. I wonder if the new generation will want to be the kinds of parents their parents were, or if they see a different life for themselves? My guess is that some will want to keep the tradition and others will be tempted by the lure of a better life. It will be interesting to redo this book in 20 years and see how many things have changed and become homogenized and globalized.

*Parenting Across Cultures* consists of 32 chapters—primarily chapters on different places in the world and six chapters on related topics, such as Aggression, Indulgence, Grandparents, Fathers and Peers. The book is not making an argument for one kind of parenting, but shows a lot of variability. The authors come from a wide variety of fields: education, psychology, sociology, and anthropology.

In the first chapter, on China, Yiyuan Xu, Lijin Zhang and Puanani Hee review traditional and contemporary child rearing practices in the context of recent social and economic changes, and how some of these parenting practices may be related to the development of shyness in Chinese children. The authors conclude that parenting practices such as shaming and overprotective/intrusive parenting may be related to the development of anxious shyness.

In the next chapter, Daniel T.L. Shek and Rachel C.F. Sun discuss traditional Hong Kong Chinese parenting characteristics, such as focus on family harmony, well-defined parental and children roles, limited personal space for children, strict parental control, emphasis on continuity of family name, parental differences in socialization for boys and girls, and emphasis on filial piety. Although traditional parenting characteristics persist, such as emphasis on academic excellence of children, there are changes in the roles of fathers and mothers. There are also worrying trends in parenting and a severe lack of evidence-based parenting programs in Hong Kong.

We travel next to India, which is a collectivistic culture that believes in interdependence and family relationships. Rita Isaac, I.K. Annie and H.R. Prashanth say that most parents follow a parenting style with close regulation and strict

enforcement of family rules with clear emphasis on consequences of behaviours. There is wide variation between rich and poor, and poor children are often forced into hard labour. The urban rich are pushing their children to accomplish more, and these excessive parental expectations coupled with societal pressure, unhealthy competition and endless emphasis on achievements, can overwhelm the young people. India is another country where tradition competes with modernization and often parents find it hard to keep the traditions alive.

Some of the same is also true in Vietnam. According to Tatyana Mestechkina, Nguyen Duc Son, and Jin Y. Shin, the extended family and the community play an important role in individuals' lives and there is much multigenerational interaction. Values such as harmony, duty, honor, respect, education, and allegiance to the family are derived from Confucian ideas and are emphasized heavily in childrearing. However because of economic reforms and more access to western culture, there have been new trends in parenting such as less engagement with the extended family, less use of corporal punishment and more acceptance of some individualistic values.

Japan's parenting situation is quite different, given its special history. Susan D. Holloway and Ayumi Nagase begin their chapter with a history of parenting and the government's involvement in it. The Confucian ideology that has deeply affected Japanese society emphasizes the essential moral rectitude of the child. Parents who have been shaped by these Confucian beliefs may be more likely to feel the need to nurture these qualities and protect children from the corrupting influence of civilization. Japanese parents emphasize the importance of developing smooth interpersonal relationships and wish for their children to become skillful in interacting with others. Now there is a declining birth rate and the government is again involved in trying to improve it. The chapter discusses gender role constraints and how they have changed Japanese parents, especially fathers.

The aim of Ziarat Hossain in his chapter on Malaysia is to articulate parental beliefs and fathers' and mothers' roles in early childcare. Diverse values, traditions, religions, and socioeconomic conditions provide the context of parenting in multi-ethnic Malaysia. Even within contemporary Malaysian families, family values and religious beliefs still construct the core foundations of successful and moral parenting, whether they subscribe to the principles of Islamic tradition, Confucian teachings, Hindu wisdom, or subsistence ecology. These findings are noteworthy because they suggest that, regardless of geographical proximity or similarity in beliefs and family traditions, levels and styles of parental involvement are largely similar.

In Pakistan, Riffat Moazam Zaman maintains that Muslim values provide the core for many parenting norms that cut across social and economic classes. Families place tremendous importance on duty and obligation, and childhood's earliest lesson centers on respecting one's elders. Shame is often used as a disciplinary tool; this is characteristic of cultures that emphasize interrelatedness in which children are raised to be conscious of what others think of them and by extension of their families. Notions of shame and familial honor during childrearing regulate behavior and often restrict individual choice. However, this style of parenting also sustains emotional bonds.

We go next to the Philippines, where we find that the themes that characterize Filipino parenting include parental authority and control and the expectation of obedience on the part of children, family cohesion and interdependence, and the value of meeting familial obligations. Liane Peña Alampay states that the roles of mothers and fathers follow traditional gender lines; however, mothers' work has posed challenges to the customary family dynamics. The discussion of Filipino parenting is embedded in the nation's traditional cultural values of *kapwa*, *hiya*, and *utang na loob*, and contextualized in the current milieu that portends culture and family change.

Bangladesh is another Asian country represented in this volume. The authors, Jena Derakhshani Hamadani and Fahmida Tofail show that parenting practices mainly follow traditional norms with some exceptions in better-educated and richer families. Parenting practices also differ in urban and rural contexts. In most cases, children are raised with both parents and with extended family members. Parents often have little awareness about early child stimulation and parent-child interaction. Poverty and lack of adequate nutritional and developmental knowledge leads to malnutrition; approximately ten million children are not achieving their developmental potential. Corporal punishment is fairly common. With various programs and public health education campaigns, parenting practices are gradually improving and more and more parents are adopting more beneficial parenting behaviors.

In her chapter on Singapore, Karen Mui-Teng Quek says that the Singapore an family is strong and in a healthy state but faces potential tensions between work-family balances and societal pressures. Most Singaporeans still emphasize strong family ties and cherish family values, desiring to be parents and have more children. However the gap between reality and ideals persists. Competing priorities and responsibilities between motherhood, fatherhood and jobs pose tough challenges for parents to ensure that family commitments remain as the main anchor. Her study on contemporary Singaporean couples with young children indicated that when confronted with how to value dual careers, children, and marital relationships within a changing social structure, a new model of parenthood and couple relationship is being demonstrated by most of them, even though they expressed traditional gender ideals.

To complete the section on Asia, and perhaps to tie all the chapters together, James P. McHale, Khanh T. Dinh, and Nirmala Rao write about coparenting and family systems in East and Southeast Asian families. These cultures have been greatly influenced by Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism, which have shaped traditions and values that dictate family structure, hierarchy and roles, and one's place in society. Grandparents are revered, husbands possess more power than wives, and sons have more privileges than daughters. Ties with the extended family remain very close, so that in some cultures the family collective shares roles in care giving, socialization and coparenting of children. Children are thankful to parents for their birth, upbringing and education; they always think of their parents and family first and love and care for their parents in their elder years. All this may change in the years to come, as there is increasing physical and social mobility, migration and relocation, international marriage, demographic transformation characterized by aging, declining fertility and delayed marriage and childbearing, shifts in attitudes

about gender roles, marriage, parenting, and children's socio-emotional needs, and increased women's labor force participation. These have all triggered important shifts in family structures and roles.

We next move from Asia to Turkey, a combination of Asia and Europe. Hilal Sen, H. Melis Yavuz, and Bilge Yagmurlu have written a fascinating chapter. Turkey falls in the middle between being an individualistic culture and a collectivistic society, and parenting reflects both styles. But the situation for women is not very good. Even women who have higher educational degrees do not work after they marry and start a family. Two social norms, patriotism and respect for authority, are strong in the traditional family, but lovingness and warmth towards children are still prominent aspects of Turkish parents. Maternal sensitivity, reasoning, providing explanations to the child, and cognitive stimulation increase with the mothers' education. Relatedness and emotional ties between family members are valued highly and across contexts, but the emphasis on autonomy and obedience tends to vary among families coming from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

In her chapter on Israel, Mimi Scharf shows that Israeli society has a strong familial culture in conjunction with high levels of stress and massive immigration. She discusses relatedness and autonomy in parent-adolescent relationships. Israeli parents favor proximal parenting that is crucial in dangerous and unpredictable environments. Closeness to parents, and heightened centrality of parents, is associated with favorable outcomes. Reduced parental authority and heightened permissiveness are also salient features. It is probably more difficult to exert parental authority when parents are highly involved and close to their children. The author discusses sociological and psychological explanations for these characteristics.

Staying in the Middle East, Hanan Takash and Suha Al-Hassan discuss parenting in Jordan. Jordanian society directs great attention to childhood. Together government and families take part in the parenting mission. The government makes laws to protect children and family based upon global human rights and provides services such as free education and health services, while families mostly follow the rules of Arabic culture in parenting children. Islamic teaching and local tradition generally direct parenting in Jordan. Jordanian society is open to Western culture which has introduced new concepts and methods in parenting.

The next section looks at parenting in Africa. We go first to South Africa, where Nicolette Roman says that family life is indicated by single motherhood, the impact of HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy, and the impact of violence. Modernization has resulted in the disintegration of traditions and has resulted in social problems such as delinquency, substance abuse, and the inability of families to cope. Her study shows that maternal parenting has a stronger effect on child and youth outcomes than that of fathers and shows that children raised in low socio-economic environments experience more hostility and conflict in relationships with their parents. There are different parent-child relationships and parenting approaches across different ethnic groups with additions of socio-economic status and education. She does hold out hope for a better future for parents.

We go from South Africa to West Africa with a chapter on Ghana. Kingsley Nyarko examines childrearing practices, motherhood, and fatherhood. He looks at

the contextual background of the country, ethnic groupings, family systems and childrearing practices, and the patrilineal and matrilineal systems. His evidence shows that mothers are oriented towards the permissive style of parenting, while fathers use an authoritarian style, and that while some parents accept corporal punishment as a method of disciplining children, others frown on its usage. His study underscores the importance of situating parenting within one's culture.

Emmanuel Babatunde and Kelebogile Setiloane explore the patterns of Yoruba parenting in Nigeria, beginning with the process of marriage, child-bearing and rearing. They distinguish between the man as a husband and father and the woman as wife and mother. To throw into relief the importance of wife as a mother, they compare the wife with the concubine. Yoruba parenting is presented as the gradual socialization of the child in the values, expectations and practices of adult life. The first principle is making the child understand that she is part of a group that cares and expects respect in return. The second principle is that the child learns about *Omoluwabi*, a system in which she is deferential to her elders, hardworking and frugal and ready to help others in need. The chapter ends by comparing styles of parenting between the Japanese concept of *Amae* and the Batswana concept of *Botho* as they replicate the Yoruba concept of Omoluwabi.

A last stop in the west is Cameroon, where Relindis Yovsi describes the parenting principles and strategies of the Nso, an ethnic group in the Northwest province. The cultural structure of the Cameroonian Nso is outlined in relation to their geography, settlement patterns, subsistence and sociopolitical structure. Nso children grow up in a context of social closeness and also social responsibilities. Children are assets in childcare, household chores, farm work or family subsistence. Childcare is seen as a communal responsibility and children become parts of the society, serve as security for old parents and are interrelated within the sociocultural network. Parents expect their children to be obedient, abide by cultural norms and values, respect elders and authority and exercise a sense of social responsibility and social competence from an early age. The endpoint of the socialization agenda is a child who shares and cooperates with others, and has a sense of communion, belongingness and oneness.

In East Africa, the situation is a little different. In a chapter about Kenya, Pamela Akinyi Wadende, Kathy Fite and Jon Lasser review the changing trends in parenting in the Luo and Kipsigis ethnic communities. Traditionally, Kenyan ethnic communities assigned distinct parental roles to mothers and fathers. With the passage of time, parenting in Kenyan ethnic communities has changed, blurring the roles of mothers and fathers and introducing alternative providers of parenting services. Additionally, societal dynamics continue to influence and redefine the traditional practices of parenthood. Other impacts of modernity include the unraveling of traditional family structures. Factors that pre-date modernity such as disease, poverty, and strife have also influenced how Kenyan parents rear their children.

We travel next to South America. María Cristina Richaud, Viviana Lemos and Jael Vargas Rubilar present a chapter on Argentine culture and parenting styles. Argentina has an affiliative culture, where groups place a high priority on constructive interpersonal relationships. The authors compare parenting styles for middle

class and poor children. Middle class parents control their children's outings, schedules, and friends. Girls typically have close relationships with their mothers and maternal grandmothers and they also have more academic success than boys. For those in poverty and social risk, the three most important functions of social parenting (nurture, socialization, and education) are weakened or reduced. These parents used more physical punishment, shouting, isolation, intrusion, withdrawal from relationships, and negligence. Finally the authors offer some intervention possibilities and research implications.

Isabel Martínez, Leoncio Camino and Cleonice Camino and Edie Cruise discuss family socialization in Brazil, the largest country in South America. The socialization process shows how individuals acquire and internalize the social habits, beliefs, values and norms that define a culture. Those considered are: affection, indifference, dialogue, detachment, scolding, physical punishment and revoking privileges. The authoritative and neglectful styles are the most used, while the styles least used are the indulgent and authoritarian. Other techniques mentioned include threats of punishment from mythical or supernatural beings and positive reinforcement techniques. Mothers play a larger role than fathers in child rearing and both employ more demanding practices with girls than with boys. Coercive practices do not achieve improvement in psychological wellbeing or value internalization in Brazil.

Kevin Bush and Gary Peterson discuss parenting and parent-child relationships in Chile. These relationships are influenced by two general value systems, individualism and collectivism. Although the society remains family oriented, individualistic values are on the rise and social and sexual norms have become more liberal. Among Chilean children and/or adolescents, parental monitoring and knowledge are positively related to self-efficacy, conformity to parental expectations, school achievement orientation, legitimate parental authority, and connectedness with mothers, fathers, peers, and school. Studies show that secure attachment is related to positive parenting, positive relationship quality and prosocial child outcomes. Parental behavioral control also is used frequently by Chilean parents and serves to foster developmental outcomes indicative of social competence. The authors end with suggestions for further research.

Paul Schvaneveldt authors a chapter on Ecuador, in which he states that parenting is shaped by its historical, economic, and political context. Parenting has been traditional in that parental authority was highly valued within a collectivist culture. Mothers and fathers followed traditional gender roles and socialization practices encouraged conformity. Currently, Ecuador is experiencing many changes that are impacting parenting and family life. Gender roles are slowly changing, families often live in extended intergenerational households, many experience separation from family members due to emigration patterns, and divorce and single parenthood are becoming more common. Positive parenting practices include the use of positive induction, involvement, monitoring, emotional closeness, and close family relationships. Schvaneveldt also discusses parenting education programs and government policies.

In a chapter on Jamaica, the only country from the Caribbean in the book, Patricia Anderson and Camille Daley describe the experience of Jamaican fathers from middle and low-income communities in the main urban area. This account is situated within

the framework of the Afro-Caribbean family, which often locates men at the margin of their families, if they choose to pursue a traditional path of multiple sexual relationships in the effort to demonstrate virility and dominance. In this situation, many fathers may live separately from their children, so that there are both "inside" children and "outside" children. Jamaican men of all social classes hold a strong attachment to their identity as fathers, and do not show any confusion regarding their parenting roles or the desired outcomes for children. The extent of their actual father work varies with whether they reside with their children, so that inevitably children receive unequal fathering.

Finally we come to North America. In a chapter on Mexico, Pedro Solís-Cámara, Michael P. Fung and Robert A. Fox summarize parenting in Mexico starting with the first half of the twentieth century. That period was characterized by the absolute supremacy of the father and the sacrificial role of the mother. Eventually beliefs emerged that have challenged these traditional cultural values. In order to support Mexican families who are experiencing challenges in child rearing, intervention programs have been developed to offer parent-child training programs with positive results for the parents and their children. Traditional Mexican values continue to exist while a progressive infusion of counter-cultural values are gradually altering Mexican parenting attitudes and practices. This chapter concludes by providing a brief glimpse into the lives of two families in Mexico, one from a small city and another from the country.

In a chapter on American Indians, Betsy Davis, Renda Dionne, and Michelle Fortin discuss the problem of living with a worldview in a place where there is a dominant view that is quite different. The majority of American Indian families reside off-reservation, live and raise children in mainstream society and find themselves physically removed from the support of their tribal community. The authors present the mainstream social context American Indian parents and children must deal with today. They demonstrate how society continues to exacerbate the impact of colonization on many families. They present their conceptualization of the balance needed between ancestral story and mainstream influences in order for parents to pass cultural resiliency through to the next generation.

And finally, Karen Benzies talks about parenting in Canadian Aboriginal cultures. Aboriginal children and parents in Canada experience conditions unique to their cultural group. There are large inequalities in social determinants of health. Aboriginal children are more likely than non-Aboriginals to be born to an adolescent mother, to be raised in foster care and almost half live below the poverty line. The impact of colonialism on Aboriginal parenting must also be taken into account. The colonialist practice of forced re-education in the early twentieth century interrupted and obscured knowledge of traditional parenting practices. General principles to support parenting in Canadian Aboriginal cultures include respect for the diversity of Aboriginal culture and its traditions and values. Two-generation programs that provide early learning and care, and nutritious meals for children concurrent with parenting and life skills training for adults have shown promise, as they support the economic and social needs of Aboriginal parents.

The last section consists of seven chapters that deal with issues that are cross-cultural. Barbara Settles writes about global grandparents. Grandparents across the world have experienced two demographic shifts: longer life spans and reduced family size. Some areas such as Africa are less affected by these two trends, but still the opportunity for grandparents to relate to grandchildren is expanding. Grandparents' responses suggest that the relationships with their own children are critical to their maintaining close grandchild relationships. Their role involves being available, but not interfering. Several situations where grandparents are doing more comprehensive caregiving and/or heading the households with grandchildren in them are described. Intergenerational transfers appear to be happening earlier and grandchildren are often included. Some research on the processes of using technology together and interacting around memory development are discussed with implications for further research.

Kingsley Nyarko addresses the issue of parenting styles and children's' academic performance. Although parenting styles are discussed in virtually every chapter in this book, this one, which focuses mainly on Ghana, also has implications for other cultures. Nyarko looks at parenting styles and children's outcome, family structure and academic performance. Where some studies show a positive and significant effect between authoritative parenting and children's school achievement, others show that there is no effect of parenting styles on children's academic achievement. The study underscores the significance of analyzing parenting styles within one's cultural milieu.

Fernando García and Enrique Gracia present an interesting chapter on indulgent parenting. They find that evidence from emergent research in South European and Latin American countries indicates that adolescents from indulgent families scored equal or even better than those from authoritative families in many key indicators of psychosocial adjustment, and that indulgent parenting appears as the optimum parenting style in these samples. This research suggests that authoritative parenting is not always associated with optimum developmental outcomes and that relationships between parenting styles and developmental outcomes also depend on the ethnic and cultural context where the socialization process takes place.

Parent, Peers, and Adolescent Outcomes: Interactions And Cultural Variations is the subject of the next chapter. Ioakim Boutakidis and Eli Lieber discuss both the universals and notable differences across cultures in regard to peer influence on child and adolescent outcomes. Socializing with peers engaged in various delinquent behaviors predisposes adolescents to similar behavior, while adolescents' associations with positive, pro-socially oriented peers tends to produce similarly beneficial outcomes. An important question is how parents can influence their child's choice of peer networks by attempting to manage, initiate, or prohibit them. Parental strategies that emphasize supporting healthy peer relationships usually promote healthier peer interactions and are also effective in promoting the social skills, behaviors, and perspectives that help ensure healthy peer associations. Overreacting to negative peer conformity pressures, as opposed to more proactive efforts to facilitate healthy relations, may do more harm than good.

Jennifer Lansford takes on the subject of Parents' Aggression Toward Children and Children's Own Aggression. Parents' aggression toward children can take physical (corporal punishment, physical abuse) or nonphysical forms (derogatory verbal comments, psychological control). Aggression toward children is associated with negative child outcomes and is a violation of children's right to protection. Children's own aggression is predicted by harsh, coercive forms of parenting and by a lack of warmth, acceptance, and positive responsiveness. Cultural contexts shape parents' and children's aggression, in large part by providing a context in which aggression is condoned or condemned.

Rudy Ray Seward and Leslie Stanley-Stevens review the development and current status of fathering research worldwide with a focus on the cultural context of fatherhood. Parenting research in large-scale societies initially focused on mothers and when fathers were studied they typically were White, North American, and middle-class. Approaches to fathering vary widely from a primary concern with being a disciplinarian and provider to those focusing on nurturing child care with many possible types and combinations in between. However, almost all research on fathers across cultures since 1990 suggests some change in the direction of greater involvement by fathers. Cultures with more involved fathers tend to be more peaceful and have more gender equality. Comparative studies are needed within regions, within a given culture, and that focus on shared conditions like emigration.

The last chapter is Mother-Child Emotional Availability across Cultures: Findings from Western and Non-Western Countries. Diane L. Putnick, Marc H. Bornstein, Dana A. Breakstone, and Joan T. D. Suwalsky show that a mother-child dyad high in emotional availability is one in which both partners adapt their behavior to the other, share positive affective exchanges, and interact in a constructive, synchronous manner. When conditions are good, mother-child dyads display adaptive levels of emotional availability, but when conditions are poor (due to physical or mental illness, poverty, or inadequate social or cognitive resources) dyads are characterized by suboptimal emotional availability. The authors recommend expanding the study of availability to include more Asian and African cultures, where mothers may have different interactive styles with their infants and young children. They also recommend studying dyads with different predominant family structures (extended families, village settings) and dyads in various living conditions (extreme poverty, high infant mortality) to understand the full range of emotional availability across the world.

The chapters summarized above span the spectrum of the non-Western world, an important introduction for readers who wish to understand parenting. The notion of the West and non-West lends itself to considerable debate; opinions vary on the exact definition, and the dividing line is not always clear. Some interpretations might include or exclude countries and regions. Also, the region is characterized by a vast size and diversity of cultures, environments, peoples and wealth, as well as instances of cultural unity and shared sense of belonging across countries. Another challenge is that the study of parenting is sparse in some places, especially in developing countries, where the number of researchers in a given field can be quite small and scholarship is hampered by limited research facilities. Although no single

book can completely cover a region as diverse and relatively unstudied as this one, the chapters in this volume were chosen to represent countries and samples for which information and research are available.

# References

Baumrind, D. (1967). Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behavior. *Genetic Psychology Monographs, 75*(1), 43–88.
Baumrind, D. (1987). A developmental perspective on adolescent risk taking in contemporary America. *New Directions for Child Development, 37*, 93–125.

# Parenting Practices and Shyness in Chinese Children

**Yiyuan Xu, Lijin Zhang, and Puanani Hee**

> *Jade that has not been carved,*
> *cannot be used.*
> *Person that has not been taught,*
> *cannot know righteousness.*

—The Three-Character Classic

## Introduction

Throughout thousands of years of Chinese civilization, parents have been an essential part of childhood socialization. Traditional Chinese socialization, or *zuoren*, emphasizes the process through which children are taught by parents to learn to become acceptable members of Chinese society. They are expected to develop the qualities of *ren* (benevolence), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (propriety), *zhi* (wisdom), and *xin* (trustworthiness) (Wang and Zheng 2004; Wu 1996). Parents are responsible for providing appropriate environments for facilitating moral cultivation or moral teaching (Dardess 1991), as concisely put in *The Three-Character Classic*:

Y. Xu (✉) • P. Hee
Department of Psychology, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, HI, USA
e-mail: yiyuan@hawaii.edu; phee@hawaii.edu

L. Zhang
School of Psychology, Shaanxi Normal University, Xi'an, China
e-mail: zhangli6@nxu.edu.cn

People at birth,
are naturally good.
Their natures are similar;
their habits become different.
If, negligently not taught,
their nature deteriorates.
The right way to teach,
is with absolute concentration.
Formerly, the mother of Mencius
chose a neighborhood.
When her child would not learn,
she broke the shuttle from the loom (to motivate Mencius to study harder)…

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a brief review on parenting practices in Chinese culture and how they are related to Chinese children's social development, particularly shyness or *haixiu* (Xu et al. 2007, 2008, 2009a; Xu and Farver 2009). The chapter first introduces a theoretical framework on culture and parenting (LeVine 1980, 1988), which forms the basis for the discussion on traditional Chinese parenting practices, as well as parenting practices in contemporary Mainland Chinese society. Second, a multidimensional model of shyness (Asendorpf 2009; Xu et al. 2007, 2009a) is proposed to explain how culture shapes the expression of childhood shyness in the Chinese context. Third, the chapter draws upon evidence from a recent study (Xu et al. 2009c) to discuss the relation between parenting practices and shyness in Chinese children.

## Culture and Parenting: A Theoretical Model

In a classic model of culture and parenting, LeVine (1980, 1988) proposed that all human parents share the universal goals of survival, health, acquisition of economic capabilities, and the attainment of cultural values for their children. These goals form a rough hierarchical sequence in the course of development. That is, most parents ought first to meet the more fundamental goals, such as survival and health of their children, before adapting their child rearing strategies to cultivate culturally defined virtues. Differences in parenting behavior across cultures can be viewed as variations in the strategies parents use to attain these hierarchical goals while they attempt to minimize perceived risks to children and maximize their welfare. Gradually, these strategies develop into the commonsense formulas or the folk wisdom of childrearing in a particular culture (LeVine 1980).

The common sense formulas for child rearing represent cultural codes that are both adaptive and arbitrary (LeVine 1988). They are adaptive because they are built on the child rearing experiences of multiple generations that anticipate risks and provide a "script" for survival in the historically conditioned cultural environments; they are also arbitrary because they are passed on to parents by older generations as being the normal and necessary pathway for parental action without leaving a choice among different possibilities (LeVine 1988). Therefore, parenting practices represent compromised formulas designed for the accomplishment of multiple and hierarchically organized goals in a particular cultural context. When the environmental conditions

are relatively stable and resemble those of the past, the commonsense formulas for child rearing typically facilitate the welfare of children.

Parenting practices are also influenced by the ecological context which is mediated by historical and society-wide changes, shifts in cultural values and childrearing goals, as well as family-level life stressors and social support (LeVine 1988; Xu et al. 2005). Rather than blindly following cultural scripts of child rearing, parents often adjust their behaviors, sometimes unconsciously, to risks or benefits in changing aspects of the ecological contexts that threaten or facilitate the attainment of their child rearing goals. Over time, the adjustment made by parents in their child rearing helps redefine the common sense formulas in their cultural communities as adaptive practice rather than arbitrary tradition (LeVine 1988).

## Parenting Practices in Chinese Cultural Contexts

Traditional Chinese parenting practices cannot be understood apart from predominant values and socialization goals in Chinese culture. As an ancient civilization, Chinese culture is often reflected in the civilizations of East Asia, including Japan and Korea, and Southeast Asia which share similar views of self in relation to others and the cultural notions concerning the nature of individual behavior (Nisbett et al. 2001). Traditional Chinese society is an agrarian culture in which strict responsibilities are assigned to members for cropping, tending, planting, harvesting, and food storage. Consistent with LeVine's model (LeVine 1980), the nature of this large-scale agrarian culture may have given rise to the Chinese emphasis on self as a part of the "holistic whole" comprising natural, human, and spiritual entities (Fung 1983; Zhou 1990), and to the notion that an individual's behavior should be guided by his/her role responsibilities in the relationship knit of the holistic whole (Nisbett et al. 2001). Confucianism, the dominant value system in traditional Chinese society, applies this holistic view to the five moral standards of individual behaviors mentioned above (*ren, yi, li, zhi, xin*), which mutually regulate and direct appropriate social behaviors and relationships. For example, a child needs to behave with *li* (deference and propriety) toward his/her parents and to fulfill filial piety, while the parents are responsible for "training" the child to meet the requirements of the five moral standards (Chao 1994; Ho 2000).

Confucianism provides a philosophical basis and structure for traditional Chinese parenting practices (Ho 2000; Xu et al. 2005). A key aspect of Chinese childrearing is reciprocal expectations: parents expect children to be obedient and respectful and parents are expected to be responsible and experienced instructors who pass along cultural norms, values, and life experiences. To maintain the parent-child status hierarchy, Chinese parents, particularly fathers, are often distant from their children, and this demeanor, to some extent, is conveyed in their use of restrictive and controlling child rearing strategies. For instance, many Chinese parents emphasize child obedience and not talking back, and are expected to train their children to demonstrate *dong shi*, or an understanding of parents' desires, in parent-child interactions (Chao and Tseng 2002; Wu 1996).

When this restrictive Chinese parenting is viewed from a Western lens such as Baumrind's (1971) child rearing typologies, it is often considered an example of

"authoritarian" parenting style that involves a high level of parental control and a lack of explanations and reasoning. This is in contrast to the authoritative parenting style that entails warmth, autonomous support, and an encouragement of democratic participation by children (Maccoby and Martin 1983). Consistent with the portrayal of strict or controlling Chinese child rearing, in some comparative studies Chinese or Chinese immigrant parents reported more frequent use of physical punishment or parental control than their European or American counterparts (Lin and Fu 1990; Wu et al. 2002).

More recently, researchers have begun to challenge the notion of authoritarian Chinese parenting stereotypes (Chao 1994, 1995, 2000; Wang and Chang 2010). Chao (1994) proposed that Chinese parents' childrearing responsibilities are fulfilled in the process of *guan*, which means to "govern" as well as to "love". Chinese parents are immensely devoted to their children; they sacrifice much to meet their children's needs and they provide ample affection and warmth. Chinese parents may be strict, but at the same time they tend to be highly responsive to their children's needs, rather than being insensitive or coercive in their parenting practices (Chao 1994, 2000).

Wang and Chang (2010) further highlighted the important distinction between cross-cultural differences and within-cultural variations in parenting practices and styles. Although Chinese or Chinese immigrant parents engaged in parental control or authoritarian parenting styles more frequently than their North American counterparts (Lin and Fu 1990; Wu et al. 2002), they reported higher levels of authoritative than authoritarian parenting (Xu et al. 2005). Moreover, studies conducted in both the U.S. and Mainland China have shown that most Chinese families do not endorse harsh parenting, but rather show high levels of warmth (Wang and Chang 2010; Xu et al. 2005, 2009b) and engage in training which is a composite of parental control, parental support, care, and concern (Chao 1994, 2000; Xu et al. 2005).

While many Chinese families across the world still engage in traditional child rearing practices, contemporary Mainland Chinese society is experiencing considerable urbanization and Westernization. In addition, the government implemented a one-child policy in 1978. It has been proposed that over the past 30 years or so, the traditional Chinese value system has collapsed in response to the dramatic changes produced by the Cultural Revolution, recent urbanization, and the associated stratification of Chinese society (Chang et al. 2003). On top of that, the implementation of the one-child policy may have introduced a Western, child-centered approach into contemporary Mainland Chinese childrearing, particularly among well-educated populations (Chang et al. 2003; Xu et al. 2005). Due to recent social and economic changes, some traditional cultural scripts of parenting may no longer be adaptive, and many Chinese parents may, consciously or unconsciously, have adjusted their child rearing practices to cope with the recent transformation of families and parent-child relationships in Mainland Chinese society. On the one hand, with increased years of education and their exposure to Western patterns of child rearing, many Chinese parents may begin to appreciate inductive reasoning and democratic forms of control rather than power assertion in their interaction with children (Chen et al. 2000; Wang and Chang 2010; Xu et al. 2005). For instance, Wu et al. (2002) found

that Chinese mothers of preschoolers in Beijing highly endorsed parenting behavior such as "giving reasons why rules should be obeyed", and "explaining the consequences of the child's behavior". They also reported relatively infrequent use of punitive or power-assertive strategies such as "using threats as punishment with little or no justification", and "spanking the child when s/he is disobedient". On the other hand, with the implementation of the one-child policy, overprotective and intrusive parenting has become increasingly common in Mainland China, which may be producing "little emperors" who are over-protected and spoiled (Chen et al. 2000). These Chinese parents are characterized by excessive attention to their children's demands—reasonable or otherwise—and a high tolerance for their children's inappropriate behavior (Xu et al. 2009b). The overprotective/intrusive parents seem to lack the ability or inclination to effectively discipline and monitor their children's behavior and often exert their wills to limit their children's exploration.

Despite the dramatic changes and stratification in contemporary Mainland Chinese society, about 70 % of China's population resides in rural areas and in smaller cities where the influence of imported values and beliefs is not as prominent as in the urban areas (Xu et al. 2006). Although few studies have directly examined parenting practices among rural families, there is evidence to suggest that many rural Chinese parents still endorse traditional values such as emotional control and family obligations, and that Chinese adolescents from rural areas reported less conflict and higher cohesion with their parents, as well as less willingness to disagree openly with their parents (Fuligni and Zhang 2004; Zhang and Fuligni 2006). In contrast, Eisenberg et al. (2009) found that similar to their urban counterparts, rural parents reported higher levels of authoritative than authoritarian parenting. Furthermore, the relations between authoritative/authoritarian parenting and externalizing and internalizing problems did not differ for children from rural and urban areas. Thus, there appears to be a wide range of individual variations in parenting practices and styles among Chinese parents from rural areas.

In a similar vein, recent studies have also found that not all urban parents have abandoned traditional Chinese values and beliefs (Xu et al. 2005, 2006). For instance, Xu et al. (2005, 2006) found that a large number of Chinese mothers from Shanghai or Zhenjiang, two urban cities, endorsed traditional values such as conformity to norms, emotional control, and humility. The endorsement of Chinese traditional values was related to a positive attitude toward strict or restrictive parenting such as having well-established rules for their children. They expected their children to be grateful and appreciate all the advantages they have, and taught them to keep control of their feelings at all times (Xu et al. 2005). Moreover, parents' orientation to traditional values was associated with their children's culturally appropriate social problem solving such as avoiding confrontations during their conflicts with peers (Xu et al. 2006). Taken together, the extant studies suggest that individual variations in parenting practices and styles appear to be stronger than rural-urban differences, and that it is erroneous to assume that rural or urban Chinese parents uphold or have abandoned the traditional values drawn from Confucianism to the same extent.

## Chinese Culture and Shyness

Culture is instantiated in predominant goals, values, and beliefs, and mediates the environment in which cultural scripts of child rearing are developed and desirable social behavior is defined (Harkness and Super 1996). A particular social behavior, such as shyness, may be understood differently or has distinct meanings in various cultural contexts (Xu et al. 2007). In North American settings, shyness has been often viewed as a problem or deficit to overcome, such as "…an anxious reaction to stressful novel situations or social evaluations…" (Rubin 1998, p. 612), or "…a tendency to avoid social interactions and to fail to participate appropriately in social situations…" (Pilkonis 1977, p. 596). In some studies, shy people have been rated as less friendly and less likable, less talented, less happy, or even less physically attractive than non-shy people (Jones et al. 1986; Jones and Russell 1982). Moreover, Kerr et al. (1996, p. 1100) pointed out that North Americans tend to "…link shyness with negative qualities that are not inherently related to shyness itself…".

It should be noted that shyness differs from introversion or unsociability (Cain 2012; Xu et al. 2009a). Shyness likely reflects an approach-avoidance motivational conflict (Asendorpf 1990). That is, shy children are interested in interacting with peers but their approach motivations are often inhibited by their anxiety. In contrast, introverted or unsociable children prefer to play alone and are not motivated to interact with others (Coplan et al. 2004) and do not necessarily experience social anxiety (Rubin et al. 2009).

The predominant maladaptive view of shyness in North American settings may be partly due to the cultural emphasis on an independent self and assertiveness (Maccoby and Martin 1983). North American parents may recognize this societal expectation, and regard shy, reserved behavior as not beneficial. Accordingly, they generally encourage their children to be assertive and self-promoting.

In contrast, due to the emphasis on social harmony and mutual obligations in Chinese culture, the meaning of shy behavior is not only construed at an individual level (whether such behavior reflects fear or social anxiety), but is also understood in terms of the relevance for group functioning (whether such behavior prevents the child from appearing bold and overly assertive or standing out in the group) (Xu et al. 2008). Consequently, the Chinese notion of shyness is multidimensional because it encompasses fearful and anxious behavior that is relevant to individual children's psychological functioning, and it includes modest and unassuming behavior which seems to be particularly important for group functioning. For example, shyness has often been used to describe Chinese children who do not brag about their good grades (modest behavior) and those who back off when facing potential conflict with peers (non-assertive behavior). These behaviors are associated with maintaining harmonious social interactions (Crozier 1995). Thus, a child may be described as *haixiu* because, similar to the North American notion of shyness mentioned above, s/he is fearful and always avoids social contact, or because s/he attempts to make his/her social encounters more manageable and less threatening by behaving in a low key, nonassertive, and unassuming fashion (Xu et al. 2007, 2009a).

Xu et al. (2007) introduced the term "regulated shyness" to differentiate non-assertive and unassuming shy behavior from anxious avoidant shy behavior (anxious shyness) and suggested that regulated shyness is consistent with behavior that helps to maintain the social harmony that is valued in Confucian cultures like Mainland China (Wu 1996). Although regulated shyness does not lead to intensive social participation, it minimizes the chance of social disapproval and conveys an important message to peers that the child desires to fit in with the group (Leary and Buckley 2000; Xu et al. 2007).

Whereas anxious shyness often impedes social interactions regardless of cultural contexts, regulated shyness appears to reflect some degree of self-control and is consistent with the group orientation emphasized in a Chinese setting. As a consequence, regulated shyness is expected to be central to the perception and expression of shyness in the Chinese context (Xu et al. 2008). In line with this view, interviews with Chinese children revealed that the reasons they defined their classmates as being shy included not only attributes that characterize anxious shyness (e.g., "worries about saying things in front of classmates"), but also attributes that are important for maintaining social harmony (e.g., "does not brag [about his/her grades even if s/he does well in the exam]") (Xu et al. 2008). Similarly, when Chinese teachers were asked to describe and provide examples of behaviors typical of a shy child some descriptions, such as "afraid to join or approach peer play groups" appeared to characterize anxious shyness, whereas other responses, such as "behaving modestly" and "not showing-off", formed a cluster of nonassertive and unassuming behavior that defined a regulated form of shyness (Xu et al. 2007). Thus, it seems that regulated shyness is particularly valued in Chinese culture and plays an important role in children's psychosocial functioning.

Recent studies of Chinese children also provide some evidence for the construct validity of regulated shyness and anxious shyness (Xu et al. 2007, 2009a). Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses with three Chinese samples distinguished regulated from anxious shyness. Peer nominations of regulated shyness and anxious shyness were *both* correlated with children's self-reported shyness and teachers' ratings of asocial and solitary behavior, providing evidence for convergent validity (Xu et al. 2007). The results also showed that regulated shyness was related to peer acceptance, whereas anxious shyness was related to peer rejection and social anxiety in the Chinese context (Xu et al. 2007).

## Parenting Practices and Shyness in Chinese Children

Parke and Ladd (1992) proposed that children's experiences in the home often transfer to their social behavior with peers, suggesting that parenting practices may be related to children's shy or inhibited behavior in their social interactions. Given the recent social and economic changes, it is important to examine both traditional child rearing strategies and contemporary parenting practices in relation to various forms of shyness in Chinese children.

One traditional parenting practice, encouragement of modesty, may be particularly relevant in the development of regulated shyness in Chinese children (Wu et al. 2002). Despite the recent stratification of Mainland Chinese society, studies have found that many Chinese parents remain committed to traditional Chinese values such as humility and emotional control and emphasize the need to help their children to fit in rather than stick out in the peer group (Cai et al. 2011; Xu et al. 2005, 2006). These parents are more likely to encourage their children to be modest, unassuming, and not to place individual accomplishments or interests over group interests (Nelson et al. 2006). Some may use their own experiences or traditional Chinese stories such as "singing birds get shot" to raise children's awareness of negative consequences of being too different from others. Others may reinforce children's humility with an endorsement on their *dong shi*, or an understanding of adults' desires. Thus, variations among families where different emphases are placed on encouragement of modesty may contribute to individual differences in children's expressions of regulated shyness or their modest and unassuming behavior.

Another traditional child rearing practice, shaming, may be closely related to anxious shyness, rather than regulated shyness. Because Confucian philosophy views an individual's behavior as inextricably linked to a responsibility for the group and one's relative status in the social hierarchy (Nisbett et al. 2001), individuals are socialized to have "a heart of shame" (*xiu chi xi*) which inhibits emotional expression and behavioral transgression. Some Chinese parents may choose to publicly embarrass their children, or engage in shaming, in order to manipulate children's emotional states and sensitize them to shame and others' evaluation (Nelson et al. 2006). While this practice may be effective in inhibiting socially inappropriate behaviors, it may inadvertently bring a high level of fear or extreme worry about negative social evaluation or social disapproval, and as a consequence lead to anxious shyness in children.

As mentioned above, the implementation of the one-child policy appears to have given rise to the use of intrusive/overprotective parenting in Chinese parents, which may be related to children's anxious shyness. Parents who engage in intrusive/overprotective parenting, on the one hand pay excessive attention to their children's often unreasonable demands, and on the other hand, assert parental dominance on children and limit children's self-exploration. Children of intrusive/overprotective parents often lack the opportunities for learning social skills for successful interaction with peers. Over time, the unsuccessful social experiences with peers may heighten children's sensitivity to negative social evaluations, reinforce their negative self-perception, and eventually lead to anxious shyness in these children (Asendorpf 1990; Xu et al. 2007).

Xu et al. (2009c) recently tested the hypotheses regarding the relations between different forms of parenting practices and shyness in Chinese children. In this exploratory study, a large sample of children ($N = 321$ children, 161 girls, $M$ age = 9.41 years) were recruited from a Chinese elementary school. Children's regulated and anxious shyness were rated by both peers and teachers using the measures developed in Xu et al. (2007, 2009a). Parents also rated their use of intrusive/overprotective parenting (i.e., parents' overprotectiveness and directiveness), shaming, and

encouragement of modesty, using the parenting scale adapted from Wu et al. (2002). The results of hierarchical regression analyses showed that for both boys and girls, parents' intrusive/overprotective parenting and shaming were associated with children's anxious shyness, whereas their encouragement of modesty was related to regulated shyness.

The results of Xu et al. (2009c) suggest that both traditional and more contemporary forms of parenting practices play important roles in the development of shyness in Chinese children. Chinese parents, who commit to traditional values of humility and emotional control, may encourage children not to show off, brag, or flaunt their views that are different from those of other peers. Over time, their children may learn to make their social encounters more manageable and to decrease the chance of social disapproval by exhibiting regulated shyness.

Despite the intention of motivating children to take responsibilities for their actions (Fung 1999), shaming and emotional manipulation often distract children from participating appropriately in social interactions. Instead, due to their unpleasant experiences of being embarrassed in public, children whose parents frequently use shaming, may concentrate on potential negative consequences of social participation, and eventually withdraw from group activities with fear or anxiety (anxious shyness).

While some Chinese parents may believe that intrusive/ overprotective parenting is the best way to show love and care for their only children, they inadvertently limit children's opportunities to self-explore, and to develop regulatory and coping skills when facing social adversity (Rubin et al. 2002; Hastings et al. 2008). Although these parents aim to help their children learn how to behave and fit in with peer groups, they often give unsolicited direction to their children on how they should act, or shield their children from trial-and-error experience that is critical for developing social competence. Intrusive or overprotective parents may pay too much attention to how their children should behave and focus exclusively on correcting behavior, overlooking the way their children may feel and alternative ways to prepare their children better for coping with social anxiety. It is not surprising that intrusive/overprotective parenting was associated with anxious shyness in Chinese children (Xu et al. 2009c).

## Conclusion

Consistent with LeVine's model (LeVine 1980, 1988) on culture and parenting, Chinese parents not only follow the traditional cultural scripts but also adapt their child rearing practices in accordance with economic and societal changes. Some Chinese parents still emphasize traditional socialization goals of humility and emotional control, and expect their children to be modest and unassuming. While encouragement of modesty may result in desirable behavior in children such as regulated shyness, shaming, or the use of public embarrassment to manipulate children's emotions, appears to place children at risk for developing anxious shyness.

Other Chinese parents have begun to engage in more child-centered, democratic forms of parenting with high levels of reasoning. However, when parents give in to their children's unreasonable demands and/or are too protective to allow children's self-exploration, they may engage in intrusive or overprotective parenting practices which could lead to children's anxious shyness and unsuccessful peer interaction.

While the focus of this chapter was on parenting practices, the roles of children's individual characteristics in their development of shyness should not be overlooked. Parents' adaptation of their child rearing practices is not only a response to the changes in the family ecological context, but also a function of their children's age, gender, and temperament characteristics. Moreover, parenting practices may also be influenced by other characteristics of family contexts such as social support or parents' own personalities and psychological functioning (Xu et al. 2005). With the significant changes in contemporary Mainland Chinese society, it is important to understand Chinese parenting from a dynamic perspective and as a good fit between contextual and individual factors.

# References

Asendorpf, J. B. (1990). The development of inhibition during childhood: Evidence for a two-factor model. *Developmental Psychology, 26*, 721–730.

Asendorpf, J. B. (2009). Shyness. In J. B. Benson & M. M. Haith (Eds.), *Social and emotional development in infancy and early childhood* (pp. 389–397). Oxford: Academic Press.

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology Monograph, 4*, 1–103.

Cai, H., Sedikides, C., Gaertner, L., Wang, C., Carvallo, M., Xu, Y., O'Mara, E. M., & Jackson, L. E. (2011). Tactical self-enhancement in China: Is modesty at the service of self-enhancement in East-Asian culture? *Social Psychological and Personality Science, 2*, 59–64.

Cain, S. (2012). *Quiet: The power of introverts in a world that can't stop talking*. New York: Crown Publishers.

Chang, L., Schwartz, D., Dodge, K. A., & McBride-Chang, C. (2003). Harsh parenting in relation to child emotion regulation and aggression. *Journal of Family Psychology, 17*, 598–606.

Chao, R. K. (1994). Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development, 65*, 1111–1119.

Chao, R. K. (1995). Chinese and European American cultural models of the self reflected in mothers' childrearing beliefs. *Ethos, 23*, 328–354.

Chao, R. K. (2000). The parenting of immigrant Chinese and European American mothers: Relations between parenting styles, socialization goals, and parental practices. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 21*, 233–248.

Chao, R., & Tseng, V. (2002). Parenting of Asians. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting* (pp. 59–93). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Chen, X., Liu, M., Li, B., Cen, G., Chen, H., & Wang, L. (2000). Maternal authoritative and authoritarian attitudes and mother-child interactions and relationships in urban China. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 24*, 119–126.

Coplan, R. J., Prakash, K., O'Neil, K., & Armer, M. (2004). Do you 'want' to play? Distinguishing between conflicted-shyness and social disinterest in early childhood. *Developmental Psychology, 40*, 244–258.

Crozier, W. R. (1995). Shyness and self-esteem in middle childhood. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 65*, 85–95.

Dardess, J. (1991). Childhood in premodern China. In J. M. Hawes & N. R. Hiner (Eds.), *Childhood in historical and comparative perspective* (pp. 71–94). New York: Greenwood.

Eisenberg, N., Chang, L., Ma, Y., & Huang, X. (2009). Relations of parenting style to Chinese children's effortful control, ego resilience, and maladjustment. *Development and Psychopathology, 19*, 385–409.

Fuligni, A. J., & Zhang, W. (2004). Attitudes toward family obligation among urban and rural adolescents in contemporary China. *Child Development, 74*, 180–192.

Fung, Y. (1983). *A history of Chinese philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Fung, H. (1999). Becoming a moral child: The socialization of shame among young Chinese children. *Ethos, 27*, 180–209.

Harkness, S., & Super, C. M. (1996). *Parents' cultural belief systems: Their origins, expressions, and consequences*. New York: Guilford Press.

Hastings, P. D., Sullivan, C., Mcshane, K. E., Coplan, R. J., Utendale, W. T., & Vyncke, J. D. (2008). Parental socialization, vagal regulation, and preschoolers' anxious difficulties: Direct mothers and moderated fathers. *Child Development, 79*, 45–64.

Ho, D. Y. F. (2000). Chinese pattern of socialization: A critical review. In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The psychology of the Chinese people* (pp. 1–37). New York: Oxford University Press.

Jones, W. H., & Russell, D. (1982). The social reticence scale: An objective instrument to measure shyness. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 46*, 629–631.

Jones, W. H., Cheek, J. M., & Briggs, S. R. (1986). *Shyness: Perspectives on research and treatment*. New York: Plenum Press.

Kerr, M. (2001). Culture as a context for temperament: Suggestions from the life courses of shy Swedes and Americans. In T. D. Wachs & G. A. Kohnstamm (Eds.), *Temperament in context* (pp. 139–152). Mahwah: Laurence Erlbaum Associates.

Kerr, M., Lambert, W. W., & Bem, D. J. (1996). Life course sequelae of childhood shyness in Sweden: Comparison with the United States. *Developmental Psychology, 32*, 1100–1105.

Leary, M. R., & Buckley, K. E. (2000). Shyness and the pursuit of social acceptance. In W. R. Crozier (Ed.), *Shyness: Development, consolidation, and change* (pp. 139–153). New York: Routledge.

LeVine, R. A. (1980). Anthropology and child development. In C. Super & S. Harkness (Eds.), *Anthropological perspectives on child development* (pp. 71–86). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

LeVine, R. A. (1988). Human parental care: Universal goals, cultural strategies, and individual behavior. In R. A. LeVine, P. M. Miller, & M. Maxwell (Eds.), *Parental behavior in diverse societies* (pp. 3–12). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lin, C., & Fu, V. R. (1990). A comparison of child-rearing practices among Chinese, immigrant Chinese, and Caucasian-American parents. *Child Development, 61*, 429–433.

Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, C. N. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction. In E. M. Hetherington (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology* (Socialization, personality, and social development, Vol. 4, pp. 1–102). New York: Wiley.

Nelson, L. J., Hart, C. H., Wu, B., & Olsen, S. F. (2006). Relations between Chinese mothers' parenting practices and social withdrawal in early childhood. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 30*, 261–271.

Nisbett, R. E., Peng, K., Choi, I., & Norenzayan, A. (2001). Culture and systems of thought: Holistic versus analytic cognition. *Psychological Review, 108*, 291–310.

Parke, R. D., & Ladd, G. W. (1992). *Family-peer relationships: Modes of linkage*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Pilkonis, P. A. (1977). The behavioral consequences of shyness. *Journal of Personality, 45*, 596–611.

Rubin, K. H. (1998). Social and emotional development from a cultural perspective. *Developmental Psychology, 34*, 611–615.

Rubin, K. H., Burgess, K. B., & Coplan, R. J. (2002). Social withdrawal and shyness. In P. K. Smith & C. H. Hart (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of childhood social development* (pp. 330–352). Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Rubin, K. H., Coplan, R. J., & Bowker, J. C. (2009). Social withdrawal in childhood. *Annual Review of Psychology, 60*, 141–171.

Wang, Q., & Chang, L. (2010). Parenting and child socialization incontemporary China. In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of Chinese psychology* (pp. 53–68). New York: Oxford University Press.

Wang, F., & Zheng, H. (2004). *Chinese cultural psychology*. Guangzhou: Jinan University Press.

Wu, D. Y. H. (1996). Chinese childhood socialization. In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The handbook of Chinese psychology* (pp. 143–154). New York: Oxford University Press.

Wu, P., Robinson, C. C., Yang, C., Hart, C. H., Olsen, S. F., Porter, C. L., Jin, S., Wo, J., & Wu, X. (2002). Similarities and differences in mothers' parenting of preschoolers in China and the United States. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 26*, 481–491.

Xu, Y., & Farver, J. M. (2009). What makes you shy? Situational elicitors of shyness in Chinese children. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 33*, 97–104.

Xu, Y., Farver, J. M., Zhang, Z., Zeng, Q., Yu, L., & Cai, B. (2005). Mainland Chinese parenting styles and parent-child interaction. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 29*, 524–531.

Xu, Y., Farver, J. M., Chang, L., Yu, L., & Zhang, Z. (2006). Culture, family contexts, and children's coping strategies in peer interactions. In X. Chen, D. French, & B. H. Schneider (Eds.), *Peer relationships in cultural context* (pp. 264–280). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Xu, Y., Farver, J. M., Chang, L., Zhang, Z., & Yu, L. (2007). Moving away or fitting in? Understanding shyness in Chinese children. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 53*, 527–556.

Xu, Y., Farver, J. M., Yang, Y., & Zeng, Q. (2008). Chinese children's conceptions of shyness: A prototype approach. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 54*, 515–544.

Xu, Y., Farver, J. M., Yu, L., & Zhang, Z. (2009a). Three types of shyness in Chinese children and the relation to effortful control. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 97*, 1061–1073.

Xu, Y., Farver, J. M., & Zhang, Z. (2009b). Temperament, harsh and indulgent parenting, and Chinese children's proactive and reactive aggression. *Child Development, 80*, 244–258.

Xu, Y., Zhang, Z., & Choo, M. (2009c, April). *Parenting practices and shyness in Chinese children*. Paper presented at the symposium on "Understanding within-culture variations in the influence of parenting on child social development across diverse cultures" Chaired by C.L. Cheah, at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Denver.

Zhang, W., & Fuligni, A. J. (2006). Authority, autonomy, family relationships among adolescents in urban and rural China. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 16*, 527–537.

Zhou, G. X. (1990). *Chinese traditional philosophy*. Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press.

# Parenting in Hong Kong: Traditional Chinese Cultural Roots and Contemporary Phenomena

**Daniel T.L. Shek and Rachel C.F. Sun**

## Introduction

Darling and Steinberg (1993) proposed two dimensions of parenting. While global parenting style is "a constellation of attitudes toward the child that are communicated to the child and create an emotional climate in which the parent's behaviors are expressed" (p. 493), specific parenting practices are "behaviors defined by specific content and socialization goals" (p. 492). Based on this conception, parenting consists of both parental attitudes and behavior in the context of socialization. Parental attitudes and related behavior as well as goals in the socialization process differ widely across cultures. A review of the literature shows that the number of studies on parenting in the Western context is much higher than that conducted in the Chinese culture. Using the search term "parenting", a survey of PsycInfo showed that there were 25,260 citations up to August 2012. On the other hand, there were only 548 citations using the search terms "parenting" and "Chinese". As Chinese people constitute roughly one-fifth of the world's population, the quantity of Chinese studies is grossly out of proportion in the scientific parenting literature.

Most of the existing measures of parenting are developed in the West, with mostly English measures (Shek 2006a, 2007d). In response to this observation, one question that should be asked is whether Western parenting measures can appropriately be used in the Chinese culture. If we assume that parenting concepts are universal, then there is no need to develop culturally specific parenting measures. On the other

D.T.L. Shek (✉)
Department of Applied Social Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University,
Hunghom, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China
e-mail: daniel.shek@polyu.edu.hk

R.C.F. Sun
Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

hand, if parenting concepts and emphases differ across time and place, we need different assessment tools in different cultures. For example, Chao (1994) argued that Western descriptions of Chinese parenting characteristics "have been rather ethnocentric and misleading" (p. 1111) and postulated that "training" (*jiao xun*) and "to love and to govern" (*guan*) are indigenous practices in Chinese parenting. Against this background, there are two parts in this chapter. First, we describe traditional Chinese cultural roots of parenting in Hong Kong. Second, we highlight observations regarding contemporary parenting in Hong Kong. Based on these two parts, we show the changing nature of parenting in the Chinese context over time.

## Chinese Cultural Influences on Parenting in Hong Kong

Chinese parenting is shaped by Chinese cultural values rooted in Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. With a history of more than 5,000 years, these philosophies have influenced how parents teach and interact with their children. In order to understand contemporary parenting in Hong Kong, there is a need to understand the characteristics of the traditional Chinese culture with respect to parenting (Shek 2001; Shek and Lai 2000).

There are several features of parenting in traditional Chinese culture. The first characteristic is that there was a strong emphasis on the concept of harmony in the family. Harmony in the family was strongly upheld and conflict among family members was strongly prohibited in traditional Chinese families (Freedman 1961; Strom et al. 1996). With reference to the Confucian concept of "five cardinal relations" (*wu lun*), a strong emphasis of harmonious order within the family was present. Under the "eight cardinal virtues", harmony (*he*) and peace (*ping*) were two of the virtues. Harmony refers to the observation of rules of behavior which lead to social order and stability (Shek et al. 2013) while peace denotes a sense of calmness. Peace also refers to a quiet state of mind without much thought given to the mundane details of life. Peace and harmony are closely associated. There are many passages in the Analects emphasizing the importance of *he*. For example, achieving harmony is the most valuable function of observing ritual propriety (*li*).

Besides the emphasis on harmony within the family in Confucian thoughts, harmony with others and nature was also highly advocated in the Buddhist and Taoist teachings. As pointed out by Shon and Ja (1982), there was a heavy emphasis on the harmony of human relationships through proper conduct and behavior. The element of harmony can be seen in the popular sayings, "harmony is golden" (*yi he wei gui*) and "if a family lives in harmony, everything will prosper; a family will wither if there are a lot of quarrels" (*jia he wan shi xing, jia shuai kou bu ting*).

Second, well-defined duties, obligations, and rules were emphasized to regulate the behavior of individual family members, which in turn maintain the social harmony in a larger sense (Ho 1986). According to Cheng (1944), family members in traditional Chinese families "were assigned to their proper positions for the purpose of facilitating the maintenance of domestic harmony" (p. 54). Children

were socialized to perform proper roles and to treat collective interest as more important than individual interest. "Propriety or rite" (*li*) is another core Confucian virtue which refers to human relationships and the general principle of social order. Confucius believed that human nature is good and thus the role of *li* is to steer people towards a moral life through emphasizing and nurturing the social and aesthetic norms that guide people's behavior (Shek et al. 2013). In fact, an ideal family in Confucian thought is one where "the father is affectionate and the son is dutiful, the elder brother is friendly and the younger brother shows respect" (*fu ci zi xiao, xiong you di gong*).

Third, children usually had little personal space because the collective was more important than the individual. To avoid interpersonal conflict, expression of self and emotion was de-emphasized. As a result, children were not encouraged to express their emotions openly, particularly the negative ones. Children were also discouraged from arguing with their parents. As a result, "the use of all forbearance" (*bai ban ren nai*), self-suppression, and avoidance of open conflicts were common tactics to deal with family issues (Yang 1981).

Fourth, to maintain harmony and to make sure that children act according to their duties, there was strict parental control. Besides absolute obedience of the child, parents had high expectations about their children, particularly their sons. Children were usually expected to grow "according to human nature" (*sheng xing*) and to have a high level of morality, such as respecting old people in the family. To ensure that the parental expectations were fulfilled, strict and firm discipline particularly via physical punishment was commonly used, as reflected by the saying "a filial son is the product of the rod" (*bang xia chu xiao zi*). In fact, children were not rewarded when they did well, because it was regarded as their responsibility. In contrast, if they did something wrong, they would be severely punished.

Fifth, continuity of the family name is important, as reflected in the cultural beliefs such as "wishing the son to be a "dragon" – high above other people" (*wang zi cheng long*) and "a strong father does not have a weak son" (*hu fu wu quan zi*). In addition, there was a strong emphasis on family solidarity (Topley 1969), such as bringing honor to the family and not disgracing its good name (Cheng 1944).

Sixth, there were gender differences in the socialization process where paternal roles were expected to be different from maternal roles and sons were regarded as more important than daughters. This emphasis is reflected in the popular saying "men take care of things outside the family whereas women take care of things inside the family" (*nan zhu wai, nv zhu nei*). Normally, only boys were educated. From the meaning behind the Chinese characters presented in Table 1, it can be seen that a man is regarded as active (i.e., having strength) and a woman is regarded as passive and submissive. Such role differentiation continues in the marital relationship where a husband is expected to engage in formal work and a wife is expected to take care of domestic matters. In addition, husbands were regarded as the "master of the family" (*yi jia zhi zhu*) and married women were taught to be "obedient to their husbands" (*chu jia cong fu)*. A father is seen as the head of a family and a mother is expected to take care of the basic needs of the children. In addition, fathers were expected to play the role of teachers supervising the children to ensure

**Table 1** The origin and meaning of Chinese characters (man, woman, husband, wife, father, mother)

| | 甲骨文 (Oracle bone script) | 金文 (Bronze script) | 篆書 (Seal script) | 隸書 (Clerical script) | 楷書 (Standard script) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 男 Man | | | | | |
| 女 Woman | | | | | |
| 夫 Husband | | | | | |
| 婦 Wife | | | | | |
| 父 Father | | | | | |
| 母 Mother | | | | | |

Man: "Field" and "Strength" (Active)
Woman: "Kneel" down and put hands on the abdomen (reserved and "shy") (Passive)

Husband: Man with a hairpin on the head (formal work)
Wife: Woman with a broom (domestic work)

Father: One who holds a status object (head)
Mother: One who feeds the child (breast feeding – two nipples) (rearing child)

that they behaved well, as there is a saying, "it is the fault of the father if he only raises the child without teaching him" (*yang bu jiao, fu zhi guo*).

Finally, because of the supremacy of parents, filial piety was strongly upheld, as shown in the saying, "filial piety ranks at the top of all behavior" (*bai xing xiao wei xian*). With particular reference to the parent-child dyad, children were socialized to obey their fathers, as exemplified by the saying, "if a father wants the child to die, the child cannot have the option of not dying" (*fu yao zi wang, zi bude bu wang*). Besides, traditional Chinese culture emphasized the supremacy and infallibility of the parents as revealed in the saying "there is no faulty parent in this world" (*tian xia wu bu shi zhi fu mu*).

In his discussion of the Chinese cultural roots of parenting, Yang (1981) highlighted the following features: (a) children were taught to depend on their parents (dependence training); (b) children were encouraged to have interpersonal harmony and they were discouraged from interpersonal conflict (conformity training); (c) children were encouraged to have self-inhibition and self-sacrifice to achieve interpersonal harmony (self-suppression training); (d) self-assertiveness was de-emphasized (humility training); (e) children were trained to accept their fate (contending mentality training); (f) children were severely punished for deviant behavior (punishment orientation); and (g) parental views were regarded to be more important than children's views (parent-centered). Shek (2006a) pointed out that the dominant features of traditional Chinese parental control included psychological control (expectation of total obedience of the child) and behavioral control (high expectation and strict discipline). From the perspective of modern parenting, these features (particularly psychological control and excessive parental expectations) can be regarded as detrimental to the development of children.

## Parenting Literature in Traditional Chinese Culture with Relevance to Hong Kong

Interestingly, although scientific literature on Chinese parenting is sparse, there are many ancient Chinese writings on how parents should teach their children and how children should behave in the family. There are two main categories of writings on Chinese parenting. First, the focus on filial piety was strongly emphasized in many writings in the Chinese literature. One good example is the classic 24 stories of filial piety. In this classic scripture, 24 cases of filial piety were presented. The key messages in these cases are: (a) because parents are great, children should try their best to obey and serve their parents under any circumstances; (b) Heaven would help children to fulfill their responsibilities. Some examples of the 24 stories of filial piety can be seen in Appendix 1.

Another interesting feature in Chinese literature is that there are many family instruction books (*jia xun*), such as "Family Instruction of Master Yan" *(The Yanshi Jiaxun),* "Family Instruction of Master Wu" (The *Wushi Jiaxun),* and "Family Instruction of Master Zheng" (The *Zhengshi Jiaxun).* In these books, guidelines for

parents regarding the socialization goals and suggested parenting methods are outlined. One common emphasis in these family instruction books is on family rules (*jia gui*) and how children's behavior should be regulated under different circumstances (Shek and Lai 2000).

There are also many expectations and rules for children to follow in these books. One example is how children should behave in the family and interact with their parents as described in the Standards for Being a Good Student and Child (*Di Zi Gui*).

## Changing Parenting in Contemporary Hong Kong

With growing urbanization and Westernization, there has been a gradual weakening of traditional Chinese beliefs, including the decline in respect for parents and elderly, the increase in child self-centeredness, the weakening of traditional collectivistic Chinese beliefs, and the growing contemporary individualistic beliefs and youth culture (Shek 2006b). With reference to the changing socio-economic contexts of Hong Kong, several observations on parenting in contemporary Hong Kong can be highlighted.

### *Observation 1: Traditional Chinese Parenting Attributes Still Exist but There Are Gradual Changes*

Research findings showed that parents in contemporary Hong Kong still possessed traditional Chinese parenting attributes, although changes were also observed. Shek (2007d) used the indigenously developed Paternal Control Scale and Maternal Control Scale based on indigenous Chinese parenting concepts to assess perceived parental control in contemporary Hong Kong society. The findings can be seen in Appendix 2 and Table 2. Several interesting observations can be highlighted from the findings. First, while most fathers were perceived to have expectations about their children in terms of maturity (item 1), obedience (item 2), virtues (item 3), respect for father (item 6), and respect for older people (item 12), paternal expectations for good behavior for family reasons (items 4 and 5) were not overwhelming. This observation suggests that although the traditional parental expectations are still present, paternal expectations based on family name and honor are weakening. Second, fathers' role as teachers was not strong (item 8 and item 11) in roughly one-fourth of the parents. The findings suggest that in contrast to the traditional emphasis that fathers should teach their children, contemporary parents in Hong Kong play a weak role in the teaching and supervision of their children (item 9 and item 10). Third, a significant proportion of the children were not requested by their fathers to self-reflect (item 9), suggesting that paternal parenting was not demanding. Finally, contrary to the traditional Chinese emphasis of harsh training, less than half

**Table 2** Frequency of responses to the items of the Chinese Paternal Control Scale (CPCS) and the Chinese Maternal Control Scale (CMCS) (Shek 2007d)

| Item | Cumulative percentage of "Strongly agree" and "Agree" responses | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | CPCS (%) | CMCS (%) |
| 1. My father expects me to be mature (*sheng xing*) | 86.0 | 90.8 |
| 2. My father expects me to be obedient (*guai* and *ting hua*) | 89.7 | 93.3 |
| 3. My father expects me to have good virtues and behavior | 92.5 | 94.4 |
| 4. My father expects me to have good behavior so that I will not bring dishonor to the family (*you ru jia sheng*) | 51.7 | 54.1 |
| 5. My father expects me to have good behavior so that he will not be criticized by others as having no family teaching (*wu jia jiao*) | 57.8 | 61.5 |
| 6. My father expects me to respect him | 72.8 | 78.4 |
| 7. My father is very harsh in his discipline | 41.1 | 47.9 |
| 8. My father always teaches me about the ways of dealing with one self and others | 74.4 | 76.5 |
| 9. When I do something wrong, my father requires me to have self-reflection | 69.4 | 75.5 |
| 10. When I do something wrong, my father teaches me (*jiao xun*) | 61.1 | 68.3 |
| 11. When I don't meet my father's expectation, he urges me (*du cu*) to work hard | 74.8 | 84.6 |
| 12. My father expects me to interact with older people (*zhang bei*) with respect and courtesy | 93.1 | 95.9 |

of the respondents perceived paternal discipline as harsh (item 7). Similar patterns were observed for maternal parenting characteristics. Taken as a whole, the findings suggest that traditional Chinese parenting expectations in parents are still quite strong, although parental harshness in discipline and parental supervision gradually weaken. In addition, the strong parental expectations are not coupled with harsh parental discipline.

## Observation 2: There Is a Shift from "Strict Fathers, Kind Mothers" to "Strict Mothers, Kind Fathers" or "Involved Mothers, Detached Fathers"

In traditional Chinese culture, the role differentiation of fathers and mothers is clearly revealed in the saying, "Strict father, kind mother" (*yan fu ci mu*) (Wilson 1974). According to Ho (1987), "the father was typically characterized as a stern disciplinarian, more concerned with the demands of propriety and necessity than with feelings, who was to be feared by the child; and the mother as affectionate, kind, protective, lenient, and even indulgent" (p. 231). However, while there is support for this cultural stereotype, there is a gradual change in its nature and severity. In fact, in a series of studies (Shek 2005, 2007a), mothers were seen as more

positive in terms of parental control (knowledge, expectation, monitoring, discipline, demandingness, psychological control, and control based on indigenous Chinese concepts), and parent-child relational measures (trust of parents, parental trust of children, communication, and initiative). These findings strongly suggest that the notion of "strict fathers, kind mothers" in the traditional Chinese culture has changed to "strict mothers, kind fathers" and "involved mothers, detached fathers". In terms of behavioral control indicators, mothers were seen as stricter than fathers (fathers were relatively less demanding and kinder). At the same time, mothers were seen as more involved (having more knowledge about their children) whereas fathers were seen as more detached (spending less time with their children). Finally, mother blaming still exists in contemporary Hong Kong society, as exemplified in the saying "a fond mother spoils the son" (*ci mu duo bai er*).

## Observation 3: Academic Excellence Is Still the Paramount Socialization Goal

Traditionally, Chinese parents regarded academic achievement to be very important because getting good results in civil examinations was one of the very few ways to move up the social ladder, as exemplified by the saying, "a book holds a house of gold as well as a good wife" (*shu zhong zi you huangjin wu, shu zhong zi you yanruyu*) and "everything is inferior, and only learning is the noblest of human pursuits" (*wanban jie xiapin, wei you dushu gao*). The emphasis on academic excellence is clearly reflected in the "Poem to urge study":

> To be better off you need not invest in fertile lands, for books will promise a bumper harvest. To own a home you need not collect huge logs, for books will build a luxurious mansion near you. To find a wife you need not seek a professional matchmaker, for books will pair you with the fairest. To travel you need not anticipate being a lonely walker, for books will arrange an impressive parade of entourages and carriages like a moving forest. If one wishes to realize these life goals, he'd better pore over Confucian books with great interest.

With such a cultural background, parents in Hong Kong generally expect their children to have very good academic results. To achieve good academic results, parents generally emphasize the importance of diligence as reflected in the cultural belief of "the sea of learning knows no bounds; only through diligence may its shore be reached" (*xue hai wu ya, wei qin shi an*) and "reward lies ahead of diligence, but nothing is gained by indolence" (*qin you gong, xi wu yi*). According to Shek and Chan (1999), academic excellence was regarded as a key attribute of an ideal child by Hong Kong parents. In a study of parenting behavior in families with early adolescents, Shek and Lee (2007) found that parents devoted more attention to the academic study of their children than other aspects of development. There are several implications of these findings. First, the findings suggest that Chinese parents might overlook the significance of holistic and balanced development of children. Second, overemphasis on academic excellence would create much stress

and conflict for the parents, the children and the family. Third, parents should be helped to accept the academic limitations of their children and to cope in a healthy manner.

## Observation 4: Worrying Phenomena Related to Parenting

There are several phenomena related to parenting in Hong Kong. First, research shows that parents in Hong Kong spent very little time with their children. In a comparative study involving many places, fathers in Hong Kong spent an average of 6 min a day with their children and fathers in China spent no more than 54 min a day with their children (Bracey et al. 2007). In fact, there is research showing that the working hours in the working force in Hong Kong were the second longest in the world (Union Bank of Switzerland 2006). Second, the Social Development Index (SDI) compiled by the Hong Kong Council of Social Service showed that there has been a drop in family solidarity in Hong Kong and building up of family stress. In SDI-2010, its value was -906, which is around a 70 % drop as compared to the previous release in 2008 (Chua et al. 2010). Such findings suggest that the quality of family life is gradually deteriorating, which will eventually impair parenting and parent-child relational qualities. Third, for middle and upper class families, parents usually employ foreign domestic helpers to help in domestic work; there are roughly 220,000 domestic helpers in Hong Kong. Some family researchers have argued that the employment of foreign domestic helpers as surrogate parents has created dependency in children and adolescents.

Finally, research findings based on comparative studies showed that family and parenting problems were more prevalent in Hong Kong than in Shanghai (Han and Shek 2012a, b). Compared with parents in Shanghai, parents in Hong Kong were perceived to have lower levels of parental knowledge about their children, parental expectation, and parental monitoring but a higher level of parental psychological control. In addition, adolescents in Hong Kong perceived lower levels of satisfaction with parental control, readiness to communicate with the parents, and global parent-adolescent relationship.

## Observation 5: Parent-Child Discrepancies Exist in Perceived Parenting Processes

Chinese parents and their children have different views on the parenting processes in a family. In a study examining the perceptions of parents and their adolescent children of the attributes of an ideal family, Shek (2001) showed that there were significant differences between parents and their children in the different domains. Besides, there are studies showing that Chinese parents perceived parenting processes to be more positive than did their adolescent children (Leung and Shek 2012).

## Observation 6: Parenting Processes Are Relatively Poorer in Vulnerable Families

There are longitudinal research findings showing that family and parenting processes in intact families, in which the parents were in their first marriage, were comparatively more positive than those in non-intact families (single-parent, re-married or cohabitated families). Utilizing validated measures of perceived parental behavioral control (parental knowledge, expectation, monitoring, discipline, and demandingness as well as parental control based on indigenous Chinese concepts), parental psychological control, and parent-child relational qualities (satisfaction with parental control, child's readiness to communicate with the parents, and perceived mutual trust between parents and their children), Shek (2007b, c, 2008a, b) showed that perceived parental behavioral control processes, parent-child relational qualities, and psychological wellbeing were poorer in non-intact families relative to intact families over time. In contrast, maternal psychological control was higher in non-intact families than in intact families over time.

In addition, longitudinal research findings showed that compared to students not experiencing economic disadvantage, poor adolescents experienced lower parental behavioral control (parental knowledge, expectation, monitoring, discipline, and demandingness as well as parental control based on indigenous Chinese concepts), higher parental psychological control, and lower satisfaction with parental control, readiness to communicate with the parents, and mutual trust between parents and their children. Furthermore, parental differences were more pronounced for the father-adolescent dyad than for the mother-adolescent dyad.

## Observation 7: Lack of Evidence-Based Parenting Programs

In a review of preventive and positive youth development programs, Shek and Yu (2011) showed that there was a paucity of evidence-based adolescent developmental programs. The same observation applies to evidence-based parenting programs. With a few exceptions (Leung et al. 2003, 2011), there is a need to develop and validate parenting programs in Hong Kong.

# Appendices

## *Appendix 1: Examples of the 24 Piety Stories*

| No. | Title | Summary |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Filial Piety That Moved the Heaven | Although his father, step-mother and half brother attempted to kill him several times, Shun still loved them. His filial act moved the King of Heaven. He sent animals to assist his work |
| 2. | Tasted the Medicine | The Queen-Mother had been sick for 3 years. Every medicine used by his mother was tasted by Emperor Wen beforehand |
| 3. | He Sold Himself to Bury His Father | Dong Yong sold himself into slavery for money to bury his father |
| 4. | He Fed His Parents Deer's Milk | Tan's old parents suffered from eye diseases and the deer milk was a medicine to their diseases. Thus, Tan attempted to get the milk by using a deer skin to pretend to be a fawn |
| 5. | He Concealed Oranges to Present to His Mother | Yuan Shu treated two oranges to Lu Ji. Lu Ji remembered his mother was craving for oranges, so he concealed two oranges in his sleeves and wanted to present them to his mother |
| 6. | He Let Mosquitoes Consume His Blood | When Wu Meng was 8 years old, his family was too poor to have a mosquito net. He naked himself to attract the mosquitoes to suck his blood instead of disturbing his parents |
| 7. | He Lay on Ice in Search of Carp | Wang Xiang loosened his clothes and lay on the surface of a frozen river intended to melt the ice and catch the crap for serving his stepmother |
| 8. | He Strangled a Tiger to Save His Father | Yang Xiang's father was dragged away by a tiger. Although Xiang had no weapon at hand, he leapt forward and grabbed tightly at the tiger's neck. The tiger then left |
| 9. | He Amused His Parents With Play and Glad Clothes | Old Lai (over 70) always wore colorful clothes and played a toy drum to entertain his parents |
| 10. | He Picked Mulberries to Serve His Mother | Shun gathered mulberries and sorted them into different containers. A group of robbers saw this and asked him about it. Shun said, "The ripe ones are for my mother. The unripe ones are for me" |
| 11. | He fanned the Pillow and Warmed the Quilt | Huang Xiang loved and served his father filially. In the hot summer, he cooled his father's pillow and mat with a fan. In the cold winter, he warmed his father's quilt and bed with his body |
| 12. | He washed his Mother's Bedpan | Although Huang Tingjian was a government compiler with a prominent status, he washed his mother's bedpan by himself |

## Appendix 2: English Translation of "At Home, Be Dutiful to My Parents" in Standards for Being a Good Student and Child (Di Zi Gui)

**At Home, Be Dutiful to My Parents**

When my parents call me, I will answer them right away. When they ask me to do something, I will do it quickly. When my parents instruct me, I will listen respectfully. When my parents reproach me, I will obey and accept their scolding. I will try hard to change and improve myself, to start anew.

In the winter, I will keep my parents warm; in the summer, I will keep my parents cool. I will always greet my parents in the morning to show them that I care. At night I will always make sure my parents rest well. Before going out, I must tell my parents where I am going, for parents are always concerned about their children. After returning home, I must go and see my parents to let them know I am back, so they do not worry about me. I will maintain a permanent place to stay and lead a routine life. I will persist in whatever I do and will not change my aspirations at will.

A matter might be trivial, but if it is wrong to do it or unfair to another person, I must not do it thinking it will bear little or no consequence. If I do, I am not being a dutiful child because my parents would not want to see me doing things that are irrational or illegal. Even though an object might be small, I will not keep it a secret from my parents. If I do, I will hurt my parents' feelings.

If whatever pleases my parents is fair and reasonable, I will try my best to attain it for them. If something displeases my parents, if within reason I will cautiously keep it away from them. When my body is hurt, my parents will be worried. If my virtues are compromised, my parents will feel ashamed. When I have loving parents, it is not difficult to be dutiful to them. But if I can be dutiful to parents who hate me, only then will I meet the standards of the saints and sages for being a dutiful child.

When my parents do wrong, I will urge them to change. I will do it with a kind facial expression and a warm gentle voice. If they do not accept my advice, I will wait until they are in a happier mood before I attempt to dissuade them again, followed by crying, if necessary, to make them understand. If they end up whipping me I will not hold a grudge against them.

When my parents are ill, I will taste the medicine first before giving it to them. I will take care of them night and day and stay by their bedside. During the first 3 years of mourning after my parents have passed away, I will remember them with gratitude and feel sad often for not being able to repay them for their kindness in raising me. During this period I will arrange my home to reflect my grief and sorrow. I will also avoid festivities and indulgence in food and alcoholic drinks. I will observe proper etiquette in arranging my parents' funerals. I will hold the memorial ceremony and commemorate my parents' anniversaries with utmost sincerity. I will serve my departed parents as if they were still alive.

Pure Land Learning College Association. (2005). *Di Zi Gui: Guide to a happy life.* Toowoomba, Queensland: Australia.

# References

Bracey, G., Montie, J. E., Xiang, Z. P., & Schweinhart, L. J. (2007). *The IEA preliminary study: Findings and policy implications*. Ypsilanti: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation.

Chao, R. K. (1994). Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development, 65*, 1111–1119.

Cheng, C. K. (1944). Familism: The foundation of Chinese social organization. *Social Forces, 23*, 50–59.

Chua, H. W., Wong, A. K. W., & Shek, D. T. L. (2010). Social development in Hong Kong: Development issues identified by Social Development Index (SDI). *Social Indicators Research, 95*(3), 535–551.

Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting style as context: An integrative model. *Psychological Bulletin, 113*(3), 487–496.

Freedman, M. (1961). The family in China, past and present. *Pacific Affairs, 34*, 323–336.

Han, X. Y., & Shek, D. T. L. (2012a). Perceived parental control and psychological control in Chinese adolescents in Shanghai. *International Journal on Disability and Human Development, 11*(2), 107–112.

Han, X. Y., & Shek, D. T. L. (2012b). Perceived parent-child relational qualities and parental control in Chinese adolescent in Shanghai. *International Journal on Disability and Human Development, 11*(1), 61–66.

Ho, D. Y. F. (1986). Chinese patterns of socialization: A critical review. In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The psychology of the Chinese people* (pp. 1–37). Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Ho, D. Y. F. (1987). Fatherhood in Chinese culture. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The father's role: Cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 227–245). Hillsdale: Erlbaum.

Leung, C. M., Sanders, M. R., Leung, S., Mak, R., & Lau, J. (2003). An outcome evaluation of an implementation of the triple p-positive parenting program in Hong Kong. *Family Process, 42*(4), 531–544.

Leung, C. M., Tsang, S., & Dean, S. (2011). Outcome evaluation of the Hands-On Parent Empowerment (HOPE) program. *Research on Social Work Practice, 21*(5), 549–561.

Leung, J. T. Y., & Shek, D. T. L. (2012). Parental differences in family processes in Chinese families experiencing economic disadvantage. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Gender Studies, 1*(3), 271–299. doi:10.4471/generos.2012.13.

Shek, D. T. L. (2001). Chinese adolescents and their parents' views on a happy family: Implications for family therapy. *Family Therapy, 28*(2), 73–104.

Shek, D. T. L. (2005). Perceived parental control and parent-child relational qualities in Chinese adolescents in Hong Kong. *Sex Roles, 53*(9–10), 635–646.

Shek, D. T. L. (2006a). Assessment of perceived parental psychological control in Chinese adolescents in Hong Kong. *Research on Social Work Practice, 16*(4), 382–391.

Shek, D. T. L. (2006b). Chinese family research: Puzzles, progress, paradigms, and policy implications. *Journal of Family Issues, 27*(3), 275–284.

Shek, D. T. L. (2007a). A longitudinal study of perceived differences in parental control and parent-child relational qualities in Chinese adolescents in Hong Kong. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 22*(2), 156–188.

Shek, D. T. L. (2007b). Family life quality and emotional quality of life in Chinese adolescents with and without economic disadvantage. *Social Indicators Research, 80*(2), 393–410.

Shek, D. T. L. (2007c). Intact and non-intact families in Hong Kong: Differences in perceived parental control processes, parent-child relational qualities, and adolescent psychological well-being. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, 47*(1–2), 157–172.

Shek, D. T. L. (2007d). Perceived parental control based on indigenous Chinese parental control concepts in adolescents in Hong Kong. *American Journal of Family Therapy, 35*(2), 123–137.

Shek, D. T. L. (2008a). Economic disadvantage, perceived family life quality, and emotional well-being in Chinese adolescents: A longitudinal study. *Social Indicators Research, 85*(2), 169–189.

Shek, D. T. L. (2008b). Perceived parental control processes, parent-child relational qualities, and adolescent psychological well-being in intact and non-intact families: Longitudinal findings in the Chinese culture. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, 49*(1–2), 171–189.

Shek, D. T. L., & Chan, L. K. (1999). Hong Kong Chinese parents' perceptions of the ideal child. *Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied, 133*(3), 291–302.

Shek, D. T. L., & Lai, M. F. (2000). Conceptions of an ideal family in Confucian thoughts: Implications for individual and family counseling. *Asian Journal of Counselling, 7*(2), 85–104.

Shek, D. T. L., & Lee, T. Y. (2007). Parental behavioral control in academic and non-academic domains: A three-year longitudinal study in the Chinese culture. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health, 19*(4), 529–537.

Shek, D. T. L., & Yu, L. (2011). A review of validated youth prevention and positive youth development programs in Asia. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health, 23*(4), 317–324.

Shek, D. T. L., Yu, L., & Fu, X. (2013). Confucian virtues and Chinese adolescent development: A conceptual review. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health, 27*, 1–10.

Shon, S. P., & Ja, D. Y. (1982). Asian families. In M. McGoldrick, J. K. Pearce, & J. Giordano (Eds.), *Ethnicity and family therapy* (pp. 208–220). New York: The Guilford Press.

Strom, R. D., Strom, S. K., & Xie, Q. (1996). Parent expectations in China. *International Journal of Sociology of the Family, 26*, 37–49.

Topley, M. (1969). The role of savings and wealth among Hong Kong Chinese. In I. C. Jarvie & J. Agassi (Eds.), *A society in transition* (pp. 167–227). London: Routledge.

Union Bank of Switzerland. (2006). *Prices and earnings: A comparison of purchasing power around the World*. Zurich: Union Bank of Switzerland.

Wilson, R. W. (1974). *The moral state: A study of the political socialization of Chinese and American children*. New York: The Free Press.

Yang, K. S. (1981). The formation and change of Chinese personality: A cultural-ecological perspective. *Acta Psychologica Taiwanica, 23*, 39–55.

# Parenting in India

**Rita Isaac, I.K. Annie, and H.R. Prashanth**

## Introduction

India's cultural heritage has its base in the rich values of respect for elders, parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts and strong family ties. The strong kinship networks and extended families continue to prevail, though there is an increasing trend towards nuclear families. A collectivistic culture that believes in interdependence and highlights family relationships and obligations is still the norm (Mishra 1994; Saraswathi and Pai 1997a, b). The value of prayer, seeking guidance from gods and goddesses in all that they do in some form or the other, is prevalent in all sections of society. In traditional families, whether it is at home or at the place of work, the day starts off with a prayer. India has a significant repertoire of spiritual and religious texts, including the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Puranas*, and the *Manusmriti*; all contain enlightening discourses and insights on various aspects of family life, They are storehouses of knowledge about social thoughts, family life, parent and child relationships and behaviour. The Islamic heritage introduced the idea of brotherhood and community life; the writings of Sufi saints propagated the doctrine of patience and ability to accept all tribulations and afflictions as the manifestations of God's love (Farooqi 2002). Such insights help in the understanding of coping mechanisms in stressful family and social environments in India. Furthermore, since colonial times, Christian evangelism and missions have greatly influenced the life and parenting style in India. The fundamentalists and on the other extreme, most liberal thinking Christians, have contributed to the diversity of lifestyles and parenting culture in

R. Isaac (✉) • I.K. Annie
Department of RUHSA (Rural Unit for Health and Social Affairs),
Christian Medical College, Vellore, Tamil Nadu, India
e-mail: rita.isaac@cmcvellore.ac.in

H.R. Prashanth
Community Medicine, Department of RUHSA (Rural Unit for Health and Social Affairs),
Christian Medical College, Vellore, Tamil Nadu, India

India. Thus the parenting choices and child rearing practices are guided by the spiritual and religious texts, cultural norms and family environment, as are parents' own beliefs and experiences and also ideas shared by members of cultural groups.

Parenting practices in India have to be viewed also within the several objective indicators of the Indian culture. India is predominantly a Hindu country with large minorities of Muslims and Christians. About 70 % of the population lives in rural areas; about 30 % of male and 52 % of female Indians are illiterate; about 30 % of the population lives below the poverty line. Socio-economic conditions and religious beliefs also play a large part in parenting styles and attitudes in India.

## Parental Readiness for the Arrival of the Baby

In India, the babies are raised mostly within the extended family structure. Traditionally young married couples are oriented and educated on pregnancy, birthing and childcare by the parents or grandparents in the family, very clearly emphasizing the expected gender roles. While the mother is the primary caregiver and nurturer of children, the father is dominant and obeyed with fear in most conservative families. His principal duty is to provide economic support (Mandelbaum 1970). The grandparents play a significant role by supporting the care of the infant and especially the maternal grandmother considers it her privilege to guide the inexperienced mother to take care of the newborn baby. However, over the last three decades, with the rapid social and economic changes, modernity has crept into the parental childrearing practices. Westernization is slowly making the age-old, expected gender roles, cultural practices and traditional concepts less significant. There is a trend towards more and more men taking interest in everything that has to do with parenting, from washing to feeding to reading bedtime stories, especially in urban communities.

Indian mothers enjoy physical closeness to their babies. Babies sleep next to the parents on the bed most of the time and some parents put the babies in a cradle while they are resting. In India, co-sleeping during the early years is encouraged for a better mother-infant relationship. In some tribal communities, babies are carried on their mothers' back wrapped in a cloth while the mothers are working and that practice gives the children a strong sense of security and confidence. Mothers carry babies close to their body when they are breastfeeding and the studies show that more than 90 % of mothers breastfeed and about 50 % of them breastfeed the babies exclusively for 6 months (Patel et al. 2010).

Another interesting traditional custom is that the babies are given oil massages and baths by the hired *dais* (birth attendants or assistants) or by the mothers or grandmothers themselves. Ayurveda (the Indian system of medicine) advocates oil baths and massages to increase immunity and enhance the mental capacity of the child. We is of the opinion that through these ritualistic oil baths, babies receive a lot of attention of the family and a sense of belonging. Many of the practices related to care during pregnancy and delivery and after delivery have been handed down from previous generations. Traditionally, for better care of the mother and baby, the pregnant women in their last 1–2 months of pregnancy, even today, prefer

to stay in their parents' house, away from their husbands and in-laws. However, in more affluent societies with educated and working women, the luxury of spending time in one's mother's house around the time of delivery is fast disappearing. Working women continue to work until the delivery and they spend 3 months with the baby in their own homes, largely helped by their husbands. A few wealthy, fortunate mothers get help from housemaids. In many houses, housemaids spend more time with the children than their parents and therefore the behaviour of the children is influenced by the untrained maids.

Culturally Indian women with their families make elaborate preparations to welcome the newborn baby and are anxious about baby's growth, nature of delivery and in some conservative communities, the baby's complexion and gender. There is a strong preference for male children in India for family inheritance, to take care of the family property, to give fire to the parents' funeral pyre, and to keep the family name intact. A female child is often seen as a financial drain on her family. This obsession for male children brings discrimination and inequality in childrearing practices. The male children are more likely to be well fed and to receive schooling and adequate health care. Most educated and very learned people also fall into this trap and only a tiny minority of very elevated people believes in having one or two children, irrespective of their gender. This bias towards male children causes enormous damage to parenting in India.

## Parental Encouragement in Early Childhood

Research on parenting in India has shown that most parents believe in the folk wisdom on parenting influences and the developmental outcomes of the children and thus follow an authoritative parenting style, with close regulation and a strict enforcement of family rules with clear emphasis on consequences of behaviours (Nair et al. 2009). Indian parents give a lot of importance to familial bonds, interdependence and loyalty to the family, obedience, religious beliefs and academic and career achievements (Karkar 1978). Indians believe that children are capable of learning from a very young age and that they must be given guidance. Even toilet training is often begun earlier in India, with some parents beginning to train their children to use the toilet as soon as they can walk, as early as 1 year old. In nuclear urban families, parents are becoming more and more responsive to children's needs, as they become more child-centered and permissive.

In India, with a very diverse population, there is a general lack of awareness regarding the need for parenting education on parenting skills or appropriate child rearing practices for children's physical, cognitive and social development. Children are expected to obey their parents and often corporal punishments are used to discipline the children. A recent cross sectional study done in one of the states in India reported that 62 % of the mothers were found to practice severe verbal abuse and 50 % practice severe physical abuse to discipline their children. The study concluded that there is a high prevalence of normative and abusive practices in the community with mothers playing a prime role in disciplining the child (Nair et al. 2009).

In communities with poor socio-economic prospects, there is a high prevalence of child labour and often children are forced to work in hostile, exploitative and unsafe conditions. More and more girls and boys are running away from their homes and some come into conflict with the law. Further, in many resource-poor communities, child marriages are practiced and young girls enter into forced marriages, becoming vulnerable to rape and other forms of sexual abuse; adolescent girls and boys are trafficked for the purposes of domestic work and forced prostitution. Sociological research has revealed that negative and violent parental behaviour was a major reason for children's fleeing their homes and for the occurrence of emotional and behavioural problems in children belonging to economically poorer communities (Singh et al. 2012).

## Regulation and Freedom During Adolescence

Parents play a pivotal role in shaping the lives of young people. Most young people stay with their families until adulthood or until their marriage. This gives the parents both more control and the chance to offer more protection and care (Trommsdorff 1995). Indian children are less anxious about the control their parents use. Though most parents in India insist on obedience, there are increasingly others who are concerned with individual development and the ability of young people to make decisions on their own.

In urban, educated communities, parents are increasingly encouraging children to develop self-reliance, self-sufficiency and adaptiveness to survive in the globalised and highly technological environment (Saraswathi and Pai 1997a, b). With modernization, it has become very hard for parents to try and keep the traditional values intact, for the younger generation is always in a sense of conflict between the values that they have grown up with and the values of modern society. In most urban, educated, nuclear and small families, parents are becoming less authoritarian and more child-centered. They allow their children more freedom and are more sensitive to young children's needs and aspirations. Although the authoritative parenting style has been the norm in India, adolescents no longer accept traditional, unquestioned obedience. Parents are increasingly encouraging autonomy and independence.

In India, the current trend is that the parents are investing more time, energy and money in their children's educational and occupational choices to make a secure future for their children. Some parents are becoming too demanding with too much emphasis on educational and career achievements and success. The excessive parental expectations coupled with societal pressure, unhealthy competition and endless emphasis on achievements, overwhelm the young minds and that leads to frustration, confusion, chaos, hopelessness and desperation in some children and adolescents. India is one of the countries with the highest rate of suicides in young people (Aaron et al. 2004).

Menarche (the first menstrual period) is celebrated in most communities and following that a new code of conduct is prescribed for girls in some conservative communities based on traditional wisdom. However traditional Indian parents rarely discuss with their teenagers the most important biological and physiological changes that take place at the onset of puberty and its significance and therefore youngsters turn to peers and other sources of information (Abraham 2000). As a consequence of that the young people are at higher risk for exploitation, sexual abuse, mental health problems and HIV/AIDS.

## Parenting in Joint Family Structure

Unlike in the past, people now prefer to live in nuclear families. People who have grownup in joint families have the opportunity to share their difficult experiences while they were growing up. When there is more than one child in the joint family, there is a tendency for parents to make comparisons. Also, if one child is given something and the other isn't, it could lead to the development of unhealthy competition and feelings of envy. Most 'unhealthy' children come from joint families because they live together out of compulsion and not out of choice.

## Parenting and Children in North East India[1]

The northeastern middle class embrace the idea of intensive mothering and a sheltered childhood. Parenting styles vary among farmers, rural and urban working-class families and the city elites. In rural areas, children actively contribute to their family's income by hunting and fishing, assisting in parents' traditional occupations including tending gardens (tea garden) or livestock, toiling in mines or mills, scavenging or participating in street trades, and caring for younger siblings.

Most children have Christian names tracing their origin to Christian missionary activities in their land and some of them have names of tribal origin in their own language. Poverty, hard labour and poor nutrition have contributed to the birth of many children with low birth weights in rural areas. In recent years, with improved medical care and economic changes, the situation is changing. Mothers take care of early childhood while the fathers are out for work in the field or for earning money. By the time the children reach the age of 15 or 16, the children start taking part in various social activities along with their parents. Parents provide a major support to their children in all aspects of growth and development. Since most people in the states in northeastern India are Christians, the church plays a major role in the moral development of children and the style of parenting.

---

[1] The authors would like to thank Rev. Dr. Sebastian Ouseph Parambil for his help in the section on parenting in North East India.

The society at large is conservative and only a minority of parents discuss sex and sex-related topics with their children, Therefore there is a need for including life coping skills in the high school curriculum. Most of the affluent parents send their children to premier institutions in mainland India for higher education. In the rural, poorer communities, parents expect children to contribute to the family income and encourage the children to take up family responsibilities at an early age and therefore schooling and education are given less importance.

## Government of India Programmes that Focus on Improving Parenting Styles in India

The Government of India has launched initiatives to support healthy parenting and early childhood development (ECCD). The Integrated Child Development Scheme started in the year 1975 through the early childhood care centers. Anganwaadis is one such initiative. Parents are instructed on child nutrition, non-formal education, immunization and prevention and management of common childhood illnesses. However the initiatives focus only on early childhood development. There are no programmes as yet to address the issues faced by 7–12 year old children. The Balika Samridhi Yojana (Girls Dedication Scheme) is another scheme to influence parenting styles to value both girls and boys without any discrimination. The initiative aims to improve the enrolment and retention of girls in schools, raise the age of marriage and assist girls to undertake income-generating activities. The Mid-day Meal Scheme in the schools has been supporting children from low socio-economic backgrounds. It has encouraged parents to enroll the children in school and allow them to continue and complete their schooling. "ApniBetiApnaDhan" (My Daughter, My Pride) scheme in the State of Haryana is another Government of India initiative that provides monetary incentives to mothers and girl children to prevent female foeticide and infanticide, promote education for girls and discourage early marriage. The scheme introduced a savings certificate to the mother of a new daughter, and the child can cash it in when she is 18 years old with compound interest. This has led to changes in the parenting style in India by reducing gender discriminatory care practices against girls.

In recent times, there are laws and legislation regulating parental leave after delivery, working hours and working conditions of mothers with recent amendments promoting improved parenting practices. Fathers are also given leave after the delivery of the mother. The law has laid down rules regulating working hours for nursing mothers and improved working conditions.

In summary, parenting style and attitudes in India are influenced by its rich traditions, economic changes, industrialization, governmental policies and many other non-cultural factors.

# References

Aaron, R., Joseph, A., Abraham, S., Muliyil, J., George, K., Prasad, J., Minz, S., Abraham, V. J., & Bose, A. (2004). Suicides in young people in rural Southern India. *Lancet, 363*, 1117–1118.

Abraham, L. (2000). *True-love, time-pass, bhai-behen: Heterosexual relationships among the youth in a metropolis*. Paper presented at the workshop on reproductive health in India: New evidence and issues, Pune.

Farooqi, N. R. (2002). Some aspects of classical sufism. *Islamic Culture, 76*, 1–32.

Karkar, S. (1978). *The inner worlds: A psycho-analytic study of childhood and society in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Mandelbaum, D. G. (1970). *Society in India: Continuity and change: Vol. 1. Part II. Family and kinship relations.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mishra, R. C. (1994). Individualist and collectivist orientations across generations. In U. Kim & H. C. Triandis (Eds.), *Individualism and collectivism: Theory, method, and applications* (pp. 225–238). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Nair, M. K., Rajmohanan, K., Remadevi, S., Nair, S. M., Ghosh, C. S., & Leena, M. L. (2009). Child disciplining practices in Kerala. *Indian Pediatrics, 46*(Suppl), s83–s85.

Patel, A., Badhoniya, N., Khadse, S., Senarath, U., Agho, K. E., & Dibley, M. J. (2010). Infant and young child feeding indicators and determinants of poor feeding practices in India: Secondary data analysis of National Family Health Survey 2005–06. *Food and Nutrition Bulletin, 31*(2), 314–333.

Saraswathi, T. S., & Pai, S. (1997a). Socialization in the Indian context. In H. S. R. Kao & D. Sinha (Eds.), *Asian perspectives on psychology* (pp. 74–92). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Saraswathi, T. S., & Pai, S. (1997b). Socialization between culture and biology: Perspectives on ontogenetic development in the Indian context. In H. S. R. Kao & D. Sinha (Eds.), *Asian perspectives on psychology* (pp. 76–92). New Delhi: Sage.

Singh, S., Manjula, M., & Philip, M. (2012). Suicidal risk and childhood adversity: A study of Indian college students. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry, 5*(2), 154–159. Epub 2012 May 3.

Trommsdorff, G. (1995). Parent-adolescent relations in changing societies: A cross-cultural study. In P. Noack, M. Hofer, & J. Youniss (Eds.), *Psychological responses to social change: Human development in changing environments* (pp. 189–218). Berlin: de Gruyter.

# Parenting in Vietnam

**Tatyana Mestechkina, Nguyen Duc Son, and Jin Y. Shin**

## Geography, History and Economics

Vietnam is a country in Southeast Asia that borders Thailand, China, Laos, and Cambodia. Its area is 331,210 km$^2$ and its population is about 91 million people. Vietnamese climate is tropical in the south and monsoonal in the north, with a hot and rainy season in May-September and a warm and dry season in October-March. There is a low and flat delta in the north and south, while it is hilly in the central highlands and mountainous in the far north and northwest. The country extends 1,650 km north to south but is only 50 km across at its narrowest point. Its natural resources include: phosphates, coal, manganese, rare earth elements, bauxite, chromate, offshore oil and gas deposits, timber and hydropower (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency 2012) (Fig. 1).

Some scholars believe that the country was originally settled in 2000 B.C. Throughout their history, the Vietnamese people have been in contact with many cultures and nations, often in the form of invasions. The Chinese, the French, and the Indian people have had a large influence on Vietnamese culture. Despite this, the Vietnamese have still maintained many of the original traits of their culture such as a sense of community in the villages, local religions, the structure and responsibility between family members and a philosophy of education.

As of 2011, Vietnam's GDP per capita is estimated to be $3,300, with 20 % of its exports going to the United States. Vietnam is considered one of the fastest

T. Mestechkina (✉)
Clinical Psychology, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY, USA
e-mail: tmestech@gmail.com

N.D. Son
Department of Psychology and Education, Hanoi National
University of Education, Hanoi, Vietnam

J.Y. Shin
Department of Psychology, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY, USA

**Fig. 1** Map of Vietnam (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency 2012)

emerging economies in Asia. However, it is still a relatively poor country and, and aside from the war with the U.S., it is less known to the West than China or Japan. The relatively new economic reforms, as well as the struggles of living in a poor country, contribute to some of the challenges that Vietnamese families face.

There have also been trends towards more Western influence. Vietnam is getting more deeply integrated into the modern world. Many values of western culture have become accepted by the younger generation. Some examples include more independent living from parents, less attachment to the family, and less attachment to traditional values. This in turn affects the values and beliefs of the parents. Conflicting ideas develop, as parents want to educate their children about western culture, but also want to retain more traditional family values.

## Parenting

Dimensions that influence parenting include: the parents' beliefs, values, goals and behaviors, the child's characteristics such as temperament (Chen and Luster 2002), and the customs and psychological characteristics of the parents (Boushel 2000; Rosenthal and Roer-Strier 2001). In addition to this, the social system in which a child is raised, including such issues as war, the political climate and policies of multiculturalism and assimilation (Rosenthal 2000), can also influence parenting.

### *Family Structure and Roles*

In Vietnamese families, roles are hierarchical and clearly defined. Fathers tend to be the central figures (Hunt 2005) and are commonly revered. They are ultimately responsible for providing for their family and making family decisions. After the fathers and elderly relatives, the eldest male siblings generally assume the most authority. Fathers' traditional roles differ from mothers'. They tend to play less of a direct role during infancy and young childhood and become more involved during the schooling and adolescent years (Locke et al. 2012). Fathers are also traditionally associated with discipline (Locke et al. 2012). They are the authority figures of the family and other members are expected to obey the requests they make. This is particularly evident in their relationships with their children. Fathers sometimes use physical punishment in order to encourage compliancy.

The mothers are expected to engage in domestic work and childrearing. Mothers are the primary caregivers in Vietnamese families and spend more time with their children and interact more frequently with their children's teachers than do fathers. Mothers are with their children during early infancy until they are at least 2 or 3 years old and again when they approach their teenage years (especially for girls) (Locke et al. 2012). Mothers monitor their children's health, self-care and nutrition. They guide their children's education and help them with their homework. There is

a Vietnamese saying that suggests that if a child is misbehaving, it is the mistake of the mother. However, in more modernized families, both parents are beginning to share the responsibility of ensuring the proper education of their children.

Vietnamese social norms emphasize that a mother should bear a son. In traditional Vietnamese culture, a man's position in the family is higher than the woman's and the son is expected to carry on the family line and the family name. Having more sons is associated with a higher status for the family.

Research suggests that compared to Japan, which is another eastern country with collectivistic ideas, mothers in Vietnam were more likely to report feeling less confident in their parenting skills (Goto et al. 2010). Those who had less confidence reported more negative parenting outcomes than did confident mothers (Goto et al. 2010). A mothers' psychosocial and mental health has been shown to influence the child's growth, nutritional status, and emotional development (Barlow and Coren 2004; Harpham et al. 2005; Patel et al. 2004; Poobalan et al. 2007).

In the West, the nuclear family is very common. In Vietnamese culture, the extended family plays a much more important role in individuals' lives, and there is much more multigenerational interaction. A typical Vietnamese household may include parents, children, daughters-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, and unmarried siblings. Also, the community plays a larger role in peoples' lives, and often they are considered one large extended family. Kinship pronouns are sometimes used even among strangers greeting each other, demonstrating the view that the community is part of the way Vietnamese people conceptualize families (Hunt 2005).

Grandparents play a big role in helping raise children in Vietnam (Locke et al. 2012). Elderly family members are highly valued and respected. Grandparents and other older relatives also play important decision-making roles. If the parents are deceased, the responsibility falls upon the eldest male to provide for the family. In addition to living elderly family members, there is also much respect for the deceased. Children are often responsible to care for and maintain ancestral tombs and all family members are expected to pay homage to ancestral spirits (Hunt 2005).

## New Trends in Family Structure

As a result of economic reforms and more access to western cultures, there have been major changes in Vietnamese family structures. In 1986, when Vietnam embarked on economic liberalization and a transition to market socialism, it had profound effects on the family structure. As a result, there has been migration to cities and industrialized zones for factory work. Many married men and women have been leaving their families in rural areas to go and work, leading to changes in the family structure among low income migrant workers (Summerfield 1997; Resurreccion and Khanh 2007). While this creates obstacles to family life, migrant mothers justify their absences because of the need to provide their children with their basic needs (Locke et al. 2012). As there are clear social norms about the roles of fathers, not being present may become a crisis of masculinity for these fathers

who have to migrate for work (Locke et al. 2012). There are fewer extended families living together, and most of them are in rural areas. Young married people are growing more independent from their parents. The number of nuclear families is increasing.

## Parenting Goals

Parenting goals are objectives that adults have in mind when raising a child. Many parenting goals stem from traditional cultural beliefs. In addition, religion plays a significant role in Vietnamese society which in turn influences parenting values. In Vietnam, both Confucianism and Buddhism have heavily influenced its culture and parenting practices (Hunt 2005). Confucianism has mainly been influential in regard to the overall way of life in Vietnamese society as many life values have been derived from the religion, while Buddhism is the religion more commonly practiced (Hunt 2005). Confucian ideas guide the social roles of men and women in Vietnam (men should be responsible for their country, women should care about their families). Understanding religious practices helps us understand the culture and its effects on parenting styles.

While some Western cultures may see life as linear, Buddhism sees life as cyclical. According to Buddhist beliefs, when people die, their soul is reincarnated and each life cycle begins with a new identity (human or animal). There is also a hierarchy of life forms, with insects at the lowest rung and humans at the highest. Living a life of sin can result in being reincarnated into a lower life form. Living virtuously can break the cycle and lead to reaching Nirvana, a state of ultimate happiness. Living a virtuous life includes living in a way that is honorable to your family and their values. If someone lives a life of evil, their descendants may also be punished by being reincarnated as lower life forms.

A lot of corresponding values such as harmony, duty, honor, respect, education, and allegiance to the family are derived from Confucian ideas and are emphasized heavily in childrearing (Hunt 2005). Harmony is achieved by living according to one's role within the family, creating harmony within oneself and one's family (Hunt 2005). In Vietnam, children are asked what they plan to do to contribute to society when they grow up, and they are expected to stay with their immediate families, even when they marry (Hunt 2005). It is also customary for the wife to move in with the husband's family. To maintain harmony, children are taught to communicate in a modest way through both their speech and their mannerisms and to think before speaking to avoid discord and animosity (Hunt 2005). Also, moderation is considered a component of harmony and individuals are encouraged to avoid extremes and practice harmony in verbal communication, daily life activities, consumption of food and drink and in social interaction (Hunt 2005).

Respect is also a very crucial value in Vietnamese culture and is part of the foundation of Confucianism. Respect to individuals in the community, authority figures and the elderly is expected and there is particular emphasis on showing respect to

the family, particularly to parents. Respect is expressed through both language and demeanor and is earned by leading a virtuous life, fulfilling one's filial and social duties, accomplishing heroic deeds and attaining a high degree of education (Hunt 2005). In addition, in the past, Vietnamese children were taught to avoid direct eye contact with elders and authority figures as this does not convey respect and can mean that they are being challenging. This is not commonly practiced presently. However, when spoken to by an authority figure or elder, children are taught to be quiet, listen and to avoid asking questions as that can be perceived as also being challenging.

The values of honor and duty to one's family are taught at a young age (Hunt 2005). Familial roles are clearly defined and children are expected to behave in a way consistent with these roles and to make necessary sacrifices to honor these roles. Children are encouraged to protect the honor and dignity of the family and are expected to act in a way that avoids losing face or bringing shame to their family. When children act inappropriately, it is seen to reflect not just on them, but on their whole family. Children are taught that it is more important to fulfill their family roles, responsibilities and duties than to fulfill their own desires; they are taught to obey their parents and never to question their authority (Hunt 2005). In addition, there are certain duties that parents have. Besides providing their kids with the basic needs, parents must ensure that their children are educated and develop morals (Hunt 2005). When parents get old, then the duty to take care of them is transferred to the children.

In Vietnam, education is something that has high value (even more so than wealth and success) and parents are expected to make sacrifices in order to provide their children with educational opportunities. Hard work is emphasized and Vietnam has almost a 90 % literacy rate (Hunt 2005). In Vietnam, getting an education comes along with social respect, prestige and the prospect of vertical mobility (Hunt 2005). Proper language use is also seen as a vital way to maintain harmony and show respect (Hunt 2005). However, as educational success is highly valued and parents set high expectations for their children's academic accomplishments, this results in a very competitive environment. Parents can put significant pressure on their children and have a hard time accepting that their child is not living up to their standards.

## Disciplinary Measures

Disciplinary measures in Vietnam reflect attitudes held by parents about which disciplinary tools are appropriate in childrearing. In Vietnam, corporal punishment is a much more accepted disciplinary tool than in most western societies. Research has found that some parents from Southeast Asia actually viewed scolding and physical punishments as expressions of parental love, as they see this as a way to protect their children from dangerous activities (Xiong et al. 2001). However, more recently, Vietnamese parents, particularly younger ones, have begun to re-evaluate this type of punishment. There has been a lot more education and awareness in the

media about the negative consequences of using corporal punishment as a parenting technique. Also, the Vietnamese government has modified their laws to restrict physical violence towards children. Despite these growing trends, some parents still use physical punishment such as spanking and thrashing.

## Other Issues

### *Adolescents and Communication About Sex*

Because of more social and geographic mobility and more access to electronic media, there has been a lot more exposure to western images and ideas, particularly among Vietnamese adolescents. This has had an effect on altering their sexual expectations and expressions (Gammeltoft 2002; Mensch et al. 2003; Ngo et al. 2008; Nguyen and Thomas 2004). There has also been an increased amount of sexual activity and as a result more unwanted pregnancy, abortions, and HIV/AIDS in this age group (Center for Population Studies and Information 2003; Ministry of Health et al. 2005). Despite these increasing risks, parents often avoid communicating with their children and adolescents about issues such as relationships, sexuality and associated health risks. Instead, parents commonly tell their adolescents not to have sex, as they often feel embarrassed about talking about these issues and believe that talking about topics such as contraceptives and pregnancy are not appropriate for adolescents and unmarried youth (Kaljee et al. 2011). Kaljee et al. (2011) have found this embarrassment on both sides. Longstanding beliefs held by parents that talking about sex would lead to sexual experimentation among adolescents, and parents' lack of knowledge emerged as barriers that restricted parent–adolescent sexual communication. Also, because of the high emphasis on education, traditional parents may believe that young adults should not be engaging in sexual relationships until after they complete their education (Kaljee et al. 2008). This can be problematic, as research has found that better communication about sexual concerns between adolescents and parents can delay sexual initiation, reduce the number of sexual partners, and lead to more contraceptive use and fewer unwanted pregnancies (e.g. Casper 1990; Hacker et al. 2000).

### *Parenting Children with Developmental Delays*

When children have developmental delays, parents have increased stress from the care giving burden and from uncertainties about their children's becoming independent adults. Parenting stress among parents of children with developmental delays has been well documented in Western culture, and both Vietnamese mothers and fathers of children with developmental delays also experience elevated stress (Shin and Viet

Nhan 2009; Shin et al. 2006). Traditional gender roles are also reflected in the experience of Vietnamese parents (Shin et al. 2006). Mothers experience more stress than fathers due to the fact that they are usually the main caregivers and financially dependent on their husbands. Mothers were more affected by the child's characteristics (e.g., lower intellectual functioning) and their husband's health. Fathers with lower economic status and a smaller social support network were more stressed than other fathers, suggesting that fathers are more affected by concerns about the family's connection to the wider world and by economic issues, as the main income earners.

In traditional Vietnamese culture as in many other Asian cultures, such as those of Korea, Japan and China, there is a stigma attached to having children with disabilities. Often families hide the fact that their children have disabilities and feel ashamed of having such children (Hunt 2005). Studies show that Vietnamese families of these children are affected by stigma experiences (Ngo et al. 2012; Shin and McDonaugh 2008; D'Antonio and Shin 2009). The more severe the child's intellectual delays are, the less social support parents experience, suggesting restricted interactions with neighbors and extended family members, which makes them experience social strain and exclusion. Often these parents do not receive adequate professional support, due to a shortage of systems and professionals in the field. The changing attitude of the society to include these children and their families as positive members of the society, along with the influence of Western values and the adoption of Western professional practices in the field, is enhancing positive perspectives of parenting among parents of children with developmental issues.

## *Immigration and Acculturation Issues*

Cultural beliefs and expectations play a significant role in child development and in the development of childrearing practices. Some factors influenced by relocation may be the child's physical and social setting, such as the number of people living in a household, gender expectations, and the child care arrangements that parents make for their children, such as whether a child is looked after by a member of the child's extended family or by an unrelated caretaker in a group care setting (Harkness and Super 1992, 1996; Segall et al. 1999). As in many cultures, immigration of Vietnamese parents to different countries has resulted in many acculturation issues.

Wise and da Silva (2007) did a study evaluating differences in parenting among different cultures within Australia. They had found that children of Vietnamese parents who live in Australia (mothers on average of 10.7 years and fathers 15.1 years) valued independence less but compliance more than Anglo/Celtic (dominant culture group) parents in Australia. Vietnamese parents also had later expectations for language development than the Anglo/Celtic parents. Also, Vietnamese parents had earlier expectations for all other aspects of development (except motor development), and thought power assertion was effective more than Somali parents living in Australia. However, both level of education and years of experience in the early

childhood field accounted for differences between Somali and Vietnamese caretakers. One third of Vietnamese mothers in Australia were un-partnered and Vietnamese children were more likely to have mothers under 34 years old than were Somali children.

As some Vietnamese families have immigrated to America, there have been many issues in families that result from parents' keeping their traditional Vietnamese parenting values, while their children might assimilate more into western culture. As Vietnamese-American children enter schools, develop peer relationships and spend time being exposed to American media, they adapt more western, individualistic ideals that might conflict with their families' more traditional, collectivistic views. Adolescents tend to acculturate faster to western culture and retain less of their culture of origin (Kim et al. 2009). This divide has led to Vietnamese-American adolescents' having poorer relationships with their parents (Dinh et al. 1994). The parent-child conflicts have been linked to delinquent behavior (Choi et al. 2008), poorer life satisfaction (Phinney and Ong 2002), and depressive symptomology (Ying and Han 2007) among Vietnamese-American adolescents.

Language may also become a barrier and result in communication difficulties when as adolescents children might lose fluency in their native language while immigrant parents might have difficulties excelling in English (Hwang 2006; Zhou 2001). Southeast Asian adolescents perceived that their parents didn't understand their thoughts and feelings and were overly critical, controlling, and protective, and rarely showed overt affection for them (Xiong and Detzner 2004). This research also found that these adolescents would prefer that their parents be warmer, more supportive, tell them that they loved them, and praise them when they had done something right. Other research suggests that parents that emigrated from Southeast Asia perceive that they show their children love mainly by meeting their physical and material needs (Xiong et al. 2001).

## Conclusion

Traditionally, Vietnamese family roles were very hierarchical and clearly defined, with major involvement from the extended family. The Confucius-derived concepts of harmony, duty, honor, respect, education, and allegiance to the family are prevalent in parenting goals. However, due to more recent economic reform and influence from western culture, we can see major shifts in parenting ideals and practices in Vietnam.

## References

Barlow, J., & Coren, E. (2004). Parent-training programs for improving maternal psychosocial health. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, 1*, CD002020.

Boushel, M. (2000). Childrearing across cultures. In M. Boushel, M. Fawcett, & J. Selwyn (Eds.), *Focus on early childhood: Principles and realities* (pp. 65–77). Oxford: Blackwell Science.

Casper, L. M. (1990). Does family interaction prevent adolescent pregnancy? *Family Planning Perspectives, 22*, 109–114.

Center for Population Studies and Information. (2003). *Adolescent and youth in Vietnam*. Hanoi: Center for Population Studies and Information.

Chen, F., & Luster, T. (2002). Factors related to parenting practices in Taiwan. *Early Child Development and Care, 172*, 413–430.

Choi, Y., He, M., & Harachi, T. W. (2008). Intergenerational cultural dissonance, parent-child conflict and bonding, and youth problem behaviors among Vietnamese and Cambodian immigrant families. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 37*, 85–96.

D'Antonio, E., & Shin, J. Y. (2009). Families of children with intellectual disabilities in Vietnam: Emerging themes. In R. M. Hodapp (Ed.), *International review of research in mental retardation* (pp. 93–123). New York: Academic.

Dinh, K. T., Sarason, B. S., & Sarason, I. G. (1994). Parent-child relationships in Vietnamese immigrant families. *Journal of Family Psychology, 8*, 471–488.

Gammeltoft, T. (2002). Seeking trust and transcendence: Sexual risk-taking among Vietnamese youth. *Social Science & Medicine, 55*, 483–496.

Goto, A., Nguyen, Q. V., Van Nguyen, T. T., Pham, N. M., Chung, T. M. T., Trinh, H. P., Yabe, J., & Yasumura, H. S. S. (2010). Associations of psychosocial factors with maternal confidence among Japanese and Vietnamese mothers. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 19*, 118–127.

Hacker, K. A., Amare, Y., Strunk, N., & Horst, L. (2000). Listening to youth: Teen perspectives on pregnancy prevention. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 26*, 279–288.

Harkness, S., & Super, C. (1992). Parental ethnotheories in action. In I. Sigel, A. McGillicuddy-DeLisi, & L. Goodnow (Eds.), *Parental belief systems: The psychological consequences for children* (2nd ed., pp. 373–392). Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc.

Harkness, S., & Super, C. (Eds.). (1996). *Parents' cultural belief systems: Their origins, expressions and consequences*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Harpham, T., Huttly, S., De Silva, M. J., & Abramsky, T. (2005). Maternal mental health and child nutritional status in four developing countries. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, 59*, 1060–1064.

Hunt, P. C. (2005). An introduction to Vietnamese culture for rehabilitation service providers in the United States. In J. H. Stone (Ed.), *Culture and disability: Providing culturally competent services* (pp. 203–223). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Hwang, W. (2006). Acculturative family distancing: Theory, research, and clinical practice. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training, 43*, 397–409.

Kaljee, L., Tho, L. H., & Riel, R. (2008). *What parents don't know: The "Generation Gap" and reproductive health for Vietnamese adolescents*. Memphis: Society for Applied Anthropology.

Kaljee, L., Green, L. M., Lerdbook, M., Riel, P., Pham, R., Tho, V., & Stanton, B. (2011). Parent-youth communication and concordance between parents and adolescents on reported engagement in social relationships and sexually intimate behaviors. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 48*(3), 268–274.

Kim, B. S. K., Ahn, A. J., & Lam, N. A. (2009). Theories and research on acculturation and enculturation experiences among Asian American families. In N. T. Trinh, Y. C. Rho, F. G. Lu, & K. M. Sanders (Eds.), *Handbook of mental health and acculturation in Asian American families* (pp. 25–43). New York: Humana Press.

Locke, C., Ngan Hoa, N. T., & Thanh Tam, N. T. (2012). Visiting marriages and remote parenting: Changing strategies of rural-urban migrants to Hanoi, Vietnam. *Journal of Development Studies, 48*(1), 10–25.

Mensch, B. S., Clark, W. H., & Dang, N. A. (2003). Adolescents in Vietnam: Looking beyond reproductive health. *Studies of Family Planning, 34*, 249–262.

Ministry of Health, WHO, & UNICEF. (2005). *Survey assessment of Vietnamese youth*. http://www.gso.gov.vn/default_en.aspx?tabid¼4484&idmid¼44&ItemID¼44152. Accessed 20 Dec 2007. From https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vm.html

Ngo, D. A., Ross, M. W., & Ratliff, A. E. (2008). Internet influences on sexual practices among young people in Hanoi, Vietnam. *Culture, Health and Sexuality, 10*, 201–213.

Ngo, H., Shin, J. Y., Nhan, N. V., & Yang, L. (2012). Restriction on social life of families of children with intellectual disabilities in Vietnam. Singapore Medical Journal, 53(7), 451–457.

Nguyen, B. T., & Thomas, M. (2004). Young women and emergent postsocialist sensibilities in contemporary Vietnam. *Asian Study Review, 28*, 133–149.

Patel, V., Rahman, A., Jacob, K. S., & Hughes, M. (2004). Effect of maternal mental health on infant growth in low income countries: New evidence from South Asia. *British Medical Journal, 328*, 820–823.

Phinney, J. S., & Ong, A. D. (2002). Adolescent-parent disagreements and life satisfaction in families from Vietnamese- and European-American backgrounds. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 26*, 556–561.

Poobalan, A. S., Aucott, L. S., Ross, L., Smith, W. C., Helms, P. J., & Williams, J. H. (2007). Effects of treating postnatal depression on mother infant interaction and child development: Systematic review. *British Journal of Psychiatry, 191*, 378–386.

Resurreccion, B. P., & Van Khanh, H. T. (2007). Able to come and go: Reproducing gender in female rural–urban migration in the Red River Delta. *Population Space and Place, 13*, 211–224.

Rosenthal, M. (2000). Home to early childhood service: An ecological perspective. *Childrens Issues, 4*(1), 7–15.

Rosenthal, M., & Roer-Strier, D. (2001). Cultural differences in mothers' developmental goals and ethnotheories. *International Journal of Psychology, 36*(1), 20–31.

Segall, M., Dasen, P., Berry, J., & Poortinga, Y. (1999). *Human behavior in global perspective: An introduction to cross cultural psychology* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Shin, J. Y., & Viet Nhan, N. (2009). Predictors of parenting stress among Vietnamese mothers of young children with and without cognitive delay. *Vietnam Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability, 34*(1), 17–26.

Shin, J. Y., Nhan, N. V., Crittenden, K., Hong, H. T. D., Flory, M., & Ladinsky, J. (2006). Parenting stress of mothers and fathers of young children with cognitive delays in Vietnam. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research, 50*(11), 748–760.

Shin, J. Y., & McDonaugh, R. G. (2008). Types, availability and perception of social support among parents of young children with cognitive delays in Vietnam. *International Journal of Rehabilitation Research, 31*(2), 131–139.

Summerfield, G. (1997). Economic transition in China and Vietnam: Crossing the poverty line is just the first step for women and their families. *Review of Social Economy, 55*(2), 201–214.

U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. (2012). *The World factbook*. Retrieved March 15, 2012.

Wise, S., & da Silva, L. (2007). *Differential parenting of children from diverse cultural backgrounds attending child care*. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Xiong, Z. B., & Detzner, D. F. (2004). Southeast Asian adolescents' perceptions of immigrant parenting practices. *Hmong Studies Journal, 5*, 1–20.

Xiong, Z. B., Detzner, D. F., & Rettig, K. D. (2001). Southeast Asian immigrant parenting practices and perceptions of parent-adolescent conflicts. *Journal of Teaching in Marriage and Family, 1*, 27–48.

Ying, Y., & Han, M. (2007). The longitudinal effect of intergenerational gap in acculturation on conflict and mental health in Southeast Asian American adolescents. *The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 77*, 61–66.

Zhou, M. (2001). Straddling different worlds: The acculturation of Vietnamese refugee children. In R. G. Rumbaut & A. Portes (Eds.), *Ethnicities: Children of immigrants in America* (pp. 187–227). Berkeley: University of California Press.

# Child Rearing in Japan

**Susan D. Holloway and Ayumi Nagase**

## Introduction

Although the Japanese population is among the most highly educated and financially secure in the world, many Japanese citizens express serious concern about the economic and social wellbeing of their nation. Foremost among these concerns is that the family no longer provides the same strong support for young children as it did in earlier decades, when Japanese children's academic achievement and social adjustment were the envy of Western countries. Another prominent concern is the declining birth rate, which plunged to a low of 1.26 in 2005 (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare 2008). In this chapter, we investigate the changing features and functions of the Japanese family to provide some answers to the persistent perception that the Japanese family is in crisis (White 2002). We are particularly interested in the role of fathers, who are frequently characterized as marginal figures in the Japanese family system, particularly when their children are young (Holloway 2010).

In our work, we conceptualize parenting as being shaped by social institutions as well as cultural norms. We begin this chapter with a brief overview of the Japanese government's attempts to address one problem associated with the declining birth-rate, namely men's lack of involvement in parenting and family life. To put these efforts in perspective, we then offer a historical overview of the family in Japan, highlighting the role of government and business interests in defining the role of mother and of father. We conclude the section with an analysis of the most recent policy initiatives designed to help fathers as well as mothers address the important goal of balancing work and family life.

A second important level of influence on families is that of culture, particularly the collective representations—or cultural models—of family life that are available to parents as they engage in rearing their children (Super and Harkness 1997). In the

S.D. Holloway (✉) • A. Nagase
Graduate School of Education, University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA
e-mail: susanholloway@berkeley.edu

second half of this chapter we describe classic studies from the 1970s and 1980s as well as recent research on Japanese child rearing, identifying changes as well as continuity in how Japanese mothers and fathers are raising their children. Of particular interest is how culturally constructed norms of parenting have restricted men's engagement in family life. We conclude with an overview of the steps that policy makers, educators, and other family service providers can take to support Japanese families' ability to nurture their young and provide for the wellbeing of all family members.

## Wanted! More Japanese Babies

At the end of World War II, the average Japanese woman bore 4.5 children in her lifetime. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the birth rate had dropped to 1.3, making Japan one of the least fertile countries in the world (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare 2011). The government projects that in 50 years one in four Japanese citizens will be at least 75 years old. With fewer and fewer employed adults available to replace those that retire, the Japanese economy as well as its social support network are in peril. This crisis has resulted in a plethora of commissioned surveys, studies, and white papers—all designed with the goal of figuring out why the birth rate is so low and offering solutions for remedying the problem (Rosenbluth 2007).

In this chapter, we focus on one particular angle of this analysis: the perception that women are unwilling to have more children because they perceive that men are not sufficiently involved in family life. Many women may prefer to remain single and stay in the workforce for as long as possible rather than marry and face strong pressure to become a stay-at-home mother (Japan Institute for Labor Training Policy and Training 2008).

To address these concerns, the Japanese government is running an active media campaign to encourage a departure from the traditional norm of workaholic men and full-time mothers (Shatil 2010). Numerous public service messages refer to engaged fathers as *ikumen*—a term that combines the Japanese term *ikuji* (*child rearing*) and the English word *men*. The main goal of the government's *ikumen* project is to disseminate parenting tips and lists of community resources for fathers and fathers-to-be. In a sign that the project is making some inroads, business also sees this movement as a potentially promising market, introducing such products as a "dad jacket" equipped with nine pockets for holding baby paraphernalia, diaper bags that coordinate with men's clothing, and cooking lessons designed especially by and for fathers.

Yet, in spite of these government efforts, the majority of Japanese people still uphold the idea that a mother's continuous presence is critical for a child's development during his first 3 years, and Japanese fathers are still not as engaged with their children as are fathers in many other countries (Benesse Educational Research Institute [BERI] 2006a; Holloway 2010). Evidently, a growing awareness

of the importance of paternal involvement paradoxically co-exists with an enduring emphasis on maternal child rearing responsibilities. To understand the basis for this contradiction, we now turn to a brief description of the nation of Japan, followed by an examination of how and when the traditional Japanese family, with its highly gendered view of family roles became established in Japanese history.

## Families and Child Rearing in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Japan

Japan is an archipelago consisting primarily of four mountainous islands. Throughout Japan's history, periods of cultural exchange and imperialist expansion have alternated with periods of relative isolation from other Asian countries and those in the West. As early as the sixth century, contacts with Korea and China resulted in the introduction of Buddhism to Japan, which continues to co-exist in adapted form along with Japanese Shinto beliefs. By the eighth century, Japan had developed into a state governed by an imperial court with a distinctive indigenous culture. Centuries of strife among feudal lords (*samurai*) came to an end in the early 1600s, when the country was united under the rule of a particularly powerful shogun. The subsequent 250 years were characterized by isolation from all forms of foreign exchange.

During this period (referred to as the Edo era), family life among the wealthier classes took the form of an extended household (*ie*), which included the head of the family, his wife and children, and his parents as well as other relatives, servants, lodgers, and apprentices (see Uno 1999 for an overview of Japanese family history). The family was considered primarily an economic unit as well as a means of maintaining family continuity by honoring ancestors and producing descendants. Husbands and wives were not viewed as being romantic partners, and typically marriages were arranged in support of the economic position and social status of the *ie*.

During the Edo era, young married women in wealthy households were expected to take care of their husbands and mothers-in-law. They were not entrusted with the exclusive care of their children, who were considered to belong to the *ie*. Fathers were expected to take responsibility for training and educating their children, particularly the boys. Japanese fathers in the pre-modern era were sometimes described as something to fear (along with earthquakes and fire) although other writings suggest that they were never powerful members of the family circle (Azuma 1986). In families of more humble means, child rearing was a community-based enterprise in which childcare was distributed not only across members of the immediate family but also across inhabitants of the village (Imano 1988). Thus, the modern Japanese emphasis on mothers as the only appropriate caregivers of their children was *not* based on culturally-based tradition, as some might think, but was rather a departure from the norms that had held sway in Japan in previous centuries.

In 1854, the American navy commander Matthew Perry forced Japan to open its ports to foreign trade, ending Japan's period of extended isolation. As Japan began its transition to a modern democratic state, government officials sought to break the

influence of the shogun and feudal states. They accomplished this objective in part by reviving, in slightly altered form, certain cultural norms pertaining to the centrality of the family. Government officials viewed the extended family household as an effective metaphor to illustrate the importance of the new "family state"; they tried to emphasize the rule of the family by a patriarch, with other family members relating to the patriarch on the basis of social position and gender (White 2002). Fathers were increasingly defined in terms of their ability to support the family financially, and mothers as those who performed the caring and domestic work. The term *good wives, wise mothers* (*ryosai kenbo*) was coined to convey the notion that women should cease participating in civic and breadwinning activities, and were best suited to focus exclusively on the family (Kojima 1996).

As contact between Japan and Western countries increased during the late 1800s and early 1900s, government policy makers, the media, and Christian organizations all made attempts to shape the Japanese family according to their own goals and ideals. Japanese government officials attempted to graft Western scientific principles onto basic Japanese values. At the same time, Christian missionaries—aided by the Japanese media—were encouraging Japanese families to adopt Western values of family life and child rearing. This shift included a redefinition of the home as an educational environment for children, with the modern housewife playing the role of manager and instructor (Sand 2003). During this period, the media began using the term *bosei-ai* (*maternal love*) and characterizing it as distinctive and critical to children's development (Kashiwagi 2008).

During this time of cultural transition, men were still considered to be active participants in family life. For instance, elementary textbooks used by boys and girls alike contained a passage containing instructions on how to change a diaper. Some family professionals during the early nineteenth century defined the ideal family as one in which the father was caring and the mother was strict (Fukaya 2008). Furthermore, the economic realities of most families dictated that mothers engage in the workplace, and indeed their labor was crucial to the ongoing nation-building project, as indicated by the national government's support for child care centers well into the 1930s (Uno 1999). However, with the onset of World War II, family roles underwent further redefinition and polarization as men's military responsibilities kept them far from home. The image of a strict, remote father was increasingly emphasized, while mothers were expected to take full responsibility for taking care of family matters (Fukaya 2008; Kashiwagi 2008).

This polarizing trend continued after the war's end as the economy shifted from agriculture to the manufacturing and service industries. The new economy relied on a reliable workforce of full-time employees, and government officials hoped that women would devote their energies to supporting men who could participate in this labor force (Fukaya 2008). And as schooling became the major sorting mechanism to select suitable workers, mothers were also expected to provide a supportive environment conducive to children's academic progress (Allison 1996). All told, these domestic demands became increasingly incompatible with women's full-time participation in the work place.

After the war, the American occupying army assisted in the creation of a democratic state featuring a bicameral parliament structure called the Diet, which has the power to designate the prime minister. Although Diet members are democratically elected, the government has been closely aligned with corporate interests throughout the modern period. In the eyes of some observers, this close alliance has been detrimental to the welfare of women, particularly in terms of their employment opportunities, as they have been viewed primarily as homemakers and as a cheap source of temporary labor that can be hired or laid off according to the needs of industry.

In the early 1960s, the Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda introduced various policies to promote women's role as homemaker, and commissioned several reports about the importance of early education and the maternal-child bond during the first 3 years of life. Feminist historians argue that government officials and the mass media employed at that time various ideological devices to convey a strong image of motherhood to the young workers who were leaving their hometowns for life in Tokyo and other big cities (Kayama 2010). For instance, the government promoted a popular song called *Kaasan no uta* [Song of a Mom], which extolled the virtues of a mother who stayed up late at night to knit a pair of mittens for her child.

During the 1970s, as educational achievement became increasingly important in determining professional advancement for young men, mothers experienced increased pressure to be exclusively engaged in rearing and supporting their children's development and academic skills. In addition to promoting study at home, mothers were required to support the growing industry of test preparation schools that provided after-school lessons for children in middle and high school. Mothers were also expected to maintain their children's mental health and motivation to study under these stressful conditions (Allison 1991, 1996).

For a brief period in the 1980s, it appeared as if the gender role constraints and associated restrictions on women's involvement in the workplace might be giving way to greater equality between men and women. The economy was booming, and young women were increasingly likely to pursue higher education. Compared with the previous decade, fewer women expressed a sense of fulfillment in the role of full-time housewife, and more sought to remain employed even after marrying and having children (Kashiwagi 2008).

However, the trend toward equality began to erode in the early 1990s. The national birth rate hit 1.57, the lowest rate ever recorded in Japan. Around the same time, the Japanese economic bubble burst, creating a national sense of malaise and anxiety about the future. Left-leaning Japanese analysts sought to address these problems by moving toward greater gender equality at home and in the workplace, while more conservative commentators and politicians began a campaign to revive what they described as the Japanese tradition of gendered family responsibilities (Shirahase 2007).

In 1994, the government implemented the Angel Plan to address the problems that mothers and fathers were having in terms of the work-family balance. The plan was intended to provide more child care for working families and to effect

workplace reforms. The plan was subsequently revised in 1999 to address critics' contention that the first plan was largely symbolic and contained few concrete initiatives. While some observers appreciated the government's willingness to recognize these social issues, most note that the goals of the Angel Plan still have not been fully implemented and assert that the plan has resulted in little change (Fujisaki and Ohinata 2010).

Throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century, the birth rate continued to go down, reaching a record low of 1.26 in 2005 (Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare 2008; 2010). A highly touted Child Care Leave and Family Care Leave Law, which was intended to make it possible for men to take paternity leave, had little effect on men's involvement at work (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare 2005). And, contradicting some of the official "family friendly" rhetoric, many government officials continued to assert that the family was "the foundation of a child's future" and to argue that parents—rather than teachers or other caregivers—had exclusive responsibility for a child's moral and cognitive development (Honda 2008). The ambivalence that permeated government policy during this period was also characteristic of the public at large. A national survey administered by the Japanese Cabinet Office revealed that 80 % of surveyed adults believed that mothers should stay home to take care of their children, even as increasing numbers of women expressed a desire to remain in the workplace while their children were young (Kashiwagi 2008).

Some concrete changes began to occur in 2009, when the newly elected liberal government developed a comprehensive and vigorous plan for supporting the welfare of parents and children (Fujisaki and Ohinata 2010). Called The New Vision for Children and Parenting (*Kodomo Kosodate Vision*), it funded neighborhood-based child care centers offering extended hours as well as care for sick children, and created an extensive network of afterschool programs for elementary school children. This comprehensive initiative reflected the government's view that child rearing was not just a mother's responsibility but one that should be borne by the society as a whole (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare 2011). More recently the government revised the anemic Childcare Leave Law to strengthen its protection of the right of all workers to take child care leave upon the birth of a child (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare 2010; 2011).

It is still too early to tell whether these policies will have the desired effect of boosting the birth rate. Surveys conducted at the beginning of the new administration suggest that a growing number of Japanese men were trying to be more visible in their family lives, and one third of men indicated an interest in taking paternity leave or working flexible hours when family needs arise (Nissei Life Insurance Research Institute 2009). While less than 2 % took such a leave in 2009 (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare 2010; 2011), it is possible that more will continue to do so if the government maintains its commitment to these family-friendly policies.

The possibilities for women's employment also hinge on the future of the Japanese economy. Throughout the past half century, corporate policies have guaranteed lifetime employment in a single institution, but many companies are moving toward a merit-based system in which tenure is based on productivity, and

movement from one company to another is accepted. This may create more opportunities for women, whose employment is more likely to be intermittent as they take time to bear and rear their children (Rosenbluth 2007).

We now turn to an examination of how Japanese parents socialize and educate their young children. Our primary focus is on the collective representations—or cultural models—of family life that are available to parents in Japan.

## Japanese Child Rearing: Then and Now

In any community, adults have certain beliefs about what it means to be a good person. All parents hope to help their children develop the attributes of a good person, as conceptualized within their community. Parents interact with their children on the basis of cultural models of child rearing (Quinn and Holland 1987; Super and Harkness 1997). These cultural models include beliefs and practices that may be passed down from one generation to the next, but that may also be adapted as parents' circumstances change and call for new approaches (Gjerde 2004). In our view, cultural models are conceptual tools that are available for parents who wish to use them but that are not necessarily accepted by all members of the community. Thus, it is important to examine ways in which cultural models are adapted and contested, as well as ways in which they are adopted (Holloway 2000). In the case of Japan, there may be more homogeneity than in most countries, due to the fact that Japan has sharply restricted immigration and does not have the racial and ethnic diversity of the US or Western Europe.

To understand how Japanese children are socialized, it is helpful to know how parents view the basic nature of the child. Some scholars approach this task by connecting societal views about human nature to the religious or philosophical traditions predominant in a particular community (LeVine et al. 1994). It has been argued that, for example, that in the United States, it is possible to trace parents' use of corporal punishment to Calvinism and its focus on the notion of original sin. Parents who believe that children are innately predisposed to having a sinful nature may think that children need strict discipline to "beat the Devil out of them" (Jolivet 1997). In contrast to this forbidding vision of human nature, the Confucian ideology that has deeply affected Japanese society emphasizes the essential moral rectitude of the child. Parents who have been shaped by these Confucian beliefs may be more likely to feel the need to nurture these qualities and protect children from the corrupting influence of civilization (Kojima 1986; Yamamura 1986).

This benign view of children's essential nature is compatible with the Japanese acceptance of children's dependence on indulgent care from their mothers, a relationship dynamic referred to as *amae* (Behrens 2004). Psychiatrist Takeo Doi (2002/1973) first brought the notion of *amae* to the attention of Japanese and Western observers, characterizing it as the primary dynamic operating in the Japanese mother-infant relationship which in turn serves as a prototype for subsequent relationships later in life (e.g., the relationship of employee and employer). According to Doi, the

**Photo 1** Photograph of a mother and daughter in 1978



need to receive and to give this type of nurturance is not necessarily a sign of immaturity or self-indulgence. Doi's construal of *amae* helped to crystallize Japanese perceptions of the nature of social relations in their country (Borovoy 2005).

Studies from the 1960s and beyond suggest that this close, nurturing bond between mother and child was achieved in part by maintaining close physical proximity (sometimes referred to in Japan as "skinship") with the infant (Caudill and Plath 1966). In those days, Japanese mothers most often carried their babies in slings or backpacks, although they are now more likely to make use of strollers. Comparative studies suggest that Japanese mothers are more likely than those from the West to feed their infants on demand and soothe them quickly when they are in distress, and are less apt to engage in verbal interactions or other forms of stimulation (Azuma 1994; Caudill and Plath 1966). This level of responsiveness occurs at night as well, as co-sleeping has been the norm in Japan for centuries, and persists among most families in contemporary times (National Women's Education Center of Japan [NWECJ] 2005) (Photo 1).

As children move beyond infancy, their parents usually begin to teach them more explicitly the dispositions and skills that they need to get along with others in their community. Japanese parents have typically placed particular emphasis on the importance of developing smooth interpersonal relationships and wish for their children to become skillful in interacting with others (Hess et al. 1980). To that end, mothers try to nurture such qualities as kindness (*yasashisa*), empathy (*omoiyari*), sensitivity (*sensai*), and politeness (*reigi tadashii*) in their children, and help them learn to avoid bothering others (*meiwaku kakenai youni*) and to fit into society

(Holloway 2010; White and LeVine 1986). While studies of fathers' goals for children are relatively rare, some evidence suggests that they hold similar expectations as the mothers (Shwalb et al. 1997).

Contrary to what one might assume, this focus on social responsiveness doesn't mean that mothers want their children to be extremely submissive. The ideal child is sometimes described as *sunao*, a term that connotes a happy receptiveness to adult guidance (White and LeVine 1986). Children who are *sunao* are likely to be considerate of others, not because they are being forced to do so, but because they understand why considerateness is important and because it gives them a sense of pleasure to treat others well. Furthermore, mothers often prefer that their children have a lively and upbeat personality, even to the point of being mischievous or even rebellious. For example, in one survey when parents of 5 year olds were asked what they wanted their child to be like as teenagers, they most often mentioned being able to state his/her own opinions and have his/her own goals in life, along with being able to work harmoniously with other people and to be helpful toward others (NWECJ 2005).

Some surveys find gender differences in the attributes that mothers consider as desirable in their children. A survey by Benesse (BERI 2008) found that most mothers wanted their children, whether they were boys or girls, to greet others appropriately, take care of their own affairs, and get along with friends. Mothers of girls tended to place more emphasis than mothers of boys on not using bad language and helping with the housework while mothers of boys were more focused on getting their children to play outside and not to play with video games (both higher for boys). The evidence that these gender-based expectations are still strongly endorsed by Japanese parents indicates the difficulty faced by the government in its attempts to promote more egalitarian work and parenting roles.

Although early studies described Japanese parents as intensely education-oriented (e.g., Stevenson and Stigler 1992), contemporary Japanese parents are less focused on their children's academic achievement are their counterparts in other Asian countries. In one recent study of parents in Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing, Shanghai, and Taipei, parents in Tokyo placed far less importance on their children's learning than did parents in the other cities (BERI 2010). Comparisons to parents in Western countries yield similar findings. In the International Comparative Research (2005) survey, only 11.9 % of the Japanese parents strongly expected their children to get good grades in school (as compared with over 70 % in the US and France) (NWECJ 2005).

In order to develop these social skills in their children, Japanese parents tend to avoid direct conflict with their children. Comparative work by Hess and Azuma conducted in the 1970s found that while American mothers were not hesitant to confront their preschool-aged children if they misbehaved, Japanese mothers tended to avoid it for fear of embarrassing their children (Hess et al. 1980). These researchers found that rather than punish children or use other forms of power assertion, the Japanese mothers tended to call their children's attention to the consequences of misbehavior, and often stimulated their sense of empathy by pointing out the emotional repercussions on other people or even on inanimate objects.

In a powerful example of this strategy, Hess and colleagues describe a mother who told them that if her child were to draw on his wall she would tell him that the wall felt sad because it didn't look nice anymore (Conroy et al. 1980). These scholars have described the Japanese process of learning appropriate social behavior as a matter of osmosis rather than direct tuition (Hess and Azuma 1991).

Another socialization strategy used by many Japanese mothers is to prioritize the child's understanding of the reasons for doing something, as opposed to simply requiring obedience. Research conducted in the 1950s and 1960s indicated that Japanese parents stress the importance of *wakaraseru* (having the child understand), believing that compliance without a willing desire on the part of the child was of little or no value (Holloway 2010). To gain the child's understanding, mothers are careful to explain the reasons that good behavior is necessary (as we saw in the example involving a child defacing a wall). They also take a long-term view, tolerating imperfect compliance in the short run as they carefully work on helping a child see the reasons for good behavior.

Yet another parenting technique used by many Japanese mothers to socialize their children without engaging in a power struggle is called *mimamoru* (Holloway 2010). The term *mimamoru* can be translated as "watching over" or "looking on from a distance". The intention of this strategy is to allow the child to learn through the consequences of his or her actions rather than by the mother's responses. For example, if a child refuses to share a toy with a playmate and two begin squabbling, the mother may watch rather than intervene. At a later point, she may initiate a brief discussion, asking what happened or inquiring as to how the playmate might have felt when he or she was not able to play with the toy. *Mimamoru* has also been identified as a strategy used by preschool teachers and others who work with young children (Bamba and Haight 2011; Tobin et al. 2009).

While these indirect forms of socialization are highly valued by many parents, they may in fact engage in more power assertive forms of discipline in some cases. In an international comparison of parents in Japan, Korea, Thailand, the US, France, and Sweden, the Asian parents were much more likely to endorse corporal punishment than were the parents from Western countries. In Japan, three quarters of the respondents thought it was "OK to hit a child as long as you do it with love," whereas one third or fewer endorsed this practice in the US, France, and Sweden (NWECJ 2005; see also Miller 2009). Fathers as well as mothers appear to engage in corporal punishment, although fathers are more likely to direct this form of punishment to sons than to daughters (BERI 2006b).

It is also important to realize that even if parents endorse the use of indirect forms of socialization, they may not be able to maintain this level of equanimity in stressful situations. For example, in a survey of 116 mothers of preschool aged children, one third of the respondents reported spanking their children, with many of these indicating that they did so only when they were tired or when other methods had failed to achieve good results (Holloway 2010).

In general, these findings about corporal punishment remind us to avoid assuming that all parents share the same goals and engage in the same culturally sanctioned behaviors, even within a relatively homogenous country like Japan. Although

contemporary Japanese parents may have been exposed to certain values and practices, they may or may not adopt them depending on their own beliefs and their own experiences, personalities, and goals. In other words, they do not mindlessly enact cultural practices but rather can be said to exert agency in how they interpret and apply them. They may accept them, reject them, or adapt them to their own circumstances. Thus, change, variability, and contestation are all part of the dynamics of parenting in Japan as in any other society (Gjerde 2004; Holloway 2000).

## Fathers

As we emphasized earlier in this chapter, parenting in pre-war Japan did not have the highly gendered character that it took on after the war, in part due to government programs pushing women out of the workplace and into the home. Additionally, the post-war cultural ideas about early care that were popularized in the 1960s and 1970s—which emphasized physical proximity and emotional sensitivity—pushed mothers to the forefront, and left relatively little room for fathers in terms of interacting with their infants and young children (Borovoy 2005).

Even if they were not as fear-inspiring as legend describes, it is clear that corporal punishment and other strict discipline techniques were frequently used in the early and mid twentieth century, particularly by fathers (Wagatsuma 1978). In their survey of 1,147 couples, Shwalb et al. (1997) found that few adults remembered their fathers as having played with them when they were children, and most perceived that their fathers viewed work and parenting as equally important (whereas they themselves ranked being a father as more important than being a worker). In-depth interviews with a small sample of women suggest that contemporary adults remember their own fathers as strict, or even frightening (*kowai*) men who often relied on corporal punishment (Holloway 2010). According to these informants, mothers in previous generations often played the role of intermediary or buffer, protecting a young child from the father's violent treatment (Photo 2).

Contemporary Japanese fathers may have become more involved in recent years, but they are still less likely than men in other countries to indicate a strong interest in parenting. In the International Comparative Research (NWECJ 2005) study, Japanese fathers were far more likely that those in the Western countries to indicate that they wished to prioritize work over child rearing. Fewer than 10 % of Japanese fathers indicated that child rearing should take precedence over their work, while 64 % preferred to balance the two equally, and 29 % preferred to focus on work. In contrast, the fathers in the US tended to give priority to balancing the two equally, and only 5 % gave work precedence. In Sweden, only 1 % of fathers gave work precedence, while 52 % wished for a balance, and 47 % gave precedence to child rearing (NWECJ 2005).

Japanese fathers also have a relative narrow view of what it means to be a father. In one study, only one third thought that interacting with their children was an

**Photo 2** Photo of a father
and daughter in 1978



important part of the paternal role. Most of the respondents viewed provision of emotional support to the mother as the chief activity of being a father (Shwalb et al. 1997). Similar findings emerged from two studies conducted by the Benesse Corporation (BERI 2011) in which half of the fathers of young children said they wanted to be more involved in playing with their children but relatively few indicated that they wanted to bathe their children more frequently, engage in more disciplinary actions, provide more routine care (e.g., put to bed), or perform more of the housework.

A final piece of evidence concerning fathers' preferences and goals suggests that they have relatively little motivation to push for change in the workplace. One study indicated that they are less likely than Korean or American fathers to say that work prevents them from spending enough time with their families, even though they work an average of 6 h a week longer than American fathers, and the same amount as those in Korea (NWECJ 2005). When asked specifically about their willingness to take time off from work to care for a newborn child, Japanese men express some interest in doing so (BERI 2006b). When asked what sorts of changes might make it more possible for them to take a leave after the birth of a child, they suggested reducing the number of work hours (55 %), creating and enforcing a policy of legal mandatory child care leave (46 %), permitting telecommuting (45 %), and covering the employee's entire salary during the period of child care leave (44 %). The same changes would also make it possible for Japanese women to envision the possibility of working and having a family.

**Photo 3**  Photo of a contemporary father

Given this evidence that Japanese men do not express a strong determination to become more fully engaged as fathers, it is not surprising to find that they are indeed less involved in family life than fathers in most other countries. In a study by the National Women's Education Center (2005), Japanese men spent 3.3 h per day with children aged 4–6, less than fathers in all the other countries in the study, including Thailand (5.7 h), US (4.4 h), France (3.6 h), and Sweden (4.5 h). A study comparing fathers living in Tokyo with those in other Asian countries found that only 18 % of fathers in Tokyo said they played almost every day with their young children compared to 28 % in Seoul, 40 % in Beijing, and 40 % in Shanghai (BERI 2006a). A study comparing fathers in Japan and the US found that Japanese fathers were less likely to talk to, eat dinner with, do homework with, and engage in recreation with their 10–15 year old children than were fathers in the United States (Ishii-Kuntz 1994).

While Japanese fathers may not have changed in terms of the amount of time they spend interacting with their children, it is possible that they have become less strict and more gentle than fathers in earlier generations. A survey of 380 middle school aged children found that fathers spent relatively little time with their children compared to Americans (Bankart and Bankart 1985). But these children had an idealized and positive image of their father. Almost all the respondents described their father as strong, and three quarters indicated that he liked to make them laugh. Only one third of the children characterized their father as easy to anger (Photo 3).

Although we have focused in this section on the extent to which parental goals drive their behavior with their children, we should also recall from our earlier discussion of social institutions that parents' behaviors are affected by government policies and workplace conditions. Certainly, the long hours that many Japanese

companies expect of their employees, coupled with mandatory socializing after work and lengthy commute times all contribute to fathers' limited presence in the home. A study of 442 Japanese couples with a preschool age child found that fathers were more involved in the care of their preschool child (play, bathe, take to child care, eat dinner with) when their work hours were shorter, when their wives were employed, when the household included fewer adults, and when they had more children (Ishii-Kuntz et al. 2004). Thus, it appears that fathers are willing to take more time to interact with their children if they are not working as many hours.

## Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, we have portrayed the complex ways in which parenting is affected by social institutions as well as by cultural norms. The case of Japan is particularly interesting because it experienced three sharp shocks during the modern period that resulted in drastic changes in these institutions and their attempts to influence family life. The first shock occurred subsequent to 1868, when Japan emerged from a 250-year period of isolation to become immersed in a wave of Western ideas about marriage, parenting, and education. Then it experienced nearly utter destruction during World War II, and was subsequently required to revamp its major institutions and ways of living. And third, it moved in less than three decades from severe poverty to a comfortable level of affluence for nearly all its citizens.

Our analysis shows that the government intentionally manipulated the roles of men and women in the service of nation building at each of these inflection points. In some cases, they appealed to a sense of national identity by elaborating cultural models that were long forgotten or had never been powerful in the first place. Thus, we wish to argue that what appears to be purely "cultural" in terms of family life may be a conscious attempt by government officials to shape what it means to be a "traditional" Japanese father or mother.

One result of all the economic, legal, and structural changes that Japan has experienced is that the role of father changed radically from the pre-modern to the modern period. Whereas fathers were originally viewed as the primary educator of their children (especially boys), they are now considered relatively peripheral. At this point in Japan's history, the government would again like to shape the role of the father, this time in the direction of being more rather than less engaged. However, their efforts have not been particularly successful to date. Japanese men do not seem to be expressing a strong desire to detach from the workplace and move closer to the family.

It may also be necessary to address certain underlying culturally based beliefs about the basic nature of children, and what constitutes an optimal child rearing environment. While there are certainly regional and individual differences, it is clear that many Japanese mothers place a high value on the development of empathy and sensitivity in their children, and appreciate the attainment of a "normal" life rather than one characterized by outstanding achievement. To achieve these goals,

they try to create a harmonious relationship with their children, maintaining close physical proximity, responding sensitively to children's needs, and reacting relatively mildly to misbehavior.

Theoretically, other adults besides the mother could engage in this type of responsive caregiving. And, indeed, many outside observers have noted the skill with which many preschool and child care teachers care for children in group settings (Holloway 2000; Lewis 1995; Peak 1991; Tobin et al. 2009). But as we have seen, the ideology of care in Japan has been closely and exclusively linked to the biological role of mother for the last 60 years or so, when the notion of mother's love began to be promoted as an elixir necessary for promoting children's optimal development. The idea that mothers are biologically primed to feel more intense love for their children and to know intuitively how to care for them effectively bars others from taking on primary responsibility for child care.

Given their overall acceptance of playing a minor role in family life, fathers are unlikely to be the catalyst for ideological change on these issues. And the powerful role of conservative politicians and business leaders has consistently undermined the government's efforts to change workplace policies. Ultimately, the most powerful impetus for change on the part of Japanese men may have to come from Japanese women. Many of them are currently "running for the exits" (Schoppa 2006), opting out of family life rather than trying to change the conditions that make the work/family balance impossible to attain. In the future, women may make stronger demands for work place equality but it is also likely that changes will occur in a less dramatic way as peer-led parenting groups, on-line discussions, and other forums help women to clarify their own values and identify opportunities for change in their own lives (Holloway 2010). The challenge of finding ways that men and women can both find a satisfying balance of work and family life may be a universal feature of modern life; the means for resolving this challenge are individual and political as well as cultural.

# References

Allison, A. (1991). Japanese mothers and obentos: The lunch-box as ideological state apparatus. *Anthropological Quarterly, 64*, 195–208.

Allison, A. (1996). Producing mothers. In A. E. Imamura (Ed.), *Re-imaging Japanese women* (pp. 135–155). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Azuma, H. (1986). Why study child development in Japan. In H. Stevenson, H. Azuma, & K. Hakuta (Eds.), *Child development and education in Japan* (pp. 3–12). New York: W.H. Freeman.

Azuma, H. (1994). *Nihonjin no shitsuke to Kyoiku* [Japanese ways of education and discipline]. Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai.

Bamba, S., & Haight, W. L. (2011). *Child welfare and development: A Japanese case study*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bankart, C. P., & Bankart, B. (1985). Japanese children's perceptions of their parents. *Sex Roles, 13*, 679–690.

Behrens, K. (2004). A multifaceted view of the concept of amae: Reconsidering the indigenous Japanese concept of relatedness. *Human Development, 47*, 1–27.

Benesse Educational Research Institute. (2006a). *Basic survey on young children's daily lives and parents' childrearing in five East Asian cities: Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing, Shanghai, and Taipei.* Retrieved June 12, 2008, from www.childresearchnet/RESOURCE/RESEARCH/2006/ASIAN.HTM

Benesse Educational Research Institute. (2006b). *The first report on Japanese fathers' views on childrearing.* Retrieved June 12, 2008, from www.childresearchnet/RESOURCE/DATA/SPECIAL/FATHER/index.html

Benesse Educational Research Institute. (2008). *First time parenting.* Research report retrieved June 12, 2008, from http://www.childresearchnet/RESOURCE/DATA/SPECIAL/PARENTING/PART1.html

Benesse Educational Research Institute. (2010). *Yoji no seikatsu ankeito: Higashi asia 5 toshi chosa* [The survey of young children's life styles across five Asian cities]. Retrieved June 6, 2011, from http://www.benesse.co.jp/jisedaiken/research/research_13.html

Benesse Educational Research Institute. (2011). *Wishing to be ikumen: The ideal and reality of young Japanese fathers.* Retrieved July 20, 2012, from Child Research Net: http://www.childresearch.net/data/ec/2011_01.html

Borovoy, A. (2005). *The too-good wife: Alcohol, codependency, and the politics of nurturance in postwar Japan.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Caudill, W., & Plath, D. (1966). Who sleeps by whom? Parent-child involvement in urban Japanese families. *Psychiatry, 29,* 344–366.

Conroy, M., Hess, R., Azuma, H., & Kashiwagi, K. (1980). Maternal strategies for regulating children's behavior: Japanese and American families. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Studies, 11,* 153–172.

Doi, T. (2002). *The anatomy of dependence.* Tokyo: Kodansha International. (Originally published in English in 1973)

Fujisaki, M., & Ohinata, M. (2010). *Ikuji no naka deno Rinsyo hattatsu shien* [Clinical support for parenting]. Tokyo: Minerva Shobo.

Fukaya, M. (2008). *Chichioya- Hyaku no Ikikata* [Mothers' lives, fathers' lives]. Tokyo: Chuo Koron Sha.

Gjerde, P. (2004). Culture, power, and experience: Toward a person-centered cultural psychology. *Human Development, 47*(3), 138–157.

Hess, R., & Azuma, H. (1991). Cultural support for schooling: Contrasts between Japan and United States. *Educational Researcher, 20,* 2–8.

Hess, R. D., Kashiwagi, K., Azuma, H., Price, G. G., & Dickson, W. P. (1980). Maternal expectations for mastery of developmental tasks in Japan and the United States. *International Journal of Psychology, 15,* 259–271.

Holloway, S. (2000). *Contested childhood: Diversity and change in Japanese preschools.* London/New York: Routledge.

Holloway, S. D. (2010). *Women and family in contemporary Japan.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Honda, Y. (2008). *Katei kyoiku no airo* [Pressure for Home education]. Tokyo: Keiso Shobo.

Imano, N. (1988). *Edo kosodate jijo* [Child rearing during Edo period]. Tokyo: Tsukiji Shokan.

Ishii-Kuntz, M. (1994). Paternal involvement and perception toward fathers' roles: A comparison between Japan and the United States. *Journal of Family Issues, 15,* 30–48.

Ishii-Kuntz, M., Makino, K., Kato, K., & Tsuchiya, M. (2004). Japanese fathers of preschoolers and their involvement in child care. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 66,* 779–791.

Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training. (2008). *Kosodatego no josei no saishushoku: Kadai to sono kaiketsu* [Reentry to job market for women after having a child: issues and solutions]. Tokyo: Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training.

Jolivet, M. (1997). *Japan: The childless society?* (A. Glasheen, Trans.). London/New York: Routledge.

Kashiwagi, K. (2008). *Kodomo ga sodatsu joken: Kazoku shinrigaku kara kangaeru* [Conditions for raising a child: Perspectives from family psychology]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.

Kayama, R. (2010). *Haoya ha naze ikizuraika?* [Why is it so hard to be a mother?]. Tokyo: Kodansha, Gendai shinto.

Kojima, H. (1986). Child rearing concepts as a belief-value system of the society and the individual. In H. Stevenson, H. Azuma, & K. Hakuta (Eds.), *Child development and education in Japan* (pp. 39–54). New York: W.H. Freeman.

Kojima, H. (1996). Japanese concepts of child development from the mid-17th to mid-19th century. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 9*, 315–329.

LeVine, R. A., Dixon, S., LeVine, S., Richman, A., Leiderman, P. H., Keefer, C. H., & Brazelton, T. B. (1994). *Child care and culture: Lessons from Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lewis, C. C. (1995). *Educating hearts and minds: Reflections on Japanese preschool and elementary education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Miller, A. (2009). Taibatsu: 'Corporal punishment' in Japanese socio-cultural context. *Japan Forum, 21*, 233–254.

Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare. (2005). *Introduction to the revised Child Care and Family Care Leave Law.* Retrieved August 10, 2012, from http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/affairs/dl/05.pdf

Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare. (2008). *Effective April 1 2007 scope of coverage for the child allowance system will expand*. Retrieved October 21, 2008, from http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/child-support/index.html

Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare. (2010). *Kosei Rodo hakusho* [Annual report of welfare and labor]. Retrieved June 5, 2012, from http://www.mhlw.go.jp/wp/hakusyo/kousei/10/.html

Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare. (2011). *The situation of working women*. Retrieved July 21, 2012, from http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/koyoukintou/josei-jitsujo/10.html

National Women's Education Center of Japan [NWECJ]. (2005). *International comparative research on "Home Education" 2005 – Survey on children and the family life*. Retrieved August 7, 2012, from http://www.nwec.jp/en/publish/page02.html

Nissei Life Insurance Research Institute. (2009). *Kongo no shigoto to katei no ryoritsu shien ni kansuru chosa* [Research report on work-life balance]. Retrieved May 30, 2011, from Nissei Life Insurance Research institute: http://www.mhlw.go.jp/houdou/2008/05/h0520-1.html

Peak, L. (1991). *Learning to go to school in Japan: The transition from home to preschool life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Quinn, N., & Holland, D. (1987). Culture and cognition. In D. Holland & N. Quinn (Eds.), *Cultural models in language and thought* (pp. 3–42). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rosenbluth, F. M. (2007). The political economy of low fertility. In F. M. Rosenbluth (Ed.), *The political economy of Japan's low fertility* (pp. 3–36). Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Sand, J. (2003). *House and home in modern Japan: Architecture, domestic space and bourgeois culture 1880–1930*. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center.

Schoppa, L. J. (2006). *Race for the exits: The unraveling of Japan's system of social protection*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Shatil, B. (2010). *Japan urges more dads to swap desks for diapers.* Retrieved May 30, 2012, from Business and Financial News, Reuters: http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/06/30/us-japan-fathers-idUSTRE65T1CY20100630

Shirahase, S. (2007). Women's economic status and fertility: Japan in cross-national perspective. In F. M. Rosenbluth (Ed.), *The political economy of Japan's low fertility* (pp. 37–59). Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Shwalb, D. W., Kawai, H., Shoji, J., & Tsunetsugu, K. (1997). The middle class Japanese father: A survey of parents of preschoolers. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 6*, 497–511.

Stevenson, H. W., & Stigler, J. W. (1992). *The learning gap*. New York: Summit Books.

Super, C. M., & Harkness, S. (1997). The cultural structuring of child development. In J. W. Berry, P. Dasen, & T. S. Saraswathi (Eds.), *Handbook of cross-cultural psychology: Vol. 2. Basic processes and human development* (pp. 1–39). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Tobin, J., Yeh, H., & Karasawa, M. (2009). *Preschool in three cultures revisited*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Uno, K. S. (1999). *Passages to modernity: Motherhood, childhood, and social reform in early twentieth century Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii.

Wagatsuma, H. (1978). Some aspects of the contemporary Japanese family: Once Confucian, now fatherless? In A. S. Rossi, J. Kagan, & T. K. Hareven (Eds.), *The family* (pp. 181–210). New York: W.W. Norton, Inc.

White, M. (2002). *Perfectly Japanese: Making families in an era of upheaval*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

White, M., & LeVine, R. (1986). What is an "ii ko" (good child)? In H. Stevenson, H. Azuma, & K. Hakuta (Eds.), *Child development and education in Japan* (pp. 55–62). New York: W.H. Freeman.

Yamamura, Y. (1986). The child in Japanese society. In H. Stevenson, H. Azuma, & K. Hakuta (Eds.), *Child development and education in Japan* (pp. 28–38). New York: W.H. Freeman.

# Parental Beliefs and Fathers' and Mothers' Roles in Malaysian Families

**Ziarat Hossain**

This chapter is an attempt to explore the interplay between parental beliefs and fathers' and mothers' involvement in childcare in Malaysian families. Most research on fathers' role in the family has been conducted on samples from North American and European families. These findings generally suggest that mothers are more involved in childcare than fathers, and that mothers and fathers maintain unique interaction styles with their children. Western fathers often engage with their children through vigorous rough-and-tumble play interactions. Although research interests in cultural socialization and fathers' roles in international families has been increasing since the 1990s (Bozett and Hanson 1991; Lamb 2010; Roopnarine and Carter 1992; Shwalb et al. 2013), very little empirical data on parental beliefs and fathers' and mothers' role in Asian societies are available. Given that they represent 60 % of the global population, Asian families embody diverse parental beliefs and practices. Also, because of the increasingly rapid modernization of Asia, it is important to undertake fatherhood and parenting research in Asian families. Research on Asian fathers and mothers will help us gain a clearer understanding of their parenting values and grasp the dynamics of the father's and mothers' roles within a cultural context. An additional benefit of conducting similar studies in Asia is that such research provides cross-cultural context for understanding parental beliefs and gender roles in family life. In some Asian countries, the mix of ecological factors, religious sentiments, and cultural forces provide an intricate matrix of parental beliefs and fathers' and mothers' roles in family life. One such country is Malaysia. Factors such as social status, economic praxes, home environment, religious values, and community resources often influence the parenting roles in Malaysian families (Baharudin et al. 2011). However, systematic research on parental beliefs and parenting in Malaysian families is extremely limited. This chapter is organized to address the following aspects in Malaysian families: (1) ethnic composition; (2) the

Z. Hossain (✉)
Family Studies, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM, USA
e-mail: zhossain@unm.edu

sociocultural context of gender roles and parental beliefs; (3) fathers' and mothers' involvement in childcare; (4) contemporary lifestyles and parenting; and (5) implications for research and policy.

## Ethnic Composition

Malaysia is a Southeast Asian nation. With over 29 million people in an area of 127,320 mile$^2$, its landmass consists of two major geographical areas. The Peninsular Malaysia is typically known as West Malaysia (Tanah Melayu) and it borders with Thailand and Singapore. East Malaysia is known as Malaysian Borneo and includes the states of Sabah and Sarawak. The current per capita GDP of about U.S. $15,500 makes Malaysia a relatively affluent nation in Asia. The population of Malaysia consists of Malay (58 %), Chinese (24 %), Indian (8 %), and indigenous groups (10 %, e.g., Orang Asli). Each group has its own predominant religion, culture, and language. The Malays and the indigenous populations are commonly termed *Bhumiputras*, or 'sons of the soil' (Kumaraswamy and Othman 2011; Ng 1998). Whereas Malays are Muslims, Chinese are either Buddhists or Christians, and Indians are largely Hindus. Overall, about 60 % of the country's population is Muslim, 19 % is Buddhist, 9 % is Christian, and 6 % is Hindu. Most of the indigenous peoples are animists. Regardless of ethnic or religious differences, a Malaysian family is typically defined as a marital union or registration between a man and a woman, including their children and extended family members (Saad 2001). However, increasing trends toward nuclear families, women's education and participation in the paid labor force, female-headed households, and smaller family size characterize contemporary Malaysian families.



**Source: www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/asia**

## The Sociocultural Context of Gender Roles and Parental Beliefs

The Malay family system is heavily influenced by Islamic customs and practices locally called *adat* (Kling 1995; Selvarajah and Meyer 2008; Tamuri 2007). The primary tenets of *adat* encourage the mother and the father to jointly raise children and inculcate values of a good moral character in them. The father is the head of the household and is expected to socialize his children according to *adat* and other socially acceptable values such as respect, shyness, and loyalty. The primary function of Malay fathers is to provide economically for children and the family. The practice of the hegemonic belief structures about masculinity, patrilineal hierarchy, kinship networks, and flexible family boundaries exert a strong influence on Malay parenting and gender roles (Noor 1999). In line with this hegemonic belief, the father functions as the family patriarch and the mother must practice domesticity, purity, and a submissive role in the family. The father or grandfather enjoys the roles of authority in the family. Although the traditional norm of a joint family system and polygyny are practiced in the villages (*kampung*), such practices are far less common in contemporary urban families. Factors such as women's education, nuclear family formation, women's participation in paid sectors, and birth control have been influencing fathers to break away from the traditional gender roles in the family.

The descendants of Chinese immigrants from as early at the fifteenth century are known as Malaysian Chinese. Although hundreds of years have passed since the initial immigration, the Chinese residing in Malaysia have not at all severed their ties from their ancestors' traditions and customs, particularly those practices regarding parenting roles. The Malaysian Chinese have learned from their parents and grandparents about the family values of diligence, thrift, humility, education, respect for the elders, and filial piety (Hei 2011). In their parenting roles, they value the core Confucian beliefs such as propriety, righteousness, and benevolence. In particular, both the mother and the father inculcate the value of filial piety (absolute loyalty to the family) in their children. From a very young age, children are taught to be *siao-shoon* to their parents and older family members, meaning to be filial in Mandarin. The Chinese believe that the ability to be filial is one of the greatest virtues in life. For example, Confucian literature explains that a son should mourn the death of his father for approximately 3 years in order to demonstrate filial piety. The 3-year grieving period is significant: according to Confucian beliefs, children are nursed until reaching age 3. Therefore, in return, 3 years of mourning for a parent is appropriate (Hei 2011). Filial children obey their parents' wishes and readily attend to their needs. As children become older and financially independent, they are expected to support their aging parents. In view of the Western influence of individualism in contemporary Singaporean and Malaysian Chinese families, national policies and laws have been introduced to make sure that adult children observe filial responsibilities and care for their elderly parents. Those who neglect their parents could potentially be found guilty and be punished by law (Hei 2011). In return, parents

invest almost all their resources into their children's educations. Most of the Malaysian Chinese have been immersed in the English education system and they control a lion's share of Malaysian commerce and businesses.

The colonial British brought the Indians as indentured laborers to work in the rubber plantations and agricultural fields in Malaysia. The majority of Malaysian Indians are Hindu and the parents believe that children are born with some *samsakaras* or predispositions (Rao et al. 2003). These predispositions stem from the decisions and events that took place during the child's previous lives. Hindu parents typically accept the fact that many individual differences cannot be changed due to predetermined traits or characteristics. Childhood is considered a time of innocence, and parents allow children to live a carefree life during this time. Similar to Malaysian Chinese or Malays, Malaysian Indian families are structured in a patriarchal fashion. The traditional parenting behaviors of Malaysian Indians are largely based on the Laws of Manu, a Hindu belief of patriarchy and *patibrata* (Roopnarine and Hossain 1992). This belief underscores men's authority in family matters (e.g., inheritance, residence) and women's self-sacrificing roles in the family (Chaudhury 2013). Whereas the notion of *patibrata* forces mothers to care for their children, husbands, and other family members, they play an ancillary role in making decisions for the family. The father is the head of the household and is responsible for economic and social roles in the family. For example, he accomplishes his social and spiritual duties by performing *kannyadaan* (giving away of a daughter in marriage). In Hindu ideology, there is a concept of *Shravan Kumar*, which means a dutiful and respectful son that cares for his aging parents. Similar to the Malaysian Chinese, Malaysian Indian parents put a profound importance on filial piety and academic achievement of their children (Rao et al. 2003). The success in college education is ultimately tied to principles of filial piety; the more adult children learn and earn, the more likely they would comfortably accommodate their aging parents.

The ethnography of Peninsular Malaysia is diverse with indigenous people commonly known as Orang Asli or the aboriginal peoples (Batek or Semai). Other indigenous people (Iban or Kadazan) reside in the states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Malaysian Borneo. Although each group has its own distinctive linguistic identity, the traditional beliefs of the indigenous people of Malaysia have always been related to their customs, the community or village, and most importantly, the land. Land is of utmost importance to all indigenous people, not only because it provides families with a source of income, but also because cultural traditions and spiritual beliefs are firmly tied to geographical sites. Life events take place on their land, bringing together family members, neighbors, and friends. During cultural occasions (*kaamatan* harvest festival), parents often celebrate relationships with their children by acknowledging their love through warm and friendly interactions. The land is also the livelihood of most indigenous families in Malaysia. The plains are fertile and money is typically earned by selling surplus crops and food. The traditional subsistence economy ensures egalitarian gender roles between spouses, especially among the Batek (Endicott and Endicott 2008). The father and the mother are equally responsible for childcare, household labor, and food gathering activities. Nowadays, the concept of patrilineal hierarchy is present in some indigenous

families such as the Kadazans in Sabah. The main role for a Kadazan mother is to provide her children with moral values and norms (fidelity and respect). These norms encourage male children to relate easily to their fathers and female children to relate easily to their mothers (Hossain et al. 2005).

Taken together, the practice of filial piety or *adat* or *Shravan Kumar* conveys a uniform message about families that transcends across Malay, Chinese, and Indian families in Malaysia. In line with a patriarchal belief structure, a Malay, Indian, Chinese, or Kadazan mother's main duty is to take care of her children. It can even be considered a duty to raise her children well (Rao et al. 2003). The expression of "strict father, kind mother" characterizes traditional parenting styles of these three major sub-cultures in Malaysia (Saraswathi and Pai 1997). Strong ties to extended family members and accessible and flexible family boundaries also influence mothers' and fathers' roles. Another important parental belief is that parents must invest in children's academic achievement and adult children must care for their aging parents. Although the communal approach to childrearing is present among the Orang Asli (Batek), mothers' and fathers' behaviors and investment in the family are based on egalitarian gender roles (Endicott and Endicott 2008).

## Fathers' and Mothers' Involvement in Childcare

Malaysian families across these three major ethnic groups (Malay, Chinese, and Indian) follow a patriarchal family structure that affects the levels of each parent's involvement in childcare and other household chores. Fathers are typically responsible for financially supporting the family, and therefore, they spend less time with their children and household chores than their wives. Despite modern influences (such as women's rights, education, delayed marriage, and rising divorce rates), women still perform the majority of childcare-related tasks. It appears that the increased modernization of Malaysia is forcing working mothers to embrace a "second shift" – a far too common skewed distribution of gender roles that has been widely noted in Western families (Hochschild 2003).

Empirical evidence from early research suggested that mothers spent significantly more time in childcare activities such as changing diapers, feeding, and putting the child to bed than fathers did in Malaysian Chinese families (Roopnarine et al. 1989). Likewise, mothers were found to spend more time in childcare and other household tasks than their male counterparts in both Malaysian Chinese and Malay families (Noor 1999). Findings from the latter study suggest that fathers spent about 71 % as much time as their spouses did. Participants for this latter study were urban professionals and found to be highly involved in childcare and other domestic chores. Similarly, findings from an anthropological study revealed that fathers and mothers in Batek indigenous families participated in childcare equally and treated their male and female children similarly (Endicott 1992; Endicott and Endicott 2008). Some aspects of childcare examined in Endicott's study included bathing, cleaning, cuddling, and cooking.
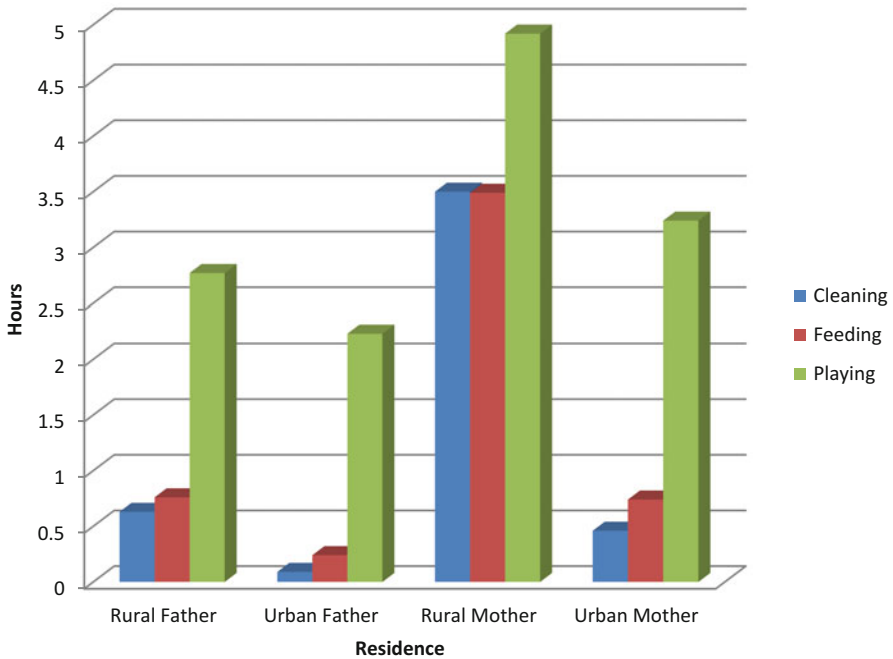
**Fig. 1** Amount of time mothers and fathers spent in childcare each day

I conducted research to examine the differences in mothers' and fathers' involvement in childcare tasks as a function of sex of the child in rural and urban Malay families. My findings were similar to the findings derived from other studies on Malaysia families. Both in rural and urban families, mothers spent more time than fathers in childcare activities such as feeding, cleaning, and playing with their children. Whereas mothers and fathers in rural families spent 11.91 and 4.16 h in childcare each day, mothers and fathers in urban families spent 5.41 and 2.56 h per day (Hossain 2013; Hossain et al. 2005). A detailed analysis of these findings suggests four major involvement patterns. First, rural mothers spent more time in childcare activities such as cleaning, feeding, and playing than mothers in urban families; second, fathers in both rural and urban families showed a similar level of involvement in caregiving; third, the mothers spent more time playing with their young children than caring for them, as did the fathers; and fourth, the discrepancy between mothers and fathers' time investment in childcare is higher in rural families than in urban families (Fig. 1).

The fact that mothers and fathers in rural families spent more time engaged in childcare than urban mothers and fathers could be due to the differences in ecology. Most urban families have two-income parents who tend to employ live-in household maids or care providers for their children. However, my own research did not explore the extent to which other care providers were used to compensate for parental care. Future research can be designed to address this issue. Furthermore, the

difference between the mothers' and fathers' involvement in childcare might have stemmed from their ecological contexts and cultural beliefs that mothers are the primary care providers of the child. Although urban parents spent far less time performing child-related tasks than rural parents, mothers and fathers are more egalitarian in urban families than mothers and fathers in rural families. It is possible that the *adat* and cultural beliefs about traditional gender roles are still much stronger in rural families than in urban families. Also, I have gathered from my field observation that rural parents either hold or keep their children within an arm's length distance while working in the kitchen, vegetable garden, and rice fields. Such a rural ecology obscures the modern boundary between parents' work environment and childcare involvement. I assume that these parents included the time they held their children while working in their reports of the amount of time they spent in childcare. This might have resulted in rural parents' reports of higher involvement in childcare than their urban counterparts.

Kadazan fathers in Malaysian Borneo also follow the trend of spending less time with their children than their spouses (Hossain et al. 2007). These fathers commute daily to work in city centers and therefore often have less time for childcare tasks. Also, Kadazan mothers were reported to be more affectionate and loving than fathers were (Rosnah 1999). Comparing these results to a study on Batek mothers and fathers residing in the Lebir River watershed in Kelantan, it was found that the parental practices of the Bateks were based on the beliefs of egalitarian gender roles. To that end, in the Batek tradition, mothers and fathers equally participated in childcare and household labor (Endicott 1992; Endicott and Endicott 2008).

There is very little empirical research available concerning mothers' and fathers' involvement in childcare in Malaysian Indian families. Available findings from prior research suggest a weak link between parents' education and their involvement in school-age children's education in Malaysian Indian (Tamil) families residing in plantations (Vellymalay 2010). Whereas a majority of the parents in Vellymalay's study had high expectations about their children's school success, assisted their children with homework, and contacted school teachers, the relationship between parents' education and the academic strategies employed for their children were not found to be significant. The parents and school teachers in plantations are tied by ethnic similarity; therefore, parents had reasons to believe and to depend upon school teachers' support for their children's educations (Vellymalay 2010). Regardless of their Tamil or Sikh/Punjabi origins, Malaysian Indian parents are more protective of their daughters than sons, and expect their children to master behaviors such as respect, interdependence, and obedience (Gill and Gopal 2010; Keshavarz and Baharudin 2009). Future research should focus on the extent to which mothers and fathers are involved with their children and the link between parental beliefs and their involvement in childcare in Malaysian Indian families.

Generally speaking, it appears that mothers across the three major cultural groups (Chinese, Malay, and Kadazan) in Malaysia play a stronger role in their children's early socialization and daily care. These findings from Malaysian families (except with the Batek) are very similar to what has been reported from other studies regarding

parental involvement in childcare (Lamb 2010). That is, mothers are usually the primary caregivers to their young children, a trend that reflects disproportionate levels of invested time, social interactions, and involvement between mothers and fathers. This has been consistent throughout several different social-organizational patterns that hold strong cultural beliefs and norms. However, mothers and fathers in peninsular Batek families show egalitarian involvement with their children. Although sociocultural and religious factors provide the context of parent-child interactions in Malaysian Indian families, we know little about the extent to which Malaysian Indian mothers and fathers are involved with their children.

## Contemporary Lifestyle and Parenting

Over the last several decades, Malaysia has experienced rapid social transformation as a result of increased industrialization and urbanization. The ensuing social changes have influenced how modern Malaysians live and work. These shifting norms are accompanied by a noticeable difference concerning women's roles in society; specifically, the role of Malaysian women in family life has changed dramatically. Although more Malaysian women than ever before are pursuing higher education, entering the labor force as both workers and entrepreneurs, and working longer hours outside of the home, many traditional beliefs regarding gender roles continue to persist in the public and private arenas (Mellström 2009; Yusof and Duasa 2010). The promotion of traditional family values across religious groups (as a means to combat the perceived decline of morality) has influenced numerous social and economic policies. Such policies tend to undermine the ability of Malaysian women to fully participate in the formal sector economy. This trend is in direct contradiction to the Malaysian government's official support of women's increased presence in the labor market, an initiative designed to bolster economic development and personal growth (Stivens 2006; Elias 2011). Given this incongruity, modern, dual-income Malaysian families face the difficult task of navigating conflicting social norms, while raising and supporting their children. Numerous factors influence the amount of time that mothers' and fathers' spend caring for their children. Such factors include gender role expectations, level of education, the number of hours spent working outside of the home, the presence of a stay-at-home parent, and the availability of alternative childcare options. The majority of very young children (ages 0–4) in Malaysia are cared for by their mothers or other family members, with a small minority receiving care outside of the home. In contrast, Malaysian children over the age of 4 have near universal enrollment in preschool. The difference in childcare practices between these two age groups may reflect disparate expectations among parents regarding the most appropriate or beneficial means of caring for young and preschool-aged children. However, recent research suggests that the lack of adequate, affordable and accessible childcare facilities for infants and toddlers has more influence on Malaysian families' use of childcare centers than personal preference (Elias 2011). According to a study on

family-friendly policies in Malaysia, the majority of workers desire greater flexibility in their places of employment, and express a lack of support for child and elder care (Subramanian and Selvaratnam 2010). At least one recent survey has shown that contemporary Malaysian women, even those pursuing college degrees and intending to enter the labor force, believe that they will have to provide the majority of care for their offspring and housekeeping duties while working outside of the home, and this belief appears to dramatically influence their field of study and choice of career (Mellström 2009).

The composition of Malaysian families has changed over the past several decades mainly due to the national shift toward industrialization and urbanization. Although smaller family size and nuclear families have increasingly become the norm, especially in urban areas, many Malaysian mothers are experiencing the challenges of caring for their both own young children and their aging parents—in addition to working outside of the home. Until recently, the "sandwich generation" phenomenon was unknown in Malaysia. However, recent research has indicated that the increase in formal employment among women, along with a growing senior population and subsequent caregiving responsibilities, compounded with the general lack of social service provision by the government, has created a generation of young mothers responsible for balancing an ever-increasing workload (Norzareen and Nobaya 2010). Although contemporary Malaysian women provide the majority of caregiving for both their children and elderly parents, the traditional parenting beliefs and some government policies continue to relegate women to housekeeping and childcare, in spite of their increased participation in the labor force (Anwar 2009; Elias 2011; Stivens 2006). Such beliefs and practices still afford men or fathers the opportunity to maintain their provisioning role in the family. Noticeably, many contemporary middle and upper class Malaysian families often use imported live-in household maids hailing from places like Indonesia and the Philippines. These maid services free mothers and fathers from childcare and domestic chores and allow them to spend additional time at work. However, employed mothers end up doing more household work than their male counterparts as the beliefs and practice of domestic labor is still tied to traditional gender roles in the family.

Traditional gender roles award men purview over the public sphere, including working outside of the home in the formal economy, whereas women have domain over the private sphere such as housekeeping and caregiving tasks. Despite widespread endorsement of traditional gender roles for women in Malaysia, a common conception of masculinity, particularly in rural Malaysia, revolves around social interactions, with much less emphasis on the role of economic provider. The use of relational status as a primary means to gain power in society serves to maintain strong divisions between men and women's roles in Malaysia, with women serving reciprocal roles to men. This arrangement also leaves room for women to enter the paid labor force in ways not typically accessible in cultures that place financial provisioning as men's primary function in the family (Mellström 2009). Women in Malaysia currently outnumber men enrolled in higher education, and the Malaysian government has repeatedly and explicitly articulated the need for women to contribute to the nation's economic growth and development by joining the paid labor force (Elias 2011).

However, the Malaysian government has sent mixed signals about the role of women in the public and private spheres. While encouraging women's participation in higher education and the paid labor force, the government continues to endorse conservative gender norms that are typically based on religious ideology in both official and non-official discourse. For example, the National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN), a subdivision of the Ministry of Women and Family Development, even went so far as to declare homemaking women's Jihad (Stivens 2006). The Malaysian government actively promotes traditional family values as the most effective way to combat the perceived decline of morality among their citizenry. The government has used this same ideology to promote a unified national identity based on a paternalistic family structure. Such a family structure holds strongly to the idea that women contribute the most to society by serving as mothers and wives (Mellström 2009; Stivens 2006). The conflicting messages sent by the Malaysian government may cause dissonance or ambivalence towards participation in the paid labor force amongst Malaysian women.

More than 60 % of Malaysians identify Islam as their religion. The Malaysian government has promoted a national Muslim identity over the last three decades, successfully linking economic progress and modernity with Islamic ideals, and highlighting women's dual role in national economic growth and social reproduction within the home (Anwar 2009; Mellström 2009; Stivens 2006). Modernity itself has become an extremely salient concept within Malaysia recently, with a national goal of achieving developed nation status by 2020 (Elias 2011). *Adat* or filial piety incorporates traditional family values as a basis for morality with an outward acceptance of conservative gender roles. The Malaysian government has encouraged its citizens to extend this conception of family to their relationship with the state, and has actively integrated individual educational and occupational goals into the successful development of the national economy and culture (Mellström 2009). Despite evidence of gender discrimination by the state, many Muslim women have the desire to raise their children in the tradition of Islam, with a radical subset of women hoping to "find liberation, truth and justice within [their] faith" (Anwar 2009, p. 176).

The association between the family and participation in the formal economy appears to have had great success in influencing Malaysian women's choices in their fields of study and careers, as demonstrated by studies investigating women in higher education and female entrepreneurs (Alam et al. 2011). However, the types of employment available to women and the level of familial support continue to play a significant role in their decisions and success (Alam et al. 2011; Idris 2010; Khan et al. 2012; Mellström 2009; Stivens 2006). In a study on women in computer science, a male-dominated field in the west, Mellström (2009) found that students believed that they could succeed in their future careers based on several factors: the entry of women in the electronics industry in the 1970s; the association of computer science with indoor spaces; the presence of numerous women in the field before them; and the ability to balance work and family responsibilities due to the nature of the job. The need to effectively negotiate the responsibilities of the mother and worker was also prevalent among women entrepreneurs. Specifically, the majority

of women-owned businesses resides in the service sector and typically provides services that fall within home economics such as food, sewing, handicraft, and childcare (Alam et al. 2011; Elias 2011; Malaysia Department of Statistics 2011).

Malaysian women in the paid labor force appear to be employed primarily in the private sector. Social class and ethnicity account for significant differences in education and labor force participation. Scholars have observed that the quotas outlined in Articles 152 and 153 of the Malaysian constitution (that provide preferential treatment of *bumiputra* (Malay) citizens in Malaysian universities) have enabled a great number of Malay women to enroll in higher education, most notably in the field of computer science (Mellström 2009). National policy makers argue that the preferential access to the scholarships and other benefits afforded to indigenous Malay women is a step toward rectifying past discrimination against them and encouraging them to advance in education. It is expected that modern educated Malays (particularly women) will contribute to the national economy and be informed parents as well. In a critical review of how gender has influenced Malaysia's transition to a knowledge-based economy, Elias (2011) discussed how low-paid migrant laborers performing household tasks for middle-class, educated women exacerbates the ever-present inequality amongst economic classes. Elias' review also underscored the challenges of promoting home-based businesses amongst the lower classes, who frequently lack literacy skills and space to work. Although the Malaysian government has offered substantial financial support for women entrepreneurs, they only make up approximately 15 % of employers in the nation, which indicates an imbalance between the type of assistance provided and the needs of women who may want to start a business (Idris 2010). It appears that the type of employment available to Malaysian women still depends on their economic status and ethnicity.

Although Malaysia has undergone dramatic modernization, including a low unemployment rate and a high rate of economic growth since the 1980s (Stivens 2006), parenting behaviors still revolve around the traditional family values of *adat* and filial piety. The dual interests of maintaining a patrilineal family structure and women's entry into education and paid employment create a clearly visible conflict. Because of these changes and dualism, many families must deal with parenting in a multifarious and different light. The availability and use of cheap live-in domestic maids have made the parenting roles more complex in contemporary Malaysian families. Those who are against the recent urbanization of the country fear that there will be a decline in family values, which might ultimately lead to social delinquency and other serious issues such as illiteracy, immorality, and corruption. LPPKN responded to the fear of moral decay by initiating a campaign called the "Malaysia Nation of Character" (MNOC). This campaign stresses that the solution to these anticipated social and family problems in Malaysia can be resolved by encouraging parents to raise their children with knowledgeable, resilient, and ethical values. The movement encourages parents to equip themselves with appropriate skills and more significantly, an understanding that the family institution and overall quality of life are at risk of decay (Stivens 2006).

## Summary and Implications for Research and Policy

Although Malaysia is a nation in transition, family values and religious beliefs are still the core foundations of successful and moral parenting in most families, whether they subscribe to the principles of Islamic tradition (*adat* and/or *akhlaq*), Confucian teachings, (filial piety), Hindu wisdom, (*Shravon Kumar*, *patibrata*), or the subsistence ecology. Stated differently, diverse values, traditions, religions, and socioeconomic conditions provide the context of parenting in multi-ethnic Malaysia. Whereas Malay, Chinese, Kadazan, and Indian families tend to follow traditional gender norms in parenting roles, the Bateks tend to exhibit egalitarian parenting roles in the family. These findings are noteworthy because they suggest that, regardless of geographical proximity or similarity in beliefs and family traditions, levels and styles of parental involvement with children vary between major Malaysian groups and the Bateks. Malaysian families have different cultural traditions that are embedded within their distinctive religious norms and customs, and yet they are largely similar in their parental beliefs and involvement with children. Another significant finding was that mothers and fathers in Malay families spent more time playing with children than providing basic care to them. This particular finding from Malay families is partly in line with the primacy of father-child play interactions that were observed in many Western families (Lamb 2010).

Methodologically, in some studies that have looked at paternal and maternal involvement in the past, it has been questioned whether the researchers have thoroughly examined all the various facets of caregiving tasks. The amount of time spent interacting with a child can be considered relative to specific sociocultural factors such as multiple care providers. Another drawback of past studies has been the amount of time the researchers and their recruited assistants actually spent interviewing or observing their participants. A potential solution could be the incorporation of longitudinal studies that extensively follow the lives of parents and their children for a much longer period of time. In order to gain a more rounded sense of parental beliefs and practices in Malaysia, future systematic research should include the context of extended family, live-in domestic maids, religious ideologies, and economic diversity and their influence on mothers' and fathers' involvement in childcare.

There are many ways to raise children effectively who are expected to become ethical, moral, and successful young adults. Studies based in non-Western countries have the potential to enlighten and inspire others by offering skills, techniques, and strategies for successful parenting that may be novel to others, especially in the Western world. At the same time, based on cross-national findings that suggest an increased level of fathers' involvement in childcare, and in view of increasing modernization in Malaysia, my research observations should be of interest to national children or parent organizations (Hossain 2013). Government policy makers can use these data when working on early childhood development and parenting policies and programs. The continued interest in parental involvement in non-English speaking and/or developing countries such as Malaysia can aid researchers in determining various aspects of parenting that can be unique to a particular region or common across cultural groups.

# References

Alam, S. S., Modh Jani, M. F., & Omar, N. A. (2011). An empirical study of success factors of women entrepreneurs in southern region of Malaysia. *International Journals of Economics and Finance, 3*(2), 166–175.

Anwar, Z. (2009). Negotiating gender rights under religious law in Malaysia. In K. Vogt, L. Larsen, & C. Moe (Eds.), *New directions in Islamic thought: Exploring reform and Muslim tradition* (pp. 175–186). London: I.B. Taurus.

Baharudin, R., Krauss, S. T., Yacoob, S. N., & Pei, T. J. (2011). Family processes as predictors of antisocial behaviors among adolescents from urban, single-mother Malay families in Malaysia. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 42*(4), 509–522.

Bozett, F. W., & Hanson, S. H. (Eds.). (1991). *Fatherhood and families in cultural context*. New York: Springer.

Chaudhury, N. (2013). The father's role in the Indian family: A story that must be told. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. 68–94). New York: Routledge.

Elias, J. (2011). The gender politics of economic competitiveness in Malaysia's transition to a knowledge economy. *Pacific Review, 24*(5), 529–552.

Endicott, K. M. (1992). Fathering in an egalitarian society. In B. S. Hewlett (Ed.), *Father-child relations: Cultural and biosocial context: Foundations of human behavior* (pp. 281–295). Hawthorne: Aldine de Gruyter.

Endicott, K. M., & Endicott, K. L. (2008). *The headman was a woman: The gender egalitarian Batek of Malaysia*. Long Grove: Waveland Press.

Gill, S. K., & Gopal, N. D. (2010). Understanding Indian religious practice in Malaysia. *Journal of Social Sciences, 25*, 135–146.

Hei, K. C. (2011). The psychology of Chinese behaviour as seen in spoke discourses. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication, 21*(2), 286–308.

Hochschild, A. R. (2003). *The second shift*. New York: Penguin.

Hossain, Z. (2013). Fathers in Muslim families in Malaysia and Bangladesh. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cross-cultural context* (pp. 95–121). New York: Routledge.

Hossain, Z., Roopnarine, J. L., Masud, J., Muhamed, A. A., Baharudin, R., Abdullah, R., & Juhari, R. (2005). Mothers' and fathers' childcare involvement with young children in rural families in Malaysia. *International Journal of Psychology, 40*(6), 385–394.

Hossain, Z., Roopnarine, J. L., Ismail, R., Hashmi, S. I., & Sombuling, A. (2007). Fathers' and mothers' reports of involvement in caring for infants in Kadazan families in Sabah, Malaysia. *Fathering, 5*(1), 58–72.

Idris, A. (2010). An inter-ethnic study of gender differentiation and innovativeness among women entrepreneurs in Malaysia. *South African Journal of Business Management, 41*(4), 35–46.

Keshavarz, S., & Baharudin, R. (2009). Parenting styles in a collectivistic culture of Malaysia. *European Journal of Social Sciences, 10*, 66–73.

Khan, N., Hussein, A., Afaq, Q., & Awan, Z. (2012). Labor force participation and gender inequalities: Comparative analysis of Pakistan and Malaysia. *Current Research Journal of Social Sciences, 4*(1), 45–55.

Kling, Z. (1995). The Malay family: Beliefs and realities. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 26*(1), 43–66.

Kumaraswamy, N., & Othman, A. (2011). Corporal punishment study: A case in Malaysia. *Psychology, 2*, 24–28.

Lamb, M. E. (Ed.). (2010). *The role of the father in child development* (5th ed.). New York: Wiley.

Malaysia Department of Statistics. (2011). *Economic census 2011*. Federal Government Administration Center, Department of Statistics, 62514 Putrajaya, Malaysia.

Mellström, U. (2009). The intersection of gender, race and cultural boundaries, or why is computer science in Malaysia dominated by women? *Social Studies of Science, 36*(6), 885–907.

Ng, K. S. (1998). Family therapy in Malaysia: An update. *Contemporary Family Therapy, 20*, 37–45.

Noor, N. (1999). Roles and women's well-being: Some preliminary findings from Malaysia. *Sex Roles, 41*, 123–145.

Norzareen, M., & Nobaya, A. (2010). Women of the sandwich generation in Malaysia. *European Journal of the Social Sciences, 13*(2), 171–178.

Rao, N., McHale, J. P., & Pearson, E. (2003). Links between socialization goals and child-rearing practices in Chinese and Indian mothers. *Infant and Child Development, 12*, 475–492.

Roopnarine, J. L., & Carter, D. B. (Eds.). (1992). *Parent–child socialization in diverse cultures*. Norwood: Ablex.

Roopnarine, J. L., & Hossain, Z. (1992). Parent-child interactions in urban Indian families in New Delhi: Are they changing? In J. L. Roopnarine & D. B. Carter (Eds.), *Parent-child socialization in diverse cultures* (pp. 1–16). Norwood: Ablex.

Roopnarine, J. L., Lu, M., & Ahmeduzzaman, M. (1989). Parental reports of early patterns of caregiving, play and discipline in India and Malaysia. *Early Child Development and Care, 50*, 109–120.

Rosnah, I. (1999). *Family quality of Kadazandusan*. Kota Kinabalu: Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

Saad, F. (2001, October 5–8). *The family in the 21st century: Country perspectives: Malaysia*. Paper presented at the international family conference, Kuala Lumpur.

Saraswathi, T. S., & Pai, S. (1997). Socialization in the Indian context. In H. R. Kao & D. Sinha (Eds.), *Asian perspectives on psychology* (pp. 74–92). New Delhi: Sage.

Selvarajah, C., & Meyer, D. (2008). One nation, three cultures: Exploring dimensions that relate to leadership in Malaysia. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 29*(8), 693–712.

Shwalb, D. W., Shwalb, B. J., & Lamb, M. E. (Eds.). (2013). *Fathers in cultural context*. New York: Routledge.

Stivens, M. (2006). 'Family values' and Islamic revival: Gender, rights, and state moral projects in Malaysia. *Women's Studies International Forum, 29*, 354–367.

Subramanian, G., & Selvaratnam, D. P. (2010). Family friendly policies in Malaysia: Where are we? *Journal of International Business Research, 9*(1), 43–55.

Tamuri, A. H. (2007). Islamic education teachers' perceptions of the teaching of akhlaq in Malaysian secondary schools. *Journal of Moral Education, 36*(3), 371–386.

Vellymalay, S. K. (2010). Parental involvement in children's education: Does parents' education level really matter? *European Journal of Social Sciences, 16*, 430–440.

Yusof, S. A., & Duasa, J. (2010). Household decision-making and expenditure patterns of married men and women in Malaysia. *Journal of Family Economic Issues, 31*, 371–381.

# Parenting in Pakistan: An Overview

**Riffat Moazam Zaman**

**Washington, DC, Summer 1982**: *In 1967, I arrived in Michigan from Pakistan to pursue a PhD in Clinical Psychology. It is 15 years later and I am a clinical psychologist in Washington, DC. My friends and I have arranged a play date for our children. We are four busy working professionals with 3-year-old daughters. My American friend Linda's wailing daughter comes running inside to her mother. Through sobs she says that her friend has snatched away her toy and won't give it back. Linda scoops up her daughter and explains, "You have to go back outside and explain to your friend nicely that the toy belongs to you, and that you want to play with it. Tell her that she should play with the toys her mom gave her, and you should play with the ones your mom gave you." Her daughter scampers off. Next week, the situation repeats itself with my Iranian friend's daughter, who comes crying to her about a child who has taken away her toy. I watch as Afsaneh bends down towards her daughter's face and tells her gently, "You have to learn to share your toys with your friends. They will share with you, and you must share with them. Friends share." I am amused by how these two instances of parenting present a window into the contrasting cultural realities of my two friends.*

## Introduction

On my return to Pakistan in the late 1990s after practicing psychotherapy in the United States, I became interested in cross-cultural research on parenting. Through my research and experiences with patients, I was struck by the many differences in how parents and children approach the process of therapy in a non-Western context, and my own role as therapist (Zaman 1997). This chapter will draw upon

R.M. Zaman (✉)
Department of Psychiatry, Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan
e-mail: riffat.moazam-zaman@aku.edu

my experiences of living in Pakistan, teaching medical students, training residents in a private medical university in Karachi, and practicing psychotherapy with families, couples, and individuals. I will discuss cultural and religious values that inform parenting practices in Pakistan. I will also provide a brief overview of research related to individualistic and collectivistic cultures and how these inform the self and its relationship to others as this has a direct bearing on parenting customs in different countries. Although research on parenting in Pakistan is relatively sparse, this chapter will also describe the few studies that have been conducted in this country. While my insights and experiences are by no means wholly representative of a country that includes several ethnic, linguistic, and cultural traditions, I will highlight some of the commonalities that are observable in Pakistani parenting styles.

## Pakistan

The Indian subcontinent was a British colony in 1947 when it was divided to form the independent nations of Pakistan and India. Pakistan initially consisted of East and West Pakistan but in 1971, the former seceded to become Bangladesh. Pakistan's present day population is approximately 180 million, making it the sixth most populous country in the world. Ninety-seven percent of the population is Muslim while the remaining three percent consists of Christians, Hindus, Zoroastrians, Sikhs, and Buddhists (Religion in Pakistan 2012). Pakistan is bordered by India in the east, China in the north, and Iran and Afghanistan in the west. The country consists of four provinces – Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), a semi-autonomous tribal region between the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan (see map). FATA is almost entirely inhabited by Pashtun tribes, who are also the dominant ethnic population in neighboring Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Unlike Pakistan's four provinces, FATA is governed by its own criminal code and regulations, and the jurisdiction of the Pakistani courts do not extend to the region.

Pakistan's national language is Urdu while its official languages are both Urdu and English. The other five most commonly spoken languages throughout Pakistan are Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Saraiki, and Balochi. According to the Government of Pakistan's *Economic Survey* (GOP), the country's overall literacy rate (age 10 years and above) is 58 % (GOP 2010–2011). Literacy is higher in urban areas than in rural areas, but is uneven across the provinces. The overall figure is 55.3 % in males and 29 % in females, with literacy levels varying by gender, province, and rural versus urban populations. Agriculture in rural areas throughout the country provides employment to approximately 45 % of the total labor force (GOP 2010–2011). Nevertheless, mass movements from rural areas to urban have led to a growth in Pakistani cities as people search for jobs and opportunities to better their children's lives. The population in urban areas has increased from 65.28 million in 2011 to 67.55 million in 2012, and further increases are expected in the future (GOP 2011).

There are predominantly three kinds of educational systems in Pakistan. Private schools are most common in large cities, in which the medium of instruction is

English. The curriculum is internationally recognized and is equivalent to the United Kingdom's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). Public schools, also prevalent in both urban and rural areas, offer a curriculum taught entirely in the national language, Urdu. The third system consists of madrasas, which are religious seminaries in which students study Islamic theology and jurisprudence in Urdu, Arabic, and Persian. Of these three educational systems, madrasas are a legacy of Muslim rule, which has been a part of India's history for nearly a thousand years, while private English schools are a legacy of British rule.

## Family Norms and Religious Values Central to Parenting

### Religion

In Pakistan, Islam functions as a formal religion while also providing a cultural ethos that structures the self and its relationships with the immediate and extended family, as well as non-family members. Muslim values, therefore, provide the core for many parenting norms that cut across social and economic classes even though the emphasis and role of religion vary in the lives of families. Babies born into Muslim families, whether in a shack in a village or in a modern hospital, begin life with the sound of the *azan* (the call to prayer) recited softly in their ear by a family elder. It is the family's responsibility to teach children to read and recite the Quran phonetically in Arabic. The use of phases such as *inshallah* (if Allah wills it), *mashallah* (praise be to Allah), *bismillah* (in the name of Allah), and *alhamdulillah* (thanks be to Allah) is ubiquitous, and peppers Pakistani conversations (Moazam 2006). In large cities, western-educated, affluent families will visit American food franchises such as McDonald's, watch Hollywood movies, and converse in English at home, but nevertheless male family members, including boys, make it a point to attend congregational prayers in the neighborhood mosque on Friday afternoons.

Childrearing also involves instilling the idea that life is transcendental and that God is the final arbitrator of all human events in this world and the next. Common virtues mentioned in the Quran are emphasized as the moral conduct to follow, and these include self-sacrifice, tolerance, and patience in the face of adversity.

### Norms of Family Structure

The structuring of the family also directly affects childrearing in Pakistan. Families place tremendous importance on duty and obligation, more so than they do on the rights of individual members. Gender and age blend to produce a complex hierarchical structure that defines relationships and responsibilities. The most prevalent family structure living under one roof is the extended family, both vertically and horizontally. This may include three generations – grandparents, sons, their wives and children, and unmarried siblings. Typically, the father is the head of the family and chief

breadwinner until adult sons can contribute to the family finances. The mother's responsibility is to manage the home and children, and when living in a joint family, to care for her parents-in-law and maintain family harmony. Within the extended family structure, the matriarch is awarded extraordinary respect and deference.

Within the work assigned to different family members, older siblings are expected to be good role models that their younger siblings should emulate. It is considered rude for younger siblings to refer to their older siblings by name; as a mark of respect, older sisters are called *apa* and older brothers are called *bhai*. Younger siblings are taught to respect and obey older siblings who in turn are taught to put their needs aside in favor of younger siblings. Parents settle quarrels between their children by admonishing the younger ones for being rude or disrespectful, while older siblings are reprimanded for not being more tolerant of their younger siblings. After parents, older siblings (especially brothers) are expected to look after sisters financially and emotionally.

Children are taught to respect parents and elders. Obligations to parents are perceived as moral injunctions that cut across all ethnicities and cultures, and social and economic classes (Moazam 2000). Verses of the Quran are commonly used to stress filial duties, especially to mothers. In turn, mothers closely watch and monitor their children and the mother-child relationship is considered superior to all others. This is emphasized through a much-quoted saying of the Prophet Muhammad that *jannat* (paradise) lies beneath the feet of the mother. This sentiment is etched on the backs of rikshaws and buses in elaborate calligraphy stating *maa ki dua, janat ki hawa* (a mother's prayer is like the breeze of heaven). Movies and television serials often portray the sacrifice of mothers for their children.

Infants and young children are indulged and pampered by parents and members of the joint family including grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Children are seldom left to their own devices, and tend to accompany their parents to most social occasions. Strict disciplining begins when children are old enough to comprehend different roles and hierarchical structures within the family. Teaching cultural and religious mores is considered the entire extended family's responsibility, and children's social behavior is frequently rewarded and/or chastised by persons other than their parents. Childhood's earliest lesson centers on respecting one's elders; children are taught to stand up to greet an elder entering a room, to give up their seats if an elder is standing and to be available to serve the needs of their elders. Faltering in any of these is considered not only a sign of deep disrespect but also a failure of good upbringing.

There is an expectation that as children grow older, they will tend to the needs of their parents and family members just as they were cared for when they were young. The responsibility of family members to each other, emotionally and even financially, is commonly seen in the healthcare professions. I have also seen this principle at work as a family therapist in Pakistan. In one recent case, a critically ill patient's entire family pooled resources to have him transported from the small town where they lived to a well-reputed city hospital. Several family members accompanied him to his physician's appointments, a common occurrence in Pakistani hospitals. The client's older brother quit his job to stay with the patient in the hospital, and continued to do so for over a month. Due to a lack of state health insurance policies, families pay most medical bills, and it is not unusual for families to sell their lands

and homes to finance a hospital visit and subsequent medical care for a sick family member (Moazam and Zaman 2003). It is a child's duty to care for an ageing and/or ill parent. Over the past several decades an increasing number of young people have been pursuing higher education and employment abroad, and parents consequently live alone in Pakistan. Despite the increasing frequency of this trend, this is considered an abandonment of parents and is generally met with disapproval.

## Strategies in Childrearing

Urdu, a rich language, has several words that capture the essence of what it means to raise children in Pakistan. These include *taleem aur tarbiyat* (education and upbringing), instilling *tehzeeb* (refinement and good breeding), and *parvarish* (nourishment and support). The concepts within these terms are broader than the understanding of the English word "childrearing". They incorporate within them aspects of training children and providing them with a moral code that forms the basis of their character, behavior, and conduct in relationship to others.

A powerful strategy employed for discipline is inducing a sense of shame in children. This is effective within a society in which an individual's identity is almost always linked to his or her family. Early feelings of shame instilled in children are of a physical nature, such as not exposing their bodies even when very young. As children grow older, feelings of shame are linked to behavior that causes the family to lose face or be publically embarrassed. It is important to differentiate between guilt and shame. Guilt is associated with transgression and engaging in bad behavior that is punishable by adults, but acts can be undone and guilt can be lessened or eased by an apology. In contrast, shame is associated with one's internal being; it is a feeling of inferiority or worthlessness about one's self rather than one's actions. As this can be an irreversible and irredeemable state, it can be intensely painful. Such feelings are characterized by comments such as, "I wish the ground had opened up and swallowed me," or "I could die of shame." The use of shame to discipline children is also reported by other Asian societies such as Taiwan and China (Fung 1999; Chao and Tseng 2002). This is characteristic of cultures that emphasize interrelatedness in which children are raised to be conscious of what others think of them and by extension of their families. Lapses of behavior, even upon reaching adulthood, are therefore construed both as personal and familial failures.

In the socialization of children in Pakistan, the self is perceived as collective. Therefore individuals are expected to behave appropriately within the familial paradigm and assume responsibility for maintaining family honor and harmony. A child misbehaving in public is often checked by saying, "What will people think of you?" or "Is this how were you raised?" At other times, comments can be even more direct such as, "Shame on you," or "You should be ashamed of yourself." It is important to note that these comments are used in indicating disappointment rather than anger. Children are praised for their respect and devotion to parents and elders and held as examples to those perceived as lacking in this quality.

## *Marriage*

Parents consider it a moral and religious responsibility, a *farz* (duty or obligation), to ensure that their children are married. Parents frequently arrange marriages, taking into consideration the suggestions and recommendations from the extended family. Since marriage is considered to be a union of two families rather than two individuals, parents seeking spouses for their children focus on compatibility between families. Even in urban settings where young persons choose their own spouses, familial consent and approval is a central part of the process.

Marriage is a source of social cohesiveness but it can also lead to conflict since it often involves negotiations between commitments to parents, and transitions between the role of a son or daughter, to that of a husband or wife. This is exemplified by a case of a young man who sought therapy with me. He belonged to a family of wealthy landowners in a Sindhi village. Although his father had been unusual in sending him to the United States to pursue his undergraduate education, despite his 4 years abroad, my client unquestionably accepted that after graduating, his parents would arrange his marriage to a woman of their choice. As the family's only son, he would follow in the tradition of taking care of his father's lands. Even though my client did not agree with his parents' choice of partner, he married the woman selected for him, and nonetheless managed to maintain his close emotional bond with his parents, especially with his father. Prior to beginning therapy, my client had ended an extramarital relationship and expressed guilt and distress about it. His father, in a conversation with him one day, mentioned gently that young men sometimes engage in impulsive acts without considering the implications for their wives and children. He praised his son's wife for being an excellent mother. While appreciative of his father, my patient—himself a devoted father of two young sons—laughingly remarked, "I will allow my sons to marry women of their choice!" On one occasion while discussing his relationship with his father, he told me with pride that his father's friends, in appreciation of his role as a good son, quoted him as an example to their own adult children. This statement, though, was accompanied with a wistful desire of having missed out on "all the fun" that his "rebellious" male friends had had as teenagers.

Although respect, obedience, and love for parents play a significant role in keeping families together, this can paradoxically be detrimental when daughters-in-law enter the family. In another case a young man sought therapy soon after his second marriage, which was arranged by his mother. His first marriage was to a woman of his choice but soon ended in divorce. My client, the older of two brothers, was born and raised in a large urban city. After receiving an undergraduate and graduate degree from the United States, he returned to Pakistan primarily to take care of his ageing parents. It seemed that my client tacitly shared his mother's belief that a successful marriage depended on his mother's choice of wife for him, as well as her guidance on how to make the relationship a success. Major conflicts arose early in the marriage when the mother's expectations and standards for her daughter-in-law were not met. My client did not subscribe to many of his mother's demands on his

wife, yet he did not openly support his wife because this meant disrespecting and disobeying his mother. In many such cases, marriage proves to alter existing family dynamics and reconfigure them according to individual choices that are formulated within existing cultural norms.

Practicing marital therapy in Pakistan has meant paying attention to how clients' selves are shaped by profound interconnectedness to family members and identifying conflict that might occur during moments of individual and familial transition. Compared to sons, daughters are especially trained to adjust to the needs of those around them and in particular, to the needs of their husbands and in-laws. A daughter's transition to daughter-in-law, which often involves moving out of her own house into her husband's, means she is essentially accountable to two sets of parents, and must carefully negotiate her ties to both. A 2006 qualitative study found that Pakistani mothers considered decision-making spheres to be separate along gender lines, in keeping with the awareness that daughters and sons would face different choices as adults (Stewart et al. 2006). Women's decision-making choices were largely restricted to the private sphere, whereas men's decision-making took place in the public sphere. Mothers discussed the importance of training daughters to adjust to their living situations after marriage, which would necessarily include their in-laws. Other elder female members in women's families often took on maternal roles when it came to advising younger women about transitioning to the role of a wife.

I have found the effects of parental training to be deeply ingrained. Some years ago, I was counseling a married woman facing enormous difficulty living with her in-laws. I suggested that her situation might improve if she and her husband moved out of the joint family and lived independently of her in-laws, but she was emphatic in her disagreement. Moving out, she said, was not an option. She would rather learn to adjust to the situation and successfully take care of her in-laws. Moving out, I realized, would have been a failure of her responsibility as daughter and daughter-in-law. My client did not wish to shame her own parents by failing at her new role within her husband's family. In the words of one of the mothers interviewed in the 2006 study, "Boys create their own world; girls have their worlds created for them" (Stewart et al. 2006, p. 234). This awareness meant that mothers emphasize providing a loving, supportive environment for their daughters. In the study mentioned above, one mother remarked poignantly, "We prefer sons, but we love our daughters more" (p. 234). Another said that daughters are given a lot of love to enable them to face the difficulties they may experience after marriage. This also seems to be the case with Chinese families where sons are raised to take care of parents while daughters are reared "for someone else's family" (Chao and Tseng 2002, p. 65). The closeness of mothers and daughters was borne out in a cross-cultural study of conflict-management styles between the two: Pakistani mothers and daughters expressed more intimacy and harmony than British mothers and daughters (Gilani 2001). While both male and female clients express deference towards me as an elder figure, when sharing conflicts that take place in their marital lives, younger men and women often ask me questions they would of a respected female family elder.

## The "Extended" Family

In a society where the family is the center of existence and consists of people one trusts and turns to for advice, the familial paradigm is extended to healthcare and mental healthcare professionals. The therapist is viewed as a trusted and wise family elder who is in a position to instruct and recommend beneficial courses of action. I have observed this cultural pattern in my experience as a clinical psychologist. Unlike in my practice in the United States where the importance of maintaining professional boundaries was paramount, my Pakistani clients placed me in the position of an adopted family member rather than of a detached medical professional (Zaman 1997). This is also exemplified by clients' occasional requests that I see another family member, who they perceive as more distressed, during their scheduled session. Frequently, when clients bring their children in for therapy, they introduce me to them as an aunt, indicating a degree of informality and closeness. In this way, I am embedded within a familial paradigm that communicates to the child a clear message about how I should be perceived and respected.

One such instance occurred recently while I was counseling a young woman who was upset at her fiancé's growing emotional distance from her, and his ambivalence about making a long-term commitment. After a lengthy discussion about the potential consequences of staying or leaving the relationship, my patient looked at me intently and asked, "If I were your daughter, what would you tell me to do?" This is one of many examples in which I have witnessed patients choosing a firm recommendation (from someone they consider a trusted elder) rather than choosing independent decision-making.

What I have described highlights a particular construal of the self as profoundly interconnected with the family and others. Some of this is supported by psychological and sociological research conducted on families and parenting in individualistic and collectivistic cultures. The next section provides a more theoretical framework for viewing parenting practices in Pakistan, and the development of the self within a collective or familial paradigm.

## Overview of Relevant Research

Psychologists have long been interested in the development of the self in individualistic and collectivistic cultures (Oyserman 1993; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Ellsworth 1994; Ryan et al. 1995). There is an interplay between individual choice and agency and the larger cultural norms that influence individual choices. In an individualistic culture, the self is perceived as the basic unit of survival and self-assertion. Self-actualization, attainment of personal goals, and autonomy are emphasized. In collectivistic cultures, the group forms the basic unit of survival. Therefore, maintaining social norms, performing one's duties, and relatedness and connectedness to others are seen as paramount in the development of the self.

In his psychoanalytic study of Japanese and Indians, Roland (1989) defines this self as the "familial self" which constitutes an inner psychological organization that enables one to function in a collectivistic culture. Marcus and Kitayama express a similar view in characterizing different cultures that reflect both independent and interdependent views of the self (Markus and Kitayama 1991, 1994).

However, Kağıtçıbaşı criticizes the simplistic binary opposition inherent in the terms "individual" and "collective" (1994, 1996). She analyses three different kinds of selves based on three different family interactional patterns. In her scheme, the traditional family is characterized by material and emotional interdependence prevalent in rural, agrarian societies where the self is relational. The second is the individualistic model characteristic of the Western nuclear family where independence and self-reliance are valued, and children are encouraged to develop an autonomous self. The last is a synthesis of these two and involves material independence but emotional interdependence is reflected in the development of an autonomous-relational self. While material interdependence may weaken with affluence, emotional interdependence continues in cultures that value family connectedness and closeness. This is supported by my clinical experience in Pakistan. The tenuousness of the individual/collective dichotomy is also suggested in a study conducted on Arab societies that are hierarchical, family-centered, and have Muslim majority populations. Dwairy et al. (2006) have conducted extensive cross-regional research involving Arab adolescents from eight countries in the Middle East. Parenting styles were found to differ across the countries with a cluster analysis revealing three combined parenting styles: inconsistent, controlling, and flexible. According to the authors, these findings support Kağıtçıbaşı's argument that Baumrind's dichotomous typology is of limited cultural relevance.[1] In their opinion, parenting styles were influenced by each country's social and political conditions, although regardless of gender, first-born Arab children experienced less authoritarian and more permissive styles of parenting and male adolescents reported a higher level of authoritarian parenting than females.

Kakar, an analyst from India, has expressed a similar view about the emergence of nuclear urban families who continue to maintain strong emotional ties with their relatives (1981, as cited in Rao et al. 2003). In my own practice in Pakistan, while working with nuclear and extended families, I have found Kağıtçıbaşı's synthesis applicable to a number of instances in which individuals identify themselves relationally—as daughters, sons, husbands, wives, parents, or siblings, where each role carries its own aspects of duty—but also make autonomous choices, in deciding to raise children differently from the way they themselves were raised, or by rejecting some aspects of the marriages of their parents in shaping their own. Urbanized,

---

[1] In 1987, Baumrind while reporting on the development of adolescents in the US added "traditional parenting" to her earlier typology. She describes this category as one in which the values of previous generations are internalized by children who therefore tend to be more conventional, compliant, and religious. Nevertheless, this category does not address the criticism of her authoritarian and authoritative parenting by researchers working with Asian populations. See Baumrind (1987).

modern couples may choose to reside independently of their extended families, but close bonds between the families still continue.

A discussion of research on parenting conducted in the West versus in "non-Western" oriented societies is germane here. Research on parenting in the West has relied heavily on Baumrind's (1967) typology of parenting—authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive models—based on her studies conducted in United States, although these have been modified and added to in recent years. The measuring instruments for parenting styles in this model are based on parents' control or demandingness, warmth or responsiveness, and democratic reasoning. High levels of control, and low levels of warmth and democratic reasoning characterize authoritarian parenting. Authoritative parenting, on the other hand is associated with low control, high warmth, and democratic reasoning. Authoritative parenting is associated with positive outcomes in children such as behavioral adjustment and high levels of academic achievement, which is not the case with authoritarian parenting. Parenting styles in Asian families, which are culturally similar to that in Pakistan, initially attracted interest because of Asian American children's high academic achievement despite clearly authoritarian parenting (Lin and Fu 1990; Steinberg et al. 1992 as cited in Stewart et al. 1999a). This contradicted the findings of authoritarian parenting in Caucasian children, which resulted in poor academic performance.

Further research on Asian parenting questions the cultural relevance of Baumrind's tripartite typology. Darling and Steinberg suggest that dimensions such as warmth and control should be independently measured rather than as a part of a typology (1993). They propose that, "Parenting style is best conceptualized as a context that moderates the influence of specific parenting practices on the child. It is argued that only by maintaining the distinction between parenting style and parenting practices can researchers address questions concerning the socialization process" (p. 487). Chao's work suggests that parenting concepts of European and American cultures are "ethnocentric and misleading" and that authoritarian parenting that has negative connotations in the West has different implications for Asian, and especially Chinese, cultures (1994, p. 111). In this view, while strictness in American parenting is often associated with parental hostility and domination, it is construed as concern and parental involvement in Asian cultures.

These findings are borne out by my clinical work in Pakistan. Notions of shame and familial honor during childrearing regulate behavior and often restrict individual choice. However, this style of parenting also sustains emotional bonds, which in the case of mothers and daughters articulate parental concern and an awareness of the challenges that daughters will face as married women and so must be prepared to handle them. Family-centered societies like Pakistan restrict individual behavior while simultaneously providing the support and warmth connected to a sense of embeddedness. Chao's study of China, in which she introduces the indigenous concept of *guan*, which means "to govern" or to "train" a child but without the negative connotations of authoritarian parenting, is similar to the *tarbiyat* and *parvarish* concepts discussed earlier in the context of Pakistani parenting. *Guan*, while associated with control also incorporates parental love, care, and concern, responsibilities

of parents towards children (Chao and Tseng 2002). Control and domination of the child as interpreted by Baumrind's authoritarian parenting differs from *guan* and *tarbiyat* which imposes standards on the child not from a desire to dominate but to educate him/her to live harmoniously and to sustain the integrity of the family of birth and marriage.

In her review of achievements by Asian children, Chao identifies several factors contributing to their academic success. These include time and effort spent on activities such as private tutoring, study groups, language lessons, while spending less time on others that reduce study time for children, such as household chores or part-time jobs. As in Pakistan, excelling in school and good academic performance by sons and daughters are considered the primary responsibilities of parents. According to Chao, cultural folk beliefs and relationship roles play an integral part in child rearing practices. The importance of Confucianism and Hindu religious belief systems in parenting goals has also been addressed in Rao's study of Chinese and Indian mothers (Rao et al. 2003). Stewart et al. (2002) and Stewart et al. (1999a, b) used a scale system measuring *guan* in studies with women participants from Pakistan, Hong Kong, and the United States. In these studies, "training items" were found to be associated with positive outcomes for the Asian participants.

In individualistic cultures, parental control and low autonomy granting to children have negative connotations, whereas self-direction and independence from parents is valued. However, cross-cultural studies conducted on Asian adolescents including from Pakistan have revealed different results (Stewart et al. 2003, 2000a, b). One study found that decision-making to please parents was related positively to adolescent adjustment whereas parents perceived to be non-supportive and detached had a negative effect on adolescent psychological adjustment. The second study revealed interesting results regarding gender differences. Overall, children who perceived autonomy-granting on the parents' parts, within established cultural norms, was associated with positive self-image and relationship harmony. In comparing boys and girls, the latter perceived their parents to be warmer and providing greater autonomy.

In a study on children's sharing behavior, Asian girls were more willing than Asian boys to share their toys and gifts, while no such correlating difference was found in their American counterparts (Rao and Stewart 1999). Another study used videotapes of Chinese, Indian, and American children to assess their interactions with one another in the matter of sharing food (Stewart and McBride-Chang 2000). While Asian children were more willing to share than American children, and Asian girls more willing than Asian boys, neither difference was significant.

Gender differences in perceptions of parenting styles are also reported in two Pakistan-based studies (Stewart et al. 2000a, b; Kausar and Shafique 2008). In the Stewart study, daughters perceived parents to be more autonomy granting than sons, and in the Kausar and Shafique study, girls similarly perceived their parents to be more authoritative than boys did. These findings are not surprising. As daughters grow older, they are encouraged to make central decisions around the maintenance and functioning of the households. They are also increasingly responsible for training and taking care of their younger siblings, and mothers often express pride about

how their daughters' shouldering the household responsibilities lessens their burdens considerably. Gender differences were also found in Bangladeshi adolescents, where parental supervisory practices were associated with warmth for girls.

There is currently a dearth of research addressing the psychology of parenting in Pakistan. The few existing studies have been limited to middle class populations and the questionnaires employed for measuring parenting styles as well as adjustment of children have been translated from questionnaires used in the West. Stewart and Bond have also noted a shortcoming of parenting research in non-Western cultures in general. They make the valid observation that translating cultural core concepts into measuring scales have yielded variable and inconsistent results. Nevertheless, cross-cultural studies' findings do yield some interesting similarities and differences of parenting in collective cultures and individualistic cultures.

## Conclusion

Cultures are neither static nor monolithic, and like many of its neighboring countries, Pakistan is also caught in forces of globalization and change. Access to modern technology and travel, especially from rural to urban areas, and globalization has meant that although familial obligations are important to sustaining social bonds, both parents and children often experience different realities that lead to generational conflict in fast-paced times. The impact of change on existent negotiations of self and family, and the role of the therapist in accommodating new notions of selfhood, is a promising area for further research.

## References

Baumrind, D. (1967). Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behavior. *Genetic Psychology Monographs, 75*, 43–88.

Baumrind, D. (1987). A developmental perspective on adolescent risk-taking behavior in contemporary America. In W. Damon (Ed.), *New directions for child development: Adolescent health and social behavior* (Vol. 37, pp. 93–126). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Chao, R. K. (1994). Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development, 65*(4), 1111–1119.

Chao, R., & Tseng, V. (2002). Parenting of Asians. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting: Vol. 4. Social conditions and applied parenting* (2nd ed., pp. 59–93). Mahwah: Erlbaum.

Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting styles as context: An integrative model. *Psychological Bulletin, 113*(3), 487–497.

Dwairy, M., Achoui, M., Abouserie, R., Farah, A., Sakhleh, A. A., Fayad, M., & Khan, H. K. (2006). Parenting styles in Arab societies: A first cross-regional research study. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 37*, 230–247.

Ellsworth, P. C. (1994). Sense, culture and sensibility. In H. R. Marcus & S. Kitayama (Eds.), *Emotion and culture* (pp. 23–50). Washington, DC: APA Press.

Fung, H. (1999). Becoming a moral child: The socialization of shame among young Chinese children. *Ethos, 27*(2), 180–209.

Gilani, N. (2001). Conflict management styles of adolescents in mother-daughter relationships belonging to individualistic and collectivistic cultures. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research, 16*(1–2), 1–18.

Government of Pakistan. (2010–2011). Ministry of Finance. *Economic Survey*. Available at http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey_1011.html

Kağıtçıbaşı, C. (1994). A critical appraisal of individualism and collectivism: Toward a new formulation. In U. Kim, H. C. Triandis, C. Kağıtçıbaşı, S. C. Choi, & G. Yoon (Eds.), *Individualism and collectivism: Theory, method and applications* (pp. 52–65). London: Sage.

Kağıtçıbaşı, C. (1996). The autonomous-relational self: A new synthesis. *European Psychologist, 3*, 180–186.

Kausar, R., & Shafique, N. (2008). Gender differences in perceived parenting styles and socioemotional adjustment of adolescents. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research, 23*(3–4), 93–105.

Lin, C. C., & Fu, V. R. (1990). A comparison of child rearing practices among Chinese, immigrant Chinese, and Caucasian-American parents. *Child Development, 61*, 429–433.

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review, 98*(2), 224–253.

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1994). The culture construction of self and emotion: Implications for social behavior. In H. R. Markus & S. Kitayama (Eds.), *Emotion and culture* (pp. 89–132). Washington, DC: APA Press.

Moazam, F. (2000). Families, patients and physicians in medical decision making: A Pakistani perspective. *Hastings Center Report, 30*(6), 28–37.

Moazam, F. (2006). *Bioethics and organ transplantation in a Muslim society*. Bloomington: Indiana Press.

Moazam, F., & Zaman, R. M. (2003). At the interface of cultures. *The Journal of Clinical Ethics, 14*(4), 246–258.

Oyserman, D. (1993). The lens of personhood: Viewing the self and others in a multicultural society. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 65*(5), 993–1009.

Rao, N., & Stewart, M. S. (1999). Cultural influences on sharer and recipient behavior: Sharing in Chinese and Indian preschool children. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 30*, 219–241.

Rao, N., McHale, J. P., & Pearson, E. (2003). Links between socialization goals and child-rearing practices in Chinese and Indian mothers. *Infant Child Development, 12*, 475–492.

Religion in Pakistan. (2012). *Wikipedia.* Retrieved July 16, 2012, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Pakistan

Roland, A. (1989). *In search of self in India and Japan: Toward a cross-cultural psychology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Ryan, R. M., Deci, E. L., & Grolnick, W. S. (1995). Autonomy, relatedness, and the self: Their relation to development and psychology. In D. Cicchetti, D. J. Cohen, et al. (Eds.), *Developmental psychopathology* (Vol. 1, pp. 618–655). Oxford: Wiley.

Stewart, S. M., & McBride-Chang, C. (2000). Influences on children's sharing in a multicultural setting. *Journal of Cross Cultural Psychology, 31*, 333–348.

Stewart, S. M., Bond, M. H., Deeds, O., & Chung, S. F. (1999a). Intergenerational patterns of values and autonomy expectations in cultures of relatedness and separateness. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 30*, 575–593.

Stewart, S. M., Bond, M. H., Zaman, R. M., Chang, C. M., Rao, N., Ho, L. M., et al. (1999b). Functional parenting in Pakistan. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 23*(3), 747–770.

Stewart, S. M., Bond, M. H., Abdullah, A. S. M., & Ma, S. S. L. (2000a). Gender, parenting, and adolescent functioning in Bangladesh. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 46*, 540–563.

Stewart, S. M., Bond, M. H., Ho, L. M., Zaman, R. M., Dar, R., & Anwar, M. (2000b). Perceptions of parents and adolescent outcomes in Pakistan. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 18*, 335–352.

Stewart, S. M., Bond, M. H., Kennard, B. D., Ho, L. M., & Zaman, R. M. (2002). Does the Chinese concept of guan export to the west? *International Journal of Psychology, 37*(2), 74–82.

Stewart, S. M., Bond, M. H., Chan, W., Zaman, R. M., Dar, R., & Anwar, M. (2003). Autonomy from parents and psychological adjustment in an interdependent culture. *Psychology and Developing Societies, 15*, 31–49.

Stewart, S. M., Zaman, R. M., & Dar, R. (2006). Autonomy as a psychological need: Perceptions of Pakistani mothers. *Psychology and Developing Societies, 18*(2), 227–239.

Zaman, R. M. (1997). The adaptation of western psychotherapeutic methods to Muslim societies: The case of Pakistan. *World Psychology, 3*(1–2), 65–87. London.

# Parenting in the Philippines

**Liane Peña Alampay**

Being a parent is universally considered a complex and valued role that most adults would undertake and regard as one of the most significant steps in their lives. This is certainly evident in Philippine society, where the family is "the center of [Filipinos'] universe" (Jocano 1998, p.11). From a scientific standpoint, an understanding of parenting is crucial to the study of human development, given substantial research evidence that how parents raise their children is cause and correlate of various positive and negative outcomes, from school and work success to antisocial behavior and mental illness (Collins et al. 2000). However, the current state of knowledge remains dominated by Western research (Henrich et al. 2010), and more culturally diverse perspectives on parenting and families are essential to arrive at a more comprehensive knowledge of human development. This chapter presents the dominant themes that describe parenting in the Philippines.

Parenting in the Philippines has been shaped by the unique history, values, experiences, adaptations, and ways of being that characterize the Filipino people and their culture. The fundamental assumption of this chapter is that parent-child interactions, and the complex roles, meanings, and consequences associated with parenting, are embedded in and shaped by broader contexts such as extended kin networks, neighborhoods, socioeconomic class, and culture. Theoretical perspectives such as Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998) and Super and Harkness's Developmental Niche (Super and Harkness 1986) propose that the sociocultural environment represents blueprints or prescriptions that influence and support the particular practices of parents as they interact with their children, and in turn children's responses to and behaviors towards their parents. The cultural context likewise shapes the attitudes, beliefs, and goals that undergird parents' behaviors; and the kinds of environments and activities that parents set for their children (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998; Bornstein and Cheah 2006; Super and Harkness 1986; Harkness and Super 2006).

L.P. Alampay (✉)
Department of Psychology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines
e-mail: lpalampay@ateneo.edu

This chapter describes various facets of Filipino parenting in terms of cognitions (beliefs, attitudes, expectations) and behaviors towards children, the nature of parent-child interactions, and the differentiated roles of mothers and fathers, and sons and daughters. The discussion is intended to provide a broad view of parenting in the Philippines, based on data derived from local and internationally published empirical research, mostly in the disciplines of psychology and sociology. There are within-culture and individual differences in the presented themes and patterns due, in part, to such variables as level of education, socioeconomic status, or ethnicity. These are not highlighted, however, as such nuances either have not been fully explored empirically or detract from the goal of providing a coherent picture of Filipino parenting.

## An Overview of the Philippines (Fig. 1)

The Philippines is an archipelago of 7,107 islands located in Southeast Asia. It is considered an economically developing country with a per capita Gross National Income of USD 2,050. Twenty-three percent of the population lives below the international poverty line (USD 1.25 per day) (United Nations Children's Fund 2012).



**Fig. 1**  Map of the Philippines

The country ranks among the highest in Asia in inequalities between rich and poor individuals. Families with a highly educated head of the household experience economic growth and increased consumption, but progress has lagged significantly for the lower income class (Ney 2007). Albeit still striving to meet its millennium development goals, the Philippines fares comparatively better than other developing nations in basic health and education indices, with an under-5 mortality rate of 29 for every 1,000 live births, and an adult literacy rate of 95 % (equivalent for males and females). About 49 % of the population lives in urbanized areas (United Nations Children's Fund 2012). More pertinent to the matter of parenting and families, the Philippine population can be considered quite young, with 37 % under the age of 18. The average size of the household is 4.6 (National Statistics Office 2010).

Philippine society is an amalgam of Eastern and Western influences, a result of the nation's location and unique sociopolitical history. Three centuries under Spanish rule, beginning in the sixteenth century; four decades of American colonization thereafter; historical struggles for decolonization, indigenization, and democracy; and interactions with and migration to Pacific Rim countries are experiences that have forged the country's rich and complex culture. At the end of 2010, there were an estimated 9.45 million Filipinos in different countries all over the world, about five million of whom are overseas for employment purposes (Commission on Filipinos Overseas 2010). This virtual diaspora has posed many challenges for the adaptation of Filipino families abroad and left behind, despite its positive contribution to the country's economic development.

## Filipino Cultural and Family Values

In a comprehensive review of parenting in Asia, the authors ascribe to Filipino culture the largely collectivist and interdependent values that have also been identified in Chinese and Japanese societies (Chao and Tseng 2002). Like our Asian neighbors, Filipinos strongly value, prioritize, and intentionally cultivate strong relational bonds, especially within the family. Because of extensive colonial experiences, however, the roots of Filipinos' social and family values depart from the principles of Confucianism and Buddhism that are considered the foundation of familial attachments and obligations in other Asian nations (Chao and Tseng 2002; Ho 1993).

Early studies of Filipino personality proposed that the central value that underscores its collectivist nature is that of "smooth interpersonal relations" (or SIP). In desiring harmony and inclusiveness in their relationships, Filipinos are thought to subjugate individual interests to conform with their in-group, engage in *pakikisama* (being along with or adjusting to others), and avoid conflict and confrontation (Lynch 1973). But indigenous psychologists largely rejected the concept of SIP as the core of Filipino interpersonal values, arguing against a psychology that interprets Filipino personality from a colonial lens. Instead, the concept of *kapwa* was proposed as pivotal in regulating social relationships (Enriquez 1994). Literally

translated, *kapwa* refers to the "other" or "fellow-being", and *pakikipag-kapwa*, reflects the pervasive orientation and commitment of the Filipino to the other. Rooted in a regard for this other as *not* different from the self, but rather as one's coequal, a basic respect for one's *kapwa* guides Filipino social behavior. In this way, the Filipino self is fundamentally interdependent with the other, even as it remains differentiated. This is expressed in the analogy of several eggs fried together, where each yolk remains distinct and yet the egg whites run together (Bulatao 1992/1998). To think and behave as if the self were separate from *kapwa* is to be individualistic, egotistic, and *walang kapwa-tao* (without fellow-feeling), a serious transgression in Filipino society (Enriquez 1994).

The value of being mindful and respectful of one's *kapwa* is first learned in the most important social group in Filipino society, the family. The Filipino family is strongly characterized by cohesiveness among immediate members and extended kin, respect for elders and deference to parental authority, and fulfillment of mutual obligations (Chao and Tseng 2002; Medina 2001; Wolf 1997; Peterson 1993; Licuanan 1979). Individual achievements and failings reflect on the family as a whole and can bring about familial pride or shame; children's behavior, whether good or ill, reflects on their parents (Chao and Tseng 2002; Guthrie and Jacobs 1966). Because of this, it is imperative that one behaves with propriety and dignity with respect to the self and the family, which is a deeply held Filipino value known as *hiya* (Enriquez 1994). Children are typically admonished by parents to behave in ways that will uphold his or her and the parents' *hiya*, as opposed to actions that are *nakaka-hiya* or bring about shame and loss of face.

Filipino children likewise strive to meet familial obligations and expectations, whether in the form of instrumental support, such as conducting household chores or helping parents financially in their old age, or in the form of educational and occupational achievements (Garo-Santiago et al. 2009; Fuligni and Pederson 2002; Wolf 1997). In rural and lower-income contexts, especially, family members rely on an extended and intergenerational system of mutual obligations and exchanges, where cooperation, generosity, and sacrifice ensure the wellbeing of the family and its neediest members (Peterson 1993). The Filipino value of *utang na loob* (literally, "debt of one's being"), in part, underlies these expectations; it is the life-long debt owed to another person not merely because of having received some favor, but it is born of deep respect and gratitude (Enriquez 1994). Children are expected to possess a sense of *utang na loob* towards their parents for having borne and reared them, which must be manifested in respectfulness and honoring of family obligations (Medina 2001). Otherwise, the son or daughter will be known as without *hiya* or without *utang na loob*—no honor or gratitude—signifying that one is not a good child, much less a decent person.

The foregoing cultural values of *kapwa*, *hiya*, and *utang na loob* are among the interdependent themes that pervade the dynamics of Filipino parenting and parent-child relationships, which are characterized by respect for parental authority and obedience on the part of children, family cohesion, and meeting familial obligations. These themes are elaborated further in the succeeding sections.

## Views of Children and Conceptions of Childhood

Parents' beliefs about children is a logical place to begin in an analysis of parenting. How parents behave towards their children depends, in part, on their views of children and conceptions of childhood and childrearing. Harkness and Super called this *parental ethnotheories* (2006). Filipino parents consider infants and young children as not having a mind of their own, lacking in understanding, and dominated by raw emotions that demand immediate gratification (Dela Cruz et al. 2001). Key ethnographic studies of indigenous and rural Filipino communities flesh out this conception. In one of the earliest detailed studies on Filipino childrearing in a rural community of Tarong in Ilocos, Nydegger and Nydegger (1966) documented that children are believed to come into the world without sense. As such, few demands are made on the infant and young child, and indulgence, constant attention, and protection from harm are the dominant features of childrearing. Sense begins to develop around the ages of 4–6, when children are believed to possess the developmental maturity to comprehend and benefit from instruction and guidance. It is at this period when children are trained to assume responsibilities in the household and community, are expected to gain greater control of their impulses, and obey their parents, elders, and older siblings.

Similar themes are described in Rosaldo's (1980) ethnographic study of the indigenous Ilongot community in Nueva Vizcaya, northern Philippines. *Beya* or "knowledge of how to act and speak, of 'where to go' with one's feelings and what is due to one's kin" (p. 68) is that human element yet to develop in infants and young children. Lacking knowledge, infants and children are vulnerable to their fears, anger, and passions; they need adults to protect them and tell them what to do. Early development of *beya*, at around the ages of 3 or 4, is seen in children's ability to listen to and follow elders, but, as yet, their actions are regulated by words, threats, and prodding from outside forces. Fear and respect for elders, and the potential shame and embarrassment attendant to behaving with passion but without knowledge, motivate Ilongot youngsters to obey until that time when knowledge more fully develops and is internalized in adolescence and young adulthood.

In Aguilar's (2009) more recent ethnography of a rural community in Batangas, Southern Luzon, the corresponding aspect is known as *bait*: the ability to think and make sense of the world, discern right from wrong, and behave appropriately and responsibly in consideration of others' needs. The absence of *bait* makes children naughty, impulsive, and difficult to control; they need discipline from elders. Discipline is deemed best while children are young and *wala pang bait* (have no sense); it is used especially to curb older children's tendencies to assert themselves and act independently when they act as if they know better. Although nearing the acquisition of *bait*, adolescents are perceived as even more corruptible than children, and require guidance of a more delicate nature, given their penchant to rebel against authority. It is expected that with adulthood comes the advent of full *bait*, although there may be some adults who lose it or never actually acquire it.

    In the foregoing accounts, it is evident that children are perceived as different from adults, in that they lack the knowledge, sense, or understanding necessary to behave competently in their environment. These beliefs are consistent with the parental protectiveness and indulgence reportedly bestowed on infants and young children. Filipino mothers reveal that they are overprotective towards their children, which is the expression of maternal love for children who are viewed as essentially helpless (Espina 1996). The childrearing environment is typically described as nurturing, affectionate, playful, and supportive for younger children (Medina 2001; Ventura 1981). On the other hand, young children's questions and other displays of inquisitiveness and curiosity are not encouraged or addressed, but are diverted to play and other distractions (*Philippine Journal of Child-Youth Development* 1976). This suggests that parents may not purposively promote their children's cognitive development, perhaps in the belief that, lacking sense or understanding, they cannot yet benefit from instruction. Children are also exempt from household and other family responsibilities at this stage, but tag along with and observe older siblings who are not excused (Dela Cruz et al. 2001; Liwag et al. 1998; Nydegger and Nydegger 1966).

    On the other hand, the aforementioned views of children also provide a basis for parental authority and expectations of children's compliance, and the relatively more authoritarian mode of parenting experienced by the older child (Dela Cruz et al. 2001). Children's natural penchant for mischief, impulsivity, and emotionality may be tolerated when younger, but increasingly need to be reined in by adult instruction and discipline starting at the ages of 4–6. Instilling obedience and good manners, and fear of God and one's parents, become the parents' primary responsibility in socializing the older child (Dela Cruz et al. 2001; Licuanan 1979).

## Filipino Parental Authority and Control; Filipino Children's Obedience

In terms of childrearing attitudes, parents may be described as authoritarian, which emphasizes strictness, respect for authority, and obedience. In contrast, progressive attitudes pertain to childrearing of a more democratic nature, where children are encouraged to think independently and verbalize their ideas (Schaefer and Edgerton 1985). Studies have revealed that Filipino parents, in general, subscribe to authoritarian attitudes. In a nine-country study, Filipino parents rated authoritarian attitudes higher relative to other countries, and progressive and modern childrearing attitudes lower (Bornstein et al. 2011; Alampay and Jocson 2011). [See the chapter "Mother-Child Emotional Availability Across Cultures: Findings from Western and Non-Western Countries" by Putnick et al., in this volume.] Similarly, in the cross-national Value of Children (VOC) study conducted in the 1970s, the quality that 63 % of Filipino mothers most valued in their children is "to mind their parents", the most popular response, while 25 % indicated "to be a good person".

In contrast, only 5 % cited independence and self-reliance as a quality they desire in their children (Hoffman 1988). Obedience was also a frequent response when rural and urban mothers were asked to define a good and competent child (Durbrow et al. 2001). Filipino children generally adhere to their parents' views in their own definitions of "good child": a child must obey his or her parents and refrain from talking back, and show concern and care for their parents especially in their old age (Dela Cruz et al. 2001).

Such valuing of obedience, in turn, shapes the strategies and interactions of parents with their children. Specifically, authoritarian attitudes positively predict endorsement of physical punishment and the frequency of its use among Filipino parents (Jocson et al. 2012). *Disiplina*, or discipline, is a dominant theme of Filipino childrearing, and disobedience is the transgression that most often warrants disciplinary action. Acts of disobedience include non-compliance with parents' rules, orders, or requests; talking back to parents; being naughty by causing younger siblings to cry; interrupting adult conversations with disrespectful chatter; play-fighting with children or siblings; and disrupting order in the house or an event with unnecessary noise or activity (Sanapo and Nakamura 2011). Physical punishment, such as spanking and slapping extremities with the hand or an object, is not uncommon, with about 74 % of Filipino parents reporting its use in a given month (Lansford et al. 2010; Sanapo and Nakamura 2011), and even with adolescent children (NFO-Trends 2001). Other forms are verbal reprimands, threatening, shaming, and comparisons with other children (Dela Cruz et al. 2001; Jocano 1970; Licuanan 1979; Medina 2001; Ramiro et al. 2005; Sanapo and Nakamura 2011).

Parents believe that *disiplina* is a parental duty necessary to "bend the young in the right direction" (Dela Cruz et al. 2001; Jocano 1970), consistent with beliefs of the role of the parent to shape a child who is yet to develop reason and self-control. Discipline, then, is a means to teach, if not a sign of parents' love for their children (Ramiro et al. 2005; Dela Cruz et al. 2001). Indeed, if a child does grow up to be good, then this is primarily attributed to proper discipline, monitoring, and the teaching of values, according to Filipino mothers, apart from inherent competencies in the child (Dela Cruz et al. 2001; Durbrow et al. 2001). Conversely, Filipino parents tend to see themselves as responsible for failures in parent-child interactions (Alampay and Jocson 2011).

Yet even granting that discipline is normative in the culture, and that children have been socialized to accept it as part of their parents' guidance, its effects are not always positive. When physical discipline is perceived as unduly harsh and undeserved, children report feeling deeply hurt (Dela Cruz et al. 2001). Others report anger, sadness, fear, frustration, and even hatred towards their parents (Sanapo and Nakamura 2011; Esteban 2006). More frequent use of physical discipline by Filipino mothers is likewise associated with higher aggression and anxiety in their children (Lansford et al. 2005). In response to the empirical studies and children's rights principles, recent policy initiatives in the Philippines have called for the curtailment of corporal punishment and the promotion of positive forms of discipline in schools and homes. Whether and how this measure will portend culture change remains to be determined.

Parental authority and influence remain strong even into adolescence and young adulthood. In studies involving Filipino young adults aged 18–30, the majority still reside with their parents (Hechanova et al. 2008; Pesigan 2012; Quiñones 2009). Unless it is for education or work in a different province or city, Filipino youth are not expected to live apart from their parents until they are married. Even then, it is acceptable for a newly-married couple to live with either the wife or the husband's parents until they are financially able to manage by themselves (Aguilar 2009; Medina 2001). Adolescent and young adult children continue to receive and seek the advice of their parents, and obtain from them emotional and instrumental support (Quiñones 2009). More specifically, high school and college students indicated strong parental influence in the areas of education (e.g., which school and course to enroll in) and domestic roles (household/family responsibilities) (Lamug 1989).

In the context of autonomy development, which is conceivably a normative process across cultures in this stage of life, research has found that, indeed, autonomy may be negotiated and proceed quite differently among Filipino and Filipino-American youth. These adolescents have been found to endorse and value parental authority in making decisions more than their European and American counterparts. They are less likely to overtly disagree or argue with their parents, and have later age expectations for certain behaviors such as going out unchaperoned with friends and having relationships with the opposite sex (Cooper et al. 1993; Darling et al. 2005; Fuligni 1998; Fuligni et al. 1999). Compared to an American and Chilean sample, Filipino adolescents reported that their parents set rules and expectations over significantly more areas in their lives, such as how they spend their free time, how well they do in school, and their relationships with the opposite sex. Moreover, the number of rules did *not* decrease across the ages of 13–21, as it did for the youth in the other countries. Interestingly, despite the stability in the number of rules imposed by parents, older Filipino teens considered their parents as having less legitimate authority to set rules, and believed that they were less obliged to obey the rules that they disagreed with. This suggests that, as they pass from adolescence to young adulthood, Filipino youth do develop cognitions or attitudes that manifest greater autonomy strivings (Darling et al. 2005). How such autonomy strivings are negotiated and expressed in the Filipino parent-child relationship, given the emphasis on parental authority and familial interdependence, requires further study.

The themes of autonomy and control likewise dominate the gender-differentiated childrearing practices employed for sons and daughters. Filipino boys and girls are granted different degrees of freedom and restriction, with the former permitted more liberties and given more leeway in expectations and behaviors, even in aggressive and sexual transgressions. In contrast, parents are more likely to set restrictions for girls, heightened especially in adolescence when they reach sexual maturity (Tan et al. 2001; Medina 2001; Liwag et al. 1998). Social and romantic relationships with the opposite sex are constrained, social activities outside the home are restricted, and the young woman's behavior, demeanor, and overall appearance must be modest. On the one hand, these restrictions are motivated by parents' protectiveness over their daughters' wellbeing; on the other hand, they reflect the double standard that family honor rests on daughters' moral and demure behaviors (Tan et al. 2001; Liwag et al.

1998). These differing gender standards are generally the norm, whether in rural or urban settings, upper or lower socioeconomic levels, or Muslim or Christian subcultures (Liwag et al. 1998).

## Familial Expectations and Obligations Between Filipino Parents and Children

Another dominant theme in Filipino families is the emphasis on the fulfillment of familial duties and obligations by children, an expectation that reinforces the family's interdependence and supports the value of *utang na loob*—that is, acknowledging and reciprocating parents' care and sacrifices (Medina 2001). In the immediate or short term, meeting family responsibilities entails the performance of everyday tasks in household management and sibling care. In the bigger picture, this pertains to the fulfillment of longer-term expectations of contributing to the economic and social betterment of parents and siblings (and even extended kin), usually through the child's educational and occupational achievements (Chao and Tseng 2002; Medina 2001; Peterson 1993). It is not uncommon for a child in a low-income or rural context, especially if the oldest, to sacrifice his or her self-advancement—for instance, delaying the completion of his or her education so as to earn an income—in order to support siblings' education or aging parents (Peterson 1993).

Such expectations are consistent with Filipino parents' attitudes concerning the value or benefits of having children. In a classic cross-national comparison of high-fertility and low-fertility countries (where the Philippines is in the former category), 67–94 % of a nationally representative sample of mothers and fathers expected their children to primarily fulfill utilitarian roles in the family, such as "helping around the house", "support siblings' schooling", and "support (parents) in old age" (Bulatao 1975; Hoffman 1988). Relative to countries such as the United States and Germany, Filipino parents were significantly more likely to cite the economic or utilitarian benefits of having children. Happiness and companionship, "to complete the family", and "to strengthen the marital bond" were also cited as reasons for having children, but to a lesser extent than utilitarian factors. A more recent study, however, shows a balance between economic and psychological reasons (Dela Cruz et al. 2001). Still, when asked to describe a good child, Filipino mothers first described one who helps care for younger siblings, fulfills chores, and helps provide for the basic needs of family members (Durbrow et al. 2001).

Given that children are expected to make meaningful contributions to the family, Filipino parents embark on responsibility training or the systematic instruction and guidance of young children in various roles they are to undertake in the household. This begins when children are about the age of 4, which coincides with the period when they are thought to develop sense and knowledge. Assignments are usually in accordance with traditional gender roles. Daughters engage in work that mostly involves the domestic sphere, such as cleaning, cooking, and care of younger siblings; they also participate in farming, crafting, or weaving, to the extent that the

women in the community do so. Sons are responsible for the jobs in the household that require more physical labor and distance; if residing in a rural area, boys may participate in farming, fishing, and tending to livestock (Liwag et al. 1998). Urban poor children and youth, regardless of gender, may undertake street-based jobs or other subsistence work that add to the family coffers (Dela Cruz et al. 2001).

Especially for families in the lower socio-economic class, such duties represent critical contributions to family welfare that increase in magnitude as the children grow to adolescence and young adulthood. Yet the practice places Filipino children at risk for hazardous and exploitative forms of labor. A 2011 national survey reported 5.5 million Filipino child laborers between the ages of 5–17; roughly 60 % of these children work in the agricultural sector (National Statistics Office 2012). While 90 % of the 5–9 year olds are enrolled in school, the percentage of school-going youth is halved by the time they are 15. Given the emphasis placed on meeting family duties and obligations, efforts to curb child labor in the country must take into account and address the cultural and familial values and traditions that underlie this practice.

Aside from gender, responsibility training varies according to birth order. Greater responsibilities and expectations are typically issued to first-borns, especially the females, who take on more household and child care tasks than even the father (Liwag et al. 1998; Parreñas 2006). Last-borns or the *bunso* are considered the parental favorites and often get a lighter load than older siblings. Older children may feel burdened or pressured by their responsibilities if the work is especially heavy and their play and schooling are compromised (Liwag et al. 1998; Parreñas 2006; Dela Cruz et al. 2001). However, Filipino children, young and old, rarely question or reject the expectation itself. Most have a genuine desire and goal to help their families (Dela Cruz et al. 2001) and are averse to disappointing their parents (Wolf 1997). Indeed, Filipino children and adolescents consider the fulfillment of their familial duties and responsibilities as a central and significant aspect of their identities (Garo-Santiago et al. 2009). For middle- and lower-income youth, being able to help one's parents financially is considered an indicator of success and status (McCann-Erickson Philippines 2006), and is associated with more positive wellbeing among Filipino-American young adults (Fuligni and Pederson 2002). The authors surmise that this is because familial responsibility provides youth with a sense of purpose, responsibility, and identity, which are all important at this time of life.

Especially for families in the middle and upper socioeconomic class, meeting familial obligations and expectations also translates to school achievement. Parents expend much effort and sacrifice to provide for their children's education; in fact, this is the primary reason Filipino parents embark on overseas work (Philippine Institute for Development Studies 2008; Parreñas 2006). The child's school achievements, therefore, are a source of parental pride and compensate for the parent's sacrifices. Still, high expectations, particularly in the academic realm, have made Filipino youth vulnerable to stress, anxiety, and depression. Students, teachers, and guidance counselors at a private boys' school in the Philippines revealed that parental pressure to do well academically is among the topmost sources of stress (Alampay et al. 2005). Similarly, parental pressures to succeed academically, in conjunction with a parent relationship characterized by strictness and a general lack of

emotional intimacy and open communication was associated with higher symptoms of depression for high-achieving Filipino-American women (Wolf 1997).

## Filipino Mothering and Fathering

The respective roles of Filipino mothers and fathers have generally been characterized as clearly demarcated along traditional gender lines. Mothers, as is the case in most other cultures, are the primary caretakers of children and are responsible for the tasks pertaining to their everyday care in the realms of schooling, daily routines, and health (Enrile and Agbayani 2007; Dela Cruz et al. 2001; Medina 2001; Liwag et al. 1998; Carunungan-Robles 1986; Porio et al. 1981; Licuanan 1979). The moniker *ilaw ng tahanan*—literally, "light of the home"—exemplifies the Filipino wife and mother ideal, one who nurtures the family as her primary duty. The father, on the other hand, is the "pillar of the home" (*haligi ng tahanan*), the parent who is primarily expected to support or provide for the family, but whose participation in other aspects of child rearing is limited (Dela Cruz et al. 2001; Medina 2001; Aguiling-Dalisay et al. 2000; Liwag et al. 1998; Tan 1989).

In reality, it is not uncommon for the provider role to be shared between husband and wife, despite the cultural dictum. About 1 in 2 Filipino women work, and more than a third of families are composed of dual-earning couples (Ortega and Hechanova 2010). Among lower-income families, mothers necessarily contribute to the family income, and some serve as the primary provider (Dela Cruz et al. 2001). But despite the expansion of their roles, working mothers are still expected to take primary responsibility over the care of children and management of the household. Indeed, self-perceptions and others' (including the husbands') perceptions of working women are more favorable if the working mother is able to remain efficient and fully involved in her domestic role (De la Cruz 1986). Feelings of guilt and lack of time to spend with family are the paramount concerns and sources of stress of working mothers (Ortega and Hechanova 2010; De la Cruz 1986).

Gendered role expectations are all the more highlighted in the case of Filipino mothers who leave their families to seek employment overseas. Of the deployed Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in 2011, 55 % are women taking on jobs in the Middle East, Hong Kong, and North America as household workers, nurses, and caregivers (Senate Economic Planning Office 2012). A scenario considered by many as anathema in Filipino culture, the mother-migrant leaves her children to work abroad, so that her more sizable income can support a better education and life for her family (Philippine Institute for Development Studies 2008; Parreñas 2006). Yet the migrant mother is still largely expected by her family, and society in general, to engage in transnational mothering; that is, to maintain the nurturing and caretaking role from a distance. She strives to achieve this by sending packages of monetary and material gifts, and via regular phone calls and text messages to oversee her children's school performance, ensure that their daily needs are being met, and maintain emotional connection (Aguilar 2009; Parreñas 2006). In Parreñas's analysis, children were more likely to see migrant-mother families as not normal,

and to feel that their care had been inadequate (albeit satisfactory substitute care may have been available), because migrant mothers are unlikely to meet their traditional role expectations for mothering.

Fathers, on the other hand, have the circumscribed role of provider in the family and are the dominant authority figure and disciplinarian. Although mothers may manage children's behavior on a day-to-day basis, and mete out rewards and punishments as necessary, more serious transgressions and misbehaviors are reported to the father who is expected to implement the more momentous admonition and punishment (Medina 2001; Liwag et al. 1998).

In terms of involvement with childcare, Filipino fathers generally fit the mold of procreator and dilettante (Tan 1989); the procreator being uninvolved in children's lives apart from providing for their material needs, and the dilettante father being involved in some interaction with children, but of a playful or recreational nature. Such is the cultural norm that even in situations when the mother is absent—as in mother-migrant families—most fathers still do not take on a greater share of the care of children. Rather, this role is usually transferred to female kin such as grandmothers, aunts, and older daughters (Parreñas 2006; Liwag et al. 1998; Philippine Institute for Development Studies 2008). However, there are those who are able to redefine their notions of masculinity and fatherhood to include child care and nurturing. This pattern is more evident among husbands who are also able to maintain jobs or responsibilities and decision-making power in the family, despite the higher earnings of the migrant wife (Parreñas 2006; Pingol 2001).

How do the respective roles of mothers and fathers affect decision-making in the family? Filipino mothers and fathers report joint decision-making when it comes to the discipline and education of children, and family finances or investments. The exception is in the domain of household finances, where wives hold the reins (Porio et al. 1981). Joint decision-making is more likely to be reported by couples who have higher incomes and more years of education. Despite this, parenting roles in the Philippines cannot unequivocally be said to be egalitarian. Certainly, mothers hold sway over most domestic and child matters and are increasingly undertaking the role of provider, but fathers assume a dominance and authority that is still recognized in the public and sociocultural sphere (Enrile and Agbayani 2007). Perhaps Article 211 of the 1987 Family Code of the Republic of the Philippines (1987) exemplifies this state of affairs: "The father and the mother shall jointly exercise parental authority over the persons of their common children. In case of disagreement, the father's decision shall prevail…"

## Relationships Between Mothers, Fathers, and Children

The mother-child relationship is characterized by themes of warmth, nurturance, and protectiveness, on the one hand, but also strictness and control on the other (Espina 1996). As the parent who supervises the behaviors of the children, she is in the position to wield authority and discipline more frequently than the father. In fact, 6–8 year-old children perceive their mothers as more powerful than fathers, in as much as they witness their mothers give orders, direct their behaviors, and oversee

the household (Carunungan-Robles 1986). Still, in terms of childrearing attitudes, Filipino mothers have also been shown to espouse relatively more modern or progressive beliefs about children and childrearing, compared to fathers. That is, mothers are more likely to support beliefs regarding children's autonomy and self-direction, a result perhaps of their greater exposure and attention to child-related media and programs (Alampay and Jocson 2011).

Results of several studies, including those with national and representative samples, indicate that Filipino children typically report feeling closer to and more open in communicating with their mothers than fathers (McCann-Erickson Philippines 2006; NFO-Trends 2001; Cooper et al. 1993; Fuligni 1998). Adolescents also report a higher visibility or presence of the mother in most aspects of their lives, such as meal times and school and leisure activities (McCann-Erickson Philippines 2006; NFO-Trends 2001).

On the other hand, the themes of the Filipino father-child relationship have to do with authority, restriction, obedience, and control, with children showing greater submission and deference to fathers than mothers (Espina 1996; Liwag et al. 1998). Almost invariably, children and adolescents report—with disappointment or regret—a lack of emotional intimacy or closeness with their fathers, a consequence, perhaps, of the limited role that fathers play in their daily lives. Likewise, communication with fathers is less open (McCann-Erickson Philippines 2006; NFO-Trends 2001; Parreñas 2006). More recent studies, however, suggest that the pattern might be changing. Compared to previous numbers, a national survey in 2005 showed that significantly more adolescents are reporting the presence of their fathers in various regular activities in their lives, such as going to church, helping with studies or homework, and even just watching television at home (McCann-Erickson Philippines 2006). In general, other studies have also found that younger fathers, and those with more years of education, tend to share more of the childrearing responsibilities with their wives and are more involved in the daily and emotional lives of their children (Aguiling-Dalisay et al. 2000).

In general, however, there seem to be limited interactions between parents and children, particularly past the years of childhood. Occasions for seeing and conversing with each other usually take place during evenings at the dining table, or while watching television or movies at home and during weekends. Communication between parents and children is mostly limited to topics pertaining to studies; there is significantly less disclosure regarding personal problems and feelings, friendships, and romantic relationships, due to adolescents' fears of censure or anger from parents (NFO-Trends 2001; Parreñas 2006; Medina 2001). Despite this, children and teenagers typically report feeling happiest when they are together with their families (McCann-Erickson Philippines 2006; NFO-Trends 2001).

## Change in the Filipino Family

Filipino social scientists surmise that the current climate of globalization and urbanization has brought about notable changes for Filipino family life, as, for example, in family structure. While over 80 % of children are raised in dual-parent

households, about a quarter of adolescents surveyed nationally are growing up in households with one parent (mostly father-absent) and another quarter with neither parent. Changes in family structure are mostly due to migrations abroad or to the city for work or studies, on the part of both the parent and the adolescent child, as well as marital separation and parental death (Raymundo and Cruz 2004; McCann-Erickson Philippines 2006; NFO-Trends 2001).

More empirical evidence is needed, however, to determine the extent to which such shifts have influenced family roles and dynamics. For instance, while there are increasing numbers of working mothers, and more fathers have taken on nurturing roles towards children, extant data suggest that the sociocultural prescriptions for the mother and father roles remain the norm (Parreñas 2006).

Medina (2001) observed, albeit with scant empirical data, that Filipino parents "are adapting gradually to the changing times by shifting their childrearing orientation from dependency to independence, from restrictiveness to permissiveness, from extreme control to autonomy, and from authoritarianism to liberalism and individuality" (p. 237). Alampay and Jocson (2011) likewise found that although mothers hold relatively more modern views than fathers regarding childrearing, authoritarian and progressive attitudes do not differ widely overall, for both parents. Such a coexistence in both traditional and modern orientations is consistent with models of emotional interdependence (individualist values in families in collectivist societies), and evidence of multiculturalism that arises in societies that are experiencing urbanization and social change (Kagitcibasi 1996). Filipino parenting behaviors may shift in the years to come, and the consequences of these emergent beliefs and behaviors for Filipino families and children's development will need to be fully examined.

# References

Aguilar, F. V. (2009). *Maalwang buhay: Family, overseas migration, and cultures of relatedness in Barangay Paraiso*. Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Aguiling-Dalisay, G., Mendoza, R., Mirafelix, J., Yacat, J., Sto. Domingo, E., & Bambico, R. (2000). *Pagkalalake* [Masculinity]*: Men in control? Filipino male views on love, sex & women*. Quezon City: Pambansang Samahan sa Sikolohiyang Pilipino [National Association for Filipino Psychology].

Alampay, L. P., & Jocson, M. R. (2011). Attributions and attitudes of mothers and fathers in the Philippines. *Parenting: Science and Practice, 11*(2–3), 163–176.

Alampay, L. P., Dela Cruz, A., Fernandez, K., Liwag, M. E., & Melgar, I. (2005). *Boys don't cry, or do they? An exploratory study of stress and coping of Filipino boys*. Paper presented at the 42nd annual conference of the psychological association of the Philippines, Metro Manila.

Bornstein, M., & Cheah, C. (2006). The place of "culture and parenting" in the ecological contextual perspective on developmental science. In K. Rubin & O. B. Chung (Eds.), *Parenting beliefs, behaviors, and parent-child relations: A cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 3–33). New York: Psychology Press.

Bornstein, M., Putnick, D., & Lansford, J. (2011). Parenting attitudes and attributions in cross-cultural perspective. *Parenting: Science and Practice, 11*(2–3), 214–237.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. (1998). The ecology of developmental processes. In W. Damon (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology* (5th ed., Vol. 1). New York: Wiley.

Bulatao, R. (1975). *The value of children: Philippines*. Honolulu: East–west Population Institute.

Bulatao, J. C. (1992/1998). *Phenomena and their interpretation: Landmark essays 1957–1989*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Carunungan-Robles, A. (1986). Perceptions of parental nurturance, punitiveness, and power by selected Filipino primary school children. *Philippine Journal of Psychology, 19*, 18–28.

Chao, R., & Tseng, V. (2002). Parenting of Asians. In M. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting* (Vol. 4). Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Collins, W. A., Maccoby, E., Steinberg, L., Hetherington, M., & Bornstein, M. (2000). Contemporary research on parenting: The case for nature and nurture. *American Psychologist, 55*(2), 218–232.

Commission on Filipinos Overseas. (2010). *Stock estimate of overseas Filipinos*. Retrieved, from http://www.cfo.gov.ph/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1340%3Astock-estimate-of overseas filipinos&catid=134 &Itemid=814

Cooper, C., Baker, H., Polichar, D., & Welsh, M. (1993). Values and communication of Chinese, Filipino, Mexican, and Vietnamese American adolescents with their families and friends. In S. Shulman & W. A. Collins (Eds.), *Father-adolescent relationships* (New directions for child development, no.62, pp. 73–89). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Darling, N., Cumsille, P., & Peña-Alampay, L. (2005). Rules, legitimacy of parental authority, and obligation to obey in Chile, the Philippines, and the United States. In J. Smetana (Ed.), *Changing boundaries of parental authority during adolescence* (pp. 47–60). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

De La Cruz, A. (1986). The impact of maternal employment on family members' perceptions and attitudes towards the maternal role. *Philippine Journal of Psychology, 19*, 29–40.

Dela Cruz, M. T., Protacio, E., Balanon, F., Yacat, J., & Francisco, C. (2001). *Trust and power: Child abuse in the eyes of the child and the parent*. Manila: Save the Children UK and the United Nations Children's Fund.

Durbrow, E., Peña, L., Masten, A., Sesma, A., & Williamson, I. (2001). Mothers' conceptions of child competence in contexts of poverty: The Philippines, St. Vincent, and the United States. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 25*(5), 438–443.

Enrile, A., & Agbayani, P. (2007). Differences in attitudes towards women among three groups of Filipinos: Filipinos in the Philippines, Filipino American immigrants, and U.S.-born Filipino Americans. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 16*(1–2), 1–25.

Enriquez, V. (1994). *From colonial to liberation psychology*. Manila: De La Salle University Press.

Espina, E. (1996). Mother-child relationships in the Philippines. *Philippine Studies, 44*(2), 153–174.

Esteban, E. (2006). Parental verbal abuse: Culture-specific coping behavior of college students in the Philippines. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development, 36*(3), 243–259.

*Family code of the Republic of the Philippines*, Executive Order No. 209. (1987). Retrieved, from http://www.chanrobles.com/executiveorderno209.htm#.UI-814VTHM8

Fuligni, A. (1998). Authority, autonomy, and parent-adolescent conflict and cohesion: A study of adolescents from Mexican, Chinese, Filipino, and European backgrounds. *Developmental Psychology, 34*, 782–792.

Fuligni, A., & Pederson, S. (2002). Family obligation and the transition to young adulthood. *Developmental Psychology, 38*(5), 856–868.

Fuligni, A., Tseng, V., & Lam, M. (1999). Attitudes toward family obligations among American adolescents with Asian, Latin American, and European backgrounds. *Child Development, 70*, 1030–1044.

Garo-Santiago, M., Mansukhani, R., & Resureccion, R. (2009). Adolescent identity in the context of the Filipino family. *Philippine Journal of Psychology, 42*(2), 175–193.

Guthrie, G., & Jacobs, P. J. (1966). *Child rearing and personality development in the Philippines*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Harkness, S., & Super, C. (2006). Themes and variations: Parental ethnotheories in western cultures. In K. Rubin & O. B. Chung (Eds.), *Parenting beliefs, behaviors, and parent-child relations: A cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 61–79). New York: Psychology Press.

Hechanova, M. R., Franco, E., & Alampay, L. P. (2008). Managing our young Filipino workers. In M. R. Hechanova & E. Franco (Eds.), *Leading Philippine organizations in a changing world: Research and best practices*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world? *The Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 33*, 1–75.

Ho, D. (1993). Relational orientation in Asian social psychology. In U. Kim & J. Berry (Eds.), *Indigenous psychologies: Research and experience in cultural context* (pp. 240–259). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Hoffman, L. (1988). Cross-cultural differences in childrearing goals. In R. Levine, P. Miller, & M. West (Eds.), *Parental behavior in diverse societies* (pp. 99–122). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Jocano, F. L. (1970). Maternal and child care among the Tagalogs in Bay, Laguna, Philippines. *Asian Studies, 8*(3), 277–300.

Jocano, F. L. (1998). *Filipino social organization: Traditional kinship and family organization*. Quezon City: Punlad Research House.

Jocson, M. R., Alampay, L. P., & Lansford, J. (2012). Predicting Filipino mothers' and fathers' reported use of corporal punishment from education, authoritarian attitudes, and endorsement of corporal punishment. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 36*(2), 137–145.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1996). *Family and human development across cultures: A view from the other side*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Lamug, C. (1989). Adolescent perception of parental influence. *Philippine Sociological Review, 37*(1–2), 46–57.

Lansford, J. E., Chang, L., Dodge, K. A., Malone, P. S., Oburu, P., Palmérus, K., et al. (2005). Cultural normativeness as a moderator of the link between physical discipline and children's adjustment: A comparison of China, India, Italy, Kenya, Philippines, and Thailand. *Child Development, 76*, 1234–1246.

Lansford, J. E., Alampay, L. P., Al-Hassan, S., Baccini, D., Bombi, A. S., Bornstein, M. H., Chang, L., Deater-Deckard, K., Di Giunta, L., Dodge, K. A., Oburu, P., Pastorelli, C., Runyan, D. K., Skinner, A. T., Sorbring, E., Tapanya, S., Tirado, L. M. U., & Zelli, A. (2010). Corporal punishment of children in nine countries as a function of child gender and parent gender. *International Journal of Pediatrics, 2010*, 1–12. doi:10.1155/2010/672780.

Licuanan, P. (1979). Aspects of child rearing in an urban low-income community. *Philippine Studies, 27*, 453–468.

Liwag, M. E., De la Cruz, A., & Macapagal, M. (1998). How we raise our daughters and sons: Child-rearing and gender socialization in the Philippines. *Philippine Journal of Psychology, 31*, 1–46.

Lynch, F. (1973). *Social acceptance reconsidered*. Manila: Institute of Philippine Culture.

McCann-Erickson Philippines. (2006). *2006 McCann inter-generation study: Youth study highlights*. Manila: Author.

Medina, B. (2001). *The Filipino family* (2nd ed.). Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.

National Statistics Office. (2010). *Census of population and housing*. Retrieved October 1, 2012, from http://www.census.gov.ph/content/household-population-philippines-reaches-921-million

National Statistics Office. (2012). *Preliminary results of the 2011 survey on children*. Retrieved October 1, 2012, from http://www.census.gov.ph/content/number-working-children-5-17-years-old-estimated-55-million-preliminary-results-2011-survey

Ney, P. (2007, August 13). Inequality growing in Asia; 'fairly stable' in the Philippines. *The Daily PCIJ*. Retrieved June 3, 2010, from http://www.pcij.org/blog/?p=1899

NFO-Trends. (2001). *Youth study 2001*. Manila: Society of Jesus.

Nydegger, W., & Nydegger, C. (1966). *Tarong: An Ilocos barrio in the Philippines*. New York: Wiley.

Ortega, R., & Hechanova, R. (2010). Work-family conflict, stress, and satisfaction among dual-earning couples. *Philippine Journal of Psychology, 43*(1), 27–43.

Parreñas, R. (2006). *Children of global migration*. Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Pesigan, I. (2012). *Identity processes in Filipino emerging adults: Parental influences and mental health outcomes*. Masters thesis, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Peterson, J. T. (1993). Generalized family exchange: A case from the Philippines. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 55*(3), 570–584.

Philippine Institute for Development Studies. (2008). OFW children: Wanting for more attention. *Development Research News, 26*(2), 1–5.

Philippine Journal of Child-Youth Development. (1976). Child-rearing practices during the fourth year of life. *6*(1), 34–40.

Pingol, A. (2001). *Remaking masculinities: Identity, power, and gender dynamics in families with migrant wives and househusbands*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Center for Women's Studies and Ford Foundation.

Porio, E., Lynch, F., & Hollsteiner, M. (1981). *The Filipino family, community, and nation* (IPC Papers No. 12). Quezon City: Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University.

Quiñones, A. (2009). *Identity explorations during the transition to adulthood: An exploratory study*. Masters thesis, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Ramiro, L., Madrid, B., Lozada, D., & Perez, E. (2005). *Understanding child discipline and child abuse in the Filipino context: Comparing perspectives of parents, children, professionals, and community leaders*. Retrieved, from http://www.childrensociety.org.sg/downloadpapers/papersfiles/Ramiro,%20Laurie.pdf

Raymundo, C. M., & Cruz, G. T. (2004). *Youth sex and risk behaviors in the Philippines*. Quezon City: Demographic Research and Development Foundation, Inc./University of the Philippines Population Institute.

Rosaldo, M. (1980). *Knowledge and passion: Ilongot notions of self and social life*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sanapo, M., & Nakamura, Y. (2011). Gender and physical punishment: The Filipino children's experience. *Child Abuse Review, 20*, 39–56.

Schaefer, E. S., & Edgerton, M. (1985). Parent and child correlates of parental modernity. In I. E. Sigel (Ed.), *Parental belief systems: Psychological consequences for children* (pp. 287–318). Hillsdale: Erlbaum.

Senate Economic Planning Office. (2012). *Overseas Filipino workers*. Retrieved, from http://www.senate.gov.ph/publications.asp

Super, C., & Harkness, S. (1986). The developmental niche: A conceptualization at the interface between child and culture. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 9*(4), 545–556.

Tan, A. (1989). Four meanings of fatherhood. *Philippine Journal of Psychology, 22*, 51–60.

Tan, M. L., Ujano-Batangan, M. T., & Española, H. (2001). *Love and desire: Young Filipinos and sexual risks*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines, Center for Women's Studies.

United Nations Children's Fund. (2012). *The state of the world's children 2012: Children in an urban world*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund.

Ventura, E. R. (1981). An overview of child psychology in the Philippines. *Philippine Journal of Psychology, 14*, 3–7.

Wolf, D. (1997). Family secrets: Transnational struggles among children of Filipino immigrants. *Sociological Perspectives, 40*(3), 457–482.

# Childrearing, Motherhood and Fatherhood in Bangladeshi Culture

**Jena Derakhshani Hamadani and Fahmida Tofail**

## Introduction

Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries of the world with a per capita income of US$848. It is the most densely populated country in the world with a population of over 150 million in an area of 147,570 km$^2$ (Fig. 1). Greater than 70 % of its population lives in rural areas within joint or extended families that have three or more generations living together. Those who have migrated to urban areas mainly live in nuclear families with two generations. Bangladesh is predominantly a Muslim country with almost 90 % of its population being Muslim, but other religions like Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and Baha'is, as well as over 40 indigenous groups live in the country. Although Islam is the religion of the majority, Bangladeshi culture has integrated many traditional beliefs and practices which are slight deviations from orthodox Islam. Some examples of this cultural fusion practiced in Bangladesh are the "dowry" system, aspects of wedding ceremonies, newborn care practices like feeding pre-lacteals [giving of fluid that is not breast milk], and shaving a baby's head after birth, among other practices.

Davies (2000) defined parenting as "child rearing that focuses on parents or caregivers practices of promoting scaffolding and supporting the optimum physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood."

In Bangladeshi culture there is a strong family bond among parents and children and parents, especially mothers, will make any sacrifice for their children. Knowledge about parenting is not adequate and many lack sufficient understanding of positive parenting that includes early child stimulation and interaction (Fig. 2).

J.D. Hamadani (✉) • F. Tofail
Child Development Unit and Centre for Nutrition and Food Security,
International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research (icddr,b), Dhaka, Bangladesh
e-mail: jena@icddrb.org

**Fig. 1** Map of Bangladesh

## Preparation for Parenting

Approximately 66 % of Bangladeshi women get married before the age of 16 (UNICEF 2011). Becoming mothers out of wedlock is considered a great sin and is not accepted in the society. Early marriage usually truncates girls' education, thus contributing to the low literacy rate (66 %) observed amongst Bangladeshi women.

**Fig. 2** A middle-class
mother affectionately holding
her child



Studies have shown that better educated mothers are better parents (Fernald et al. 2012; Hamadani et al. 2012). Most young brides conceive their first child within the first year of marriage, leaving little time for physical and mental preparation for parenting. However, recent developments have resulted in most families using birth control, thus improving the spacing of births. Mothers, therefore, have the opportunity to become better parents with their first child and therefore take better care of their subsequent children.

Care for pregnant mothers is not that well understood by families and communities. In most rural areas, a pregnant mother is provided with little food to avoid developing a large fetus and therefore a difficult delivery. In a study in Mymensingh district, half of the pregnant women reported no change or lower intake of food during pregnancy and most of them followed dietary taboos and avoided protein and calorie-rich foods. They were the last to eat at the household and received the smallest portion of food (Shannon et al. 2008).

Pregnant women usually also work in the field or at home for long hours with little rest, and though they understand the importance of rest, they rarely can afford to do so. This is one of the causes of giving birth to low birth weight children (Akram et al. 2000).

The urban picture of preparation for parenting is different. Around 70 % of families are nuclear families and usually both the parents work outside the home or are involved with some income generation. They are well cared for prenatally, according to their family traditions and the advice of doctors. In a majority of cases soon

after women realize they are pregnant, they make contact with an obstetrician or get attached to maternity hospitals for antenatal care. These practices vary among different socioeconomic classes of the urban population.

In a study in Bangladesh 10 % of urban and 12 % of rural pregnant women were victims of physical, emotional, and/or sexual violence. The majority of the perpetrators were their husbands and in less than 1 % of cases, other relatives were responsible (Naved and Persson 2008). Several studies have shown that violence against women leads to maternal depression (Johnston and Naved 2008) and suicidal ideation by women (Naved and Akhtar 2008). Poverty and poor marital relationships are also underlying contributors to maternal depression. Children of depressed mothers tend to be at higher risk of mortality (Asling-Monemi et al. 2008), morbidity (Silverman et al. 2009), low-birth weight (Nasreen et al. 2010), malnutrition (Ziaei et al. 2012) and lower development (Black et al. 2007). Depressed mothers also have weaker bonds with their children (Edhborg et al. 2011).

## Care of the Newborn

Because there are many teenage pregnancies, particularly in rural areas, the new mother is not competent or is not believed to be competent enough to take care of her baby and therefore grandmothers take care of the newborn to help the young mothers. In urban areas newborn care varies according to different social class and economic abilities. In poor communities, the mothers usually take care of the newborn all by themselves or by accepting help from the neighbors or older children. In middle, upper-middle and upper class families, they keep domestic helpers to look after their newborns. Recently some organizations provide crèche or day care services for the female staff to ensure proper nursing of their babies.

### *Nutrition*

Among Bangladeshis, newborn care is mostly focused on nutrition which includes some good and some wrong practices. For example as soon as the child is born, if breast milk is not available, pre-lacteals like honey or sugar water are given to the child with the belief that the child will be sweet-tongued. Mustard oil is another type of pre-lacteal that is fed to the child. Colostrum was previously thought to be harmful for the child and was discarded, but with present health and nutrition education throughout the country, over 90 % of mothers feed their colostrum[1] to their children. Breastfeeding is commonly practiced in Bangladesh, but it is mostly partial and the

---

[1] Colostrum is a form of milk produced by the mammary glands in late pregnancy and the few days after giving birth. It has high concentrations of nutrients and antibodies, but it is small in quantity. Colostrum is high in carbohydrates, high in protein, high in antibodies, and low in fat.

rate of exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months is around 10 % (Saha et al. 2008). Sometimes if it takes a while for the breast milk to flow, diluted cow's or powdered milk is fed to the child. Some families even start complementary feeding with rice-based cereals very early. Due to certain misconceptions, parents think that extra milk can provide more nutrients for the baby. Most poor urban mothers end up giving diluted powdered milk as a substitute for breast milk because it is expensive and they cannot afford it. Mothers of middle and upper class also switch to powdered milk through bottle feeding, as soon as possible, particularly if they are working. However, due to national movements and breastfeeding campaigns, the government of Bangladesh has recently established 6 months of maternity leave for mothers.

There are restrictions on the mother's diet, particularly in joint families, which are believed to affect the child's health. Bedding-in and rooming-in is also very common. It is, in fact, very rare to see the newborn sleeping in a separate room even if the family has sufficient rooms; this is one of the good practices to initiate and sustain breastfeeding.

## Developmental Stimulation

Despite keeping young children in close proximity to their mothers, active interaction with the young through singing, cooing, chatting, and playing is not a common practice, especially because they usually do not have toys to play with. Although this is a usual scenario in rural areas and poor urban communities, urban middle and upper class parents who buy toys for their very young children, do not have sufficient knowledge about creating an age appropriate play environment.

In general, the newborn is considered a being that has only nutritional needs and not much need of stimulation.

## Health

Healthcare, particularly in rural populations, is generally centered around traditional practices. Deliveries are mostly conducted at home by unskilled traditional birth attendants. The umbilical cord is cut using unhygienic materials which can be sources of infection in neonates (WHO 1998). The newborn and the mother are bathed shortly after birth using cold water. They are not allowed inside the house, particularly in Hindu communities, and must remain in an isolated room and lie on a thin mat on the floor. These practices frequently lead to pneumonia and other respiratory infections. Other practices include placing a hot compress on the umbilicus and giving an oil massage to the newborn's whole body. For ailments, most rural and some urban families consult traditional healers and unqualified doctors. In urban areas and especially among middle and upper class families, consulting qualified doctors and specialists is common.

For last few decades, government and non-government organizations took some steps to promote "safe motherhood" practices. This program included establishment of low cost maternity centers across the country and training of unskilled birth attendants/ health care providers to ensure safe home deliveries.

## Other Practices

Some practices are carried out due to traditional beliefs. An example is placing a black spot with *kajol* (Kohl/Surma) on the forehead or the sole of a child to protect him/her from evil spirits. Kohl is an ancient eye cosmetic, made of galena (lead sulfide) and is also used as eyeliner on the upper and lower eyelids of children. Its use has been reported to cause health hazards like higher blood lead concentration, which may cause lead poisoning.

## Parenting Practices for Infants

### Nutrition

Even though infants are breastfed, they start to become malnourished around 6 months of age, when the breastfeeding rate declines and their diet is prepared using diluted ingredients or contaminated water. Partial breastfeeding with the use of contaminated foods in young infants is associated with higher morbidity, from diarrhea (Brown et al. 1989) and malnutrition (Arifeen et al. 2001; Hop et al. 2000).

Responsive feeding practically does not exist and most parents especially from richer families force feed their children. The most common problem faced by pediatricians caring for well-to-do families is that children do not want to eat and are never hungry. Therefore parents resort to feeding them forcefully. In general, parents start panicking if their children do not eat properly and usually try all means to ensure their timely feeding.

### Developmental Stimulation

Overt expression of affection to the child is usually absent as most parents believe that their children become spoiled if they are shown much affection. Chatting with the infant is also uncommon because it is assumed that at this young age the child does not understand their language. When asked, "When should you start teaching language to your child?", most mothers said after 2–3 years of age (Hamadani unpublished data). Some very harmful practices were also observed like putting

**Fig. 3** Older sister taking care of younger sibling

lead in a child's mouth if s/he is unable to speak. In poor communities, infants do not have many toys. Poor families cannot afford to buy toys, while those who can, do not recognize the importance of playing with toys, usually keeping the expensive toys protected in a showcase and out of their child's reach. Children mostly play with household objects and materials they find outdoors which are shown to have no impact on their cognitive development (Hamadani et al. 2010). Due to recent campaigns of early childhood development, parents have started to pay more attention to children's play but still lack adequate knowledge about age appropriate games or toys that can facilitate various domains of development. Chatting, learning about the environment and labeling the names of things in their surroundings to improve their vocabulary are hardly ever practiced with young children. A safe play environment is not always provided to children in both urban and rural settings.

In poor families, where they usually live in a single room, cooking is also done in the same room, putting children at risk of burning, falling on hot water, or cutting themselves with sharp kitchen knives, in addition to inhaling unhealthy fumes from cooking fires. Sometimes if the mother is working outside, the child is cared for by an older sibling or other family members like the grandmother or the aunt (Figs. 3 and 4).

In our study, almost one third of the 12 and 18 months-old children were left alone on some days of the week for more than 2 h and about half were left with a child below 10 years of age (Hamadani and Grantham-McGregor 2004).

Poor mothers in urban slums have to work for long hours and if they have no one to care for their child, they carry the child to their work place which may be a construction site or a house where they work as domestic helpers. The child is therefore at great risk of accidents or is left alone while the mother is working. Middle income families also cannot provide safe play environment for their children due to limited space in their apartments (Fig. 5).

**Fig. 4** Child in kitchen; note the sharp kitchen knife near the child



**Fig. 5** Mother working and caring for child

## *Health*

EPI [Expanded Programme on Immunization *(World Health Organization)*] has been very successful in Bangladesh and about 80 % of people are covered by it. However, other morbidities like diarrhea and acute respiratory infection are very common. The first choice for such ailments is consulting homeopathic doctors because some parents believe that allopathic medicine is harmful for the children. In rural areas consulting traditional healers and quacks is also common.

## Care of Toddlers

### *Nutrition*

Poor parental knowledge about proper foods and economic constraint lead to malnutrition in children living in poverty. Rural mothers try to bring children to rice based diets as early as possible. They do not cook separate food for children and are usually ignorant about their protein and vitamin requirements. On the other hand, some middle and upper class families are very sensitive about their child's diet and feed them special types of food, usually smashed. They therefore do not get used to family diet and solid foods and sometimes their only diet is in thick liquid form that they take with a feeder.

### *Developmental Stimulation*

The role of play in improving a child's development was not acknowledged by most parents in the FGDs [Focus Groups Discussion] (Hamadani unpublished data) as they believed that playfulness was a waste of time and that children should instead spend that time studying. The play situation is different for toddlers within the urban and rural areas of Bangladesh. Urban children are mostly pushed into academics by parents because they want their children to gain admission into good schools, of which there are very few. Urban children play mainly indoors because of overcrowding and lack of play space, such as playgrounds or parks. Middle and upper class parents' tendency to push their children to early academics also compromises young children's stimulatory play environment, whereas rural children are allowed to play freely in the fields, which mainly involves gross motor development (use of large muscles for running, jumping, climbing). In addition urban children receive more inhibitory impulses from caregivers that ultimately restrict their exploratory behavior. Providing toys like blocks, nesting or stacking toys to improve eye-hand coordination are not commonly seen in rural areas, but are sometimes seen among urban middle and upper class parents (Figs. 6 and 7).

**Fig. 6** Playing outdoors using used disposable cups, very cheap plastic and clay toys



**Fig. 7** The only toys of a rural child

Toilet training is quite successful and Bangladeshi children are shown to be more advanced compared to Western children, because of the minimum use of diapers, resulting in parents commencing toilet training well ahead of Western parents (Fig. 8).

**Fig. 8**  Toilet training of an infant

## Care of Preschool Children

### Nutrition

Malnutrition in preschoolers is also common as a result of poverty and lack of knowledge of suitable foods. The children in middle and upper class families may not develop independent self-feeding behaviors because their parents usually do not allow them to do so. In poor families, where mothers have to take care of a number of children, in addition to numerous household chores, the children are required to become independent at a much earlier age, learning to eat and take care of themselves (Fig. 9).

### Developmental Stimulation

There are not many preschools in Bangladesh. Teacher training about dealing with young children is missing in most instances. Since only few children are enrolled in preschools, most spend their time at home. In rural areas where the families live jointly the children play with their cousins and aunts and uncles. Urban children in poor families mostly remain alone at home or with neighbors and children from better-off families stay with their baby-sitters who are generally illiterate and do not know how to stimulate them. Rural children have a lot of space to play and engage in fun motor activities but urban children usually live in small, closed houses without much outdoor space (Figs. 10 and 11).

**Fig. 9** Children eating food with very little adult supervision



**Fig. 10** Playing outdoors
using a home-made toy

**Fig. 11** Swing in a village

Parents are not usually chatty with their children and do not recognize the importance of talking with the child. Even though Bengali culture has a rich literature with renowned poets and writers like Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam, when mothers were asked if they sang or told stories to their children only 17 % said they did (Table 1). The stories they told, however, were mostly horror stories about ghosts. This frightens the children. Singing was more common and 34 % reported singing songs which were mainly Bengali or Hindi cinema songs. Preschool children are required to be very polite and obey their parents and elders.

## Parenting for School-Aged Children

### *Nutrition*

As children grow, they become self sufficient in feeding themselves but sometimes parents or grandparents like to feed the children. The rate of malnutrition is lower at this age, but anemia and intestinal worms are common, which are the consequences of poor and unhealthy eating.

**Table 1** Frequency distribution of play material and activities items at 12 and 18 months

| | | 12 months | 18 months |
|---|---|---|---|
| Category | Item | n=215 | n=801 |
| | | Present % | |
| Play materials | Household objects | 96.3 | 98.0 |
| | Things from outside | 94.9 | 99.3 |
| | Store bought toys | 88.4 | 84.8 |
| | Homemade toys | 36.3 | 47.6 |
| | **Total number of toy sources mean sd** | **3.1 sd 0.7** | **3.3 sd 0.7** |
| | Things make/play music | 15.8 | 16.2 |
| | Things for drawing/writing | 35.3 | 63.0 |
| | Picture books for children (not school books) | 17.7 | 20.5 |
| | Things meant for stacking, constructing, building (blocks) | 0 | 0.9 |
| | Things for moving a lot (balls, bats, etc.) | 67.4 | 69.9 |
| | Toys for shapes and colors | 0 | 0.4 |
| | Things for pretending (Mommy, doctor etc.) | 21.4 | 44.6 |
| | **Total number of toy varieties mean sd** | **1.6 sd 1.2** | **2.1 sd 1.4** |
| | **Total number of play materials (sources + varieties) mean sd** | **4.7 ± 1.4** | **5.5 ± 1.7** |
| Play activities | 1. Read books or look at picture books | 18.1 | 29.6 |
| | 2. Tell stories to (CHILD) | 10.7 | 17.2 |
| | 3. Sing songs with (CHILD) | 36.3 | 34.2 |
| | 4. Take (CHILD) outside the home place | 96.7 | 93.8 |
| | 5. Play with (CHILD) with toys | 47.0 | 36.6 |
| | 6. Spend time with (CHILD) in, naming things, counting, drawing | 67.4 | 62.0 |
| | **Total play activities** | **2.8 ± 1.5** | **2.7 ± 1.6** |

## Developmental Stimulation

School-aged children do not get much care from the parents except for their studies. Providing education is important to educated parents; but some illiterate parents recognize their own limitations and try to educate their children. Enrolment in primary schools is almost 100 %. However, a lot of children drop out of school. Children of the middle and upper classes spend more time indoors and watch television or play computer games; poor children, especially in rural areas, get to play outdoors.

In urban places, many of the English-medium schools do not have adequate play space for the children. Urban children also do not get adequate space at home for free play, so they are naturally inclined to sedentary games, such as playing computer games or watching television and movies. This reduced physical activity is introducing childhood obesity and other mental problems among many of these kids (Fig. 12).

**Fig. 12** Grandmother taking granddaughter to school

## Gender Differences in Parenting

Boys are more favored at home; they are given better food, better education, and more play opportunities. Care-seeking behaviors are also observed more in the case of male children. In our FGDs, we asked mothers if they would allow their sons and daughters to have equal opportunities, and most mothers said that when their son comes home from school, he throws his bag aside and goes to the field to play, while their daughter is required to start helping her mother cook and clean. It is absolutely accepted by even the daughters that it is their job to work at home while their brothers play (Hamadani unpublished data). The girls from a very young age are brought up with the mentality that they are of a lower status than boys and that they should always be ready to sacrifice their wishes for the sake of their fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons. Selective abortions to have a boy child is not that common in Bangladesh when compared to India. Most families, especially the educated ones, are happy with one or two daughters and stop having children even if they do not have a son (Figs. 13 and 14).

## Child Abuse and Maltreatment

Sometimes hitting children starts at an early age. Mothers hit their children frequently and for simple reasons, but severe punishment occurs very rarely. We conducted a study to assess rates of punishment and almost 80 % of children received

**Fig. 13** Girl child after
school





**Fig. 14** Boys after school

**Table 2** Punishment types at 12 and 18 months

| Type of punishment | 12 months (%) n=215 | 18 months (%) n=801 |
|---|---|---|
| % Experiencing only prosocial measures and no violent measure | 20 | 11.2 |
| % Experiencing psychological aggression | 91.6 | 93.8 |
| % Experiencing minor assault | 67.9 | 84.5 |
| % Experiencing severe assault | 27.9 | 43.1 |
| % Experiencing very severe assault | 15.8 | 27.8 |



**Fig. 15** Punishment even in the presence of data collectors

minor punishment by 18 months of age, while 43 % received severe and 27 % received very severe punishments (Table 2). In a cross-sectional study (Tofail unpublished data) in urban and rural hospital settings, it was shown that 33 % of urban mothers and 26 % of rural mothers practiced negative disciplining behavior like slapping, scolding, and hitting their young children. Thirty-six percent of urban and 30 % of rural mothers used verbal abuse, while 29 % and 38 % of urban and rural mothers used physical punishment to discipline their children.

Children are also onlookers of parental argument, quarrelling and fighting because parents do not assume the child understands what is going on and they keep on fighting with each other in front of the child. Sexual abuse is also very common especially in joint families but it is not spoken of and children dare not talk about it (Fig. 15).

## Role of Fathers

Traditionally fathers' role in parenting is very culturally biased. They are usually considered the breadwinner of the family and therefore are not expected to participate directly in child-rearing, regardless of their socio-economic status. Fathers play an important role in disciplining the child and have the final say on decisions in the household. It is the father who decides if the child should be taken to a doctor, which school s/he should attend, and which routines s/he should follow. However, the fathers are rarely at home. In most poor and middle class families, fathers leave the home early in the morning before the children wake up and come back late at night when the children are already asleep. Nevertheless, the norms are changing and some fathers, particularly in urban nuclear families have started to place emphasis on parenting practices and participate alongside their wives to care for their children (Chakma 2010). Some pay attention to the children and spend quality time with them during the little time that they see them. On the other hand, some fathers only consider their responsibility as providing their family with sufficient food and shelter while ignoring playing, singing and chatting with their child.

In the FGD conducted with mothers about the role of the father, most mothers felt strongly that fathers had an important role in children's education and upbringing, but fewer talked of the father's role in playing with and showing love and care to the children (Hamadani unpublished data).

In a small study conducted by students in an Early Childhood Development (ECD) course in Dhaka, both parents were interviewed from different socioeconomic strata on the role of fathers. The following conclusions were reached:

- Fathers from poor homes and Muslim fathers believed that the father's main responsibilities were to provide food for the child.
- None of the parents believed health care was the responsibility of father.
- Father's traditional attitude resulted in depriving his children of their father's love and care.
- Fathers played with the child only for enjoyment, but they didn't know the impact of play on their child's development.
- Very few parents knew that story telling helps improve their child's development.
- Compared to Muslim fathers, those of other religions were more involved in children's activities.
- Fathers with a working wife were more involved in child care and development than fathers with mothers who stayed home.
- Fathers in low-income families never hugged, cuddled, or chatted with their children, or answered questions in detail. They never took their children outside or played outdoor games with them.
- The fathers of the middle-income families were more involved than other social classes in interactions and tried to meet children's social and emotional needs. They were more involved in playing and outdoor activities rather than storytelling, singing and dancing. They were also more controlling when children were crying and throwing tantrums.
- In high income families' fathers never put their children to bed.

**Fig. 16** Father spending time with the baby

- Fathers were less involved in bathing the children or their clothes or for caring for them during illness.
- The time spent by father varied by the family income, education and the child's age.
- Fathers from all classes take meals with their children and occasionally spend time with them when they go to bed. It is not clear if they do so to enhance the development of their children or because of traditional family practice.

Most of the fathers are involved in the areas of child rearing that is related to child's physical needs and daily activities. They are not involved in any cognitive development related activities and they are not aware about the needs of early stimulation for the development of their child. The father's role in child development was insufficient in Bangladeshi culture (Figs. 16 and 17).

## Single Parenting

There are several factors that contribute to the large number of single mothers who have to raise their children in poverty. Most marriages in Bangladesh are not registered legally. A man when getting married can ask for a dowry. A lot of parents agree to pay large sums of money to get their daughter married so that she will be safe. Some men tend to use marriage as a source of income. They ask for a dowry, get married and then leave the wife and marry elsewhere to get more dowries. Since the marriages are not registered, the women cannot make any demands. They are

**Fig. 17** Father caring for child



**Fig. 18** Single mother cooking while feeding child

therefore left with a couple or more children without any help. Sometimes they go back to their parents' home but at times they have to raise their children on their own. These mothers are depressed and cannot raise their children in an appropriate manner. This means the child has to stay alone at home or accompany the mother to her work place. When the child is older, s/he goes out of the home and either begs to earn money or gets engaged in illegal professions (Fig. 18).

# Conclusion

Bangladesh has strong family bonds and most children are raised in an affectionate environment with both parents and sometimes with grandparents and aunts and uncles. Nutritional knowledge of the parents is not optimum and over 50 % of children suffer from some form of malnutrition. Psychosocial stimulation and early childhood activities are not very common and most parents do not appreciate the importance of Early Child Development programs. Punishment is frequent but is not severe. The most common barriers to good parenting are poverty, lack of knowledge of nutrition and developmental stimulation, violence against women, maternal depression and poor education of the parent.

With various programs and public health education campaigns, many of these barriers are changing and more and more parents are adopting more beneficial parenting behaviors.

# Notes

1. The article is written based on anecdotal observation of the authors and unless a reference is cited, the finding is not evidence-based.
2. All pictures have been taken after taking verbal consent.

# References

Akram, K., Zaman, K., Mazumder, Y., Filteau, S., Roy, S. K., & Siddique, A. K. (2000). Perception and practice of rest during pregnancy among mothers and family decision-makers. *Journal of Tropical Pediatrics, 46*(5), 311–313.

Arifeen, S. E., Black, R. E., Caulfield, L. E., Antelman, G., & Baqui, A. H. (2001). Determinants of infant growth in the slums of Dhaka: Size and maturity at birth, breastfeeding and morbidity. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 55*(3), 167–178.

Asling-Monemi, K., Tabassum Naved, R., & Persson, L. A. (2008). Violence against women and the risk of under-five mortality: Analysis of community-based data from rural Bangladesh. *Acta Paediatrica, 97*(2), 226–232.

Black, M. M., Baqui, A. H., Zaman, K., McNary, S. W., Le, K., Arifeen, S. E., et al. (2007). Depressive symptoms among rural Bangladeshi mothers: Implications for infant development. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 48*(8), 764–772.

Brown, K. H., Black, R. E., Lopez de Romana, G., & Creed de Kanashiro, H. (1989). Infant-feeding practices and their relationship with diarrheal and other diseases in Huascar (Lima), Peru. *Pediatrics, 83*(1), 31–40.

Chakma, S. (2010). *Perceptions and practices of fatherhood among urban fathers in Bangladesh.* Masters thesis, Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University, Dhaka.

Davies, M. (2000). *The Blackwell encyclopedia of social work* (p. 245). New York: Wiley-Blackwell.

Edhborg, M., Nasreen, H. E., & Kabir, Z. N. (2011). Impact of postpartum depressive and anxiety symptoms on mothers' emotional tie to their infants 2–3 months postpartum: A population-based study from rural Bangladesh. *Archives of Women's Mental Health, 14*(4), 307–316.

Fernald, L. C., Kariger, P., Hidrobo, M., & Gertler, P. J. (2012). Socioeconomic gradients in child development in very young children: Evidence from India, Indonesia, Peru, and Senegal. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the U S A, 109*(Suppl 2), 17273–17280.

Hamadani, J. D., & Grantham-McGregor, S. M. (2004). *Report of the Family Care Indicators (FCI) Project: Validating the family psychosocial indicators in rural Bangladesh*. Technical report to UNICEF.

Hamadani, J. D., Tofail, F., Hilaly, A., Huda, S. N., Engle, P., & Grantham-McGregor, S. M. (2010). Use of family care indicators and their relationship with child development in Bangladesh. *Journal of Health, Population and Nutrition, 28*(1), 23–33.

Hamadani, J. D., Tofail, F., Hilaly, A., Mehrin, F., Shiraji, S., Banu, S., et al. (2012). Association of postpartum maternal morbidities with children's mental, psychomotor and language development in rural Bangladesh. *Journal of Health, Population and Nutrition, 30*(2), 193–204.

Hop, L. T., Gross, R., Giay, T., Sastroamidjojo, S., Schultink, W., & Lang, N. T. (2000). Premature complementary feeding is associated with poorer growth of Vietnamese children. *Journal of Nutrition, 130*(11), 2683–2690.

Johnston, H. B., & Naved, R. T. (2008). Spousal violence in Bangladesh: A call for a public-health response. *Journal of Health, Population and Nutrition, 26*(3), 366–377.

Nasreen, H. E., Kabir, Z. N., Forsell, Y., & Edhborg, M. (2010, August 26). Low birth weight in offspring of women with depressive and anxiety symptoms during pregnancy: Results from a population based study in Bangladesh. *BMC Public Health, 10*, 515. doi:10.1186/1471-2458-10-515.

Naved, R. T., & Akhtar, N. (2008). Spousal violence against women and suicidal ideation in Bangladesh. *Women's Health Issues, 18*(6), 442–452.

Naved, R. T., & Persson, L. A. (2008). Factors associated with physical spousal abuse of women during pregnancy in Bangladesh. *International Family Planning Perspectives, 34*(2), 71–78.

Saha, K. K., Frongillo, E. A., Alam, D. S., Arifeen, S. E., Persson, L. A., & Rasmussen, K. M. (2008). Appropriate infant feeding practices result in better growth of infants and young children in rural Bangladesh. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 87*(6), 1852–1859.

Shannon, K., Mahmud, Z., Asfia, A., & Ali, M. (2008). The social and environmental factors underlying maternal malnutrition in rural Bangladesh: Implications for reproductive health and nutrition programs. *Health Care of Women International, 29*(8), 826–840.

Silverman, J. G., Decker, M. R., Gupta, J., Kapur, N., Raj, A., & Naved, R. T. (2009). Maternal experiences of intimate partner violence and child morbidity in Bangladesh: Evidence from a national Bangladeshi sample. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, 163*(8), 700–705.

UNICEF. (2011). *State of the World's children report*. New York: UNICEF.

WHO. (1998). *Postpartum care of the mother and newborn: A practical guide*. Geneva: WHO.

Ziaei, S., Naved, R. T., & Ekstrom, E. C. (2012). Women's exposure to intimate partner violence and child malnutrition: Findings from demographic and health surveys in Bangladesh. *Maternal and Child Nutrition*. doi:10.1111/j.1740-8709.2012.00432.x.

# The Evolving Challenges of Modern-Day Parenthood in Singapore

**Karen Mui-Teng Quek**

"Get Married and Have Babies!" – An urgent call for Singaporeans to reproduce more. This call came from Singapore founding father and former Minister Mentor, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew during his annual National speech on August 11, 2012. His message to the population is simple. He does not want the country "to fold". He is concerned about fertility decline in the nation. He wants Singaporeans to reproduce themselves and leave a next generation. In supporting Mr. Lee's message, Chan Chun Sing, Singapore newly appointed Minister for Social and Family Development (MSF), wants to help young couples start a family and cope with the challenges of parenthood as his immediate priority (Ong and Tai 2012). In Singapore, marriage remains the gatekeeper into the option of childbearing and parenthood.

Most Singaporeans continue to adhere firmly to pro-family ideals and "the family" remains the top priority for Singaporeans, according to a survey on Singapore Family Values (National Family Council [NFC] 2011). Raising a family, which encompasses all aspects of parenting, is impacted by the macro-systems in the political, social and economic arena. In recent decades, rapid social changes within Singapore together with influences from outside the country as a result of globalization have shaped parental roles and opportunities, familial relations, and expectations (Quek and Knudson-Martin 2008). Thus, Singaporean parents are faced with the challenge of making their family their priority. Every day parents are dealing with competing priorities and transitions that place great demands on their resources. On top of that, other social challenges such as living in a diverse society, increased divorce rates, and new family forms have become part of their rapidly changing environment. However, parents continue to play an important role in impacting Singapore future generations (NFC 2011).

This chapter attempts to identify a number of important trends that influence parenthood in Singapore. I will review findings from available statistics on families

K.M.-T. Quek (✉)
Couple and Family Therapy Program, California School of Professional Psychology,
Alliant International University, Irvine, CA, USA
e-mail: kquek@alliant.edu

in Singapore, and other studies on Singaporean parenthood. I will supplement local research studies with my 10-year long study on contemporary Singaporean parents' relationships by identifying multiple influences shaping couple and parental roles. Multiple factors inform new perspectives of parenthood in Singapore.

## Singaporeans Are Becoming Parents at a Later Age

The Singapore government is encouraging more Singaporeans to get married and start a family soon. According to Lee Kuan Yew's national day message. "At the moment, 31 percent of women and 44 percent of men are opting out…not leaving a next generation" (Lee 2012). This presents a grave situation for a small nation like Singapore. The most commonly cited reasons for delaying marriage and parenthood pertain to greater emphasis on career advancement and financial stability (NFC 2011). Moreover both women and men who desire marriage are getting married at a later age. The median age at first marriage for women was 27.7 years and for men was 30 years in 2010. As they get married later in life, they also start to have children later. The median age of mothers at first birth was 29.6 years. While peak fertility was in the age group 25–29 years in 2000, it has since shifted to 30–34 years in 2009. "Married couples with one child" is an increasing trend. During the past decade, the fertility rate has declined across the different age groups, but it was more pronounced among the younger cohorts aged 30–39 years. Consequently, this group is less likely to achieve an average of two children by the time they reach 40–49 years. Even though married Singaporeans state that they desire to have two or more children, the total fertility rate is 1.22 (NFC 2010).

## Dual-Career Parents Becoming More Common

Current governmental socio-economic policies have successfully led more married women into the labor force, which resulted in replacing the traditional structure of husband as sole breadwinner with a new family arrangement where both wife and husband work (Singapore Department of Statistics (SDS) 2011b). Because Singaporean women are as well educated as their male counterparts, they have opportunities for highly skilled managerial, professional, and technical jobs and are likely to remain in paid employment long after marriage and childbirth. In 2010, 73.6 % of women in the prime working ages of 25–45 were employed, and the percentage of married working couples accounted for 47 %, up from 41 % in 2000. Recent data (mid 2011) shows that the percentage of working mothers is 59.9 % (Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCDYS) 2011b). This represents a steadily increasing trend. Wives have contributed substantially to the combined income, and some earn as much as their husbands. The two-income households are in more financially advantageous positions with a median monthly

income of S\$6820 (USD 5475). Therefore they have more flexibility in spending and are able to maintain a comfortable lifestyle.

However, work-family balance is an enduring day-to-day challenge for parents. Slightly close to half of Singaporean two-parent families are dual-income families and their work hours are increasing. Singapore men work an average of 51 h per week and men with dependents tend to work longer hours. In an average week, Singaporean mothers work 45.5 h (SDS 2011b). As parents' work-hours increase, so too do the possibilities for the uneasy tension between times for work and family. Working parents, mostly mothers, are on-call in the family domains. Strain or anxiety at workplace can also spill over into negative parenting practices.

## Maternal Duty and Work-Life Balance

Work demands increase for all workers, as do expectations for involved parenting, especially among highly educated married workers. Work conditions such as flexibility, access to paid parental leave, and some perceived job security can ameliorate the conflict between parental responsibility and work obligation. The Singapore government has emphasized the need to promote a better work-life balance in particular through adequate childcare, more access to flexible working arrangements and by making sure tax and benefits systems do not penalize second earners (MCDYS 2011d). They have called upon employers to put in place pro-family policies like mandatory paternity leave at the workplace and to champion for a pro-family environment in Singapore. If government policy makes it possible for women to combine work and family, they are less likely to quit. Also such support from employers might well make a difference to working mothers struggling to decide whether to have another baby. However, a recent proposal to increase maternity leave for new mothers to 6 months was met with strong resistance. Reasons for rejection included the following: "It would be a disaster to lose an employee for 6 months, as many mums hold jobs that cannot be easily filled by temporary staff." "If that recommendation came to pass, employers would be better off hiring men." "The current 4 months' maternity leave was already a struggle for smaller firms, and 6 months would be unthinkable – even if the government paid for extra leave." A single woman lamented that she would be left to pick up the slack while her baby-bearing colleagues are away. A working mother looking to change jobs was worried that her employability would take a hit if longer maternity kicked in. Even the Singapore National Employers Federation has said, "Longer maternity leave could disrupt operations and result in companies preferring to hire men" (Ng 2012).

However, it appears that there is a gradual increase in mothers' combining work and family. Ng (2012), who works as a journalist, is a working mother of two young children who has considered quitting several times. She continues in her job because her understanding boss allows her to try an arrangement that works from home and at hours that suit her maternal duty. She remarks, "What works for working mums would be a change in employer mindset that flexible work arrangements can benefit

both company and family." That would be a win-win situation for all including fulfilling the national leaders' call to have more babies. Finding satisfactory solutions on how to divide time between motherhood responsibility and job expectation is not easy as there is no single best way to combine those. Western research results make it apparent that policies aimed at combining work and family such as maternity and parental leave, decrease the difference in employment rates between mothers and women without children (Niewenhuis et al. 2012).

## Childcare Subsidies & Tax Concession

Over the years, the Singapore government has introduced various childcare schemes and fiscal policies to support working mothers in the workforce (MCDYS 2011a). Policies including a paid maternity leave scheme, paid childcare leave and subsidized childcare, a baby-bonus scheme, lower maid levy, and other tax incentives have been implemented to encourage women to produce more children, while still underscoring their traditional domestic role which includes taking responsibility for child care and household duties (MCDYS 2011e). Mothers receive more financial support and benefits for parenting not available to fathers. For instance, the working mother's child relief allows mothers to claim up to 100 % of their earned income for all her qualifying children (with a cap at S$50,000 or USD40,364 for each child) (Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore 2013). Mothers also receive 4 months paid maternity leave. However, fathers are entitled to only 6 days of paid childcare leave a year (MCDYS 2011f). Even then, a father from my study encountered resistance from his superior when he tried to use his childcare leave to take care of his sick child (Quek et al. 2011). However, the birth incentives clearly benefit mothers and further "feminize" the parenting role. A more inclusive approach is needed to embrace fathers to share parenting responsibilities and to provide flexi-work alternatives for both parents. To many Singaporeans, the one-sided family policies would not work and continue to overburden working mothers (Ng 2012).

## Childcare Services

The topic of childcare forms the nucleus of what work-family conflict is about. Childcare arrangements are important for working parents. Many younger parents struggle with making decisions on the type of childcare services and preschools.

In 2010, Singapore had 874 registered childcare centers, which were open year-round with a capacity to accommodate 77,792 (MCYS 2011g). Infant and childcare centers provide full and half day care programs for children aged 2 months to 7 years old. Though many working parents prefer to leave their children with their grandparents or family members or other experienced nannies, 63,955 children are using the services of childcare centers that come with various

types of subsidies provided by the government. Childcare centers are usually located at the void decks of government housing and are easily accessible to accommodate parents' time crunch. An additional 200 more pre-school centers are slated to be built in the next 5 years to meet the childcare demand of many young families (Tai and Toh 2012). But the high levels of stress in schools remain a longstanding concern of Singaporean parents.

## Children's Academic Performance, Parents' Major Concern

Singaporean parents place great importance on education and have invested much time, effort and financial resources to ensure that their children are getting ahead in their academic pursuits. Though Singapore schools are among the best in the world, parents continue to load on hours of tuition in addition to regular schoolwork and pile up assessment books to prepare for the final stretch of major examinations. Reports show that parents spend S$820 million a year on both center and home-based private tuition alone (Koh 2012). In Singapore, hiring a tuition teacher or private tutors is a type of investment not normally found in other countries. Most students in Singapore have a private tutor at some point in their schooling days. One parent reportedly spends nearly S$6,000 a month in tuition fees alone, even when her son is a straight "A" student in a prestigious boys' school. In many cases, parents are so stressed about major examinations such as the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) that they took leave from work to monitor, coach and even study with their children. Singaporean parents have gone to the extent of securing temporary rentals within 1 km of a popular school and shelling out S$3,000 (USD 2,421) monthly rent for a minimum lease of 2 years, with the hope of enrolling their children there. While this move does not guarantee a place in the school, those applicants who live near the schools stand a better chance of catching Primary 1 places during balloting.

## Time for Children

Singaporean parents know the tug of feelings that goes along with the lack of time with children. But in today's busier, more child-centered age, working mothers and younger parents intend to get in more hours of focused childcare even though they do more paid work (Quek and Knudson-Martin 2008). Time-mindedness is clearly part of family life. Although some parents do cut back on their work hours to reduce work-to-family conflict and apply for additional months of unpaid leave to nurse their infants, others multi-task and share care giving responsibilities, making sure that they alter other commitments to satisfy their perceptions of adequate time with their children. In our modern society, fewer women want to lead the kind of life with a breadwinner father and homemaker mother. So in order to prioritize

mothers' hours of direct time with children, they have given up hours in other parts of their lives. For example, instead of going home and cleaning the house and doing laundry, they go home and spend time with their children. Younger parents decided to give up some housework. They purchase more services to replace their time in housework. Families with more disposable incomes often opt for household services. Singapore is one of the top hiring countries with one in five or six households hiring a live-in migrant domestic worker to be responsible for taking care of household chores so that parents will have more contact time with their children after working hours. According to the Singapore Family Values Survey (2010), Singaporean parents spend an average of 29 h a week with their children (NYC 2010). Mothers (34 h per week) are spending more time with their children, while fathers report spending about 24 h per week. Not all times spent with children are the same. The sorts of activities parents do with their children vary from helping them with homework, heart-to-heart communication to just being present with children who could be playing on their own.

## Father Involvement

In a survey conducted from April–May 2009 by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports to gauge perception, attitudes and behaviors related to fatherhood in Singapore, 96 % of fathers reported that they wanted more involvement with their children and participated in more parenting duties, and 95 % indicated that parenthood was a very fulfilling experience. An overwhelming agreement was that fathers are influential figures in the moral, social, psychological and intellectual development of their children. Many Singaporean fathers these days want it all: time with kids, stability at work and to be a spouse who shares some parenting duties. But fathers are spending significantly less time with children than mothers (NYC 2010). Four top parenting challenges cited by fathers are work responsibilities (63 %), financial pressures (53 %), lack of parenting resources about fatherhood (41 %) and lack of knowledge and skills on how to parent (40 %). Additionally, 39 % out of 2,220 respondents reported societal views on how men should behave and 30 % mentioned resistance or lack of encouragement from other men as barriers to their involvement. These are some positive surprising changes in perception toward shared parenting. But there is also an inability to let go of some of the more traditional male roles that fathers have played and pick up some of the responsibilities that mothers have traditionally taken greater ownership in parenting. Forty-six percent of fathers mention the traditional father image of "being a breadwinner" as their key responsibility. When asked to think of their role as a father, in terms of how they feel and what they do, what has been an important influence or source of help, 76 % of them considered their wives or their children's mother as the most important source and support. Additionally a strong marital relationship and fathers' involvement

in shared parenting go hand in hand. According to this survey, fathers who are more satisfied with their marital relationship are more likely to agree that they are very close to their child, that they spend more time with their child alone or with others. They show more commitment to their role as fathers and are more likely to agree that they have all the necessary knowledge/skills to be good fathers.

International data across 20 countries and covering the period between 1965 and 2003 indicated an increase of an average of 6 h per week in employed, married men's time in the home (Hook 2006). In comparison to the International data, Singaporean fathers typically spend about 11.2 h with their children weekly (MCDYS 2009). Their desire to spend time with children still living at home reflects the softer side of being a father, providing emotional care, love and support as well as assisting them with learning and education. A separate study surveying 199 Singaporean leaders, mostly male, working as Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) was conducted by the National Family Council from March to June 2009. Family was ranked as the top priority for these business leaders even when Singapore was hit by the global crisis and the local economy went into recession. But fathers did not cut their work hours as they were faced with even more difficulties in managing work and family demands during the economic downturn. Most were expected to do more at the office. Their company's economic survival and progress required total absorption in the job and was overwhelmingly important to fathers with high earnings. These CEOs took a look at how hard it was for them to balance their heavy workload with family goals. Many intentionally planned to provide time for the family. The 2009 survey indicated that these leaders spent an average of 2.1 h daily and 5.6 h on a weekend day with their family.

Despite the increase in father's involvement in the home, childcare responsibilities continue to be under the purview of mothers. The modernization of the father's role is developing slowly. In comparison with women's change in the market place, men's change in the home is small. As reflected in the MCDYS (2009), their definition of masculinity was wrapped up in the economic provider role. Some men resisted doing tasks defined as not manly, especially when their own performance as a provider was compromised. In some family types, most notably those that remained male sole breadwinner, men worked longer total work hours than women. So the gender gap in parenting persists.

## Gender Gap in Parenting

Despite increasing expectations of father involvement, responsibility for childcare still rests primarily on women. In general, mothers tend to modify their work lives to accommodate parenting more than fathers do. Couples who successfully share parenting describe conscious negotiation of family-work responsibilities and an ability to deal with conflict. Yet, men's gender expectations and perceptions of choice regarding work roles appear to be major factors determining the extent to

which parenting and domestic labor is shared. Quek and Knudson-Martin (2008) in their 10-year-long qualitative study with Singaporean couples revealed how contemporary couples in Singapore manage the transition to parenthood and identify the day-to-day processes involved as these heterosexual couples incrementally move toward equality in a collectivist context that is itself changing. It showed movement toward gender equality occurred in a series of daily decisions in which partners repeatedly either undid traditional gender patterns or recreated them (Deutsch 2007; Risman 2009; Quek 2009). Thus, gender relations between contemporary Singaporean parents were dynamic, based on the intersection of societal pulls that both prompt gender equality and inhibit it (Knudson-Martin & Mahoney, 1996). Our analysis identified four sets of factors that guided how Singaporean couples organized their lives and responded to each other on a day-to-day basis: (a) women's career identity versus maternal obligation, (b) fathers' willingness to coparent, (c) influence of gender legacies, and (d) availability of external support.

## Career Identity Versus Maternal Obligation

In response to governmental policies that encourage women in the workforce, mothers in this study internalized these expectations (Quek and Knudson-Martin 2006). Holding a career had intrinsic value for all the mothers and was described by them as part of their identities whether or not they were currently working full time. Suan's remark was typical. "I am not the type to stay at home, I can't achieve very well at home." The question before them was how to balance career identity with other societal expectations that emphasize maternal obligation. Undoing gender was facilitated when both partners prioritized women's career identities. Gender was reproduced when work-family decisions were automatically viewed as the woman's choice.

### *Prioritizing Women's Career*

The wives who continued to work full time said that they never intended to stop paid employment and emphasized the priority of professional development in their lives. During the 3 years since her child's birth, Dai enrolled and graduated with a masters degree in education. "I personally can't see myself being a housewife…I need to go out and do something, so having a career is important for me." Her husband also expressed commitment to mutual progression of both careers. Dai's husband, Dan, made changes to support her career. "Of course with the coming of the children, I have to do my part…. I will say it's [both careers] the same [importance]. I think that if I need to stay at home rather than work to take care of the kids; that would be a very fine arrangement with me…I think now it [division of labor] is pretty flexible."

## Women's "Choice" to Scale Back

However, gender expectations that taking care of children is a woman's responsibility continued to be reflected in how Singaporean couples approached decisions regarding women's employment. Nearly all the men described the decision as their wives' choice. Women who scaled back to part-time work agreed that it was their decision. Kay: "Whatever decision I made, he was OK with it." Though these husbands supported this decision, they also recognized the value of their wives' work outside the home. Husband Feng responded, "I think that if she is full-time housewife, she would go mad."

## Expectations of Maternal Obligation

The wives who scaled back or dropped out of work cited maternal obligation as the reason. Expressing egalitarian ideals during their earlier days in their marriage did not soften the obligation women felt as mothers. Mei, a wife with egalitarian views, saw scaling back her work as a necessary sacrifice. "Bringing up children is a parent's job and they have to sacrifice something." Husband Li Ben agreed with the importance of mother's care. "This was the right thing to do for her, so I just went along with her. The baby is very important."

Day-to-day decisions regarding women's careers were made and remade. Scaling back was viewed as temporary. Mei: "I do think about it, maybe they [children] can survive without me, so I can do full-time." She and Li Ben discussed the possibility that she go overseas for further education, and Li Ben agreed that he could take care of their daughter. Thus, though these couples in which the wife scaled back have moved to a more gendered arrangement with wives making accommodation at work in order to fulfill family obligations, these couples continued conversations and plans for wives to return to full employment.

Interestingly, most women in this sample did not describe motherhood in terms of personal fulfillment and natural bonds as is common among White mothers in the United States (Cowdery and Knudson-Martin 2005). Instead, women in this study described a pattern reported elsewhere in which motherhood is associated with social value in collectivist social structures; having children upholds family loyalties rather than individual goals (Kagitcibasi 2007). It is also consistent with Oyserman et al.'s (2002) finding that people in collectivist contexts tend to give social rather than personal explanations for their decisions. Of the three women who dropped out of the work force, only Jill said it was because being a mother was something she really wanted to do. Unlike the sense of sacrifice reported by other mothers, she attributed a psychological value to caring for children. "I am more keen to do full-time mothering because I like the experience of my mother being home and I see the importance of attachment with children."

## Father's Willingness to Co-parent

Equally shared parenting only occurred when fathers also restructured their work lives to accommodate parenting. When fathers did not, women struggled to realize their career identities. For example, Chen limited his parenting role based on his perception of the mother-child bond. "He is very fussy, he wants the mother only. I guess it's the time he spends with the mother. Actually everything about the baby she decides."As a result, in order to handle the burden of childcare that fell on her, Anna cut back on her work. However, she did not want to give it up completely because work was central to her identity. "I still find my work meaningful that is why I stay at work. But when you are at home, you don't have that same sense. So in part I go back to work and see whether I can achieve."

Chen, classified as a traditional father, was an exception; most fathers in the study actively engaged in parenting. However, the nature of their involvement depended on the consciousness with which partners approached parenting decisions and the persistence of taken-for-granted gender legacies of male power and female sacrifice.

### *Fathers Reorganize to Accommodate Parenting*

Men who shared parenting responsibility described making changes in their schedules to accommodate parenting tasks. Although shared parenting was most common when both partners remained in the workforce full time, the husbands of two of the three wives who scaled back also reported changing their jobs and work schedules to accommodate shared parenting. For example, though Kay scaled back to part time work, Feng also arranged his work schedule to maximize time with the family. He said that maintaining shared parenting meant that he had to change how he measured his achievements at work. "I try not to compare with other people [men who spend less time with their children]." As a result, Feng shared planning for managing their children. "The amount of attention you put into every single thing for the kids, even as simple as organizing of lunch … [and] getting them out to have some air…everything is calculated."

### *Conscious Discussion of Parenting Responsibilities*

The couples who undid gender through shared parenting (more than half) approached parenting with conscious discussion regarding how to share the responsibilities. Both partners seemed committed to creating a relatively equal

distribution of parenting tasks and described many hours of discussions and trial arrangements with childcare in order to maintain the shared division. In the case of Ping Ling and Lionel, he was responsible for managing childcare arrangements, "I manage the roster; I plan the scheduling. My role as a father is to make sure of that, because I don't have the ability to handle everything, [that] I established a network [of caregivers]."

Unlike models where women are responsible for finding childcare, (e.g., Zimmerman et al. 2001), a number of the fathers in this study shared these responsibilities. Han did not leave this planning to his wife. "Like we have tons of meetings to attend at night. How do we then make sure someone is at home to take care of the baby…. Like right now I know [I] definitely need someone to take care of [son]."

However, despite considerable pulls toward equally shared parenting, historical gender patterns also influenced parenting structures among a number of the couples.

## Influence of Gender Legacies

Gender legacies are gender expectations that perpetuate traditional gender dichotomies and male power. Three couples were classified as *gender legacy* parents because though their parenting practices undid some gender expectations, aspects of their parenting were still organized around gender. In contrast to the constant negotiation of shared parenting, gender legacies influenced parenting without conscious discussion.

### *Expectation of Female Sacrifice*

The first gender legacy that influenced parenting practices was the expectation that if a parent needed to sacrifice a career, it would be the mother. This was most pronounced in the case of Lindy and Chuan who were dealing with an autistic child. This couple did not discuss who would give up work. It was simply assumed that it would be Lindy. Chuan was aware of his wife's sacrifice and the inequality this created. "Sometimes my wife feels that I am not helping, that I am not doing enough work."

### *Male Takes Over Childcare Decisions*

Another kind of gender legacy was related to the historical power of men as the leaders and decision-makers in the family. In the case of Yenni and Liang, parenting

tasks for their two young children were shared, but male dominance persisted. For example, Liang changed childcare arrangements without consulting his wife. Liang: "I just pulled my son out from my in-laws' place. What he [their son, Zack] does [there] is to just stare at the television most of the time and not interacting, not doing anything to his motor skills." Yenni: "So he decided that his mother takes care. Without discussing with me first, he just decided that he [Zack] should stay there. So, because of that, I was not very happy. I feel at least he should have discussed with me before you decide on your own."

It appears that father involvement in the context of traditional gender legacies may in some cases result in a new form of male dominance. As an involved father, Liang automatically transferred male authority to the area of childcare. Yenni, however, continued to resist this kind of male power.

The power of men to determine the parenting structure was especially evident in the two couples classified as traditional parents. In each case, the mother tried to resist expectations that she sacrificed her career "for the family", but their husbands' preferences prevailed. For example, Brian pushed Tian to give up her job because he thought the children would do better when their mother is at home. "Why don't you give it a try. And after that if you feel like 'that's fine and I'm not interested in staying home.' Let's go back and work." Tian acquiesced even though her preference was to keep her job.

### Women Viewed as More Knowledgeable About Children

This gender legacy also reproduced the gendered childcare pattern in which women are viewed as more knowledgeable about children and men disengage from childcare or function as assistants. Tian: "So whenever possible he [Brian] will bring him to the beach, taking him off my hands for maybe an hour or two." When mothers were viewed as more knowledgeable, fathers did not see a role for themselves in parenting. Chen: "I am not very good with babies in the first place, so she took charge. Her mother would advise her."

## Availability of External Support

The availability of external support made it easier for the couples in this study to undo traditional gender patterns. Grandparents were regularly engaged to provide childcare and most couples hired help with housework (a support made possible by government policies that encourage maids from other countries). For example, Lionel and Ping Ling both worked in middle-management positions in the financial sector. They shared parenting of their twin boys with the aid of live-in domestic help and their parents. Ping Ling said this gave them flexibility as a

couple. "They sleep at 8 or 8.30, after that we are free, we can go out." She noted that this surprised their friends. One of them said, "Hey, you don't look like you have kids. What are you doing here? Don't you have to go home and take care of them?" I said, "There is nothing you can do if they are asleep. You just need someone to watch out for them in case they wake up." Lionel added that, "Friday nights the kids don't go back home. They stay at my in-law's place." He saw involvement by grandparents as good for their children. "Everyone has an equal time slot [two sets of grandparents and parents]. The kids get the best of three worlds; they are in good hands with family members." Parenting was viewed as a function of the entire family. In contrast, this kind of extended family support was not available to Lindy and Chuan and was one of the reasons that Lindy gave up her job to care for their special needs child.

In addition, domestic assistance lightened the workload of dual-career couples, enabled women more time to develop their careers (Chew and Liao 1999), and helped men participate more fully in parenting responsibilities. Siti: "She cleans everything…so when we come home from work, we want to spend time with him [their son]. We also spend time with each other. And the weekends are spent with our parents."

## Undoing Gender

Creating gender equality required undoing gender as usual (Deutsch 2007; Risman 2009). Even though all the women in the study described their careers as important to them, a number of factors inhibited gender equality in this study. These included societal gender patterns that make decisions about childcare the responsibility of women, expectations that women sacrifice for their children and are knowledgeable about parenting, and the persistence of male dominance in parenting decisions. When alternatives for childcare arrangements were either not available or judged unsatisfactory, traditional gender was reproduced.

However, many of the parents in this study appeared to be undoing gender and creating new family patterns. Four factors enabled this change: (1) women's career identities were prioritized by both partners; (2) fathers restructured their schedules to actively engage in parenting; (3) partners consciously discussed how to share parenting responsibility; and (4) there was support from extended family and hired labor.

As in earlier Western studies, (e.g., Deutsch 2007; Knudson-Martin 2009), undoing gender in this sample required considerable conscious discussion of how to share parenting responsibilities. If not, expectations of maternal obligation and women's accommodation reproduced gender as usual. Though women are typically the instigators of pushes toward equality, the results of this study also make visible the importance of men. Though some Western studies (Shows and Gerstel 2009; Stone 2008) suggest that working/middle class men may be more willing

to accommodate their work schedules than high status men, this study raises the possibility that the creation of gender equality may differ somewhat in some collectivist contexts.

As couples in this study are confronted with how to value dual careers, children, and marital relationships within a changing social structure, a new model of fatherhood and couple relationship is being demonstrated by most of them, even though they expressed traditional gender ideals. This parental model is similar to the relational model of harmony we found among Chinese American parents in the United States, in which couples describe high levels of parental involvement by both parents and a collaborative, relatively egalitarian relationship style (Quek et al. 2010). Partners explained decisions based on a common collectivist goal of maintaining cooperation (Oyserman et al. 2002), but they also drew on individualistic values. While recognizing that not all residents in Singapore embrace collectivist goals, the value toward in-group's duty (in this case, the family) is consistent with a recent survey by the Singapore National Family Council, where 87 % of 1,500 Singaporeans cite family responsibility as their top priority (National Family Council report 2011).

## Equal Parenting Within a Larger Network

Some Western researchers have noted that the addition of children can be associated with a decreased social network of extended family and friends due to time constraints and work overload (Viers and Prouty 2002). This did not appear to be the case for Singaporean couples in this study. Contributions by their social network made it easier for the couples to carry out their careers and commitment to each other. In fact, support from extended families turned out to be a critical factor, because without this extended help, it is very likely that the couples would have reverted back to the automatic gendered tradition. Another factor contributing to retaining an egalitarian partnership was hiring help. All of the couples in this study purchased services, mostly for household chores.

## Limits to Women's "Choice"

Finally, although the women and men in this study described women's decisions about their careers as their own, it is important to note that the women who dropped out of the workplace or scaled back felt little choice. As in a study about why some professional women drop out of the work force in the United States (Stone 2008), when men leave the choice to women, they are also saying that parenting is ultimately her responsibility, not theirs. Despite the overall movement toward relationship equality and shared parenting identified in this study, as in Stone's

study, when demands of the workplace and parenting responsibilities could not be satisfactorily resolved, it was the woman who sacrificed her career goals. "Choice" must be understood in this context.

## Conclusions

Singaporeans possess a healthy mindset on family and familial relationships. Most still emphasize strong family ties and cherish family values. Singaporeans also possesses marriage aspirations and desire to be parents and have more children. However the gap between reality and ideals persists. Competing priorities and responsibilities between motherhood, fatherhood and jobs pose tough challenges for parents to ensure that family commitments remain as the main anchor. Increasingly Singaporean families feel that they need dual incomes to survive.

Despite the many changes for men, it was women who appeared to experience discontinuity between their career identities and their obligations as parents. Policymakers, educators, and practitioners must be prepared to help families respond to ambiguous social norms and taken-for-granted assumptions that women maintain responsibility for family bonds while also participating in the labor force. This study also suggests that much depends on the willingness of men to share power and parenting tasks. Therefore it is imperative that workplaces, schools, and practitioners emphasize fathers, not just the mothers, as playing a significant role in parenting. If fathers continue to be perceived as secondary parents, then mothers will continue to bear the heaviest childcare burdens and fathers will find it more difficult to actively engage in parenting. So reframing workforce and parenting issues as dual-career couples issues will help alleviate women's second shift. Though Singapore has introduced paid paternity leave, more could be done in government policy to take men's role in childrearing seriously.

Couples in this study were able successfully to manage dual careers and childrearing because they could draw on resources outside the couple relationship. Parents without an available support network, or who are dealing with more difficult circumstances, have fewer options and may need additional resources and help making conscious, genuinely shared decisions rather than automatically falling back on traditional gender structures.

Family continuity is a matter of great importance in many Asian communities, including Singapore (Kagitcibasi 2007). Engaging grandparents to look after grandchildren appears to be a workable solution for many in this generation. However, finding high-quality stable childcare arrangement continues to be an important issue. That includes having multiple childcare arrangements to meet the growing phases of their children. Families may need a wider range of options if future generations of grandmothers are not available for childcare because they are also in the workforce. Considering how responsibility for parenting may be extended beyond the couple unit is also an important issue to the Singapore society that seeks to maximize the economic and personal potential of all Singaporeans.

# References

Chew, I., & Liao, Z. (1999). Family structures on income and career satisfaction of managers in Singapore. *The Journal of Management Development, 18*, 464–476.

Cowdery, R., & Knudson-Martin, C. (2005). The construction of motherhood: Tasks, relational connection, and gender equality. *Family Relations, 54*, 335–345.

Deutsch, F. M. (2007). Undoing gender. *Gender and Society, 21*, 106–127.

Hook, J. L. (2006). Care in context: Men's unpaid work in 20 countries: 1965–2003. *American Sociological Review, 71*, 639–660.

Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore. (2013). *Working mother's child relief*. Retrieved March 31, 2013, from http://www.iras.gov.sg/irashome/page04.aspx?id=220#How_much_you_can_claim

Kagitcibasi, C. (2007). *Family, self, and human development across cultures*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Knudson-Martin, C. (2009). Capturing the lived experience of couples. In C. Knudson-Martin & A. R. Mahoney (Eds.), *Couples, gender, and power: Creating change in intimate relationships* (pp. 31–40). New York: Springer.

Knudson-Martin, C., & Mahoney, A. (1996). Gender dilemma and myth in the construction of marital bargains: Issue for marital therapy. *Family Process, 35*, 137–153.

Koh, M (2012). *Parent pays nearly s$6,000 a month in tuition fees*. Retrieved August 12, 2012, from http://sg.news.yahoo.com/blogs/singaporescene/things-consider-sending-child-tuition-classes-102823408.html

Lee, K.Y. (2012*). "Enormous" problems if Singaporeans don't procreate*. Retrieved August 11, 2012, from www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/1219552/1/.html

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. (2009). *Fatherhood public perception survey*. Retrieved October 6, 2012, from www.nfc.org.sg/ResearchPublication/KeySurvey Findings.pdf

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. (2011a). *Baby Bonus: Singapore, a great place for families*. Retrieved October 14, 2011, from http://www.babybonus.gov.sg/bbss/html/index.html

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. (2011b). *Labor force participation rate: Married females*. Retrieved June 30, 2012, from http://app1.mcys.gov.sg/ResearchRoom/ResearchStatistics/LabourForce ParticipationRateMarriedFemales.aspx

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. (2011c). *Policies: Women (Celebrating women)*. Retrieved October 13, 2011, from http://app1.mcys.gov.sg/Policies/Women CelebratingWomen.aspx

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. (2011d). *Pro-family leave schemes: Enhanced Government-Paid Maternity Leave (GPML) Scheme*. Retrieved October 24, 2011, from http://fcd.ecitizen.gov.sg/ProFamilyLeaveScheme/GovernmentPaidMaternityLeave/

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. (2011e). *Pro-family leave schemes: Government-paid childcare leave scheme*. Retrieved October 24, 2011, from http://fcd.ecitizen.gov.sg/ProFamilyLeaveScheme/GovernmentPaidChildcareLeave

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. (2011f). *Statistics on child care*. Retrieved October 23, 2011, from http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg/ccls/uploads/Statistics_on_child_care

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. (2011g). *Women and the economy: Gender wage gap*. Retrieved October 28, 2011, from http://app1.mcys.gov.sg/ResearchRoom/ResearchStatistics/GenderWageGap

Ministry of Manpower. (2011a). *Manpower Research and Statistics Department*. Retrieved October 27, 2011, from http://www.mom.gov.sg/aboutus/divisions-statutory-boards/Pages/manpower-research-statistics-department.aspx

Ministry of Manpower. (2011b). *Singaporeans in the workforce*. Retrieved October 15, 2011 from http://www.mom.gov.sg/Publications/mrsd_singaporeans_in_the_workforce

National Family Council. (2009). *Business leaders need to make time for family*. Singapore: National Family Council.

National Family Council. (2010). *State of the family report 2010*. Singapore: National Family Council.

National Family Council. (2011). *State of the family report 2011*. Singapore: National Family Council.

National Youth Council. (2010). *The state of youth in Singapore*. Retrieved October 6, 2012, from www.resourceportal.nyc.sg/nycp/nycp.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=static_resources

Ng, J. (2012, August 5). What works for working mums. *The Sunday Times*, pp. 38–39.

Nieuwenhuis, R., Need, A., & van der Kolk, H. (2012). Institutional and demographic explanations of women's employment in 18 OECD countries, 1975–1999. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 74*, 616–630.

Ong, H., & Tai, J. (2012, August 3). Get married and start family early. *The Straits Times*, p. A6.

Oyserman, D., Coon, H., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2002). Rethinking individualism and collectivism: Evaluation of theoretical assumptions and meta-analyses. *Psychological Bulletin, 128*, 3–72.

Quek, K. (2009). We-consciousness: Creating equality in collectivist culture. In C. Knudson-Martin & A. R. Mahoney (Eds.), *Couple, gender, and power: Creating change in intimate relationships* (pp. 193–214). New York: Springer.

Quek, K., & Knudson-Martin, C. (2006). A push towards equality: Processes among dual-income couples in a collectivist culture. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 68*, 56–69.

Quek, K., & Knudson-Martin, C. (2008). Reshaping marital power: How dual career newly-wed couples create equality in Singapore. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 25*, 513–534.

Quek, K., Knudson-Martin, C., Rue, D., & Alabiso, C. (2010). Relational harmony: A new model of collectivism and gender equality among Asian American couples. *Journal of Family Issues (Special Edition on Asian American Families), 31*, 358–380.

Quek, K., Knudson-Martin, C., Orpen, S., & Victor, J. (2011). Gender equality during transition to parenthood: Longitudinal study of dual-career Singaporean couples. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 28*(7), 943–962. doi:10.1177/0265407510397989.

Risman, B. J. (2009). From doing to undoing: Gender as we know it. *Gender and Society, 23*, 81–84.

Shows, C., & Gerstel, N. (2009). Fathering, class and gender: A comparison of physicians and emergency medical technicians. *Gender & Society, 23*, 161–187.

Singapore Department of Statistics. (2011a). *Census of population 2010*. Retrieved October 11, 2011, from http://www.singstat.gov.sg/pubn/popn/c2010sr2/t61-68.pdf

Singapore Department of Statistics. (2011b). *Household size and structure*. Retrieved October 15, 2011, from http://www.singstat.gov.sg/pubn/popn/c2010sr2/findings.pdf

Singapore Department of Statistics. (2011c). *Population size and growth*. Retrieved October 14, 2011, from http://www.singstat.gov.sg/stats/latestdata.html

Stone, P. (2008). *Opting out: Why women really quit careers and head home*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tai, J., & Toh, K. (2012, August 6). Preschools feel crunch as void decks shrink. *The Straits Times,* p. B1.

Viers, D., & Prouty, A. (2002). We've come a long way? An overview of research of dual career couples' stressors and strengths. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy, 13*(2/3), 169–190.

Zimmerman, T. S., Haddock, S. A., Ziemba, S. J., & Rust, A. (2001). Family organizational labor: Who is calling the plays? In T. S. Zimmerman (Ed.), *Balancing family and work: Special considerations in feminist therapy* (pp. 65–90). New York: Haworth Press.

# Understanding Coparenting and Family Systems Among East and Southeast Asian-Heritage Families

**James P. McHale, Khanh T. Dinh, and Nirmala Rao**

The geographical world regions known as Eastern and Southeastern Asia comprise 18 countries or economies: seven in East Asia and 11 in South-Eastern Asia (UN 2012). The seven East Asian territories are: China, DPR Korea, Hong Kong (SAR), Japan, Macao (SAR), Mongolia, Republic of Korea. The ten Southeast Asian countries are: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Burma, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. The countries in the region vary widely in terms of their cultural geography, socio-cultural beliefs, levels of development, demographic profiles and political systems (Rao and Sun 2010). Further, while diverse family structures and dynamics have long existed in various regions of Asia, twenty-first century forces of globalization, urbanization, increased migration, and changes in demographic trends have had significant impacts on family forms and systems. Trends such as increased physical and social mobility among family members within and across generations, migration and relocation, international marriage, demographic transformation characterized by aging, declining fertility and delayed marriage and childbearing, cultural shifts in values and attitudes about gender roles, marriage, parenting, and children's socio-emotional needs, increased women's labor force participation, and increases in divorce rates and single parenthood have all triggered important shifts in family structures and roles. Families are continually evolving and re-defining their own status in society through everyday life arrangements, adjustments, and longer term plans and ideals (Gubhaju and Eng 2011).

The ever-increasing diversity and complexity in marriage and family formation patterns and family life have bred new stresses and challenges. The press and

J.P. McHale (✉)
Department of Psychology, University of South Florida St. Petersburg, FL, USA
e-mail: jmchale@usfsp.edu

K.T. Dinh
Department of Psychology, University of Massachusetts, Lowell, MA, USA

N. Rao
Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

intensity of these challenges vary by country and by regions within countries (with change occurring more rapidly in urban than in rural areas) and in response to different contexts of economic and social change. Socialist-oriented capitalism, government family planning policies, modernization, and emerging individualism have posed major challenges to the traditional family, and consequently require accommodation. In some countries, families have adopted new institutional structures such as neo-local family residences, while in others traditional systems of extended residence have persisted or been adapted to cope with rising costs of housing and childcare (Chen 2005; Hirschman and Minh 2002; Morgan and Hirosima 1983). Amidst the variability, some general trends and shifts in traditional family structure and process can be identified, and will be one thrust of this chapter. Due to the limited focus in the literature on fathering in Asian families, another thrust is our emphasis on the role and changing gender role of fathers within the traditional family and societal contexts of mothers as the primary caregivers. Because detailed figures on population characteristics and census data are published only irregularly for many of these countries (Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei, Cambodia, DPR Korea, Lao PDR, and Burma), we will limit our overview more generally to widespread trends and shifts in family functioning among East and Southeast nations rather than attempting an exhaustive comparative analysis.

## Values

Countries in East and Southeast Asia constitute different ethnic groups that vary in language, wartime and migration experiences, and certain cultural practices. However, there are some common cultural values, particularly pertaining to the family, that have been established (Uba 1994). First, South and Southeast Asian cultures have been greatly influenced by Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. These religions or philosophies have shaped cultural traditions and values that dictate family structure, hierarchy and roles, and one's place in society (Min 1995). Traditional two-parent heterosexual married families in South and Southeast Asia are characterized by a patriarchal and patrilineal structure, sex, age and birth order determining roles and authority within the family. Grandparents, especially grandfathers, are revered, husbands possess more power than wives, sons have more privileges than daughters, and the eldest son is the family's most important child. The immediate family is not just the mother, father and children, but also includes the husband's parents and the son's wives and children. A large proportion of newly married couples do not leave their parental home immediately after marriage, and with most couples still desiring to have a first baby as soon as possible, three-generation family households are normative.

The family as a whole and its social status take precedence over the identity and needs of individual family members. The extended family also includes close relatives who share the family name and ancestors who live in the same community. Ties with the extended family generally remain very close, so that in some cultures even aunts and uncles are part of a family collective that shares roles

in caregiving, socialization and coparenting of children (Kurrien and Vo 2004). This ethic is exemplified by a Vietnamese proverb: "If the father or mother lacks or fails, children are always taken care of by an aunt or uncle".

## Parenting Practices

Adults' parenting practices are shaped by Confucian and Tao doctrines which advocate a balance between natural, human, and spiritual entities and de-emphasize individuality and self-assertion (Munro 1985; Ryan 1985). Specifically, Taoism emphasizes self-control and interpersonal harmony, and Confucianism the fulfillment of social obligations, establishment of interrelationships with others, conforming to norms, respecting parents and elders, and attainment of family reputation through individual achievement (Fung 1983; King and Bond 1985). Wang and Chang (2010) propose that the Western model of authoritarian and authoritative parenting (Baumrind 1971), which addresses differences among families in warmth and control with children, may have limited applicability in understanding Chinese-heritage parenting. For example, Chinese parents rate themselves significantly higher than European-heritage families on "training" ideologies, and on socialization goals for filial piety (Chao 1994, 2000). Chinese values of collectivism, conformity to norms, emotional self-control and humility were associated with authoritarian parenting by mothers, with collectivism and conformity to norms also correlated with authoritative parenting (Xu et al. 2005). These data reflect a parenting emphasis on not only child obedience to rules and adult authority, but also subtle expression of warmth, acceptance and responsiveness through sensitivity to children's needs (Chao 1994). Specifically, the Chinese notion of *guan* (管), which means "to govern", "to care for", and "to love", cannot be categorized as either authoritative or authoritarian parenting (Chao 1994) because parental care, concern, and involvement are synonymous with firm control and governance of the child. This gives guan a very positive meaning. Parents' *chiao shun* (training) (教訓), or the continuous monitoring and correction of children's behavior to assure that children do not fall short of societal standards, is also an endemic feature of Chinese parenting (Chao 1994). Filial piety (*hieuthao*) is also considered to be among the most essential virtues in Vietnamese society. Children are acculturated to be thankful to parents for the debt of their birth, upbringing and education; to always think of their parents and family first; to sacrifice for them; and to love and care for parents in their elder years. Vietnamese individuals who neglect this responsibility face ostracism by both their family and the community.

## Mother and Father Roles and Involvement

Historically, research studies examining parenting practices in Asian families have gathered data principally from mothers, with few empirical studies having solicited kindred data from fathers (Kashiwagi 1993; Makino 1995). There is hence little

systematic, empirically based data concerning what fathers actually do for their children of different ages, and how they experience fatherhood in various Asia-Pacific regions. Much needed is valid, large-scale information gathering from Asian fathers across cultural and subcultural groupings concerning how they view their contributions to their child's survival, health and development; what they enjoy and believe they do well with their children; and what they do not enjoy or fear about caring for infants and young children.

The most widely held and conventional view of Asian men's family responsibilities includes ensuring sufficient income for the household and serving as teacher, disciplinarian, and support for mothers. However, this parochial view obscures within-culture variability in men's roles and changing gender roles in general. While Asian women, like women everywhere, do still tend to be the main providers of care at home (even as they assume greater work responsibilities outside their homes), there have been smatterings of evidence indicating that many Asian men have taken on increasingly greater new responsibilities related to children, including in the realms of caregiving and of providing support for children's development and education. Most evidence suggests that these changes have been tentative, subtle and slow to take hold. However, in certain parts of Asia shifts in father involvement have slowly shadowed similar shifts in Western fathers' involvement over the last half century, although this is not to say that the process of change for the latter is moving any faster than the former.

Among the recently studied fatherhood trends, particularly in several urban areas of East Asia, is whether evidence supports men's showing greater involvement in nurturing their children's development. Data have been equivocal, but where documented one explanation for change toward greater father participation in child care is that kin caregiving is less accessible to contemporary families than in the past. Dual-income urban parents now frequently tend to live in households with nuclear rather than extended family structures. Japanese men's involvement in housework was slightly higher when their wives were employed full time or more educated, as opposed to non-employed or less educated (Nagai 2004). Similarly, Makino (1995) found that men and women shared more child care activities when wives had either full-time or part-time jobs, as opposed to being homemakers (see also Ishii-Kuntz et al. 2004). These studies suggest that an increase in financial resources contributed by women may encourage men to share child care activities with their wives. On the other hand, as has been documented in many Western cultures, domestic violence, fathers' over-zealous discipline and other problems stand as factors leading many mothers to serve as 'gate-keepers' and discourage more father involvement.

Men's education may also play a role; some studies find that educated fathers in urban areas have grown more involved in actively supporting their children's development. For example, according to the Management and Coordination Agency (1986), 57 % of college-educated fathers, as opposed to 44 and 38 % of fathers who are high school and junior high school graduates, respectively, reported actively participating in talking and playing with school-aged children. However, women's increased involvement in the workforce does not inevitably prompt greater father involvement, for there are also other adaptations Asian families have made

commensurate with women's increased involvement in the workforce. In one analysis, Roberts (2011) maintains that the contemporary Japanese family has actually begun moving away from a traditional male breadwinner model, but that it is through support from women's families of origin rather than their husbands and children's fathers that makes a work–life balance for full-time Japanese career women possible [See Holloway and Nagase's chapter in this book for an interesting view on tradition in Japan].

In many rural settings, adults behave in accordance with beliefs that transgressing traditional male roles (such as fathers taking care of children in public) is never appropriate. Even if both parents hold jobs outside the home to support family income, sole responsibility for the wellbeing of the children falls to the mother. Sometimes, circumstances in the privacy of the family home are different with fathers contributing to direct child care. Certainly after the infant and toddler years, father involvement in outdoor activities, play and some domestic activities (going on outdoor visits, eating with the family, putting children to sleep, reciting rhymes, singing to children, other play-related activities) does tend to increase. Even so however, when fathers do interact with their older preschool children, it is most often to engage in physical play. Father participation in direct child care tasks such as bathing, feeding, diapering, oral health, and dressing remains rare. Moreover, when fathers participate in child care, they view their participation as temporary and only for when the mother is unavailable.

Culturally, it is important to recognize that maternal reputation and competency can also sometimes be at stake in rural areas. During infancy and toddlerhood, rural fathers view it as the mother's responsibility to be the primary child caregivers, and see it as a violation of tradition to play a central role in raising very young children. Both rural men and women are quite cognizant of culturally-prescribed roles and often adhere rigidly to these. Unfortunately, it is the narrow definition of parenthood as caregiving tasks, roles and responsibilities that has had the effect of delimiting men's accessibility to participate in the joyful experiences of mutual bonding during the baby's formative years. So endemic are the role prescriptions that even traditional nursery rhymes reinforce strict cultural roles, celebrating mothers for their love and care to the sons and daughters and fathers for their guidance, provider role and protection of child and family safety. Children themselves learn cultural mores for gender specificity in roles of fathers and mothers from very early in life.

Examining within-culture variability in patterns of paternal participation in a rural area of Vietnam, Tran (2006) documented fathering differences in the lives of 547 children under the age of 3 years old. Fathers who were involved early in the child's life were about 1.9 times more likely to be involved in sleeping with children and about 3 times more likely to bring the child to medical facilities for immunizations. Children whose fathers did not bring them to the medical facilities for immunizations were about 1.7 times more likely to be malnourished. Children who did not sleep with their fathers are about 1.5 times more likely to be categorized as having suspected developmental delay. Even within rural areas variability can be found; in a context that does not discourage early father investment, greater engagement by men appears to have positive consequences for infant health and mental health.

## Variability, Challenge, and Adaptation

There is certainly a pressing need to probe further to understand both cross-cultural and within-culture variability among families in the exercise of parenting values, beliefs and behavior, but the common historical roots and traditions described above serve as an important backdrop for understanding contemporary challenges and changes. Understanding longstanding traditions and mores also helps shed light on the even greater variability and strain attendant to rural to urban migration within a country or family migration from East or Southeast Asia to Western nations.

East Asia is rapidly becoming urban with 42 % of its population residing in urban areas. China's urban population is increasing at a rate of 1 % per annum (Engle et al. 2013). According to official figures, there are 22 million "left-behind" children in rural areas, though other reports estimate that the number may be as high as 58 million. These children have one or both parents working away from home and are taken care of by grandparents or other relatives in rural areas. There are concerns that the psychological needs of these children may be neglected and that mothers may be left to manage large families on their own.

Families that emigrate to other countries are forced to confront new cultural challenges, which in turn influence changes in family formation and dynamics across the life cycle. Among the changes that are especially common and stressful for family members are shifts in family hierarchy, in family relationships and in the specific roles of family members.

## Roles and Support Systems

Dramatic changes in immigrant men's social, occupational, and economic status undermine traditional male authority, especially the authority of the father or husband, while women's independence and identity separate from the prescribed traditional female roles often increase with occupational and educational opportunities. The nature of family migration events also can have a major impact on the very size and make-up of families when traditional multi-generational patterns of kinship are disrupted, and the traditional system of family support is interrupted (Dinh and Nemon 2007). Under such circumstances, an adaptive coping response adopted by many families includes incorporation of more distant extended relatives into the family collective (Vo-Jutabha et al. 2009).

Even so, Southeast Asian men have sometimes felt threatened by the changes in their wives' status and their own erosion of authority. This has led to tension and conflict in various instances and sometimes also to domestic violence (Kibria 1993; Tran and DesJardins 2000). For instance, although divorce is still highly stigmatized within Southeast Asian communities, increased tension in marital relationships may be partly responsible for heightened divorce rates among Southeast Asians living outside Asia (Chan 2004; Rutledge 1992). The divorce rate in Vietnam, for example,

is about 2 % (Nguyen 2011) while the comparable rate for Vietnamese men and women living in North America is 6 % (2010 ACS).

In another realm, the context of aging in Asian cultures is also transforming in subtle but noticeable ways. Historically aging confers increasing reverence within and outside the family, with elders surrounded and cared for by multigenerational family members. However, in North America adult children, especially sons, of Southeast Asian parents tend to move out to establish independent households, sometimes at significant distances from the family-of-origin unit. Increasing rates of interracial marriages among younger generations are also rendering extended family networks less readily accessible to immigrant elderly parents or members. But such changes are not just restricted to immigrant families; demographic and economic changes in China, Thailand, Singapore, and Japan are also having effects on the nature of intergenerational relationships and elderly care (Zhou 2001). For example, in post-reform China the family support network of aging rural peasants in a small village in Jiangsu Province is at variance with that of their parents' generation (who had worked and aged in a centrally-planned economy), and from their children who work and will age in a market-oriented economy. Zhou argues that the traditional Confucian support networks of the elderly are declining, and that daughters have begun playing an increasingly important role in support networks of the elderly even as sons continue to be important.

Moriki's (2011) study of living arrangements of the elderly in Bangkok explores how Thai families with fewer numbers of children, some of whom may not marry to form traditional extended families, face the challenge of caring for elderly persons. She documents a new type of co-residence that has emerged in this context—a continuing nuclear family of elderly parent(s) living with unmarried children—distinct from the traditional extended family where parent(s) live with married children. Contrary to convention, most adult Thai children move out of their parental home after marriage and hence co-residence with an unmarried child is now more common in urban Thailand where men and women never marrying is disproportionately increasing. In the urban contexts of Singapore and Japan where family sizes are also shrinking, Thang and colleagues (2011) document strain experienced by elders from contradictory coparenting roles—the expected grandparental role in transmitting cultural values to the younger generation and the norm of non-interference with childrearing on the other.

## Coparenting

Children are affected not just by the individual childcare labor efforts of each parent operating individually, but also by the degree of harmony, collaboration and esprit de corps within the broader family system as a collective socialization unit. Yet somewhat surprisingly, the concept of coparenting in Asian cultures has only recently become a focus of study. In studies of Western families, numerous studies have linked the quality of coparenting between mothers and fathers to children's

socioemotional and academic adjustment. Supportive and harmonious coparenting relationships are tied to young children's social (McHale et al. 1996, 1999; Schoppe et al. 2001) and academic competence (McHale et al. 2000). Among older children, supportive coparenting has also been linked to well-developed self-regulatory abilities (Abidin and Brunner 1995; Brody et al. 1998). By contrast, unsupportive or discordant coparenting has been associated with adjustment difficulties in children. For example, competitive and conflictual coparenting is linked with poor self-regulation and disinhibition among toddlers (Belsky et al. 1996), and with acting out and internalizing behavior among both preschoolers (McHale and Rasmussen 1998) and school-age boys (McConnell and Kerig 2002).

To date, studies substantiating associations between coparenting and child adjustment have typically involved samples of predominantly Caucasian, middle-class families. Only limited data are available on coparenting in non-Anglo cultural or ethnic groups. Nonetheless, those few studies that have engaged Asian families have suggested similar patterns of linkage between quality of coparenting and children's wellbeing. For instance, research on urban Chinese families suggests that mothers who report more collaborative coparenting rate their preschoolers as more successful academically, while conflictful coparenting is linked to problems with acting out and anxiety (McHale et al. 2000). Among Japanese families, involvement in daily child-related activities by fathers has been linked to greater child empathy (Ogata and Miyashita, 2000). While these findings are important, to advance an understanding of how coparenting in East and Southeast Asian families supports or undermines child development, researchers need to shed Western notions of mothers and fathers as the functional coparenting partners to include other caregivers such as grandparents, older children, and extended family members. Such individuals play pivotal caregiving roles in families within most Asian cultures (Kibria 1993; Roopnarine et al. 1989; Kurrien and Vo 2004).

## Summary and Conclusions

East and Southeast Asian families share many cultural, religious, and spiritual histories that collectively have shaped an ethic of family unity, harmony and collective identity. Family systems and dynamics have been challenged by a number of converging forces that have prompted reconfigurations of traditional means of acculturating and raising children, but traditional family mores have shaped the natures of adaptations made. In many countries, there have been trends towards greater direct father involvement, particularly when families are nuclear, urban, more educated, and both parents are in the paid labor force. Yet even in these circumstances, there remains often great resistance to shifting conventional patterns of father involvement, especially with young infants and toddlers, and father care remains far less than mother care. Cross-nationally, men do tend to become more involved with their children's activities as they get older, but mothers continue to tend to basic care tasks such as health, hygiene, feeding, and stimulating infants and toddlers. Where it has been tenable to maintain, families have found ways to continue to honor values of filial piety and extended kin have continued to play

a role in the coparenting of children. Adaptations made within cultures vary as a function of contextual factors impinging on the family, and there have been positive as well as negative aftereffects of changing societal forces.

One area that has been slow to change has been heightening consciousness about the importance of meaningful father engagement with infants and toddlers when attachment bonds are forming. Father involvement during infancy also has the benefit of alleviating the workload of mothers. One large-scale initiative guided by this aim was a Save the Children project in Vietnam (Richardson 1995). Husbands were told that they could reduce the health-care costs for their children if their wives worked less during pregnancy and in the early postpartum. In communes which received these messages, women reported significantly more days of rest while pregnant, and commensurately, higher birthweight babies. For their part men felt more empowered to help their wives. An unanticipated benefit was on elder men, with grandfathers reportedly also interested in increasing their involvement with children (Richardson 1995). While many countries have discussed development of initiatives at policy and program levels to promote positive father involvement, there is a gap in knowledge about what kind of education, information or support fathers actually want or would respond to. Studies of effective father involvement strategies in various regions are sorely needed. Effective strategies to promote father involvement are probably not the same as typical 'parenting education and support' programs created with mothers in mind. There is a strong need for studies that ask different kinds of fathers in different kinds of circumstances what kinds of program they would want for promoting positive father involvement or coparenting.

Though progress has been slow, a newer family lens that has been guiding studies of child development for the past quarter century (McHale 2007) promises to help illuminate changes and adaptations of Asian families to ever-changing societal circumstances that will only intensify in the decades ahead. The gradual changes and continual embracing of conventional family mores indicate that change will be incremental, adaptive, and continued to focus on a family collectivist approach in the raising of healthy children. We look forward to this next generation of research.

# References

Abidin, R. R., & Brunner, J. F. (1995). Development of a parenting alliance inventory. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 24*(1), 31–40.

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology, 4*(1p2), 1.

Belsky, J., Putnam, S., & Crnic, K. (1996). Coparenting, parenting, and early emotional development. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development, 74*, 45–55.

Brody, G. H., Flor, D. L., & Neubaum, E. (1998). Coparenting processes and child competence among rural African-American families. In M. E. Lewis & C. Feiring (Eds.), *Families, risk, and competence* (pp. 227–243). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Chan, S. (2004). *Survivors: Cambodian refugees in the United States*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Chao, R. K. (1994). Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development, 65*(4), 1111–1119.

Chao, R. K. (2000). The parenting of immigrant Chinese and European American mothers: Relations between parenting styles, socialization goals, and parental practices. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 21*(2), 233–248.

Chen, F. (2005). Residential patterns of parents and their married children in contemporary China: A life course approach. *Population Research and Policy Review, 24*(2), 125–148.

Dinh, K. T., & Nemon, M. (2007). *The psychosocial profiles of immigrants in relation to migration and resettlement factors*. Unpublished Research Report.

Engle, P. L., Rao, N., & Petrovic, O. (2013). Situational analysis of young children in a changing world. In P. R. Britto, P. L. Engle, & C. Super (Eds.), *Handbook of early child development research and its impact on global policy* (pp. 48–69). New York: Oxford University Press.

Fung, Y. (1983). *A history of Chinese philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gubhaju, B., & Eng, L. A. (2011). How fares the family? Resilience and transformation of families in Asia. *Marriage & Family Review, 47*(8), 505–510.

Hirschman, C., & Minh, N. H. (2002). Tradition and change in Vietnamese family structure in the Red River Delta. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 64*(4), 1063–1079.

Ishii-Kuntz, M., Makino, K., Karo, K., & Tsuchiya, M. (2004). Japanese fathers of preschoolers and their involvement in child care. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 66*(3), 779–791.

Kashiwagi, K. (Ed.). (1993). *Chichioya no hattatsushinrigaku* [Developmental psychology of fathers]. Tokyo: Kawashima Shoten.

Kibria, N. (1993). *Family tightrope: The changing lives of Vietnamese Americans*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

King, A. Y. C., & Bond, M. H. (1985). The Confucian paradigm of man: A sociological view. In W. S. Tseng & D. Y. H. Wu (Eds.), *Chinese culture and mental health* (pp. 29–45). New York: Academic.

Kurrien, R., & Vo, E. D. (2004). Who's in charge?: Coparenting in South and Southeast Asian families. *Journal of Adult Development, 11*(3), 207–219.

Makino, K. (1995). Everyday life of parents and children. In K. Makino, K. Shimizu, M. Sugiyama, H. Hara, & H. Watanabe (Eds.), *International comparative research on "home education"* (pp. 41–52). Tokyo: Japan Association for Women's Education.

Management and Coordination Agency. (1986). *Nihonnochichioyatokodomo* [Fathers and children in Japan]. Tokyo: The Printing Office of the Ministry of Finance.

McConnell, M. C., & Kerig, P. K. (2002). Assessing coparenting in families of school-age children: Validation of the coparenting and family rating system. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement, 34*(1), 44.

McHale, J. P. (2007). When infants grow up in multiperson relationship systems. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 28*(4), 370–392.

McHale, J. P., Kuersten, R., & Lauretti, A. (1996). New directions in the study of family-level dynamics during infancy and early childhood. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development, 1996*(74), 5–26.

McHale, J. P., & Rasmussen, J. L. (1998). Coparental and family group-level dynamics during infancy: Early family precursors of child and family functioning during preschool. *Development and Psychopathology, 10*(1), 39–59.

McHale, J. P., Johnson, D., & Sinclair, R. (1999). Family dynamics, preschoolers' family representations, and preschool peer relationships. *Early Education and Development, 10*(3), 373–401.

McHale, J. P., Rao, N., & Krasnow, A. D. (2000). Constructing family climates: Chinese mothers' reports of their co-parenting behaviour and preschoolers' adaptation. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 24*(1), 111–118.

Min, P. G. (1995). *Asian Americans: Contemporary trends and issues*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Morgan, S. P., & Hirosima, K. (1983). The persistence of extended family residence in Japan: Anachronism or alternative strategy? *American Sociological Review, 48*(2), 269–281.

Moriki, Y. (2011). Co-residence among Bangkok elderly: Implications of children's marital status. *Marriage & Family Review, 47*(8), 529–547.

Munro, D. J. (1985). *Individualism and holism: Studies in Confucian and Taoist values* (Vol. 52). Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan.

Nagai, A. (2004). Male involvement in childcare. In H. Watanabe, A. Inaba, & N. Shimazaki (Eds.), *Structure and change in the contemporary family* (pp. 190–200). Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, in Japanese.

Nguyen, T. B. (2011). The trend of Vietnamese household size in recent years. *International Conference on Humanities, Society and Culture, 20*, 47–52. Retrieved from http://www.ipedr.com/vol20/10-ICHSC2011-M00023.pdf

Ogata, K., & Miyashita, K. (2000). Father and family: Exploring links between husband-wife relations, wife's mental stress, infant social adaptability and father's own personality development. *Bulletin of Faculty of Education, Chiba University, 48*, 1–14.

Rao, N., & Sun, J. (2010). *Early childhood care and education in the Asia-Pacific region: Moving towards Goal 1*. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong/UNESCO: Bangkok Office.

Richardson, J. (1995). *Achieving gender equality in families: The role of males*. Innocenti Global Seminar, Summary Report, Florence, Italy: UNICEF International Child Development Centre, SpedaledegliInnocenti.

Roberts, M. (2011). *Chinese fairy tales and fantasies*. New York: Pantheon.

Roopnarine, J. L., Lu, M. W., & Ahmeduzzaman, M. (1989). Parental reports of early patterns of caregiving, play and discipline in India and Malaysia. *Early Child Development and Care, 50*(1), 109–120.

Rutledge, P. (1992). *The Vietnamese experience in America* (Minorities in Modern America). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Ryan, A. S. (1985). Cultural factors in casework with Chinese-Americans. *Social Casework, 66*, 333–340.

Schoppe, S. J., Mangelsdorf, S. C., & Frosch, C. A. (2001). Coparenting, family process, and family structure: Implications for preschoolers' externalizing behavior problems. *Journal of Family Psychology, 15*(3), 526.

Thang, L. L., Mehta, K., Usui, T., & Tsuruwaka, M. (2011). Being a good grandparent: Roles and expectations in intergenerational relationships in Japan and Singapore. *Marriage & Family Review, 47*(8), 548–570.

Tran, B. (2006). *Father's involvement and child development outcomes in a rural area of Vietnam*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Tulane University.

Tran, C. G., & DesJardins, K. (2000). Domestic violence in Vietnamese refugee and Korean immigrant communities. In J. L. Chin (Ed.), *Relationships among Asian American women* (pp. 71–96). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Uba, L. (1994). *Asian Americans: Personality patterns, identity, and mental health*. New York: Guilford Press.

United Nations. (2012). *Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings*. Retrieved from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm

Vo-Jutabha, E. D., Dinh, K. T., McHale, J. P., & Valsiner, J. (2009). A qualitative analysis of Vietnamese adolescent identity exploration within and outside an ethnic enclave. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 38*(5), 672–690.

Wang, Q., & Chang, L. (2010). Parenting and child socialization in contemporary china. In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of Chinese psychology* (pp. 53–67). New York: Oxford University Press.

Xu, Y., Farver, J. A. M., Zhang, Z., Zeng, Q., Yu, L., & Cai, B. (2005). Mainland Chinese parenting styles and parent-child interaction. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 29*, 524–531.

Zhou, M. (2001). Straddling different worlds: The acculturation of Vietnamese refugee children. In R. G. Rumbaut & A. Portes (Eds.), *Ethnicities: Children of immigrants in America* (pp. 187–227). Berkeley: University of California Press.

# Parenting: The Turkish Context

**Hilal Sen, H. Melis Yavuz-Muren, and Bilge Yagmurlu**

In addition to the importance of the early environment, early relationships are crucial in every aspect of human development and functioning. Parenting and its impact on children's development have been examined widely in an attempt to understand the ways we can improve child outcomes (Abidin 1992; Kagitcibasi et al. 2001). Research that examines the role of parenting in child's development reveals that aspects of the social context and family environment (Vandell 2000), including socioeconomic background, neighborhood, and family structure, are closely related to parenting (Cowan et al. 1998). Culture is also a powerful context that shapes societal and familial values, and parent-child interactions (Slaughter-Defoe 1995).

Cross-cultural research on parenting helps us identify universal aspects of child rearing as well as differences between cultural groups. Studies conducted with a cultural psychology perspective (Goodnow 1997) are also enlightening to show variations within cultures that are observed in relation to contextual characteristics and social change. In this chapter, we try to provide the reader with the general pattern of parenting in the Turkish family and we employ the framework of cultural psychology to explore the variations in parenting in Turkish culture. As we do so, we do not solely focus on parents' behaviors, but also on their ideas (Dix et al. 1986; Goodnow 1988), values (Harwood 1992), and goals (Hastings and Grusec 1998; Kuczynski 1984) which shape their child-rearing behaviors and parenting style (Baumrind 1978). But before that, in an attempt to elucidate underlying processes in parenting, we first give a quick overview of different conceptualizations and cultural approaches to socialization.

H. Sen (✉) • H. Melis Yavuz-Muren • B. Yagmurlu
Developmental Psychology, KOC University, Istanbul, Turkey
e-mail: hisen@ku.edu.tr

## Culture and Parenting: Conceptualizations

Among the factors that shape human development, culture has a powerful role. Various scientific fields such as anthropology (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952), sociology (Inglehart and Baker 2000), and psychology (Bronfenbrenner 1979; Kagitcibasi 2007; Triandis 1972) acknowledge this. Segall and colleagues (1990, p. 5) say that "it is rare (even impossible) for any human being ever to behave without responding to some aspect of culture".

The comprehensive and multidimensional nature of culture is also recognized by all disciplines, yet every one of them has a different approach to the study of culture. The psychological point of view describes culture as a man-made part of the environment that consists of both objective and subjective aspects (Triandis 1994). This approach is mostly in line with the tradition of Herkovits (1948). Its objective aspects refer to observable acts and products found in a society such as formal education, explicit rules, artifacts, and tools. Subjective aspects include the inferred characteristics of a culture such as shared beliefs, customs, value systems, and attitudes that are not easily observable.

These different aspects are well recognized in Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory (1989) which is one of the prominent psychological theories that elaborate on the relations of culture to socialization and child development. According to the model, the child functions in basic contexts like family, day-care center, and school and is surrounded by other social settings such as community services, which are all shaped by the culture. Beliefs, values, attitudes, and norms embedded in culture elicit different behaviors from parents (and all socialization agents in general), which in turn affect the child's behavior.

Super and Harkness's Developmental Niche Model (1986) also argues for the central role of culture in child development. The model suggests that culture influences child development through shaping three different but related subsystems that function together: settings, customs, and caretaker's psychology. Settings include all physical and social environments (e.g., a separate room for the child, the availability of books at home) in which child rearing occurs. Customs of child rearing consist of common parenting practices (e.g., carrying the baby in a carriage versus on the mother's back) embedded within a culture. Caretaker's psychology includes parental cognitions composed of beliefs, values, and attitudes regarding parenting, childhood, and child development. Both the Bioecological Systems Theory and the Developmental Niche Model acknowledge the important effect of culture on parenting that in turn influences child development.

## Turkey: Not Western but Not Eastern Either

Many scholars who investigate the role of culture in parenting behaviors and child development study culture within the individualism-collectivism continuum. Individualism and collectivism represent two contrasting worldviews (Hofstede

2001; Triandis 1995). Individualistic cultures value personal goals over communal goals, and endorse independence, self-reliance, initiative, and economic freedom more. Group harmony, cohesion, interdependence, and obedience are the attributes valued more highly in collectivistic societies. Asian cultures like China, Japan, and India, are generally described as closer to the collectivism side of the continuum; Western cultures, like America, Australia, and European countries, are regarded as being more individualistic. Currently, Turkey is ranked halfway between individualistic and collectivistic cultures (37th out of 93 countries) on the dimension of individualism (Hofstede et al. 2010). In addition to the existence of some individualistic elements, collectivistic values are highly valued in the Turkish population (Göregenli 1995, 1997). For example, in a study that examined three dimensions—conservatism vs. intellectual and affective autonomy, hierarchy vs. egalitarianism, and mastery vs. harmony—in 49 countries, Turkey was identified as scoring high on the conservatism, hierarchy, and harmony dimensions and low on the autonomy, egalitarianism, and mastery dimensions (Schwartz 1999). Turkish scholars also recognize the hierarchical characteristic of Turkish culture (Sunar and Fisek 2005). In Turkish society, essential qualities of individuals outrank them in different domains like family relationships or business. For example, in the traditional Turkish family, age differences are always recognized. Younger siblings never call an older sibling by name, but rather by respectful terms that are used for elder brothers or sisters.

Turkish society has witnessed considerable societal and economic changes in the last decades. Among the factors that propel these changes, globalization and urbanization have had the most impact. Globalization, consistent with its multidimensional makeup, has brought economic, political, and social consequences (Inglehart and Norris 2009). The beginning of the 1950s witnessed Turkey's transformation from a rural and agricultural society to an urban and non-agricultural, industrial society (Rasuly-Paleczek 1996). Globalization and urbanization, conjointly, have shaped the economic reforms and financial development, which indirectly influenced women's situation in Turkey. Because family structure, access to education, employment status are known to be associated with parenting (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 1989), below we present brief information on the demographic profile of women and family in Turkey, and then focus on the more specific topic of parenting in Turkish society.

## Women in Turkey

Statistics reveal that the average years of education of Turkish women have shown a slow but steady increase over the past 30 years (TUIK 2011; Turkish Republic Prime Ministry Family Research Institution 2012). However, the number of illiterate women is still high (9.8 %) in the adult population (15 years of age and over). In general, the percentages of illiteracy for women and men increase from young to

old, from urban to rural areas, and from the west to the east, but the proportion of illiterate women is always higher than men (TUIK 2011).

Despite the increase in schooling of girls, participation of Turkish women in the workforce is low and tends to fluctuate. The employment rate for women was 34.1 % in 1990, 26.9 % in 2002, 25.4 % in 2004, and 28.8 % in 2011 (Turkish Republic Prime Ministry Family Research Institution 2012). These percentages are very low compared to Western women's labor force participation (59.5 % in 2011 for EU-15 countries[1]) (Turkish Republic Ministry of Development 2009). Statistics suggest that social and cultural factors, such as patriarchic society structure, education, and marital status are influential in this low rate. Even women who have higher educational degrees do not work after they marry and start a family. The rate of participation in the labor force is not low among never-married women of prime working age (25–45) (90 % for university graduates, 55 % for high school graduates, and 40 % for those with primary school education). However, this number is substantially lower in their married counterparts (70 % for university graduates, 25 % for high school graduates, and 15 % for those with primary school education) (Fowler 2011). The rate of women in Turkey who are housewives was 61.2 % in 2011 (Turkish Republic Prime Ministry Family Research Institution 2012).

Urbanization and the downsizing of agricultural employment are listed among the other reasons for low rates of women's employment (Turkish Republic Ministry of Development 2009, 2010). The substantial migration from eastern (and rural) to western (and urban) parts of Turkey has created disadvantages for women who work in agrarian labor.

Another change observed in Turkish society in the last few decades is that families have become smaller (nuclear rather than extended) and the number of children decreased. The Family Structure Survey (2006) revealed that 80.7 % of families are nuclear. The total fertility rate (TFR) has declined in Turkey since the 1960s (Özgür 2004) and keeps decreasing in recent years. The TFR was 2.53 in 2000, 2.07 in 2009, and 2.03 in 2010 (TUIK 2010). There are also notable differences within the country; the fertility rate is highest in Southeastern Anatolia (TFR = 3.46) and the lowest in the western Marmara region (TFR = 1.51) (TUIK 2010). In line with this, the number of illiterate women is the highest in Southeastern Anatolia (18 %) and the lowest in Western Marmara region (3 %). This pattern suggests a strong association between education (or literacy) and the fertility rate of women (and family size); as the years of education increase, the rate of reproduction decreases (Özgür 2004).

---

[1] EU-15 countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

From the Mother Child Education Foundation (MCEF) (http://www.acev.org/en/)

Education also impacts women's economic status, age of marriage, desired family size, access to family planning services, and use of contraception (Turkish Republic Ministry of Development 2010). These results suggest that educational opportunities have many direct and indirect consequences for women, their families and children. Cognitions of women about the nature of children, children's behaviors, optimal development and child rearing, and parenting practices are also influenced by their educational and social status.

## Turkish Familial Patterns

Two social norms, patriotism and respect for authority, are strong in the traditional Turkish family (Kagitcibasi 1970). Cultural values indicate a high valuing of sons and a clear differentiation in attitudes and behaviors towards girls and boys. Girls are monitored and restricted more than boys, and also expected to learn skills to keep house and help their mothers in housework (Kiray 1976; Lloyd and Fallers 1976). The traditions of hospitality and sharing are highly valued and reinforced by the family and the society (Göregenli 1997). Mutual help (UNICEF 1991) and assisting others, especially strangers, are observed more widely in families coming from rural backgrounds (Korte 1984).

Although social change has resulted in more material independence among family members, lovingness and warmth towards children are still prominent aspects of Turkish parents. Researchers suggest that these characteristics and behaviors of

parents, especially mothers, do not change much with their educational background or sociopolitical attitudes (traditionalists vs. modernists) (Kagitcibasi 2010; Baumrind 1978, 2009). Emotional interdependence is also important in Turkish families. There are strong and close ties between family members in families coming from different social backgrounds, including the most affluent and economically advantaged families. Kagitcibasi (1989) suggests that support is one of the positive features of this "culture of relatedness" but it also reinforces dependency and obedience to parents. In Turkish culture, similar to many other Third World countries and rural-agricultural families, children are dependent on their parents till their parents get old, when parents in turn depend on their children (Kagitcibasi 1987). The expectation of being looked after by children decreases from underdeveloped to more developed areas and with higher SES families, but some aspects of parenting such as obedience-demanding behavior may persist due to strong cultural traditions (Kagitcibasi 1996).

In the traditional Turkish family, relatives and family relations have significant contributions to family life (Günes-Ayata 1996). The support and interaction among relatives and family members are so important to the functioning of the families that the Turkish family has been identified as "functionally extended" (Ataca et al. 2005). In the functionally extended family, relatives stay in different houses but families may still fulfill many tasks together: cooking, eating meals together, and child rearing.

A large proportion of the mothers in Turkey (72 %) do not work outside the home (TUIK 2011), and it appears that social relationships of many stay-at-home mothers take place with members of the extended family. Research findings show that the social support received from family members has a protective role in increasing positive parenting and decreasing harsh parenting practices (Ataca et al. 2005; Mulsow et al. 2002). A study conducted with a nationally representative sample (Early Childhood Developmental Ecologies in Turkey) revealed that emotional and instrumental support received from extended family members decreased Turkish mothers' punitive behaviors and increased their warm and supportive parenting (Güroglu 2010). This relation was strong especially for the mothers from disadvantaged backgrounds (Baydar et al. 2012). Emotional and instrumental resources outside the family might foster better parenting behaviors by decreasing parents' distress level (Kotchick et al. 2005; Odgers et al. 2009) and providing role models for positive behavior (Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2000).

The structure of the Turkish family and pattern of relationships among its members (the functionally extended family) do not fully confirm the assumptions of the modernization theory of family (Dawson 1967; Inkeles and Smith 1974) which posits that with socio-economic improvement, collectivistic values will merge into individualistic values. Individualistic ways of thought and interactions will dominate, and developing countries will end up in a Westernized family type—a nuclear family that functions as an independent system in the community and has dissolved family ties with the community. Many scholars from different disciplines have objected to the assumptions of the modernization theory and argued that the processes of urbanization and globalization need not necessarily result in isolated nuclear families (Kagitcibasi 1982b, 2005; Sun 1991). According to Kagitcibasi

(2007), the view that with urbanization and industrialization the family gets closer to an individualized Western family is a reflection of an individualistic way of thinking which excludes important contextual factors. Individualistic thinking values and prioritizes child autonomy as an important developmental outcome, whereas collectivistic thinking highlights the significance of relatedness. Kagitcibasi argues that autonomy and relatedness are two basic needs of humans that can develop together at different levels. They are not at the opposite ends of a continuum; they are different dimensions that co-exist. Based on this view, Kagitcibasi suggested three distinct family models, each emphasizing different parenting styles and socialization practices according to the characteristics and needs they value. The *Family Model of Interdependence* is usually seen in rural/agrarian traditional societies. Here, intergenerational, material, and emotional dependencies are important, so there is an emphasis on the economical value of children. In this context, the goal of socialization is obedience in children and authoritarian parenting is common. Children are expected to contribute to the family economy and compliance is regarded as an important and positive characteristic in children. The *Family Model of Independence* mostly characterizes the Western and urbanized family system. Independence is highly valued; autonomy in children is seen as very important for success in society. In this system, children stay in school for longer periods of their lives, so they become economic costs for families. Therefore, the goal of socialization is to make the child gain autonomy, self-reliance, and individuation. Permissive parenting is common in this context. The *Family Model of Emotional Interdependence* is a synthesis of the other two models. In this family model, economical independence and emotional dependence are both considered important. Children are not valued as economic assets for the family anymore; they are not expected to contribute to the family economy. Their dependence on the family is expected on the emotional level by retaining close ties with the family. Hence, children's behaviors are controlled but autonomy is also valued and fostered. Authoritative parenting is common in this family model. Kagitcibasi presents the emotional interdependence model as the ideal model that cultures are converging towards since both autonomy and relatedness are basic needs and the family model of emotional interdependence meets all these needs at once.

The emotional interdependence model of Kagitcibasi is supported by empirical studies conducted with Turkish families. The results of the studies examining parental cognitions and behaviors suggest that both individualistic and collectivistic aspects are observed in child rearing. These findings overall provide support for the existence of a family model of emotional interdependence in Turkey. In the next section more detailed descriptions of the relevant studies and their results will be discussed.

## Parenting Studies in Turkey

Studies focusing on cognitions of Turkish parents mostly investigate parental values, beliefs, and goals. One of the most comprehensive studies conducted in this field is the Value of Children (VoC) study which was carried out cross-culturally to

examine the changes in the values of parents regarding the reasons to have children in nine cultures including Turkey, America, Korea, Germany, Thailand, Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, and Taiwan (Bualato 1979a; Fawcett 1983; Hoffman 1987; Kagitcibasi 1982a; Kagitcibasi and Ataca 2005). The reasons for families to have children were classified into three categories: psychological, economical, and social. The *psychological value* refers to the enjoyment, pleasure or love the parents gain as a result of having children and being parents. The *social value* constitutes the social status gained through being a parent. And the *economical value* includes the economic expectations of parents from their children.

The first wave of the VoC study with Turkish mothers and their children was conducted in the 1970s; the same study was conducted with a different sample in 2005. The results indicated that in the 1970s, the economical value and old-age security value of children were of the first priority for mothers in Turkey, which contradicted the results with the Western and more developed cultures in the project, Germany and the USA (Kagitcibasi 1982b). Because of the children's contribution to family economy when they are young and their care for the elderly when they become adults, children's economic value was significant for Turkish parents (Kagitcibasi 2007). The results of the 2005 study, however, revealed that these patterns have undergone a change in Turkish society; there was a decrease in the economical/utilitarian value and an increase in the psychological value of children (Kagitcibasi and Ataca 2005). These findings suggested that the significance of material intergenerational dependencies have decreased over time but the psychological importance of children has come into prominence. The change in the meaning of children for their families is a product of the rapid social change and urbanization that took place especially after the 1980s. Despite this general change observed in values of Turkish parents over time, significant within-culture variance of course continues to exist. Research indicates that some parental cognitions vary as a function of SES (Göregenli 1997; Sunar and Fisek 2005) and rural-urban settlement (Nacak et al. 2011).

Socio-economic status (SES) is an important demographic variable in developmental psychology (Duncan and Magnuson 2003). The literature consistently shows that parents' coming from a more advantageous socioeconomic background have better knowledge of children's nature, development, positive parenting, and cognitive stimulation (Davis-Kean 2005; Mistry et al. 2008). While some studies examine SES-related differences, others just focus on parental education (Bornstein et al. 2003; Duncan and Brooks-Gunn 1997), as it is the more stable aspect of SES compared with occupation and family income.

In addition to the findings described above, the VoC study conducted in 2005 also revealed significant SES differences in maternal values (Kagitcibasi and Ataca 2005). Mothers from lower SES ($M_{years\ of\ education} = 6$) highlighted the importance of obedience, while those from middle-high SES ($M_{years\ of\ education} = 14$) valued autonomy-related behaviors in their children. Imamoglu (1987) also found that economically disadvantaged families stressed the importance of gratefulness, whereas families with high economic status valued closeness among family members rather than gratefulness.

The study of Yagmurlu and colleagues (2009) revealed differences in long-term socialization goals of low- and high-educated mothers living in Istanbul, the most urbanized city in Turkey. The findings reflected that mothers with low education ($M_{years\ of\ education}$ = 4.9) emphasized obedience and being respectful to others, whereas mothers with high education ($M_{years\ of\ education}$ = 15.5) highlighted the importance of autonomy and self-enhancement. Specifically, low educated mothers underlined the importance of being adaptive to a new situation, being kind and considerate towards others, having close family ties, and being compliant with family values. Highly educated mothers, on the other hand, reported the importance of being motivated, peaceful, positive, self-confident, and resilient. Mothers with both low and high education did not always value different characteristics; there were also similarities in the attributes they highly valued in their children, such as lovingness, decency, having self-control, success in school and work life (achievement), and being resilient in the face of difficulties.

In their study on emotion socialization behaviors of Turkish mothers, Yagmurlu and Altan (2010) also focused on education level and found that mothers who had higher education used encouragement of emotional expression of the child more frequently and minimization reactions (ignoring the child's emotional reactions) less in response to their child's negative emotions like anger, fear, and sadness. In support of this finding, the work of Corapci et al. (2012) revealed that more educated mothers displayed less punitive and minimization responses to their children's sadness than mothers with lower education levels.

Research has revealed that in addition to education of parents, the characteristics of residence (village, small city or metropolis) are also influential in shaping parental cognitions and behaviors. With regard to child-rearing practices, Nacak et al. (2011) showed that mothers in small cities in central Anatolia (described as "rural cities" in the article) on the whole used more obedience-demanding and punitive behaviors compared to mothers in the metropolis. It was also found that highly educated mothers living in the big city reported using less obedience-demanding and punitive behaviors and higher levels of permissiveness compared to low-educated mothers in the metropolis and mothers in small cities in general (Nacak et al. 2011).

These findings indicate that socio-economic and urban-rural differences foster different parenting expectations and exert different parenting behaviors, so that families with low socio-economic status or in rural context value obedience, gratefulness, and economic contributions to family as more important. Families in more advantaged socio-economic contexts or urban settlements consider the psychological values of children as more essential. Parents emphasize socialization goals that are adaptive in their context. Accordingly, Kagitcibasi (2007) argues that mothers with low education mainly emphasize being respectful and compliant in order to sustain economical and psychological interdependency. Mothers with high education endorse self-reliance and autonomy more, because these are perceived to be necessary for effective functioning in that social context.

Here we must underline that not all cognitions and behaviors display significant within-culture variance. Research findings have shown that even if expectations about autonomy and obedience change with socioeconomic status, lovingness and decency are valued and warmth is displayed in high levels regardless of SES and rural-urban settlement (Yagmurlu et al. 2009). In Nacak et al.'s study (2011), all comparison groups (low- and high-educated mothers in the big city, and mothers in small cities) displayed similarly high levels of maternal warmth. Limited research conducted with Turkish immigrant mothers also revealed that warmth is an aspect of child rearing that does not vary significantly with mother's acculturation status (assimilation, integration, or separation) (Yagmurlu and Sanson 2009). These results provide support for the conceptualization of emotional interdependence of Kagitcibasi (2007). It might also be argued that parental values and practices which do not display much within-culture variance are the fundamental aspects of a society and are more resistant to the influences of social change.



From the Mother Child Education Foundation (MCEF) (http://www.acev.org/en/)

Having said that, we need to make a distinction between parental warmth and positive parenting (that includes also responsiveness and inductive reasoning) and highlight the difference in the findings that pertain to warmth and positive parenting. Findings indicate that Turkish mothers display warmth at high levels, and this does not vary significantly with SES. However, other aspects of positive parenting

such as maternal sensitivity, reasoning, providing explanations to the child, and cognitive stimulation increase with education (Prime Ministry Family Research Institution 1995). Küntay and Ahtam (2004) reported that even though Turkish mothers with higher and lower education levels talked about the same number of past events with their children, mothers with higher education displayed more elaborative (asking many questions, offering statements containing new information) and less repetitive (recycling the same question or statement) child-directed speech than mothers with lower education.



From the Mother Child Education Foundation (MCEF) (http://www.acev.org/en/)

The positive association of SES to maternal responsiveness was also confirmed by research that assessed parenting behaviors in laboratory (Yavuz 2011) and home observations (Baydar et al. 2008). Findings of the Early Childhood Developmental Ecologies in Turkey (ECDET) project showed that, during a Lego construction task in a home setting, mothers with high levels of education were less intrusive and more responsive towards their children than those with lower education (Baydar et al. 2008; Civelek 2012). In another project using lab observations of mother-child interactions, parenting behavior, and child's socio-emotional outcomes, the contexts that elicited certain parenting practices were examined (Aksan et al. 2008). The results showed that children were more frequently ignored than praised after compliance and more frequently criticized than ignored after noncompliance

(Aksan et al. 2008; Kürüm 2011). It might be argued that this pattern—Turkish mothers' ignoring the compliance and criticizing the noncompliance—indicates that compliance is seen as the expected response in Turkish culture, so it does not need to be rewarded. But noncompliance is not an acceptable stance and requires a negative response from parents.

In terms of parental control, in the traditional Turkish family, parents mostly employ punishment-oriented control as the most common method of control and they rarely use verbal reasoning. In this context, parents are authoritarian (Taylor and Oskay 1995) and interfere with the child's choice of occupation and friends (Kongar 1976). Such parenting behaviors encourage dependency and do not promote autonomous decision-making (Kagitcibasi 1989). Nevertheless, punitive and restrictive parenting behaviors are seen together with parental warmth and responsiveness. In other words, negative and positive parenting behaviors can be seen at the same time in the Turkish familial context (Kagitcibasi 1996). Providing support for this claim, Akcinar and Baydar (2011) found that Turkish mothers of 3-year-olds reported using both high levels of parental warmth and control.

## Concluding Remarks

These studies indicated that in addition to the well-known role of culture in shaping parenting cognitions and behaviors, aspects of the social context are related to parenting. In Turkish culture, relatedness and emotional ties between family members are valued highly and across contexts, but the emphasis on autonomy and obedience tends to vary among families coming from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Turkish mothers with high education are more likely to foster autonomous behaviors in their children because the dominant expectation is to gain economical independence and success in this context. Mothers with low education value compliance more, mainly because their socioeconomic conditions require children to provide care to the elderly and disabled members of the family and contribute to the family economy. Similar differences are also observed for parents in urban vs. rural settlements.

There are of course gaps in the literature on parenting in Turkey. Similar to the international literature, the national literature on parenting focuses mainly on mothers. Studies that examine characteristics, parenting cognitions and behaviors of Turkish fathers are very few in number and reveal that the Turkish rural father holds traditional values. Although he is proud of his children, especially sons, he keeps a distance from them to maintain authority and respect (Volkan and Cevik 1989). Fathers in small towns are also conservative and authoritarian but they are not as traditional as rural fathers. Fathers in big cities tend to be well educated and hold modern views and values similar to those endorsed by Western fathers. These fathers are aware of and accept parenting responsibilities (Volkan and Cevik 1989).

From the Mother Child Education Foundation (MCEF) (http://www.acev.org/en/)

In addition to research on parenting of Turkish fathers, studies that include economically disadvantaged populations also need to increase in number. Religious beliefs may also have an impact on parental cognitions and practices of Turkish parents, which is an interesting research question to be explored. A recent survey examining religiosity showed that belief in God is emphasized more in Turkey compared to Chile, the Philippines, and Portugal which have a large Catholic population (Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu 2009). A survey in Turkey (Agirdir 2010) also revealed that the religious conservatives constitute a plurality (36.5 %) of the population; this rate was 32.8 % for the traditional conservatives, and 30.8 % for the moderns. Although these statuses may be linked to education level (years of schooling was on average 7.2 for religious conservatives; 7.8 for traditional conservatives, and 8.8 for moderns), investigating the nature and extent of influence they have on child rearing would add to our knowledge of parenting in Turkey. They would also contribute to the international literature that reveals inconsistent findings with regards to the relations of religiosity to attitudes towards physical discipline, warmth, and child's autonomy (cf. Danso et al. 1997; Duriez et al. 2009).

Despite these gaps, the extant literature presents ample evidence on different aspects of parental cognitions and practices in Turkey; many are reviewed in this chapter. There are also many other studies that examine the role of parenting in children's developmental outcomes, parenting-temperament interactions, and parenting in Turkish migrant contexts (see Sayil and Yagmurlu 2012); they are left out of this chapter. In the last decade, the number of extensive, longitudinal studies (Baydar et al. 2008), utilizing observational methods as well as parent reports (Aksan et al. 2008) is increasing. There are also new studies that investigate the meaning of some constructs such as warmth and strictness to Turkish parents

(parental ethnotheories) (Yagmurlu et al. 2012). Findings of these studies will be published within the next few years and will let us know much more about parenting in the Turkish context.

# References

Abidin, R. R. (1992). The determinants of parenting behavior. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 21*(4), 407–412.

Agirdir, B. (2010). *Polarization in society and politics*. Retrieved June 26, 2012, from Konda Research and Consultancy Website: http://www.konda.com.tr/tr/raporlar.php

Akcinar, B., & Baydar, N. (2011, July). *Parental control and its behavioral consequences for preschool children in Turkey and in USA*. Paper presented at the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP) regional conference, Istanbul.

Aksan, N., Yagmurlu, B., & Corapci, F. (2008). *Socio-emotional development and mother-child relationship in early childhood* (Grant No: 109K016). Istanbul: Koc University.

Ataca, B., Kagitcibasi, C., & Diri, A. (2005). Turkish family and the value of children: Trends over time. In G. Trommsdorff & B. Nauck (Eds.), *The value of children in cross-cultural perspective. Case studies from eight societies* (pp. 91–119). Lengerich: Pabst Publishers.

Baumrind, D. (1978). Parental disciplinary patterns and social competence in children. *Youth and Society, 9*(3), 239–275.

Baydar, N., Kuntay, A., Goksen, F., Yagmurlu, B., & Cemalcilar, Z. (2008). *The study of early childhood developmental ecologies in Turkey-Wave- 1 Results*. Retrieved May 25, 2009, from http://portal.ku.edu.tr/~ECDET/index.htm

Baydar, N., Akcinar, B., & Imer, N. (2012). Environment, socio-economic context, and parenting. In M. Sayil & B. Yagmurlu (Eds.), *Parenting: Theory and research* (pp. 81–128). Istanbul: Koc University Press.

Bornstein, M. H., Hahn, C., Suwalsky, J. T. D., & Haynes, O. M. (2003). The Hollingshead four factor index of social status and the socioeconomic index of occupations. In M. H. Bornstein & R. H. Bradley (Eds.), *Socioeconomic status, parenting and child development* (pp. 29–82). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1989). Ecological systems theory. In R. Vasta (Ed.), *Annals of child development* (Vol. 6, pp. 187–251). Greenwich: JAI.

Bualato, R. A. (1979a). On the nature of the transition in the value of children. *Papers of the East-West Population Institute* (No. 60-A). Honolulu: EastWest Center.

Carkoglu, A., & Kalaycioglu, E. (2009). *Religiosity in Turkey: A cross-national investigation*. Istanbul: Sabanci University, Istanbul Policy Center.

Civelek, Z. (2012). *The effects of maternal behaviors on children's cognitive development*. Unpublished master's thesis. Graduate School of Social Sciences & Humanities (GSSS), Koc University, Istanbul.

Corapci, F., Aksan, N., & Yagmurlu, B. (2012). Socialization of Turkish children's emotions: Do different emotions elicit different responses? *Global Studies of Childhood, 2*(2), 106–116.

Cowan, P. A., Powell, D., & Cowan, C. P. (1998). Parenting interventions: A family systems perspective. In W. Damon (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology* (5th ed., Vol. 4, pp. 3–72). New York: Wiley.

Danso, H., Hunsberger, B., & Pratt, M. (1997). The role of parental religious fundamentalism and right-wing authoritarianism in child-rearing goals and practices. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 36*, 496–511.

Davis-Kean, P. E. (2005). The influence of parent education and family income on child achievement: The indirect role of parental expectations and the home environment. *Journal of Family Psychology, 19*, 294–304.

Dawson, J. L. M. (1967). Traditional versus Western attitudes in West Africa: The construction, validation, and application of a measuring device. *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 6*, 81–96.

Dix, T., Ruble, D. N., Grusec, J. E., & Nixon, S. (1986). Social cognition in parents: Inferential and affective reactions to children of three age levels. *Child Development, 57*, 879–894.

Duncan, G. J., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (1997). *Consequences of growing up poor*. New York: Russell Sage.

Duncan, G. J., & Magnuson, K. A. (2003). Off with Hollingshead: Socioeconomic resources, parenting, and child development. In M. H. Bornstein & R. H. Bradley (Eds.), *Socioeconomic status, parenting, and child development* (pp. 83–106). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Duriez, B., Soenens, B., Neyrinck, B., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2009). Is religiosity related to better parenting?: Disentangling religiosity from religious cognitive style. *Journal of Family Issues, 30*, 1287–1307.

Fawcett, J. T. (1983). Perceptions of the value of children: Satisfactions and costs. In R. Bulatao, R. D. Lee, P. E. Hollerbach, & J. Bongaarts (Eds.), *Determinants of fertility in developing countries* (Vol. 1, pp. 347–369). Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Fowler, S. (2011, May 4). Women still an untapped labor force in Turkey. *New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/05/world/middleeast/05iht-M05-WORK-WOMEN.html

Goodnow, J. J. (1988). Parents' ideas, actions, and feelings: Models and methods from developmental and social psychology. *Child Development, 59*, 286–320.

Goodnow, J. J. (1997). Parenting and the transmission and internalization of values: From social-cultural perspectives to within-family analyses. In J. E. Grusec & L. Kuczynski (Eds.), *Parenting and children's internalization of values* (pp. 333–361). New York: Wiley.

Göregenli, M. (1995). Individualism-collectivism orientations in the Turkish culture: A preliminary study. *Turkish Journal of Psychology, 10*(35), 1–14.

Göregenli, M. (1997). Individualistic-collectivistic tendencies in a Turkish sample. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 28*(6), 787–794.

Günes-Ayata, A. (1996). Solidarity in urban Turkish family. In G. Rasuly-Paleczek (Ed.), *Turkish families in transition* (pp. 98–113). Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Güroglu, I. (2010). *Can the support networks help mothers with high levels of depressive symptoms?* Unpublished master's thesis. Graduate School of Social Sciences & Humanities (GSSS), Koc University, Istanbul.

Harwood, R. L. (1992). The influence of culturally derived values on Anglo and Puerto Rican mothers' perceptions of attachment behavior. *Child Development, 63*, 822–839.

Hastings, P. D., & Grusec, J. E. (1998). Parenting goals as organizers of responses to parent-child disagreement. *Developmental Psychology, 34*, 465–479.

Herkovits, M. J. (1948). *Man and his works: The science of cultural anthropology*. New York: Knopf.

Hoffman, L. W. (1987). The value of children to parents and child rearing patterns. In C. Kagitcibasi (Ed.), *Growth and progress in cross-cultural psychology* (pp. 159–170). Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger.

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Imamoglu, E. O. (1987). An interdependence model of human development. In C. Kagitcibasi (Ed.), *Growth and progress in cross-cultural psychology* (pp. 138–145). Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger.

Inglehart, R., & Baker, W. E. (2000). Modernization, cultural change, and the persistence of traditional values. *American Sociological Review, 65*(1), 19–51.

Inglehart, R., & Norris, P. (2009). *Muslim integration into Western cultures: Between origins and destinations.* Retrieved June, 16, 2012, from Harvard Kennedy School, Social Sciences Research Network website: http://ssrn.com/abstract=1354185

Inkeles, A., & Smith, D. H. (1974). *Becoming modern: Individual changes in six developing countries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1970). Social norms and authoritarianism: A Turkish-American comparison. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 16*(3), 444–451.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1982a). Old-age security value of children. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 13*(1), 29–42.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1982b). Sex roles, value of children and fertility in Turkey. In C. Kagitcibasi (Ed.), *Sex roles, family, and community in Turkey* (pp. 151–180). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1987). Alienation of the outsider: The plight of migrants. *International Migration, 25*, 195–210.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1989). Child rearing in Turkey and intervention research. *Psychology and Developing Societies, 1*(1), 37–52.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1996). *Family and human development across cultures: A view from the other side*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Kagitcibasi, C. (2005). Autonomy and relatedness in cultural context: Implications for self and family. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 36*(4), 403–422.

Kagitcibasi, C. (2007). *Family, self, and human development across cultures: Theory and applications* (2nd ed.). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Kagitcibasi, C. (2010). *Self, family, and human development: Cultural psychology*. İstanbul: Koc University Press.

Kagitcibasi, C., & Ataca, B. (2005). Value of children and family change: A three-decade portrait of from Turkey. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 54*(3), 317–337.

Kagitcibasi, C., Sunar, D., & Bekman, S. (2001). Long-term effects of early intervention: Turkish low-income mothers and children. *Applied Developmental Psychology, 22*, 333–361.

Kiray, M. (1976). The new role of mothers: Changing intra-familial relationships in a small town in Turkey. In J. G. Peristiany (Ed.), *Mediterranean family structures* (pp. 261–271). London: Cambridge University Press.

Kongar, E. (1976). A survey of familial change in two Turkish gecekondu areas. In J. G. Peristiany (Ed.), *Mediterranean family structures* (pp. 205–218). London: Cambridge University Press.

Korte, C. (1984). The helpfulness of villagers. In E. Staub, D. Bar-Tal, J. Karylowski, & J. Reykowski (Eds.), *Mediterranean family structures* (pp. 205–218). London: Cambridge University Press.

Kotchick, B. A., Dorsey, S., & Heller, L. (2005). Predictors of parenting among African American single mothers: Personal and contextual factors. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 67*(2), 448–460.

Kroeber, A. L., & Kluckhohn, C. (1952). *Culture, Part III: Papers of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kuczynski, L. (1984). Socialization goals and mother-child interaction: Strategies for long-term and short-term compliance. *Developmental Psychology, 20*(6), 1061–1073.

Küntay, A., & Ahtam, B. (2004). Effect of maternal education on Turkish mothers' styles of reminiscing with their children. *Turkish Journal of Psychology, 19*, 19–31.

Kürüm, O. (2011). *The role of affective tone in discipline transactions of mothers and their preschoolers: Implications for self-regulation*. Unpublished master's thesis, Graduate School of Social Sciences & Humanities (GSSS), Koc University, Istanbul.

Leventhal, T., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2000). The neighborhoods they live in: The effects of neighborhood residence on child and adolescent outcomes. *Psychological Bulletin, 126*(2), 309–337.

Lloyd, A., & Fallers, M. C. (1976). Sex roles in Edremit. In J. G. Peristiany (Ed.), *Mediterranean family structures* (pp. 243–260). London: Cambridge University Press.

Mistry, R. S., Biesanz, J., Chien, N., Howes, C., & Benner, A. D. (2008). SES, parental investments, and the cognitive and behavioral outcomes of low-income children from immigrant and native households. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 23*, 193–212.

Mulsow, M., Pursley, M., Caldera, Y. M., Reifman, A., & Huston, A. C. (2002). Multilevel factors influencing maternal stress during the first three years. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 64*, 415–448.

Nacak, M., Yagmurlu, B., Dürgel, E., & van de Vijver, F. (2011). Parenting in metropole and Anatolia samples: The role of residence and education in beliefs and behaviors. *Turkish Journal of Psychology, 26*(67), 85–100.

Odgers, C. L., Moffitt, T. E., Tach, L. M., Sampson, R. J., Taylor, A., Matthews, C. L., et al. (2009). The protective effects of neighborhood collective efficacy on British children growing up in deprivation: A developmental analysis. *Developmental Psychology, 45*(4), 942–957.

Özgür, E. M. (2004). Spatial distribution of total fertility rate in Turkey. *The Journal of Geographical Sciences, 2*(2), 1–12.

Rasuly-Paleczek, G. (1996). Some remarks on the study of household composition and intra-family relations in rural and urban Turkey. In G. Rasuly-Paleczek (Ed.), *Turkish families in transition* (pp. 1–44). Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Sayil, M., & Yagmurlu, B. (2012). *Parenting: Theory and research*. Istanbul: Koc University Press.

Schwartz, S. H. (1999). Cultural value differences: Some implications for work. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 48*, 23–47.

Segall, M. H., Dasen, P. R., Berry, J. W., & Poortinga, Y. H. (1990). *Human behavior in global perspective*. New York: Pergamon.

Slaughter-Defoe, D. T. (1995). Revisiting the concept of socialization. Caregiving and teaching in the 90s: A personal perspective. *American Psychologist, 50*(4), 276–286.

Sun, L. K. (1991). Contemporary Chinese culture: Structure and emotionality. *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs, 26*, 1–41.

Sunar, D., & Fisek, G. (2005). Contemporary Turkish families. In U. Gielen & J. Roopnarine (Eds.), *Families in global perspectives* (pp. 169–183). Boston: Allyn & Bacon/Pearson.

Super, C. M., & Harkness, S. (1986). The developmental niche: A conceptualization of the interface of child and culture. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 9*, 545–570.

Taylor, R. D., & Oskay, G. (1995). Identity formation in Turkish and American late adolescents. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 26*(1), 8–22.

Triandis, H. C. (1972). *The analysis of subjective culture*. New York: Wiley.

Triandis, H. C. (1994). *Culture and social behavior*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and collectivism*. Boulder: Westview.

Turkish Republic Ministry of Development. (2009). *The employment of women in Turkey: Tendencies, causes, and political context* (No: 48508-TR). Ankara.

Turkish Republic Ministry of Development. (2010). *The changes in the employment of women in Turkey* (No: 2). Ankara.

Turkish Republic Prime Ministry Family Research Institution. (2012). *The situation of women in Turkey*. Ankara.

Turkish Statistical Institute. (2010). *Results of business statistics*. Retrieved from http://www.tuik.gov.tr

Turkish Statistical Institute. (2011). *Results of education*. Retrieved from http://www.tuik.gov.tr

UNICEF. (1991). *The situation analysis of mothers and children in Turkey*. Ankara: UNICEF.

Vandell, D. L. (2000). Parents, peer groups, and other socializing influences. *Developmental Psychology, 36*(6), 699–710.

Volkan, V. D., & Cevik, A. (1989). Turkish fathers and their families. In S. H. Cath, A. Gurwitt, & L. Gunsberg (Eds.), *Fathers and their families* (pp. 347–364). Hillsdale: The Analytic Press.

Yagmurlu, B., & Altan, O. (2010). Maternal socialization and child temperament as predictors of emotion regulation in Turkish preschoolers. *Infant and Child Development, 19*, 275–296.

Yagmurlu, B., & Sanson, A. (2009). Acculturation attitudes and parenting in Turkish-Australian mothers. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 40*, 361–380.

Yagmurlu, B., Citlak, B., Dost, A., & Leyendecker, B. (2009). Child socialization goals of Turkish mothers: An investigation of education related within-culture variation. *Turkish Journal of Psychology, 24*, 1–15.

Yagmurlu, B., Cheah, C., Sen, H., & Yavuz, H. M. (2012). *Turkish mothers' cognitions for strictness and warmth in parenting*. Unpublished work.

Yavuz, M. H. (2011). *Internalizing behaviors in Turkish preschoolers: Role of temperament, maternal positive parenting and stress.* Unpublished master's thesis, Graduate School of Social Sciences & Humanities (GSSS), Koc University, Istanbul.

# Parenting in Israel: Together Hand in Hand, You Are Mine and I Am Yours

**Miri Scharf**

Israel is a small, young country characterized by cultural diversity, with traditional family patterns alongside modern lifestyles. Founded 64 years ago, Israel has absorbed massive waves of immigration from more than 70 countries around the world (Lavee & Katz 2003), which have increased its population nine-fold. The country's population numbers 7,837,000, approximately 75 % of whom are Jewish. The remainder are non-Jewish, primarily Arabs who comprise 20.5 % (Central Bureau of Statistics 2011). Since Israel is a young country with immigration dynamics, it combines influences of a traditional-collectivistic approach with a more western individualistic approach (Lissak 2009). Individualist and collectivist orientations implicate various psychological and childrearing differences (Bornstein et al. 2007). More individualist societies emphasize self-reliance, exploration, and independence, whereas more collectivist societies stress sensitivity to others, obedience, and obligation (Hofstede 2001; Scharf & Hertz-Lazarovitz 2003). In general, living in a developed, industrialized Western country, Israelis are similar to North Americans in their focus on individualistic values (Schwartz 1994). However, an important characteristic of Israeli society is related to its emphasis on communal values and practices and to the high value placed on the family (Lavee & Katz 2003) (Fig. 1).

There are two unique features of Israeli society relevant to parenting. The first relates to its strong communal and familial values (Scharf & Mayseless 2010). Despite changes over the past decades, Israel has remained a highly familial and close-knit society, with more stable families than in most industrialized countries. Israelis nowadays marry later than in the past, but earlier than their counterparts in industrial societies (64.5 % of 25–29 year old males and 46.1 % of females are single), and the frequency of divorce is relatively lower (about 75 %

M. Scharf (✉)
Department of Counseling and Human Development,
University of Haifa, Haifa 31905, Israel
e-mail: scharfm@edu.haifa.ac.il

**Fig. 1** Map that includes Israel

remain married). Moreover, Israel is a "child-oriented" society (Lavee & Katz 2003), and is the only country in the world that provides almost unlimited, universal state funding for fertility treatments (Birnbaum-Carmeli 2009). On average, families have 2.98 children, and most Israelis (60 %) believe that "the greatest joy in life is to follow one's children growing up", and that life without children is an "empty life" (Lavee & Katz 2003). Close and frequent contact with family members, and especially with parents, is maintained throughout life (Scharf & Mayseless 2005).

The second feature relates to the stressful context that Israelis live in (Scharf & Mayseless 2010). Israel is a young country, and most of its citizens are either themselves new immigrants to the country, or second and third generation immigrants. Many immigrants came from Eastern Europe following the Holocaust, others as refugees from Arab countries. Themes of trauma and persecution are

part of their experience. Furthermore, since its establishment, Israel has been constantly afflicted by the Israeli-Arab conflict: repeated wars, terrorist acts on both sides, and other security-related issues. A large majority of each cohort of 18-year-old Jewish youth serves a 2–3 year term of compulsory military service, and the majority of Israeli families has suffered personal injury or loss, or has close relatives or personal friends that have experienced these events (Milgram 1993). During the first two decades of existence the economic climate was diffi-cult, and many Israelis suffered from poverty (Lissak 2010). This economic situ-ation has changed and currently Israel, in general, enjoys a moderately good economic status. These familial-communal accents and stressful circumstances are reflected in parenting practices.

A large number of studies examining parenting have been conducted in Israel, some of which have examined several issues pertinent to the Israeli culture. For example, several studies examined parenting and war- or trauma-related issues, such as parenting style as a moderator of the effects of political violence (Slone et al. 2012), intergenerational effects of trauma from terror (Kaitz et al. 2009), par-enting of adult children among ex-prisoners of war (Zerach et al. 2012), parenting among war veterans (Cohen et al. 2011) and the echoes of the trauma of Holocaust as reflected in parenting (Wiseman & Barber 2008; Sagi et al. 2003; Scharf 2007). Other studies focused on the effects of immigration on parenting and children's adjustment (Atzaba-Poria 2011; Finzi-Dottan et al. 2011; Knafo et al. 2009; Roer-Strier et al. 2005; Glassman & Eisikovits 2006). Yet others examined the unique collective childrearing practices in the Kibbutz (Beit-Hallahmi & Rabin 1977; Maital & Bornstein 2003). Other studies examined cross-cultural differences, mainly between Jews and Arabs in Israel (Dwairy 2010; Feldman et al. 2001; Mikulincer et al. 1993).

Another body of research examined issues that might be less specific to the Israeli culture. Examples are intergenerational transmission of values (Knafo & Assor 2007) and parenting and future orientations (Seginer et al. 2004). Other stud-ies examined bio-behavioral processes such as parenting and children's sleep (Sadeh et al. 2010), heritability of children's pro-social behavior and differential suscepti-bility to parenting (Knafo et al. 2011), oxytocin and the development of parenting in humans (Gordon et al. 2010), socio-emotional processes such as parenting and adolescents' romantic relationships (Shulman et al. 2012; Scharf & Mayseless 2008), parenting and intimate friendships (Sharabany et al. 2008), or parenting insightfulness (Oppenheim & Koren-Karie 2012).

These studies will not be detailed here and interested readers may refer directly to the relevant articles. This chapter focuses on one specific prism to illustrate the interplay of culture and parenting in Israel. Specifically, two central dimensions of parenting are discussed that are manifested in a special way in the Israeli culture, particularly in adolescence: (a) relatedness as expressed in closeness between par-ents and children and (b) autonomy, as expressed in parental granting of autonomy and limit setting. These dimensions will be discussed within the unique context of Israeli society, implying high levels of stress, massive immigration and a strong familial culture. These issues will be illustrated with selected findings and

examples from three large projects conducted with my colleagues, Ofra Mayseless and Inbal Kivenson-Baron, which examined parent-child relationships in Israel that are related to these themes.

Two of the projects are longitudinal studies that focused on the leaving home transition of male (Scharf et al. 2004) and female adolescents (Scharf et al. 2011) in Israel. In both studies the youngsters and their parents were followed for several years starting during their senior year in high school, using interviews and questionnaires pertaining to relationships with their parents.

The sample in the first study included 88 families that were well educated (80 % percent of the fathers and 74 % of the mothers had at least a college education). The adolescents and their parents were interviewed and completed questionnaires during the formers' senior year in high school, approximately a year prior to conscription. Adolescents were administered the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI: George et al. 1985), and their parents were administered the Parenting Representations Interview – adolescence (PRI-A). Halfway through the sons' military basic training period, the research team contacted two friends from the sons' basic training units who knew the respondents well. These friends rated the participants' coping and adjustment. Finally, during a furlough towards the end of the participants' 3-year mandatory military service, 83 of the adolescents were interviewed regarding intimacy and completed questionnaires regarding individuation.

The second study included 120 late-adolescent girls, who were planning to start compulsory military service away from home. The families were recruited from middle-class neighborhoods and were mostly well educated (74 % of the fathers and 73 % of the mothers had at least a college education). At the first assessment the girls were administered the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI: George et al. 1985) and their mothers were administered the Parenting Representations Interview - adolescence (PRI-A). Additionally, the girls and their mothers participated separately in Revealed Differences family dyadic interaction tasks (Allen et al. 1994), which were videotaped at home. The next assessment took place 8–10 months following recruitment to military service. By this time the young women were already residing in their permanent placements, to which they had had the time to adapt. One hundred and fifteen (115) adolescents and 108 of their friends completed questionnaires regarding the adjustment of the former.

## Centrality of Parents in Their Children Lives

In order to examine parents' centrality in their emerging adult children, we focused on four specific questions from Hoffman's PSI measure (Psychological Separation Inventory), which appear to reflect this centrality. The youngsters completed these questions in both projects. We constructed a scale we termed "parents forever" that included the following statements: "My parent is the most

important person in the whole world", "I wish to live close to my parent in the future", "I love to spend most time with my parent when on vacation", and "My parent is my best friend".

A very large proportion (around 50 %) of youngsters perceives their mothers and fathers as the most important people in their lives. Similarly, more than a third of the youngsters wish to live close to their parents in the future (to a very high degree). Thus, a large proportion of these youngsters view their parents (in particular the mother) as highly central in their lives, both in the present and in the future.

Next we examined whether this heightened centrality is positive or negative as reflected in other domains of sons' and daughters' functioning. Quite a clear picture emerged, though the correlations were small to moderate in their magnitude. "Parents are forever" scales were positively associated with functioning during high school, basic training and at the end of the 3-year mandatory military service. This was revealed in the young men's own perceptions of their functioning and their self-perceptions, as well as in the reports of their peers. Similarly to young men, young women with high levels of parent centrality revealed better psychosocial functioning during the senior high school year and during their military service, according to their evaluations as well as those of their peers.

During our interviews the parents of these emerging adults were asked about the place of their children in their lives, and their perspective regarding future relationships with their adult children. It appears that parents, too, are highly invested in their children and expect them to stay close by and continue to have a daily connection. Responding to the interviewer's question: "When you try to imagine your daughter ten years from now, how do you see her"?, one mother answered, "She is in my home all the time, and I'm in her home all the time …..I hope she will not draw away and that she will visit a lot. I'm sure; she already said she will not separate, so it's O.K. Our relationship (ten years later) will be close-close. They will become close again. Because at the beginning she will leave home, after she will have children then we'll be close again".

Another mother answered, "I see our relationship in the future ten years from now as the relationship I had with my mother…. I loved going a lot to their home, it is a warm home. I hope that here too my daughter will have a warm home… I hope, I know that it will be a warm home and that she'll always want to come back and be here. From another side, she will be at her home and I'll help her, I know it is essential in the period, actually in all the periods, so she can build herself. It is important. Lifetime children build themselves".

Describing their relationships 10 years in the future another mother of a son said that their relationship would be, "Wonderful, just wonderful. I built our relationship that way. I don't expect that it will be different even if he will have a wife. I don't expect it to be different because I'll get along with her too so as not to miss my son". Still another mother said, "Our relationship will be excellent. I'll be the best grandmother in the world, and she will bring her children a lot, and I'll volunteer every weekend that they will come to me, eat together, leave their children and will go out to have fun".

In sum, though processes of "letting go" could be identified in the parents, the relationships with young adults relationships remained important and central to both parents and children. In fact, this constant close bond is characteristic of many Israeli families. These findings underscore the uniqueness of Israeli culture in preserving the central role of these relationships in this developmental stage of emerging adulthood. Possibly the relatively collectivistic orientation and the stressful environmental circumstances promote and maintain the high centrality of this parent-child bond beyond childhood, adolescence and even young adulthood, and reflect their continuous centrality throughout the life span.

## Parenting Representations and Offspring's Psychosocial Functioning

Parents perceive, understand and interpret their children's personality and behavior through the lens of parenting representations. These representations influence parents' accessibility to emotions and thoughts and subsequently their behavior toward their children. Parenting representations were studied using interviews modeled on the Adult Attachment Interview. In both studies we examined the associations between mothers' parenting representations of their adolescents and their adolescents' attachment representations, and adolescents' functioning, from their own perspective and that of others – concurrently and longitudinally. We also assessed fathers' representations, but the analysis of their interviews has not yet been completed. Additionally, we used mothers' and fathers' self-reports from questionnaires pertaining to closeness and autonomy dimensions.

### *Parents' Measures*

Parents are asked to give a general description of their relationships with their children and support this description with specific incidents from childhood and adolescence. The interview included questions regarding experiences of closeness, pain, guilt, anger, worry, discipline and children's increasing autonomy, and the way that parents address these situations. In addition, the parents were requested to describe how they see their children in the future, and their anticipated future relationships with them.

In this chapter we focus on three scales from the parent-adolescent relationships domain. *Positive feelings* represent the relatedness dimension in the mother-adolescent relationship and refer to the extent to which the parent describes his/her relationship with the child as characterized by acceptance, warmth and affection. Two scales represent the autonomy dimension: granting of autonomy and monitoring. *Granting of Autonomy* refers to the extent to which the parent facilitates

autonomous decision-making and behavior, balanced with adequate support according to the situation and the child's developmental stage. The scale reflects tolerance for different opinions, as well as the child's privacy and the encouragement of the child's independent activities and reasoning. *Monitoring* refers to the extent to which the parent exerts behavioral control over the child, knows where the child spends his/her free time and who his/her friends are, and is aware of his/her functioning in school and other settings.

## *Adolescent Measures*

Participants were requested to give a general description of their relationships with their parents and support these descriptions with specific biographical incidents. Using several scales, scores were assigned to inferred childhood experiences of love, rejection, involvement of each parent, and to the respondent's state of mind (SoM) with respect to attachment.

## Results

Looking at mothers' interviews, positive feelings are associated with attachment variables, adolescents' wellbeing, romantic intimacy, differentiation of self and peer reports. Granting autonomy is associated with less involvement and higher levels of individuation, whereas monitoring is associated with the attachment variables, and with romantic intimacy and individuation. Fathers' reports regarding acceptance and the encouragement of independence are associated with most indicators, whereas mothers' reports regarding acceptance are associated with attachment variables, wellbeing and individuation, and mothers' encouragement of independence is associated with most of the sons' indicators. Thus, both relatedness and autonomy contribute to sons' psychosocial functioning. Interestingly, romantic intimacy is associated mainly with parenting autonomy-related dimensions.

Looking at mothers' interviews, positive feelings and monitoring are associated with all indicators (monitoring is not associated with daughters' behaviors toward mothers), and granting autonomy is associated with most AAI scales and with autonomy-relatedness behaviors of mothers and daughters. Looking at parents' reports, mothers' reports are associated with love and rejection scales, wellbeing and friends' reports on distress. Mothers' closeness is also associated with their own autonomy-relatedness behaviors in interaction and with their daughters' wellbeing. Fathers' reports on closeness and monitoring are associated with their friends' report on distress, as well as with their own autonomy-relatedness behaviors toward daughters. Thus, generally, more mothers' variables are associated with girls' psychosocial functioning.

Relatedness and autonomy in parent-youngster relationships are associated with better adjustment concurrently and longitudinally, with no distinct predictions of the autonomous or relatedness dimensions in relationships on specific psychosocial domains. It appears that these two dimensions facilitate better adjustment.

## Adolescent's Views Regarding Parental Authority

The third project focused on parental authority and its implications for adolescents' adjustment in the educational systems (Scharf & Mayseless 2005). The sample consists of 3,496 8th and 11th graders (1,884 girls; 53.9 %) representing the various socio-economical strata in the Israeli education system. Adolescents completed questionnaires pertaining to their relationships with their parents. In addition, adolescents, their teachers, and their peers reported on adolescents' adjustment. We found that the majority of youth (70 %) reported relationships with parents that were characterized by high closeness, expressed in a sense of acceptance, openness and trust. However, half these youth reported that this close relationship is combined with low monitoring, low limit setting and low enforcement of rules by their parents. About 30 % of them experience closeness and warmth in relationships with parents in conjunction with indulgence and leniency. This parental indulgence was found to be associated with a sense of "royalty" among youth; they "deserve" what they want without their parents' demand for reciprocity. Thus, many youngsters believe that "the main role of parents is to indulge their children and fulfill their requests", or agree that "it seems too much for me to be involved in tasks at home when my day is so busy". Additionally, 20 % of Israeli adolescents report moderate closeness to their parents, while also reporting parental intrusiveness, guilt inducing, and psychological control. These findings were similar across different socio-economic backgrounds, adolescent ages, and other demographic characteristics. Thus, although closeness is a prevalent characteristic of parent-adolescent relationships, the findings also reveal two different profiles of less adequate parenting that might affect the functioning of youth in the school system.

The functioning of youth who experience involved and intrusive parenting was found problematic, especially in externalizing behaviors such as violence and delinquency. However, these adolescents were also more vulnerable to violence as victims, and they had high levels of anxiety, depression, ADHD, and somatic problems (Scharf & Mayseless 2005).

Experiencing indulgent parenting comprised of warmth without adequate monitoring and control does not necessarily lead to serious problems of violence, but is a significant risk factor for less severe problems of discipline such as vandalism, disruptive behavior and difficulties in school. Lack of parental response to problem behavior might be perceived as positive reinforcement. Additionally, easy discipline

problems often reflect difficulty regulating emotions and behaviors. The parent–child relationship is the main arena in which children acquire and develop emotional regulation skills.

Several suggestions for these parenting characteristics have been offered (Scharf & Mayseless 2005). Possibly this reduced parental authority and heightened permissiveness reflect processes pertaining to child centeredness that are taking place in Israeli society (Almog & Watzman 2004). Children's needs, self-actualization and happiness are essential, and parents feel obliged to promote these goals. This change in educational ideology makes it difficult to exert parental authority, and parents tend to please their children rather than discipline them. Parents themselves experienced relatively strict parenting in their own childhood and want to spare their children these difficulties. In their desire to correct unfavorable experiences they go too far and give their children too much freedom, or rarely enforce parental authority (Scharf & Mayseless 2005).

Parental permissiveness might also result from parents' desire to allow their children a good life and not frustrate or upset them, assuming that life in Israel is difficult and dangerous enough, and there is no knowing what the following day will bring. Possibly this threat to security, whether in the context of acts of terrorism or in relation to military service, and the feeling that life in Israel will be difficult and stressful for young people when they grow up, compels parents to avoid confrontation with children, as may be required by exerting parental authority. Possibly parents make special efforts to make their children happy, since the future is expected to be difficult and unforeseen (Scharf & Mayseless 2005).

Furthermore, in the context of high geopolitical uncertainty, it is not entirely clear how to plan for the future, or to know the best ways to succeed in life. In this case it is preferable not to set clear goals and unequivocal rules for behavior, as the future is unpredictable. It is possible that as a parental strategy (not necessarily conscious), parents choose to educate their children to be flexible, to improvise and to get along, rather than educating them to be obedient, which is not necessarily compatible with the unpredictable, frequently changing world. This uncertain and dangerous context might also explain the relatively high levels of involvement and intrusiveness. When the world is perceived as dangerous and chaotic, it may be a good parental strategy to raise children to remain close to their parents to allow their parents to protect them as long as this protection is required.

Finally, parents might also avoid using their authority due to feelings of guilt. Many families in Israel are dual career couples, and parents spend a lot of time away from home at work. Because parents feel guilty for not spending sufficient time with their children, they do not want to frustrate or annoy them. Moreover, parents' work leaves little time and energy to invest in parenting in general, and in monitoring in particular, as this requires constant supervision. It is probably more difficult to exert parental authority when parents are highly involved and close to their children.

## Concluding Remarks

Culture plays an important part in the ways different child rearing practices are perceived by both parents and children and may affect children's outcomes differently. In this chapter the focus is on autonomy and relatedness in parent-child relationships.

Keller and her colleagues (Keller et al. 2009) refer to two different parenting strategies that are already revealed in infancy. The proximal parenting style, which is expressed in physical contact and body stimulation, is prevalent in traditional subsistence societies where socialization goals that emphasize relatedness, obedience, and hierarchy are preferred (Kagitcibasi 2005). The proximal parenting style bolsters closeness and warmth and is related to early development of compliance. The distal parenting style is characterized by communication from a distance and object stimulation, and is prevalent in Western middle-class families where competition, individual achievements, and self-enhancement are preferred socialization goals.

It appears that these parenting strategies are also relevant to parenting of children beyond infancy and childhood, and that, in general, Israeli parents favor proximal parenting. This strategy might be more adequate in collectivistic cultural contexts, and is particularly crucial in dangerous and unpredictable environments where physical proximity to parents could ensure protection and survival (Simpson & Belsky 2008). As revealed in our findings, closeness to parents, and even heightened centrality of parents, is indeed associated with favorable outcomes. In a similar vein, Korean adolescents who report higher family enmeshment had higher self-esteem (Chun & MacDermid 1997), and African American adolescents displaying greater emotional autonomy showed more behavioral problems and lower academic achievements (Fuhrman & Holmbeck 1995). Generally, in western societies emotional autonomy is associated with better adjustment. Likewise, Italian adolescents reporting greater family enmeshment did not experience more depressive symptoms or anxiety as they approached the transition from secondary school (Manzi et al. 2006). Manzi and colleagues suggested that given the high involvement prevailing in Italian family culture, these characteristics may not have been experienced as blurring interpersonal boundaries or limiting personal autonomy and, therefore, were not associated with adverse outcomes. Thus, it appears that the high levels of closeness prevalent in Israeli culture are beneficial for both parents and their offspring.

However, it is clear that Israeli children do not favor obedience and hierarchy, and there are indications that parents, too, do not necessarily promote these qualities in their offspring. This resembles findings by Keller et al. (2009) demonstrating that parents from urban educated families, in cultures with a more inter-dependent history, use both proximal and distal parenting strategies. These societies, including the Israeli society, are industrial, competitive societies and therefore promoting autonomy is an important element in raising children to succeed.

The ambivalent attitude toward authority is also reflected in other domains of life and in Israeli attitudes toward authority figures and institutions. How can this be interpreted? The geopolitical circumstances of Israel might promote a less authoritarian style in order to raise creative and flexible children who could adapt to future challenging situations. Studies also demonstrated the complex outcomes of immigration on family dynamics (Strier & Roer-Strier 2010), such as parental loss of authority and strong conflict between traditional and more liberal and democratic child rearing practices.

Psychological interpretations might also be relevant. Parents construct their role based on their subjective experiences with their own parents, examining what they received from their parents and what they needed and wanted but did not receive (Osherson 1986). This might culminate in greater indulgence, leniency and closeness in their parenting. According to Brazelton & Cramer (1990), parents' fantasies, expectations and inner conflicts mediate the interaction between them and their children. They suggest that parents may attempt to establish exactly the opposite type of relationship with their children to that which they had with their own parents. Thus, a strict disciplinary experience may lead parents to be unwilling to impose any limits on their children, or cause them frustration. This may result in the child's inability to delay gratification, as well as in demanding behavior by the children. Parents may not be aware that they have actually reconstructed their past relationships and are again living in an authoritarian climate in which, this time, the role of their own parents is taken on by their children (Scharf & Shulman 2006).

A quote from the Israeli satirical writer Efraim Sidon demonstrates the special bond between Israeli parents and their children. "What does an Israeli child have in his life? His parents and his parents and his parents, and his parents. And day and night they chase him, breathe down his neck and follow in his tracks … Because they will find him everywhere … Twenty-two years old or twenty-five, thirty years old, or fifty. There is no escape from his worried parents. Even if he lands on the moon or flies to Mars, they will follow him with a cake and warm clothes…".

# References

Allen, J. P., Hauser, S. T., Bell, K. L., Boykin, K. A., & Tate, D. C. (1994). *Autonomy and relatedness coding system manual*, version 2.01. Unpublished manual. University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

Almog, O., & Watzman, H. (2004). *The Sabra: The creation of the new Jew*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Atzaba-Poria, N. (2011). Internalizing and externalizing problems in early childhood: A study of former Soviet Union and veteran-Israeli children living in Israel. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 42*(6), 983–997. doi:10.1177/0022022110381122.

Beit-Hallahmi, B., & Rabin, A. I. (1977). The kibbutz as a social experiment and as a child-rearing laboratory. *American Psychologist, 32*(7), 532–541. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.32.7.532.

Birenbaum-Carmeli, D. (2009). The politics of 'The Natural Family' in Israel: State policy and kinship ideologies. *Social Science & Medicine, 69*(7), 1018–1024. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2009.07.044.

Bornstein, M. H., Hahn, C.-S., Haynes, O. M., Belsky, J., Azuma, H., Kwak, K., et al. (2007). Maternal personality and parenting cognitions in cross-cultural perspective. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 31*(3), 193–209. doi:10.1177/0165025407074632.

Brazelton, T. B., & Cramer, B. G. (1990). *The earliest relationship: Parents, infants, and the drama of early attachment*. Reading: Addison-Wesley.

Central Bureau of Statistics. (2011). *Statistical abstracts of Israel*. Jerusalem: Central Bureau of Statistics.

Chun, Y.-J., & MacDermid, S. M. (1997). Perceptions of family differentiation, individuation, and self-esteem among Korean adolescents. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 59*(2), 451–462. doi:10.2307/353482.

Cohen, E., Zerach, G., & Solomon, Z. (2011). The implication of combat-induced stress reaction, PTSD, and attachment in parenting among war veterans. *Journal of Family Psychology, 25*(5), 688–698. doi:10.1037/a0024065.

Dwairy, M. (2010). Introduction to special section on cross-cultural research on parenting and psychological adjustment of children. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 19*(1), 1–7. doi:10.1007/s10826-009-9336-0.

Feldman, R., Masalha, S., & Nadam, R. (2001). Cultural perspective on work and family: Dual-earner Israeli Jewish and Arab families at the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Family Psychology, 15*(3), 492–509. doi:10.1037/0893-3200.15.3.492.

Finzi-Dottan, R., Bilu, R., & Golubchik, P. (2011). Aggression and conduct disorder in former Soviet Union immigrant adolescents: The role of parenting style and ego identity. *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*(6), 918–926. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.12.008.

Fuhrman, T., & Holmbeck, G. N. (1995). A contextual-moderator analysis of emotional autonomy and adjustment in adolescence. *Child Development, 66*(3), 793–811. doi:10.2307/1131951.

George, C., Kaplan, N., & Main, M. (1985). *Adult Attachment Interview. Unpublished manuscript, Department of Psychology*. Berkeley: University of California.

Glassman, I., & Eisikovits, R. A. (2006). Intergenerational transmission of motherhood patterns: Three generations of immigrant mothers of Moroccan descent in Israel. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 37*(4), 641–657.

Gordon, I., Zagoory-Sharon, O., Leckman, J. F., & Feldman, R. (2010). Oxytocin and the development of parenting in humans. *Biological Psychiatry, 68*(4), 377–382. doi:10.1016/j.biopsych.2010.02.005.

Hofstede, G. H. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Kagitcibasi, C. (2005). Autonomy and relatedness in cultural context: Implications for self and family. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 36*, 403–422.

Kaitz, M., Levy, M., Ebstein, R., Faraone, S. V., & Mankuta, D. (2009). The intergenerational effects of trauma from terror: A real possibility. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 30*(2), 158–179. doi:10.1002/imhj.20209.

Keller, H., et al. (2009, September). Distal and proximal parenting as alternative parenting strategies during infants' early months of life: A cross-cultural study. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 33*(5), 412–420.

Knafo, A., & Assor, A. (2007). Motivation for agreement with parental values: Desirable when autonomous, problematic when controlled. *Motivation and Emotion, 31*(3), 232–245. doi:10.1007/s11031-007-9067-8.

Knafo, A., Assor, A., Schwartz, S. H., & David, L. (2009). Culture, migration, and family-value socialization: A theoretical model and empirical investigation with Russian-immigrant youth in Israel. In U. Schönpflug (Ed.), *Culture and psychology. Cultural transmission: Psychological, developmental, social, and methodological aspects* (pp. 269–296). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Knafo, A., Israel, S., & Ebstein, R. P. (2011). Heritability of children's prosocial behavior and differential susceptibility to parenting by variation in the dopamine receptor D4 gene. *Development and Psychopathology, 23*(1), 53–67. doi:10.1017/S0954579410000647.

Lavee, Y., & Katz, R. (2003). The family in Israel: Between tradition and modernity. *Marriage & Family Review, 35*(1–2), 193–217. doi:10.1300/J002v35n01_11.

Lissak, M. (2009). *Studies in Israeli social history*. Jerusalem: Magnes (Hebrew).

Maital, S. L., & Bornstein, M. H. (2003). The ecology of collaborative child rearing: A systems approach to child care on the kibbutz. *Ethos, 31*(2), 274–306. doi:10.1525/eth.2003.31.2.274.

Manzi, C., Vignoles, V. L., Regalia, C., & Scabini, E. (2006). Cohesion and enmeshment revisited: Differentiation, identity, and well-being in two European cultures. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 68*(3), 673–689. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2006.00282.x.

Mikulincer, M., Weller, A., & Florian, V. (1993). Sense of closeness to parents and family rules: A study of Arab and Jewish youth in Israel. *International Journal of Psychology, 28*(3), 323–335. doi:10.1080/00207599308246925.

Milgram, N. (1993). War-related trauma and victimization: Principles of traumatic stress prevention in Israel. In J. P. Wilson & B. Raphael (Eds.), *International handbook of traumatic stress syndromes* (pp. 811–820). New York: Plenum Press.

Oppenheim, D., & Koren-Karie, N. (2012). Parents' insightfulness: The importance of keeping the inner world of the child in mind for parenting plan evaluations. In K. Kuehnle & L. Drozd (Eds.), *Parenting plan evaluations: Applied research for the family court* (pp. 25–46). New York: Oxford University Press.

Osherson, S. (1986). *Finding our fathers*. Chicago: Contemporary.

Roer-Strier, D., Strier, R., Este, D., Shimoni, R., & Clark, D. (2005). Fatherhood and immigration: Challenging the deficit theory. *Child & Family Social Work, 10*(4), 315–329. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2206.2005.00374.x.

Sadeh, A., Tikotzky, L., & Scher, A. (2010). Parenting and infant sleep. *Sleep Medicine Reviews, 14*(2), 89–96. doi:10.1016/j.smrv.2009.05.003.

Sagi-Schwartz, A., van Ijzendoorn, M. H., Grossmann, K. E., Joels, T., Scharf, M., Koren-Karie, N., & Alkalay, S. (2003). Attachment and traumatic stress in female Holocaust child survivors and their daughters. *The American Journal of Psychiatry, 160*(6), 1086–1092. doi:10.1176/appi.ajp.160.6.1086.

Scharf, M. (2007). Long-term effects of trauma: Psychosocial functioning of the second and third generation of Holocaust survivors. *Development and Psychopathology, 19*(2), 603–622. doi:10.1017/S0954579407070290.

Scharf, M., & Hertz-Lazarowitz, R. (2003). Social networks in the school context: Effects of culture and gender. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 20*(6), 843–858. doi:10.1177/0265407503206007.

Scharf, M., & Mayseless, O. (2005). *Parental authority and emotional, social and behavioral functioning at school*. Submitted to the Ministry of Education. (Hebrew).

Scharf, M., & Mayseless, O. (2008). Late adolescent girls' relationships with parents and romantic partner: The distinct role of mothers and fathers. *Journal of Adolescence, 31*(6), 837–855. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2008.06.012.

Scharf, M., & Mayseless, O. (2010). Finding the authentic self in a communal culture: Developmental goals in emerging adulthood. In S. Shulman, & J. -E. Nurmi (Eds.), *The role of goals in navigating individual lives during emerging adulthood* (New directions for child and adolescent development, 130, pp. 83–95). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Scharf, M., & Shulman, S. (2006). Intergenerational transmission of experiences in adolescence: The challenges of parenting adolescents. *Representations of Parenting: Theory, Research and Clinical Implications*, 319–351.

Scharf, M., Mayseless, O., & Kivenson-Baron, I. (2004). Adolescents' attachment representations and developmental tasks in emerging adulthood. *Developmental Psychology, 40*(3), 430–444. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.40.3.430.

Scharf, M., Mayseless, O., & Kivenson-Baron, I. (2011). Leaving the parental nest: Adjustment problems, attachment representations, and social support during the transition from high school to military service. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 40*(3), 411–423. doi: 10.1080/15374416.2011.563464.

Schwartz, S. H. (1994). Beyond individualism/collectivism: New cultural dimensions of values. In U. Kim, H. C. Triandis, Ç. Kâğitçibaşi, S.-C. Choi, & G. Yoon (Eds.), *Cross-cultural research and methodology series* (Individualism and collectivism: Theory, method, and applications, Vol. 18, pp. 85–119). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Seginer, R., Vermulst, A., & Shoyer, S. (2004). The indirect link between perceived parenting and adolescent future orientation: A multiple-step model. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 28*(4), 365–378. doi:10.1080/01650250444000081.

Sharabany, R., Eshel, Y., & Hakim, C. (2008). Boyfriend, girlfriend in a traditional society: Parenting styles and development of intimate friendships among Arabs in school. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 32*(1), 66–75. doi:10.1177/0165025407084053.

Shulman, S., Zlotnik, A., Shachar-Shapira, L., Connolly, J., & Bohr, Y. (2012). Adolescent daughters' romantic competence: The role of divorce, quality of parenting, and maternal romantic history. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 41*(5), 593–606. doi:10.1007/s10964-012-9748-9.

Simpson, J. A., & Belsky, J. (2008). Attachment theory within a modern evolutionary framework. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (2nd ed., pp. 131–157). New York: Guilford Press.

Slone, M., Shechner, T., & Farah, O. K. (2012). Parenting style as a moderator of effects of political violence: Cross-cultural comparison of Israeli Jewish and Arab children. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 36*(1), 62–70. doi:10.1177/0165025411406856.

Strier, R., & Roer-Strier, D. (2010). Fatherhood in the context of immigration. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (5th ed., pp. 435–458). Hoboken: Wiley.

Wiseman, H., & Barber, J. P. (2008). *Echoes of the trauma*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Zerach, G., Greene, T., Ein-Dor, T., & Solomon, Z. (2012). The relationship between posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms and paternal parenting of adult children among ex-prisoners of war: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Family Psychology, 26*(2), 274–284. doi:10.1037/a0027159.

# Parenting in Jordan

**Hanan Takash and Suha Al-Hassan**

Parenting is one of the most critical issues facing societies today. Jordan, a society with Arab Muslim values, has drawn international (Fernea 1995) and national attention (Al-Hassan and Takash 2011). With a population exceeding six million, 37 % are less than 15 years old and 59.5 % are between 15 and 65 years old, which makes Jordanian society a youthful one (Department of Statistics (Jordan) 2012). It consists of Muslims and Christians, divided into Bedouin, Conservatives and Rural according to their life style regardless of where they live. Bedouins are more committed to traditions; the rural follow more liberal lifestyles while conservatives follow tradition to a moderate level. Economically, Jordan is a moderate income country; its GDP per capita (PPP US$) in 2004 was $4,688 (United Nations Development Program 2007).

In its attempts to ameliorate the conditions of early childhood care and education (ECCE), Jordan reinforced its legislative framework in favor of children, reviewed and amended the Penal Law, the Juvenile Law, and the Personal Status Law in addition to enacting new laws that directly or indirectly support children's welfare. Furthermore, it has introduced frameworks for child focused planning, including the National Plan of Action for Children (2004–2013, launched in October 2004), the National Framework for Family Protection (including the setting up of the NCFA in 2001), the National Early Childhood Development Strategy, the National Strategy to Eliminate Child Labour (adopted in 2003), the National Youth Strategy (2005–2009, adopted in December 2004), the National Strategy for the Jordanian Family, and the National Anti-Poverty Strategy of 2002. These efforts support, sustain and complement the Early Childhood Development Strategy launched in December 2000, and the subsequent Plan of Action for the years 2003–2007.

Jordan has over the past decade made remarkable achievements in the areas of health, nutrition, and education with no gender differences. Infant and child

H. Takash (✉) • S. Al-Hassan
Department of Special Education, Queen Rania Faculty for Childhood,
The Hashemite University, Az Zarqa, Jordan
e-mail: dr.h.Takash@gmail.com

mortality rates (IMR and U5MR) indicators for Jordan reflect improvements in meeting the survival rights of Jordanian children. However, IMR and U5MR are low at 21 and 24 per 1,000, respectively. This has motivated the government to focus more closely on development and protection issues.

On the social side the extended family model is still a common style in Jordan despite the increases of the nuclear model among more educated individuals, working mothers and followers of liberal lifestyles. The social structure contains kin which are divided into several tribes where the blood bonds are the strongest connection. Families are headed by the father who leads mostly by social traditions and values (Alkhataibah and Bani Naser 2006).

Like other Arab societies, Jordanian society refers to Islam as source of its values. Nevertheless, Jordanian culture does not embrace Islam in all its actions and traditions. In fact, those local attitudes are not always compatible with the teachings of Islam. One of the obvious differences is the perception of boys and girls. The Quran makes it clear that the two are different but it shows no preference or higher status. The equality between the two genders is confirmed in verses 36, 37 and 195 of *Surah Al-E-Imran*. Selective readings from the Quran lead to the misconception of Islam's discrimination between boys and girls which creates imbalances in the society. Caring is a major principle of the social system in Islam. Islam places high value on caring for elderly parents as stated in *Surah Al-Isra*, verses 23 and 24, Within the same context, Islam encourages its followers to attend to orphans and those with special needs as stated in verse 2, 5 and 6 of *Surah An-Nisa'*.

Islam's social relationships are built on the rights and duties for every individual whether in a husband-wife relationship or in a parent-child relationship. To maintain a healthy social relationship both parties must have clear-cut rights as well as obligations. The relationships are reciprocal. The duties of one side are the rights of the other side. So in a parent-child relationship, the rights of the parents are the obligations of the children and the rights of the children are obligations (duties) of the parents. New studies about parenting and socializing in Jordan indicate few changes in values and methods of parenting mainly drifting away from the Arab cultural heritage (Ali 2009; Said 2008).

Parenting culture in Jordan follows the western style in physical and medical aspects but differs in cognitive and psychological aspects. Cognitive socializing depends on the Islamic theory that focuses on the balance between life and the hereafter (Hawamdeh 1994). Jordanian society is keen on early marriage to increase the chances of having children, as children form a source of social pride, support in rural areas in sheep grazing, and care for elderly parents. Children contribute to the stability of marriage (Sherif 2005). The cultural exposure to the West has put pressure on Jordanian parents to provide their children with a high quality of education which in turn made some families consider smaller size families, modification in caring styles according to variables like social group or lifestyle, religious adherence, economic level and parent education.

Since Islam considers family the cornerstone of the social system, there are criteria set when choosing one's partner. For example, followers are encouraged to choose their partners based upon level of religiosity rather than beauty or wealth.

The fetus has the right to live since the creation moment; neither the father nor the mother has the right to elective abortion. Abortion is forbidden by religion and law, and socially unacceptable except when the life of the mother is threatened or jeopardized. The right of the fetus to live is protected by taking care of the pregnant woman and obliging the father to support her financially until the delivery, as we read in verse 6 of *Suarh Al-Talak*. Also, to provide ultimate care for the fetus and the newborn, pregnant and nursing women are excused from some worshiping tasks as fasting during the month of Ramadan, and praying during the puerperium.

Boys and girls have the same rights, but they are treated differently from their early years. For example, boys are given names that reflect courage and strength, such as lion. Girls are given cheerful names, such as flowers and names of jewelry. They name their males to tease and threaten their enemies and their females to be joyful; this implies the gender role expected by the family and society. Parents usually give their infant a name with a nice meaning since it is believed that the name may reflect its meaning on one's personality. Also, traditionally the first boy has to carry the name of his paternal grandfather. Children bear their father's nationality and religion.

Children are the adornment of the present life as stated in the Quran in *Surah Al-Kahf* verse 46. Raising children is considered an everlasting good deed. This belief lessens the stress and hard work of taking care of children and encourages people to have more. To be a mother or a father in the Jordanian society grants a socially respected status. The mother cares for the newborn along with any female in the family, such as grandmothers and aunts. Breastfeeding is still the preferred and most popular way of feeding. Breastfeeding by the same woman in the same period of time creates a relative bond between children that resembles the blood bond and is called "breastfeeding siblinghood". There is a common belief that the infant's character and mood is affected by the woman's character who breastfeeds him. This has an impact on the parents' decision in choosing who will breastfeed their children and with whom they share that milk. Extended family involvement in child care reduces parents' stress by sharing responsibility. However, the extended family has some negative sides, especially in adapting to the new norms of life in a changing world. In the early stages, the role of the father is mostly to provide financial support for both mother and the infant. In the local culture, *Aqeeqah* is a way of celebrating the new baby. It is the father's duty to sacrifice two sheep for a boy and one for a girl, although it could be one for both if he cannot afford two. The slaughtering takes place on the seventh day after the infant's birth and the meat is shared between poor people, family and friends.

Circumcision is one of the acts in Islam embraced in Jordanian society for boys, but it is not performed on girls, unlike some Arab societies that apply it for both girls and boys. Childhood in Jordan extends from the moment of birth to the independent stage which is marked by marriage and establishing a new family.

Jordanian society is described as a masculine paternal one, although mothers care for, socialize and guide their children according to the local culture. Through the socialization process, children learn their society's values that emphasize respecting parents and keeping in touch with relatives. Male members have an extra caring responsibility towards their female relatives regardless of their age or degree of kinship.

Islam puts a high value on education and seeking knowledge. The Prophet Muhammad instructed parents to "teach your children archery, swimming and horseback riding". This applies to both boys and girls. The mosque also has a role in introducing children to the teachings of Islam though it is not the only nor the most effective way, since schools and media have become important agents of change today. Parents encourage their children to go to the mosque at least for Friday and Eid prayers which include special sermons.

Children's education occurs through establishing kindergartens funded by the government and creating primary schools and designing a national curriculum. According to Jordanian law basic education until grade 10 is compulsory. According to a local survey, the illiteracy rate is 6.7 % among people older than 15 years; unfortunately 9.9 are females and 3.6 are males (Government of Jordan, Department of Statistics 2012).

School readiness was higher among boys than girls in Jordan. This is associated with higher parental education and higher family income (Al-Hassan and Lansford 2009). This may be attributed to the extra parental care and interest in boys' education because they carry the family name and are expected to take care of their female relatives and their parents when they grow old. There is great concentration at this age on values concerning the gender role, encouraging girls to be emotional and dependent and boys to be strong and hide their emotions as it is considered a weakness in a man. Girls are expected to help with the housework and take care of their younger siblings. Boys are expected to assume some of man's responsibilities such as accompanying their mother or sisters.

Mothers and fathers in Jordan held more progressive than authoritarian parenting attitudes. There is a similarity between parents in attribution for success and failure in parenting practices (Al-Hassan and Takash 2011). There is some evidence that Jordanian mothers emphasize obedience and getting along with others in their children's behavior. In a recent study conducted by Al-Hassan and De Baz (2010) investigating the values that mothers wish to instill in their children, the findings revealed mothers' emphasis on values associated with appropriate behavior (politeness, good habits, respecting elders, obedience, and loyalty to family), decency (honesty, charity, following social rules, and responsibility). Within the lovingness category, the values stressed by mothers were: respecting others, getting along with others, sharing, loving family, and compassion/consideration. Mothers placed less emphasis on self-maximization. The values most frequently mentioned by mothers within this category were: working hard at school, diligence, independence, and creativity.

The parental tolerance children enjoy in their childhood decreases in adolescence. Arab culture considers and expects the adolescent to be like an adult socially and emotionally but not financially. Parenting in Jordan directs great attention to gender roles and rights. Discrimination against girls involves limitations of personal freedom and the right of education. Seriousness, inflexibility and freedom restriction are the dominant parenting styles at the ages of adolescence. This is rationalized by the shortage of adolescents' experience and maturity. This contradicts one of the Islamic principles which makes puberty the age of maturity and brings with it the responsibility of ones' behavior starting with worshiping and handling financial property independently. Parents tend to be overprotective and do not give adolescents freedom

to make their decisions in many aspects such as college major, choosing friends and appearance, taking in mind that their children's behavior would reflect on their family. This restriction on children's independence may be applied to choosing spouses where the spouse considers a family member who must be socially compatible with the family. Freedom and social rules are conflict areas between parents and adolescents. Both the Western culture and the teachings of Islam encourage caregivers to treat adolescents as adults. In fact, this is the age when Islam starts considering adolescents accountable for their own choices and actions. Connecting the individual to his extended family in the local culture makes his extended family responsible about one's individual behavior. This gives many people the authority to watch, interfere and even control which restricts personal freedom. The local culture encourages total loyalty and subordination to the family rules and norms.

Openness to Western culture through education curricula and media created a conflict between the local culture, which implied loyalty to family rules without questioning and no freedom of opinion or behavior. Since some schools started using a Western curriculum, it has become a critical issue to balance between the respect of family commitment and the desire for more individual freedom.

A study carried out in Amman (Farah 2002) about the type of relation between mothers and their adolescent daughters showed that the least used type was extreme monitoring which is popular among non-working mothers with big families of 9 or more, and with girls aged from 16 to 18 years with low academic performance. The democratic relation type was dominant among educated mothers, with families of 3–5 children, a high income and high academic performance.

Another study of adolescents in Amman (Al-Majaly 2003) showed their need for more opportunities for entertainment and athletic activities, social freedom in choosing their friends, more sympathy of their parents with their emotional needs, and more tolerance from their teachers.

Ayasrah (2008) evaluated human rights in Islam as mentioned in the Holy Quran. Jordanians showed a high practice of justice, equality, consultation (*Shura*) and the promotion of virtue and prevention of vice. There are needs to increase the practice of decreased rights of belief freedom and freedom of opinion expression. This is an aspect where Jordanians prefer their tradition to religion.

Jordanian society is a youthful society with a great interest in childhood. There are now laws to regulate children's rights, and several studies were carried out to elicit children's and adolescents' needs and problems to improve parenting. In spite of the high degree of education the parenting method mostly followed the local Arabic styles.

# References

Al-Hassan, O., & De Baz, T. (2010). *Childrearing values of mothers in Jordan*. Paper presented at the Education in a Changing World Conference, The Hashemite University, Zarqa, Jordan.

Al-Hassan, S., & Lansford, J. (2009). Child, family and community characteristics associated with school readiness in Jordan. *Early Years, 29*(3), 217–226.

Al-Hassan, S., & Takash, H. (2011). Attributions and attitudes of mothers and fathers in Jordan. *Parenting: Science and Practice, 11*, 142–151.

Ali, M. (2009). *Studies in socializing*. Amman: Author.

Alkhataibah, S., & Bani Naser, N. (2006). *The Jordanian society* (2nd ed.). Amman, Jordan: Authors.

Al-majaly, G. (2003). *Adolescent problems in Jordanian society: Social field study on an adolescents sample at Amman City*. Master thesis, University of Jordan, Amman.

Ayasrah, W. (2008). *Human rights in Quran and its role in socialization*. Amman: Dar Elhamed.

Department of Statistics (Jordan). 2012. *Statistical year book 2012*, Amman. http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_e/main/index.htm

Farah, R. (2002). *Relation types among mothers and their adolescent daughters: Case studies at Amman*. Master thesis, University of Jordan, Amman.

Fernea, E. (1995). Childhood in the Muslim Middle East. In E. W. Fernea (Ed.), *Children in the Muslim Middle East* (pp. 3–16). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Hawamdeh, M. (1994). *Socializing in Islam*. Irbid: Dar Al- Kandi.

*Quran* translation http://www.qurancomplex.org/Quran/Targama/Targama.asp?nSora=18&l=arb&nAya=46#18_46

Said, S. (2008). *Family psychology for girls' socializing*. Irbid: Alam al kotob al hadith.

Sherif, A. (2005). *Socialization of the Arabic child at the global time* (2nd ed.). Cairo: Dar Alfeker Alarabi.

United Nations Development Program. (2007). *Country fact sheets: Jordan*. Retrieved from http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_JOR.html

# Parenting in a Rainbow Nation: A South African Perspective on Parenting

**Nicolette V. Roman**

## Introduction

Parenting is one mechanism through which a child can learn appropriate and inappropriate behavior, learn right and wrong choices in decision-making, acquire skills, understand roles and accept or not accept the norms of a community. Parenting has been and is a controversial topic because there is no single prescriptive book for parents showing them how to raise their children. Raising children can be a challenge for some parents. The reciprocal nature of the parent-child relationship calls for a different parenting approach at different stages in the development of the child, which makes understanding parenting quite complex (Amoateng et al. 2006; Maccoby 2000). So a child in early childhood will be parented differently to a child in middle childhood or adolescence. Added to this complexity is the diversity of culture and socio-economic status. This is especially prominent in a country such as South Africa (Amoateng et al. 2006; Bray et al. 2010; Muris et al. 2006).

South Africa has a population of over 50 million people spread across nine provinces with different levels of socio-economic status. The inhabitants of South Africa are called the 'rainbow nation' because of their diverse cultures, languages and ethnic groups or races. During the era of apartheid, people were designated as White, Black African, Coloured (people of mixed race) and Asian/Indian. South Africa also has 11 official languages. To a large extent, South Africa's socio-political history encouraged this diversity based on the principles of separation and segregation (Ginwala 1990).

Before 1994, the National Party imposed stringent laws and passes as control strategies separating groups of people into white and non-white (Black African, Coloured and Indian) people. These control strategies included Pass Laws, the

---

N.V. Roman (✉)
Child and Family Studies Programme, University of the Western
Cape (UWC), Cape Town, South Africa
e-mail: nicoletteroman@gmail.com

Groups Areas Act, the Migrant Labour System and Influx Control. Segregation was on all levels, including resources, services, education and transport. Religion was another factor which the National Party used to wield its power. For example, it encouraged a patriarchal society, based on biblical beliefs, with the belief that women had to be subservient, were considered minors and therefore could not access resources without the permission of a male person in the family. With regard to parenting, the belief was that if you "spare the rod, you spoil the child" and therefore harsh, authoritarian parenting was the approach used to discipline children or minors. In order for non-whites, especially Black Africans to enter white areas, they needed to have a pass and their presence within a specific location had a time limit of 72 h. Non-adherence to the laws meant arrest. This meant that many people were unemployed and urban family life was destroyed. Families could ill afford the income loss because of their dependence on the meagre earnings of the breadwinner in the family (especially the father). The arrests also meant that many women were left to head their households (consisting of children, old and disabled family members) and the survival of the family was constantly threatened (Bernstein 1985; Posel 1991). As a result of the dire socio-economic circumstances, women were forced to access 'forbidden' areas for work, and care of the children was left to grandmothers and other female family members. All these laws, which formed the system of apartheid, led to the eventual breakdown and disintegration of husbands and wives, parents and children and general family life (Ginwala 1990). The impact of apartheid left deeply entrenched scars of pain, anxiety and fear. At the same time, these scars became the driving force behind the struggle against the oppression of apartheid. On a daily basis, the struggle for many women was to maintain the existence of their families, continue relationships with their husbands, have their children with them, and be allowed to work in the towns.

In the two decades since the abolishment of apartheid, many changes have evolved. People previously categorized as non-white, have more access to resources. Corporal punishment was removed in schools and people are able to live in previously advantaged areas and children to attend schools in these areas. Socio-economically, there are opportunities for growth and development across all groups of people. However, the scourge of apartheid continues to run deep. The divide is clearly indicated geographically, with the majority of poor people still being non-white and living in the areas allocated by the National Party. Socio-economically, the divide is still based on race and class with Whites having supremacy.

What has clearly changed is the advocacy for strengthening the family, the development and implementation of the Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005), which affords more rights to children, and less focus on religion's being a tool for discipline and punishment.

While evidently there have been some improvements, life is still difficult for parents and children, and this could have later behavioral outcomes once the children grow up. The South African parent faces many different challenges. The 2006 General Household Survey (Statistics South Africa 2007) shows that,

- 14.5 % of people lived in informal structures, commonly referred to as shacks. This percentage increased from 12.7 % in 2002. There are proportionately fewer

households living in shacks in provinces such as Limpopo and Eastern Cape as compared to the Western Cape and Gauteng provinces. The percentage of households living in informal dwellings was on the increase in Free State, Northern Cape and North West.

- Only 16.6 % of Black African headed-households lived in six-roomed (or more) dwellings as compared to 32.7 % of other groups living in such houses.
- The unemployment rate declined from 30.5 % in 2003 to 28.6 % in 2006. The vast majority of persons that were not employed relied on financial assistance from persons within their household (76.7 % in 2002, 76.8 % in 2004 and 77.5 % in 2006). An additional 14–17 % each year relied on assistance from persons outside their household. Eighty-five percent of households in low socio-economic environments were dependent on social grants, disability grants and old age pensions. These grants were especially financially beneficial in households where the parents were unemployed.
- Although 51 % of the South African population is female, female-headed households remain more challenged when compared to male-headed households. The gender differences are prominent in education with 8.6 % of men aged 20 years and above having no formal education as compared to 12.6 % of women; between 2002 and 2006 adults and children in female-headed households reported more hunger than in male-headed households. For example, in 2006 in 3.4 % of female-headed households, children went hungry as against 1.6 % in male-headed households (Statistics South Africa 2007).

In general, the main indicators of poverty showed improvement during the period 2002–2006. The General Household Survey (Statistics South Africa 2007) showed an improvement in education, health, employment, access to services and facilities such as water, electricity and sanitation which contributed to an increase in improvement of living circumstances. The reality is that women continue to be marginalised and single mothers, especially living in low socio-economic environments, are especially challenged, which ultimately has consequences for the family.

A recent study conducted by the South African Institute for Race Relations (Holborn and Eddy 2011:1) reveals a very stark reality of family challenges. In trying to understand the family, the researchers state that

> [F]amily life in South Africa has never been simple to describe or understand. The concept of the nuclear family has never accurately captured the norm of all South African families. Furthermore, many children in South Africa grow up in fractured families. Poverty and unemployment take their toll on family life while many are increasingly concerned about the state of public education. The consequences for young people— the country's future workers, entrepreneurs and leaders—are dire.

This reality of family life is indicated by single motherhood, the impact of HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy, and the impact of violence and engagement in at-risk behaviors of youth. These issues will be discussed later in the chapter. There are serious challenges that South African parents have to deal with while trying to be the best possible parents they can be in order to raise well-adjusted adults. How do we understand parenting then within these challenging contexts? There is limited South African research information with regard to parenting styles and thus there

is no clear picture as to a definitive style of parenting. In general, and in a sense based on the socio-political history of the experiences of South African parents and families, resilience has been central to coping within challenging contexts. This would mean that parents provide support, warmth and care in most families. Additionally, cultural traditions have been the mechanism of transferring beliefs and values and the mechanisms through which children are raised (Naidoo 1998; Ocholla-Ayayo 2000). This would naturally be culture specific and based on the traditions followed in the different cultures. Intertwined with culture is also socio-economic status and religion (Herzog and Sudia 1973). According to Ocholla-Avavo (2000) modernization in Africa, has resulted in the disintegration of traditions and subsequently resulted in social problems such as delinquency, substance abuse, and the inability of families to cope. Additionally, families were able to cope because of kinship networks which enabled social control and a sense of collectivity. Today, the emphasis has moved more towards individualism and there are more social problems and families are more challenged. In order to examine parenting in South Africa, as a developing country, there is often a dependency on Western theoretical perspectives (Fig. 1).
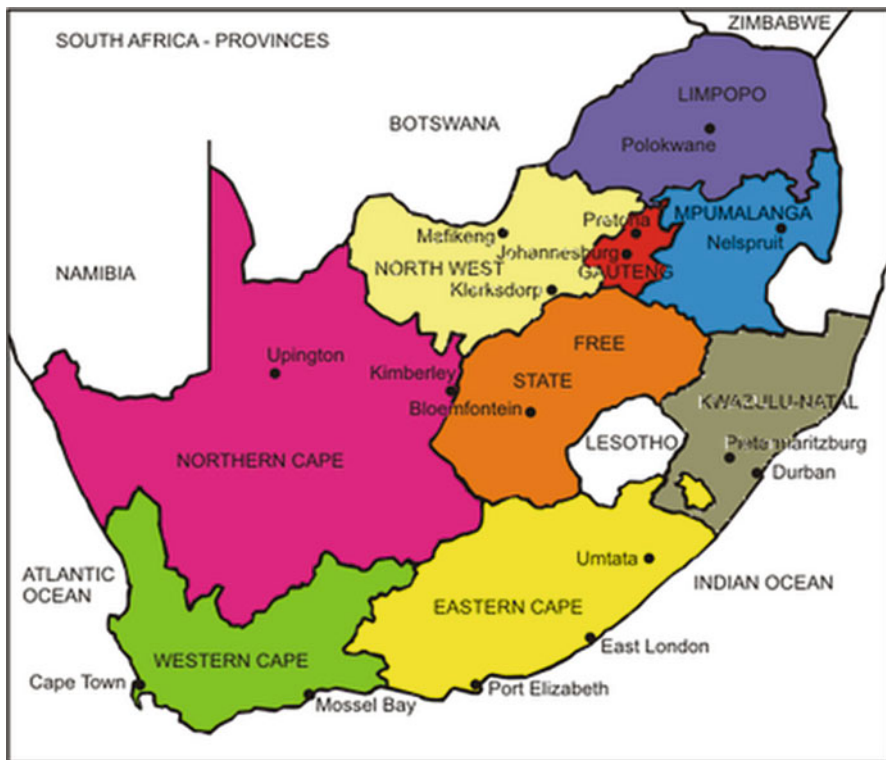


**Fig. 1** Map of South Africa showing the different provinces

## Theoretical Underpinning of Parenting Styles and Practices

All parents have a different approach in the way they raise their children. Some parents allow the child to do as he or she pleases, while some parents are very restrictive in what they allow. Parents are the primary agents in the process of socialising their children with the purpose of encouraging their children to become participants in a community as responsible adults (Bigner 1998; Hartley-Brewer 1996; Pervin and John 2001; Bukatko and Daehler 1995). Ultimately, the way in which parents raise their children is related to the child's behavioral outcomes and his behavior as an adult.

Baumrind (1966, 1967, 1968, 1978) was one of the first researchers to look at parenting styles. She first proposed three styles of parenting identified as authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles. Subsequent parenting research identified the involved parent (Maccoby and Martin 1983) and the traditional parent (Baumrind 1987).

*Authoritative parents* have structures and rules in place when raising their children, but they also encourage their children to provide input in decision-making in the family and provide reasons for rules and structures. Authoritative parenting is warm, supportive, encouraging, accepting and responsive. *Permissive or indulgent parents* are accepting, assenting and have a benevolent and compassionate manner towards the child's impulses and actions. The parent becomes a resource rather than the socialisation agent to shape and change the child's behavior and will not apply rules and structures when raising the child. *Authoritarian parents* are extremely restrictive in communication. Obedience is very important and compliance is often physically and harshly enforced. The authoritarian parent appears harsh, stern, strict and cruel without warmth and tenderness towards the child.

Uninvolved parents are often neglectful, indifferent and dismissive. They may offer little to no supervision, be emotionally distant and unable to support their children emotionally.

The traditional parent is known to have a "non-lenient" approach to parenting (Baumrind 1987: 110). Traditional parents spend time with their children, discipline their children and religion is central to the family and the community. Subsequently, there are strong beliefs in the family which are maintained through various cultural traditions.

These styles were researched in order to understand the effects each might have on behavior (Karavasilis et al. 2003; Lamborn et al. 1991; Milevsky et al. 2007; Rudy and Grusec 2006; Schaefer 1991; Steinberg et al. 1994). For example, the effect of authoritarian parenting results in children feeling pressure to prove their abilities following their parents' strict rules (Gupta and Theus 2006); lack of confidence, difficulty in independent decision-making (Grolnick 2003); dependence on parents and aggressive behavior (Dobson 2002); limited exploration (Gonzalez et al. 2001) and high achievement at school (Aquilino and Supple 2001). Children raised by permissive or indulgent parents often perform badly at school and are more likely to engage in risk-taking behavior such as substance abuse (Baumrind 1991), usually rank low

in happiness, self-regulation and self-control (Maccoby 1992), and have trouble establishing any form of relationship, or friendship (Gronlick 2003). This form of parenting stimulates children to be bad-mannered, egocentric, and demanding (Baumrind 1997). Authoritative parents promote children's sense of individualism and enhance self-development (Baumrind 1991). These children become well-adjusted adults (Arnett 2007), secure attachments in later relationships (van Wel et al. 2000), have improved academic performance and competence (Wintre and Yaffe 2000), show autonomous decision-making (Aquilino 2006; Allen et al. 2002), and develop interpersonal skills and take responsibility (Conger et al. 2000). Children of uninvolved parents have similar behavioral and emotional outcomes as children raised by permissive or indulgent parents. The outcomes include being emotionally withdrawn, experiencing fear, anxiety and stress; having difficulty forming emotional attachments and exhibiting inappropriate behavior in social settings (Hughes et al. 2005; Huver et al. 2010; Steinberg et al. 1994).

Parenting research in South Africa is limited. Studies in South Africa specifically using the parenting styles constructs (authoritarian, authoritative and permissive) had children in early childhood (Latouf 2005; Moremi 2002), adolescents (Kritzas and Grobler 2005) and young adults (Makwakwa 2011) as participants in their studies. In early childhood, which in South Africa is age 0–9 years, the results of the study conducted by Latouf (2005), show that the authoritative parenting style resulted in more acceptable behaviour, while the Moremi (2002) study had inconsistent findings to previous relationships and found no direct relationships with children's socio-emotional adjustment at school. Additionally, fathers' authoritarian styles are linked to emotion-focused coping strategies of adolescents, which is in contrast to the findings of previous research. In young adulthood, Makwakwa (2011) retrospectively examined the relationship between perceived parenting styles and current decision-making styles of university students living in a university residence. The findings suggest that an authoritative parenting style was associated with thoughtful decision-making of young adults. The parents of these students had used more authoritative parenting approaches than authoritarian or permissive. In comparing mothers' and fathers' parenting styles, there were significant differences. Mothers were perceived to be more dominant in their parenting, which could be explained by the amount of time mothers spend with their children. There are similarities and inconsistencies for parenting styles in South Africa as compared to the findings of research in other countries.

One of the main challenges of using parenting styles is that it does not provide an understanding of what parents actually do in positive or negative parenting, and that parenting styles are in fact an umbrella for more practical applications of parenting. Thus Gray and Steinberg (1999) proposed that research should focus on "unpacking parenting styles and their effects across the lifespan and move beyond parenting styles and more towards practices." In this way the context becomes relevant. A theory which focuses on parental practices is Self-Determination Theory.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) states that in order for any individual to be psychologically well and strive towards reaching his or her optimal potential, three basic psychological needs have to be satisfied: relatedness, autonomy and

competence (Deci and Ryan 1985; Ryan and Deci 2000; Van Steenkiste 2005). For relatedness to be satisfied an individual would need to experience a sense of belonging. The satisfaction of autonomy affords an individual the space to make decisions, have self-control and self-regulated behavior, while at the same time maintaining close ties with the parent. Being competent means feeling able, knowledgeable and skilled in a task. When these needs are not met the individual will be frustrated and lack the motivation to progress. In addition to having these needs met, SDT emphasises that the environment or context becomes the conduit for enhancing or hindering the satisfaction of these needs (Chirkov et al. 2003). So when the environment is enhancing the environment is supportive but when it is hindering it creates an environment which is controlling.

*Supportive parenting* is defined as being involved, warm, nurturing, caring parents who provide structure for their children (Grolnick 2003; Grolnick et al. 1997). These parents encourage self-initiation and acknowledge the child's perspective and feelings. As involved parents they act as a resource for their children and take an interest in their activities. They spend more time with their children and know more about what they are doing in their daily lives and therefore apply monitoring principles. In providing structure, children are taught limits and boundaries such as how to eat properly at a table, respecting others and their possessions and going to bed at an appropriate time. Parenting is conducted in a way that provides "reasons and purposes for doing activities; communicating expectations that are optimally challenging; explaining and consistently administering consequences and providing informational feedback" (Grolnick et al. 1997: 147). In this way, children know what to expect and subsequently feel more secure because they know what the consequences of their behavior are. Researchers have found that proactive and positive parenting resulted in children with fewer delinquent problems (Grolnick 2003; Kurdek and Fine 1994; Pettit et al. 2001). It increased positive behavioral conduct, improved psychosocial development, mental health, and academic progress (Gray and Steinberg 1999). The outcome of supportive parenting is self-regulation, self-control and self-determination. Overall, children raised by supportive parents acquire problem-solving skills and are competent and generally well adjusted in later phases of development. Studies in South Africa focusing on autonomy-supportive parenting have shown that when mothers use autonomy-supportive parenting, children are psychologically well with the majority having higher scores on tests of self-esteem and satisfaction with life. This parenting practice can be found in families where the family environment is cohesive, organised, achievement-orientated and where behavioural control is present (Roman 2008). This study was conducted with pre-adolescents with a mean age of 11 years across marital and socio-economic status groups. The findings of this study are similar to studies conducted in other countries (Grolnick et al. 1997; Grolnick 2003; Soenens 2006). A more recent cross-cultural study in the area of supportive parenting included participants from South Africa (McNeely and Barber 2010). They found consistent results, across the different participating countries, indicating similarities in adolescents' perceptions of supportive parenting. Variability was found in supportive parenting also being perceived as

guidance and advice, which were additional aspects not indicated in the Western sample. Guidance and advice encouraged parent-adolescent closeness, but this might have been a cultural indicator of parental love and support.

While limits, boundaries and monitoring are imperative in order for children to feel safe, secure and well-adjusted, being overly involved could result in controlling parenting. Children may perceive this "as pressure to think, feel or behave in specified ways" (Deci and Ryan 1985: 95). *Controlling parenting* is defined as "control attempts that intrude into the psychological and emotional development of the child (e.g. thinking processes, self-expression, emotions and attachment to parents)" (Barber 1996: 3296). A form of controlling parenting, as a more negative type of parenting, is psychological control, which is indicated by behaviors such as intrusiveness, parental direction and control through guilt, possessiveness, protectiveness, nagging, negative evaluation, strictness and punishment. Barber (1996: 3297) describes psychological control as "insidious" which potentially inhibits psychological development through manipulation and exploitation of the parent-child bond (love withdrawal and guilt induction), negative, affect-laden expressions and criticisms (disappointment and shame), and excessive personal control (possessiveness and protectiveness). There is a distinct difference between psychological and behavioral control. Behavioral control is used by parents as attempts to control and manage the behavior of their children (Barber 1996, 2002). According to Barber (1996: 3299), psychological control is "inhibitive", while behavioral control is "facilitative". Behavioral control is important, so that children can have structure, limits, boundaries and parameters in their interaction with others. Behavioral control is also important for parents to monitor their children's activities. This process of control is especially important for children living in high-risk environments where there is the constant threat of being coerced to participate in gang-related activities and crime (a phenomenon which is quite common in South African communities). The outcome of psychologically controlling parenting for the behavior and adjustment of children has been presented in research studies. These studies have linked psychological control to low self-esteem levels, anxiety, depression, higher drop-out rates at school, maladaptive learning attitudes, substance abuse, theft and ill-being (Bean et al. 2003; Pettit et al. 2001; Van Steenkiste et al. 2005; Soenens 2006).

Research conducted in this area of parenting has in the main been conducted in Western counties. The argument is often that the results of parenting research conducted in Western countries may not necessarily reflect that of non-western countries and therefore should not be generalized to other countries. Significant differences were found in parenting research, which had been cross-culturally conducted (Deater-Deckard et al. 2010; Rudy and Grusec 2006), but in other instances there were also similarities (McNeely and Barber 2010). In reference to psychologically controlling parenting in South Africa, research findings are similar to that found in other countries (Barber et al. 2005). For example, Roman et al. (2012) found a relationship between psychologically controlling parenting and anti-social behaviour in young adults. They also found that maternal psychological control, rather than paternal psychological control, was a stronger predictor of anti-social behaviour. Similarly, Roman (2008) found a significantly negative relationship

between maternal psychological control and child self-esteem and satisfaction with life. In the same study psychological control was significantly positively related to conflict, and negatively related to cohesion, organisation and independence in the family. The research conducted in South Africa produced similar results as studies conducted in Western countries, suggesting the negative effects of psychologically controlling parenting.

What is important in parenting research and practice is that Westernised research and practices be contextualised and specific to a culture so that parenting interventions have an impact.

## Parenting in a Challenging South African Environment

While it is important to understand the effect of different parenting approaches on child outcomes, often other types of parental behaviours and parent-child interactions are considered in South African research due to the challenging environments prevalent.

A study conducted on the status of youth in South Africa indicates that 51 % have witnessed violence in their communities, 36 % of the prison population was under the age of 25, 31 % of 12–22 year olds had drunk alcohol, 62 % of the same age group had easy access to alcohol, 32 % of sexually active youth had four or more partners and 51 % of 15–24 year old youth were unemployed in 2010 (South African Institute of Race Relations Holborn and Eddy 2011). These statistics paint a sad picture of the current status of youth and often this can be traced to parental behaviour. The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (Burton et al. 2009) conducted a comparative study between youth offenders and non-offenders. The main differences indicated prevalent violence between family members and criminal behaviour within the family for offending youth. Additionally, the offending youth had received less emotional and financial support from their fathers, spent less time with their mothers and had experienced harsh and violent disciplinary methods than non-offending youth. Their study revealed similar levels of poverty between offending and non-offending youth. The South African Institute of Race Relations (Holborn and Eddy 2011) suggests that the structure of families may be a key factor in negative child outcomes.

## The Effect of Family Structure on Parent-Child Relationships

Marital status has been identified as an important factor in the behavior and adjustment of children. Often the comparison is drawn between single and married parent families or male- and female-headed households. Often, it is the single female parent or female household head that is portrayed as having more challenges than her married counterpart (Magnuson and Berger 2009; Osborne et al. 2012; Weinraub

and Wolf 1983). Historically, apartheid created and maintained the status of the single female parent heading the household due to the Migrant Labour System. Research in post-apartheid South Africa shows this phenomenon of single motherhood is still prevalent. For example, in the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention study (Burton et al. 2009), the majority of household heads was female (56 %). Similarly, the South African Institute of Race Relations (Holborn and Eddy 2011) indicates that 40 % of children between the ages of 0–17 years lived with mothers, 3 % with fathers and 35 % with both biological parents. The SAIRR (Holborn and Eddy 2011) portrays the urban single parent as Black African, female, unemployed and between the ages of 25 and 34 years. Single mothers in Roman's (2008) study reported lower levels of self-esteem and satisfaction with life than single mothers from higher socio-economic environments and married mothers. The reality is that the majority of single mothers often have lower education levels, low paying employment opportunities, often lack spousal financial support and have inadequate and insufficient social support (Statistics South Africa 2007). She is often faced with the most challenging circumstances and this is frequently related to the parent-child relationship.

South African research studies comparing child outcomes in married and single parent households present contrasting findings. For example, regardless of marital status, there were no significant differences in the way children perceived their mother's parenting (Roman 2011). Mother-child self-esteem was significantly positively correlated regardless of marital status and socio-economic status (Roman 2008). Makwakwa's study (2011) suggests that young adults raised in households with both parents were more thorough in their decision-making styles than young people raised in a single parent household. Lowe's (2005) study suggests that young people in married households received more positive parental care than those in single parent households, which is associated with later relationship satisfaction with a partner. Studies conducted by the SAIRR (Holborn and Eddy 2011) and the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention study (Burton et al. 2009) suggest that children who are raised in single parent families would more than likely engage in risk-taking behaviour. The focus of single parenting is often gendered with the focus being on mothers. Fathers are often silent in single parenting because fathers are not taking on the responsibility of fatherhood. In South Africa, the proportion of children with absent living fathers increased from 42 % in 1996 to 48 % in 2009 (Holborn and Eddy 2011). Although research still is limited, research concerning fathers and fatherhood in South Africa is emerging as there is the realisation that intervention with fathers could improve conditions for children (Morrell et al. 2012; Richter and Morrell 2006; Swartz and Bhana 2009). In their book called *Baba*, Richter and Morell (2006), compiled a thorough exploration of what it means to be a father in South Africa and the changes which have occurred for the South African father over time. Additionally, Morrell et al. (2012) and Swartz and Bhana (2009), in their book *Books and babies: Pregnancy and young parents in schools* and *Teenage Tata: Voices of young fathers in South Africa* provide insight into the challenging issue of teenage parenthood and its effects on teenage mothers and fathers. While the debate continues both locally and internationally regarding the effect of

family structure on parenting and child adjustment, what is clear is that these factors often play a major role in the process of parenting.

## Parenting: Culture and Diversity

Some researchers in South Africa have compared parenting in different social contexts. The issue of race or ethnicity is never quite discussed as there is always the possibility of portraying one race against another, and there is also the sense that the term 'race' has negative connotations for many South Africans. So if we examine the research in South Africa the findings of the effect of parenting in particular studies may be quite different from findings in parenting research in other countries if races are compared. The researchers of these studies support this and therefore caution against generalization. Thus the research which focuses on parenting in different ethnic groups provides the following information:

- The study conducted by Lowe (2005) had a majority sample of White, Afrikaans-speaking participants, which is not a representative sample. These would be considered a minority group with very strong Christian values and principles based on a patriarchal belief system. The findings would be different for a more representative sample of participants if one considers the different cultures. This study examined parenting practices in relation to adult relationship satisfaction with university students. The results suggest that parenting styles have an effect on the relationship satisfaction (conflict resolution/communication, independence and intimacy) of young adults/students.
- Latouf's (2005) study found that parents were more authoritative in her study and this style of parenting encouraged more acceptable behavior with 5-year olds. This study was conducted with a multi-cultural high socio-economic group, which could explain the prevalence of an authoritative approach to parenting, which would be similar to research studies in Western countries.
- Moremi's (2002) study was conducted with a sample of Black participants and produced different results to that found in Western parenting research. Authoritative parenting was not related to adjustment, which differs from results found in Western research.
- Roman's (2008) study assessed and compared the psychological wellbeing of mothers and their preadolescent children (aged 10–12) according to family structure and socio-economic status. The study had a majority sample of Coloured participants. These parents were from both high and low socio-economic environments. The results suggest that both mothers and preadolescents were psychologically well and satisfied with their lives regardless of marital and socio-economic status. There was a significant positive relationship between mother and preadolescent self-esteem levels. Mothers used more autonomous-supportive rather than psychologically controlling parenting practices. Families were perceived as being more cohesive, had less conflict, were more organised, more achievement orientated and had more control. Preadolescent self-esteem

was predicted by socio-economic status, psychologically controlling maternal parenting practices and how satisfied a child is with his or her life.

- Makwakwa (2011) had a majority Black African sample in her study. This study was conducted with university students in the phase of emerging adulthood. In a retrospective study, she examined the relationship between parenting styles and decision-making styles of emerging adults. The results suggest that authoritative parenting style is the prevalent style used by parents and is significantly positively correlated to thoughtful decision-making of emerging adults. There were also significant differences between the parenting styles of mothers and fathers. The results suggest that mothers were more authoritative, authoritarian and permissive than fathers.

- Kritzas and Grobler (2005) found authoritative parenting significantly accounted for the variance in resilience for black and white adolescents. Additionally, a paternal authoritarian parenting style was associated with emotion-focused coping strategies in white adolescents, which is in contrast to international research associating authoritarian parenting and harsh parenting with maladaptive behavior. This study was conducted with adolescents at a racially integrated school, which would be considered a socio-economically advantaged school and could therefore explain the similarities in findings for the two groups.

- Amoateng et al. (2006) conducted a study with adolescents, with a mean age of 15 years. The sample size was similar across the groups. The results suggest that Black African, Coloured and White parenting approaches significantly predicted adolescent substance use. Adolescents who used substances had parents who applied fewer limits and had less knowledge of their adolescents' whereabouts. Additionally, these parent-adolescent relationships were identified by hostility and high levels of family stress. There were no significant differences between the groups.

- DeJager (2011) compared White and Coloured adolescents' relationships with their mothers, fathers, best friends and romantic partners. Adolescents had stronger mother-adolescent relationships than father-adolescent relationships as indicated by nurturance, support, satisfaction, affection and intimacy. This study found that Coloured adolescents viewed their mothers as more important than their fathers when compared to a group of White adolescents. Additionally, adolescents from high socio-economic households were more satisfied with their relationships with their fathers than adolescents from middle to low income households. Furthermore, Coloured adolescents living in middle and low income households reported more punishment and conflict in relationships.

- Bomester (2012) examined the parent-adolescent relationship in a Coloured low-socio-economic community and found strong mother-daughter and father-son relationships. In general, mothers spent more time with the adolescent or child than fathers did.

- Muris et al. (2006) examined anxiety symptoms of South African youth and their parents' perceived rearing behaviors across ethnic groups. Black African and Coloured youth were more anxious than White youth. White youth rated their parents as overprotective, less anxious and rejecting, but more emotionally warm

than coloured and black youths. Overprotective, anxious and rejecting parenting uniquely predicted anxiety in youth.

- McNeely and Barber (2010) conducted a cross-cultural study of adolescents across 12 nations or ethnic groups including adolescents from Black African, Coloured and White groups. The focus of the research was on comparing loving and supportive parenting behaviors across the groups. The results of the study identified similarities across the groups suggesting that there are similarities internationally. The differences were shown in the value and rarity adolescents assigned to signs of love from parents. Particularly in South Africa, more Black African adolescents perceived parental support for education as a sign of love than White and Coloured groups in South Africa as well as the other cultural groups in the study.

These research studies were the studies available and accessible, but may not provide definitive information regarding parenting in South Africa. What do these studies tell us?

- Maternal parenting has a stronger effect on child and youth outcomes than fathers. As a developing country, there could be remnants of the patriarchal ideologies of apartheid with males being providers and women caring for children or the family (Lindeggar and Maxwell 2007). The traditional parenting style (Baumrind 1987) could still be dominant in certain ethnic groups particularly in the Black African group.
- The majority of research studies suggest that parents use a more authoritative style of parenting.
- There are differences across races or ethnic and socio-economic status groups. Children raised in low socio-economic environments experience more hostility and conflict in relationships with parents. Parenting differences in socio-economic status groups could be due to families or parents experiencing more stressors. So although parenting differs across ethnic groups, differences become more prominent when comparing socio-economic groups. In South Africa, race, socio-economic status and geographical location continue to be intertwined as created during apartheid, although the laws have changed.

## Conclusion

Trying to describe parenting in South Africa can be quite a challenge as there is so much diversity. What may be prominent in one culture may not necessarily be found in another. Historically, South Africa has evolved from an oppressive patriarchal society into a democratic society. The existence of the family during apartheid was constantly under threat and parents struggled to maintain cohesion in the family. Today, there are different challenges, such as substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, single parenting and HIV/AIDS, which threaten the existence and wellbeing of the family. In order to understand the parenting approaches used in South Africa, Western theories are used to understand parenting in South Africa. Thus, constructs

such as parenting styles and practices may have similar *and* different meanings when applied to South African parenting. The limited parenting research presents authoritative mothering as prevalent and linked to more positive outcomes for children. Additionally, the mother-child relationship is identified as stronger than the father-child relationship in families. What is clear is that there are different parent-child relationships and parenting approaches across different ethnic groups with additions of socio-economic status and education. Although there has been an increase in parenting research in South Africa, parenting in South Africa could be considered emerging and more studies could provide a more detailed perspective of parenting across cultures.

# References

Allen, J., Hauser, S., O Conner, T., & Bell, K. (2002). Prediction of peer-rated adult hostility from autonomy struggles in adolescent-family interactions. *Development and Psychopathology, 14*, 123–137.

Amoateng, A. Y., Barber, B. K., & Erickson, L. D. (2006). Family predictors of adolescent substance use: The case of high school students in the Cape Metropolitan Area, Cape Town, South Africa. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 18*(1), 7–15.

Aquilino, W. S. (2006). Family relationships and support systems in emerging adulthood. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 193–218). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Aquilino, W. S., & Supple, A. J. (2001). Long-term effects of parenting practices during adolescence on well-being outcomes in young adulthood. *Journal of Family Issues, 22*(3), 289–308.

Arnett, J. J. (2007). Suffering, selfish, slackers? Myth and reality on emerging adults. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence, 36*, 23–29.

Barber, B. K. (1996). Parental psychological control: Revisiting a neglected construct. *Child Development, 67*, 3296–3319.

Barber, B. K. (2002). Reintroducing parental psychological control. In B. K. Barber (Ed.), *Intrusive parenting: How psychological control affects children and adolescents* (pp. 3–13). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Barber, B. K., Stolz, H. E., & Olsen, J. A. (2005). Parent support, psychological control, and behavioural control: Assessing relevance across time, method, and culture. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 70*, 4.

Baumrind, D. (1966). Effects of authoritative parental control on child behaviour. *Journal of Child Development, 37*, 887–907.

Baumrind, D. (1967). Child care practices interceding three patterns of preschool behavior. *Genetic Psychology Monographs, 75*(1), 43–88.

Baumrind, D. (1968). Authoritarian vs authoritative control. *Adolescence, 37*, 255–272.

Baumrind, D. (1978). Parental disciplinary patterns and social competence in children. *Journal of Youth & Society, 9*, 239–276.

Baumrind, D. (1987). A developmental perspective on adolescent risk taking in contemporary America. *New Directions for Child Development, 37*, 93–125.

Baumrind, D. (1991). The influence of parenting styles on adolescent competence and substances. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 11*(1), 58–95.

Baumrind, D. (1997). Necessary distinctions. *Psychological Inquiry, 8,* 176–182.

Bean, R. A., Bush, K. R., McKenry, P. C., & Wilson, S. M. (2003). The impact of parental support, behavioral control, and psychological control on the academic achievement and self-esteem of African American and European American adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 18*(5), 523–541.

Bernstein, H. (1985). *For their triumphs and for their tears. Women in apartheid South Africa.* London: International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa.

Bigner, J. J. (1998). *Parent-child relations: An introduction to parenting.* New York: Macmillan College Publishing Company.

Bomester, O. (2012). *Exploring closeness in parent-adolescent relationships (PAR) in a semi-rural, low income community in the Western Cape Province of South Africa.* Unpublished masters thesis, Stellenbosch University, Cape Town.

Bray, R., Gooskens, I., Kahn, L., Moses, S., & Seekings, J. (2010). *Growing up in the new South Africa: Childhood and adolescence in post-apartheid Cape Town.* Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council.

Bukatko, D., & Daehler, M. (1995). *Child development: A thematic approach* (2nd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Burton, P., Leoschut, L., & Bonora, A. (2009). *Walking the tightrope: Youth resilience to crime in South Africa.* Cape Town: Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention.

*Child Care Act, 38 of 2005*, (492). (2006). Government of South Africa. No 28944.

Chirkov, V., Ryan, R. M., Youngmee, K., & Kaplan, U. (2003). Differentiating autonomy from individualism and independence: A self-determination theory perspective on internalization of cultural orientations and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*(1), 97–110.

Conger, R. D., Cui, M., Bryant, C. M., & Elder, G. H. (2000). Competence in early adult romantic relationships: A developmental perspective on family influences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79*(2), 224–237.

De Jager, N. (2011). *Adolescents' relationships in a town in the Western Cape, South Africa.* Unpublished masters thesis, University of Stellenbosch, Cape Town.

Deater-Deckard, K., Sewell, M. D., Petrill, S. A., & Thompson, L. A. (2010). Maternal working memory and reactive negativity in parenting. *Psychological Science, 21*(1), 75–79.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior.* New York: Plenum Press.

Dobson, J. (2002). *Parents' answers book.* Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

Ginwala, F. (1990, January 13–18). *Women in South Africa today.* A paper presented at the Malibongwe conference, Amsterdam.

Gonzalez, A., Greenwood, G., & Wenhsu, J. (2001). Undergraduate students' goal orientations and their relationship to perceived parenting styles. *College Student Journal, 35,* 182–193.

Gray, M. R., & Steinberg, L. (1999). Unpacking authoritative parenting: Reassessing a multidimensional construct. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 61,* 574–587.

Grolnick, W. (2003). *The psychology of parental control: How well-meant parenting backfires.* Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Grolnick, W. S., Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1997). Internalization within the family: The self-determination theory perspective. In J. E. Grusec & L. Kuczynski (Eds.), *Parenting and children's internalization of values: A handbook of contemporary theory* (pp. 135–161). New York: Wiley.

Gupta, R. M., & Theus, F. C. (2006). *Pointers for parenting for mental health service professionals.* Chichester: Wiley.

Hartley-Brewer, E. (1996). *Positive parenting.* London: Cedar.

Herzog, E., & Sudia, C. (1973). Children in fatherless families. In B. Caldwell & H. Ricciti (Eds.), *Review of child development research* (Vol. 3, pp. 79–92). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Holborn, L., & Eddy, G. (2011). *The first steps to healing the South African family*. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations.

Hughes, S. O., Power, T. G., Fisher, J. O., Mueller, S., & Nicklas, T. A. (2005). Revisiting a neglected construct: Parenting styles in child-feeding context. *Appetite, 44*, 83–92.

Huver, R. M. E., Otten, R., de Vries, H., & Engels, R. C. M. E. (2010). Personality and parenting style in parents of adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence, 33*, 395–402.

Karavasilis, L., Doyle, A. B., & Markiewicz, D. (2003). Associations between parenting styles and attachment to mother in middle childhood and adolescence. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 27*, 153–164.

Kritzas, N., & Grobler, A. A. (2005). The relationship between perceived parenting styles and resilience during adolescence. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 17*(1), 1–12.

Kurdek, L. A., & Fine, M. A. (1994). Family acceptance and family control as predictors of adjustment in young adolescents: Linear, curvilinear or interactive effects? *Child Development, 65*, 1137–1146.

Lamborn, S., Mounts, N., Steinberg, L., & Dornbusch, S. (1991). Patterns of competence and adjustment among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent and neglectful families. *Child Development, 62*, 1049–1066.

Latouf, N. C. (2005). *Parenting styles affecting the behavior of five-year olds*. Unpublished masters thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Lindeggar, G., & Maxwell, J. (2007). Teenage masculinity: The double find of conformity to hegemonic standards. In T. Shefer, K. Ratele, A. Strebel, N. Shabalala, & R. Buikema (Eds.), *From boys to men* (pp. 94–111). Lansdowne: Juta & Company Ltd.

Lowe, C. (2005). *Perceived child-rearing practices as predictors of relationship satisfaction of fourth-year university hostel residents*. Unpublished masters thesis, University of Free State, Free State Province.

Maccoby, E. E. (1992). The role of parents in the socialization of children: An historical overview. *Developmental Psychology, 28*, 1006–1017.

Maccoby, E. E. (2000). Parenting and its effects on children: On reading and misreading behavior genetics. *Annual Reviews of Psychology, 51*, 1–27.

Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, J. A. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent–child interaction. In P. H. Mussen & E. M. Hetherington (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology* (Socialization, personality, and social development 4th ed., Vol. 4, pp. 1–101). New York: Wiley.

Magnuson, K., & Berger, L. M. (2009). Family structure states and transitions: Associations with children's well-being during middle childhood. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 71*(3), 575–591.

Makwakwa, T. (2011). *Emerging adulthood: Examining the relationship between parenting styles and decision-making of university resident students*. Unpublished masters thesis, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town.

McNeely, C. A., & Barber, B. K. (2010). How do parents make adolescents feel loved? Perspectives on supportive parenting from adolescents in 12 cultures. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 25*, 601.

Milevsky, A., Schlechter, M., Netter, S., & Keehn, D. (2007). Maternal and paternal parenting styles adolescents: Associations with self-esteem, depression and life satisfaction. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 16*, 39–47.

Moremi, D. M. (2002). *Parenting styles and the adjustment of black South African Grade 1 children in single parent households*. Unpublished masters thesis. University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Morrell, R., Bhana, D., & Shefer, T. (2012). *Books and babies: Pregnancy and young parents in schools*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Muris, P., Loxton, H., Neumann, A., du Plessis, M., King, N., & Ollendick, T. (2006). DSM-defined anxiety disorders symptoms in South African youths: Their assessment and relationship with perceived parental rearing behaviors. *Behavior Research and Therapy, 44*, 883–896.

Naidoo, P. (1998). The experiences of divorced mothers as single parents. *Psychology in Society (PINS), 23*, 17–34.

Ocholla-Ayayo, A. B. C. (2000). The African family in development crisis in the second millennium. *The African Anthropologist, 7*(1), 84–113.

Osborne, C., Berger, L. M., & Magnuson, K. (2012). Family structure transitions and changes in maternal resources and well-being. *Demography, 49*(1), 23–47.

Pervin, L., & John, O. (2001). *Personality: Theory and research* (8th ed.). New York: Wiley.

Pettit, G. S., Laird, R. D., Dodge, K. A., Bates, J. E., & Criss, M. M. (2001). Antecedents and behavior-problems outcomes of parental monitoring and psychological control in early adolescence. *Child Development, 72*(2), 583–598.

Posel, D. (1991). *The making of apartheid 1948–1961. Conflict and compromise*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Richter, L., & Morell, R. (2006). *Baba: Men and fatherhood in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Roman, N. V. (2008). *Single and married mother-preadolescent relationships: Understanding and comparing the interaction between self-esteem and family functioning*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town.

Roman, N. V. (2011). Maternal parenting in single and two-parent families in South Africa from a child's perspective. *Social Behavior and Personality, 39*(5), 577–586.

Roman, N. V., Human, A., & Hiss, D. (2012). Young South African adults' perceptions of parental psychological control and antisocial behavior. *Social Behavior and Personality, 40*(7), 1163–1174.

Rudy, D., & Grusec, J. E. (2006). Authoritarian parenting in individualist and collectivist groups: Associations with maternal emotion and cognition and children's self-esteem. *Journal of Family Psychology, 20*(1), 68–78.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 68–78.

Schaefer, E. (1991). Goals for parent and future-parent education: Research on parental beliefs and behavior. *The Elementary School Journal, 91*(3), 239–247.

Soenens, B. (2006). *Psychologically controlling parenting and adolescent psychosocial adjustment*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Leuven, Belgium.

Statistics South Africa. (2007). *General household survey 2006*. (Online) www.statssa.gov.za. September 18, 2007.

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, N. D., Mounts, N. S., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1994). Over-time changes in adjustment and competence among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent and neglectful families. *Child Development, 65*(3), 754–770.

Swartz, S., & Bhana, A. (2009). Teenage Tata: Young fathers take responsibility. *HSRC Review, 7*(3), 4–5.

Van Steenkiste, M. (2005). *Intrinsic versus extrinsic goal promotion and autonomy support versus control*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Leuven, Belgium.

Van Steenkiste, M., Zhou, M., Lens, W., & Soenens, B. (2005). Experiences of autonomy and control among Chinese learners: Vitalizing or immobilizing? *Journal of Educational Psychology, 97*(3), 468–483.

Van Wel, F., Linsen, H., & Abma, R. (2000). The parental bond and the well-being of adolescents and young adults. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 29*(3), 307–318.

Weinraub, M., & Wolf, B. (1983). Effects of stress and social supports on mother-child interactions in single and two-parent families. *Child Development, 54*, 1297–1311.

Wintre, M. G., & Yaffe, M. (2000). First-year students' adjustment to university life as a function of relationships with parents. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 15*(1), 9–37.

# Childrearing, Motherhood and Fatherhood in Ghana

**Kingsley Nyarko**

Parenting is a universal phenomenon pervasive in all human cultures and societies. Although culturally universal, parenting is culturally relative. In other words, whilst parenting is known to exist across all cultures, it differs from one culture to another. Parenting in western/individualistic cultures significantly differs from that in collectivistic cultures like the Ghanaian culture. Corsaro (1997) maintained that the images of childhood do not arise from nature, but from a society's culture and organization. Based on this assumption, it seems that biology alone cannot fully explain childhood and development. Rather, the notion of childhood has evolved throughout history and culture, based on the beliefs and values of a specific society dictated by parenting influence (Vygotsky 1978).

The values and norms of a culture are transmitted from one generation to the next through child rearing practices (Keshavarz and Baharundin 2009; Vygotsky 1978). Cultural differences in ideals and values based on the notions of individualism and collectivism provide an explanation for the interpretation for parenting across cultures (Triandis 2001). Understanding the cultural context of a society helps predict the differences in parenting styles that predominate in that society and explains how to account for such differences (Keshavarz and Baharundin 2009). This suggests that parenting styles are socially constructed and are not necessarily universal typologies as Baumrind has suggested (1967, 1971). In her work, she identified four distinct parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and rejecting-neglecting. However, a fifth style, the contemporary view—which states that the development of an individual is defined by the communities in which they reside and the activities they do—was added in 1987.

K. Nyarko (✉)
Psychology Department, University of Ghana, P. O. BOX LG 84, Legon, Ghana
e-mail: kingpong73@yahoo.com

## Contextual Background

Ghana is centrally located on the West African coast (8 00 N, 2 00 W) and has a total surface area of 238,537 km$^2$ of which 230,020 km$^2$ constitute land and 8,520 km$^2$ constitute water bodies. Three French-speaking countries border it: Togo on the east, Burkina Faso on the north and northwest, and Côte d'Ivoire on the west.

Ghana is a lowland country except for a range of hills on the eastern border and the mountain Afadjato, the highest point above sea level (884 m). Ghana can be divided into three ecological zones: the sandy coastline backed by a coastal plain, which is crossed by several rivers and streams; the middle belt and western parts of the country, which are heavily forested and have many streams and rivers; and a northern savannah, which is drained by the Black and White Volta Rivers. The hydroelectric dam created Volta Lake, which is the largest artificial lake in the world and which supplies hydroelectric power to the state. The country is also influenced by the northeasterly harmattan wind (January to March). It is tropically warm and comparatively dry along the southeast coast, hot and humid in the southwest and hot and dry in the north.

Economically, development has followed a broad pattern with socioeconomic development being higher in the coastal savannah and declining towards the north (Ghana Statistical Service 2000). For example, the proportion of the population with formal education, which is over 90 % in coastal areas such as the Greater Accra Region, is less than 50 % in the northern savannah area. Agriculture contributes 34 % of the gross domestic product (GDP) (Ghana Statistical Service 2008) and it employs about 50 % of the population (Ghana Statistical Service 2002). The leading export commodities are cocoa, gold, and timber. Tourism is fast gaining prominence as a foreign exchange earner. Moreover, Ghana hopes to boost its economy from the prospects of its current oil discovery.

## Ethnic Groupings in Ghana

The ethnic structure of the Ghanaian population is complex. However, linguists have placed Ghanaian languages in one or the other of only two major linguistic subfamilies of the Niger-Congo language family, one of the large language groups in Africa. These are the Kwa and Gur groups, found to the south and north of the Volta River, respectively. The Kwa group, which comprises about 75 % of the country's population, includes the Akan, Ga-Adangbe, and Ewe. On the north of the Volta River are the three subdivisions of the Gur-speaking people: the Gurma, Grusi, and Mole-Dagbane. The Akan, the largest of the ethnic groups (49 %), are comprised of the Asante, Fante, Akyem, Akuapem, Kwahu, Brong, Ahanta, Wassa, and ten others. They are followed by the Mole-Dagbon (17 %); Ewe (13 %); Nkonya, Tafi, Logba, Sontrokofi, Lolobi, Likpe and Ga-Dangme (8 %); and Ga, Krobo and Ada (13 %) (Ghana Statistical Services 2002).

## Ghanaian Family Systems and Childrearing

Although Ghanaians, like many other nationalities, are expected to marry, it is unfathomable for married couples to be childless (except on medical grounds). Studies have shown that the premium that Africans put on childbearing make them have larger families (Caldwell 1982). In Ghana, women bear many children. Although, there seems to be a reduction in the average fertility levels among women in Ghana, the average family size of nearly five children is considerably higher than what is found in other parts of the world. However, family size varies considerably among women of different social groupings. In general, the higher the income, the fewer children a couple have.

Traditional Ghanaian society places a high premium on children. The crucial role played by children in the social organization, which is based on the lineage system, makes them the dream of every family in Ghana. In this kind of family system, the influence of the lineage depends extensively on its members. Consequently, an increase in the numerical strength of the lineage becomes both desirable and prestigious. Prolific childbearing therefore becomes an invaluable treasure to traditional society. According to Abotchie (2008), in order to satisfy the desire for a large family, polygamous marriages, concubinage and premarital sex become rampant. However, traditional Ghanaian society has come under the influence of exogenous forces which have not only transformed the society's orientation, but in some instances distorted the social system. As part of the process of rapid demographic and socio-economic change due to urbanization and modernization, patterns of family formation and family life are continuing to undergo considerable change, altering the composition and structure of families in our societies. More prominent in urban areas is the rapid appearance of the nuclear family system. It is a matter of the individual's life, his house, his possessions, and not the traditional usage of our farm, our home, sharing the happiness, woes, and successes of the extended family, with loyalty and responsibility to one's elders (Degbey 1997).

Apart from children being cherished so that the family tree can be maintained, other compelling reasons have been identified. One is that marriage is nearly universal and most women marry at an early age. Some individuals also suggest that high fertility is the result of deep-rooted cultural values, norms, and practices that support the existence of large families. In this regard, African parents receive more rewards from reproduction than do parents in many other societies. Moreover, these upward-wealth flows are guaranteed by interwoven social and religious sanctions. Because children are the main source of old age support, labor, prestige, and marital stability, Caldwell (1982) and Takyi (2001) suggest that it is suicidal for parents to have no children. Also, parents may want more children because it costs them very little to raise a child; other people help in the provision of childcare through fostering arrangements (Isiugo-Abanihe 1985).

In the wake of modernity in Ghana, the family still remains the centre of the social structure. It continues performing its traditional functions of child reproduction, maintenance, status ascription, and socialization. However, the inception of Christianity coupled with modern economic pressures has led to a

significant decline in polygamous marriages as well as the rate of childbirth (Nukunya 1992; Owusu 2007). The rate of childbirth went from 32.37 in 2008 to 31.98 in 2009 (Trading Economics 2012).

## Extended (Collectivistic/Traditional) Family System Versus Nuclear (Individualistic/Modern) Family System

The traditional Ghanaian society family organization hinges on the concept of the extended family system which is also known as the lineage system. The extended family is very collectivistic and traditional in function, emphasizing a strong sense of cohesiveness and group responsibility in all social endeavors including parenting. The lineage system invites the involvement of all members of the larger community to participate in parenting and childrearing at the larger community level, irrespective of biological parenthood (Nukunya 1992; Degbey 1997).

In the lineage system, the desire for societal continuity and maintenance of social order dictates the course of parenting towards the moral dimension. According to Sarpong (1974), the influence of the external family system has several implications for the values assigned to children and possibly the way they are socialized. The value of respect for the elderly has always been highly emphasized. Children are traditionally trained to be responsive to older people's needs in the society. In such a society, it is a norm for a child to rush to help with a load on an elder's head, to offer a public seat to an older person, to avoid interference in elders' conversations, and to fetch and offer bundles of firewood and/or buckets of water to distant elders. Punishment for delinquent behaviour is never restricted only to biological parents. In homes or public outskirts, any older person of the community possesses the license to discipline a child through any socially approved method.

The sole object of parenting in this traditional lineage family system has been to train children to become future custodians of societal values and traditions. This motive has always been expressed in the concern for the initiation of children into the various customary rites of passage where traditional values are reiterated. For instance, among the Akans, during the child outdooring (naming) ceremony, the head who supervises the ceremony admonishes the child in the following words whilst administering water and local gin to the child:

[Child's name],
*Say water whenever it is water*
*Say gin whenever it is gin*

Similarly, among the Ewes, the head also admonishes the child in the following way:

[Child's Name]
*Know that,*
*He who liveth in this world*
*Eateth of the corn and drinketh of water*

*For these are nourishing:*
*This is a mix of corn and water*
*I now administer to you.*
[The child is here administered with a tipple of gin]
*Now here is a tipple of gin,*
Taste of it
But gin intoxicates and betrays
Be wise and drink it not

Both Akans and Ewes, through the ritual of their outdooring ceremony, usher the newborn child into the concept of good and evil, of truth and falsity, and the need to make a clear distinction among these. This is an explicit demonstration of how the parents endeavour to impart the values of sincerity and honesty to the new generation, believing that these are essential to the longevity of the lineage (Abotchie 2008).

Although the traditional extended family system has been characteristic of most Ghanaian communities, encounter with the West has now paved way for the rapid emergence of the nuclear or small family system where the ideals of collectivistic living are replaced with the ideals of individualistic living. Here, biological parents are directly in charge of their children's behaviour. A child belongs to the nuclear or small family and must be trained by that family. In view of the family's crucial role, Bowlby (1989) argued that the family structure provides emotional attachments between parents and children. In some cases, biological parents overprotect their children and openly confront other people who attempt to punish their children. In today's Ghana, it is not uncommon to see parents bringing their children to schools to confront the teacher for a punishment he delivered. In these cases, a child's responsibility to his elders is largely limited to his or her immediate family. Unlike the traditional collectivistic society, in the modern family system children show little respect to unknown elders, fail to offer seats to older people even in public transport, and may even exchange harsh words with elders.

## Matrilineal Versus Patrilineal Family Systems

Another way of explaining the family organization in Ghana is through the perspective of family inheritance where there are both matrilineal and patrilineal systems. This kind of system determines who becomes more interested in the child and thus the extent of devotion to parenting. The Akan ethnic group is basically matrilineal where children are said to belong to their mother's kin group and only females possess the right to pass kin identity on to their offspring. The role of mothers in parenting has been one of extreme importance. In this system, mothers promote a special bond and attachment of the child with her own kin group as against the husband's kin group. In the matrilineal family system the father gains nothing in the family life business as the wife takes all. Indeed, typical matrilineal fathers show little interest in their own children but more interest in their nephews who are the customary rightful heirs to their inheritance.

The Ewes are essentially patrilineal people who consider children to be part of their father's kin group and not of their mother's. Men pass on kin membership to their own children. Moreover, there exists another type of family system known as the double descent. Double-descent people incorporate dimensions of both the matrilineal and the patrilineal type. The domestic group often consists of two or more brothers with their wives and children who usually occupy a single homestead with a separate room for each wife (Abotchie 2008).

## Motherhood Versus Fatherhood

In Ghana, despite the matrilineal and patrilineal divisions, generally speaking, the family structure ensures that spouses rely on each other for the upbringing of their children. Traditionally, the father is designated as the family's "bread winner" responsible for all economic and financial provisions. The mother is the "bread maker" who remains at home to prepare meals for the family, take care of the family's properties, and keep the house, the husband and the children clean and tidy (Abotchie 2008). In these well-defined responsibilities, both the father and the mother cooperate to ensure the welfare of their children.

According to Clark (1999), Ashantis stress biological motherhood for women and assume that mother's loyalties and schedule conflicts interfere with equally female gendered expectations within marriage. Ashanti maternal devotion is mostly expressed through maternal hard work in addressing children's financial needs and not by staying home with them. Clark (1999) identified trading as an ideal "nursing-mother work" due to its accompanying steady income which helps to bring up children successfully in adulthood but not because of its compatibility with childcare. Kin role is commonly defined through the use of concepts like "motherly fathers" or "manly woman". Such concepts define gender role expectations and actual role performance.

In Baumrind's (1967) typologies of parenting, the character of Ghanaian mothers epitomizes the permissive style of parenting. Mothers adopt a more liberal approach to the upbringing of children. Permissive parents allow much liberty to their children in order to ensure their creativity and individuality. Mothers are less punitive and use an accepting and affirmative approach in addressing their children's desires and actions. In addition, mothers are very protective and emotionally responsive to their children's needs. It is common to see children running to their mothers for protection when they are about to receive punishment from their fathers.

The character of Ghanaian fathers epitomizes the authoritarian style of Baumrind's (1967) classification. Fathers raise their children in accordance with a set standard of conduct, usually an absolute standard, theologically motivated and formulated by a higher authority. Fathers usually demand obedience from children and make use of punitive, forceful measures to shape the behaviour of their children. This kind of parenting does not give children the opportunity to express their views on issues and stifles their creativity and impairs their competence (Moore 1992; Hernandez 2007).

These children also have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression (Darling 1999).

Although Ghanaian mothers are largely permissive in parenting and fathers are largely authoritarian in parenting, there are many deviations. Some fathers and mothers adopt an authoritative approach, some fathers are permissive but only a few mothers appear authoritarian. (These are my own observations, and represent the reality on the ground).

Apart from the above parenting styles used in parenting in Ghana, parents also use corporal punishment in disciplining their children at home. The Children's Act (1998) forbids the use of "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment including any cultural practice which dehumanizes or is injurious to the physical and mental well-being of a child" (article 13(1)). However it permits a degree of "reasonable" and "justifiable" punishment of children, stating that, "no correction of a child is justifiable which is unreasonable in kind or in degree according to the age, physical and mental condition of the child and no correction is justifiable if the child by reason of tender age or otherwise is incapable of understanding the purpose of the correction" (article 13(2)).

Even in schools, corporal punishment is lawful. In accordance with the 1961 Education Act, the Ghana Education Code of Discipline for second cycle school provides head teachers or teachers with his permission, the platform to cane students up to six strokes. Although, ministerial directives advise against the use of corporal punishment in schools, it is only rhetoric.

The limited empirical studies on parental discipline corroborate the use of corporal punishment in the country. For instance, Twum-Danso (2010) in her study indicated that corporal punishment is a principal way through which parents train their children. Her study supports the generally accepted view that physical punishment is pervasive and socially accepted throughout the Ghanaian society. The majority of the children used in the study indicated that they have experienced some form of physical punishment at the hands of parents or primary caregivers (61.4 %) – with 30.4 % claiming they experienced only physical methods of punishment at home and 31.0 % reporting that they experienced both physical and non-physical methods. In one of her focus group discussions, one parent remarked, "In training children there are certain methods/stages you go through. As part of a method of training children, physical punishment is important." However, another woman decried the use of punishment in childrearing in the following statement, "Me, when my children do something, I have never hit them. They see how I change in the way I relate to them (e.g. ignore them, not do anything for them, etc.) and they stop" (Twum-Danso 2010, p. 19).

According to a statistical review by UNICEF, 69 % of children who are between the ages of 2 and 14 experienced minor physical punishment in the home in 2005–2006, although 43 % of the mothers and caregivers hold the belief that children have to be physically punished. The same review indicated that 47 % of girls and women who are between the ages of 15 and 49 believed that a husband or partner is justified in hitting or beating his wife in some situations (UNICEF 2007). In another report by UNICEF on parental discipline in the home in Ghana, it was revealed that

between 2005 and 2006, 90 % of children aged between 2 and 14 years experienced physical punishment and/or psychological aggression in the month before the survey; about 11 % experienced severe physical punishment (being hit or slapped on the face, head or ears and/or being repeatedly beaten with an implement "as hard as one could") (UNICEF 2010).

In fact, the country appears to be divided on the use of corporal punishment in shaping behaviour. Whereas some are in favour of caning, others are not. It makes it difficult to evaluate the place of corporal punishment in growing our young. Thus, physical punishment is used as only one of the various approaches in child discipline. This supports Levinson's ninety country study in which he discovered that while physical punishment is a critical form of discipline in many societies, it is not the only means adults use in parenting their young (Levinson 1989). What people are interested in is training children to become functional in society. However, the society appears to be interested in caning (Twum-Danso 2009).

## Conclusion

As suggested by Keshavarz and Baharundin (2009), the understanding of the cultural context of a people reveals much about their way of life. It is in this sense that the discussion on the Ghanaian parenting style commenced with a discussion of the geographical description of the country and continued with a discussion on the ethnic groupings of the people. Discussion on parenting in Ghana was accomplished from analyses of the family systems pervasive in Ghanaian society. The family systems were evaluated from the juxtaposition of the extended/traditional/collectivistic family to the nuclear/modern/individualistic family in one perspective, and in another perspective of inheritance, from the juxtaposition of the matrilineal family and the patrilineal family system. It continued with a comparative assessment of the respective roles of Ghanaian mothers and fathers in parenting. The discussion closed with the assessment of corporal punishment as a method of child discipline in the country.

## References

Abotchie, C. (2008). *Structure of traditional Ghanaian society*. Accra: Universities Press.
Baumrind, D. (1967). Child care practice anteceding three patterns of preschool behaviour. *Genetic Psychology Monographs, 71*(1), 43–48.
Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology Monograph, 4*(1), 1–103.
Bowlby, J. (1989). *Secure attachment*. New York: Basic Books.
Caldwell, J. C. (1982). *Theory of fertility decline*. London: Academic.
Clark, G. (1999). Mothering, work and gender in urban Asante ideology and practice. *American Anthropologist, 101*(4), 717–729.

Corsaro, W. A. (1997). *The sociology of childhood*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.

Darling, N. (1999). Parenting style and its correlates. *ERIC Digest, 99*(3), 1–2.

Degbey, J. L. (1997). *Africa family structure*. www.jicef.or.jp/wahec/ful217.htm

Ghana Statistical Service. (2000). *Poverty trends in Ghana in the1990s*. Accra: Ghana Statistical Service.

Ghana Statistical Service. (2002). *2000 Population and housing census: Summary report of final results*. Accra: Ghana Statistical Service.

Ghana Statistical Service. (2008). *Ghana in figures*. Accra: Ghana Statistical Service.

Government of Ghana. (1998). *Children's Act 1998 (Act 13)*. Accra: Government of Ghana.

Hernandez, K. (2007). *Consequences of authoritarian parenting*. www.helium.com/items/667048-consequences-of-authoritarian-parenting

Isiugo-Abanihe, U. C. (1985). Child fosterage in West Africa. *Population and Development Review, 11*(1), 53–72.

Keshavarz, S., & Baharundin, R. (2009). Parenting style in a collectivist culture of Malaysia. *European Journal of Social Sciences, 10*(1), 66–73.

Levinson, D. (1989). *Family violence in cross-cultural perspective*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Moore, S. G. (1992). *The role of parents in the development of peer group competence*. www.ericdigests.org/1992-3/parents.htm

Nukunya, G. K. (1992). *Tradition and change in Ghana*. Accra: Universities Press.

Owusu, S. (2007). Towards a theology of marriage and polygamy. *Direction Journal, 36*(2), 192–205.

Sarpong, P. A. (1974). *Ghana in retrospect: Some aspects of Ghanaian Culture*. Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Takyi, B. K. (2001). Marital stability in an African society. Exploring the factors that influence divorce processes in Ghana. *Sociological Focus, 34*, 77–96.

Trading Economics. (2012). *Birth rate; crude (per 1,000 people) in Ghana*. www.tradingeconomics.com/birth-rate-crude-per-1-000-people-wb-data

Triandis, H. C. (2001). Individualism and collectivism: Past, present and future. In D. Masumoto (Ed.), *Handbook of culture and psychology* (pp. 35–50). New York: Oxford University Press.

Twum-Danso, A. (2009). Reciprocity, Respect and Responsibility: The 3Rs Underlying parent-child relationships in Ghana and the implications for children's rights. *The International Journal of Children's Rights, 17*(3), 415–432.

Twum-Danso, A. (2010). *Children's perceptions of physical punishment in Ghana*. www.thumbprintcreations.com

UNICEF. (2007). *Progress for children: A world fit for children – Statistical review*, 6. New York: UNICEF.

UNICEF. (2010). *Child disciplinary practices at home: Evidence from a range of Low- and middle-Income countries*. New York: UNICEF.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society* (Cole, M., John-Steiner, V., Scribner, S., & Souberman, E., Eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

# Changing Patterns of Yoruba Parenting in Nigeria

**Emmanuel D. Babatunde and Kelebogile Setiloane**

> *Ani ki omaku* – We pray that the child may not die
> *Kinlo npa omo bi aigbon* – What kills more quickly than stupidity?
>
> -A Yoruba Proverb

## Introduction

This Yoruba proverb summarizes the philosophy, ethics and practice of parenting among the Yoruba in Nigeria. Parenting is the most important duty that an individual owes the Yoruba community. It is the foundational duty that establishes the individual as an efficient and responsible member of the community. The proverb, *Omo kogbon ani ki omaku, kinlo npa omo bi aigbo*n, (the child is stupid and the parents pray that it may not die, what kills more quickly than stupidity) says that bad, selfish or stupid behaviors are unbecoming of a decent human being living in the community. These actions classify the individual, not into the category of one living human society, but one who is wild and living in a state of nature.

The measure of worthwhileness of existence of a parent is that he or she has, at death, left behind, intelligent, responsible, caring and nurturing children. These children brought up on the template of *Omoluwabi*, the epitome of the good person, are the ones who would, through their success in parenting, keep the memory of their ancestors alive. The well-brought up child is the core of the Yoruba worldview. That worldview is child-centered, adult-controlled and elderly ruled. The past gave

E.D. Babatunde (✉)
Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Lincoln University, PA 19352, USA
e-mail: babatunde@lincoln.edu

K. Setiloane
Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition, University of Delaware, Newark, DE, USA

birth to the present which in turn will give birth to the future. The evidence of life that is successful is that the Yoruba give birth to children that are nurtured to internalize the Yoruba way. The traditional Yoruba way encompasses respect for the elder, nurture and care of the young to become responsible adults, care of the elderly while still alive, and rituals of annual remembrance to keep the memory of the dead alive among the living. This annual ritual of remembrance take the forms of the *Egungun* masquerade festival, when the living dress up as dead Yoruba ancestors who are visiting their progeny on earth. Children and relatives of the deceased give proper burial complete with all rituals, to the elderly who have died well. The last funerary rite for the elderly who have died well in the eyes of the society, is the proper feasting of the living, who ensure that these elders rest in peace. These responsibilities of satisfying the living to guarantee that the dead are admitted to repose in afterlife, show the power of the dead on the living. The Yoruba husband and wife are supposed to give birth to and nurture the young to become sensitive, caring and nurturing members of the family who are completely loyal to their kinship members, competitive in society, exuberant in promoting the superior contributions of their ancestors and ostentatious in burying their dead elders, who have, according to the Yoruba norms of living, died well.

Emile Durkheim defined religion as consisting of beliefs and practices concerned with the sacred activated by a moral community (Durkheim 1947). The Yoruba idea of the sacred and the relationship between the sacred and the ancestors—intermediaries between the divine and the individual in the community—constitute the glue that binds Yoruba society together. This is the key to understanding the powerful influence of culture on all the Yoruba. Because they are mainly patrilineal, men are more highly privileged than women. This skewing of cultural privileges in favor of men has created a tendency bordering on the abusive for women. The watchful child undergoing enculturation often develops a preference for the mother over the father precisely because the child comes to learn that his or her mother is not treated properly. Preference for the suffering Yoruba mother is related in the proverb, *Iyani wura, baba nidigi*. (Mother is gold, father is glass) (Babatunde and Setiloane 2010). In Yoruba land, men can have more than one wife, while women can have only one husband. Children of the same mother feel very close. Preference is made again for the mother by showing that the closeness of bond is stronger among children of the same mother than children of the same father. Thus when the Yoruba in a polygynous household say, *'kini yi kini mi, o yatosi kiniyi kinii wa* (this is mine is different from this is ours), it means that a mother's children by the same father are mine; while father's children by different mothers belong to another category.

## Persona of the Husband in Yoruba Tradition

The family is the key to understanding the powerful influence of Yoruba culture on the Yoruba. Because the Yoruba family is child centered, adult-controlled and elderly ruled, the care of all in the extended family is the business of all.

Three significant elements are responsible for this cohesiveness in the traditional non-urban Yoruba environment. The first is the circular structure of the Yoruba compound. The second is Yoruba loyalty to ascription rather than achievement, where status and identity are inherited not earned. The third is the Yoruba epitome of the good person, *Omoluwabi*.

The circular structure of the Yoruba compound exposes children, young adults and the very elderly to the care and concerns of the whole community. This traditional arrangement has created an open environment of interaction as children grow up, as elders become feeble and as adults pursue the daily business of taking care of the young, the sick and the feeble. The children are able to see the practices and activities of the lineage through songs which inform the children about the history of their ancestors. The elders who provide child care while the adults are absent also use other cultural instruments such as lullabies, ancestral lyrics, stories and practices that the children internalize.

The Yoruba loyalty to inherited over achieved status is another reinforcing element of Yoruba culture. The very competitive Yoruba often see loyalty to their family as superior to achieved status in the new professions of the modern society. Thus when I was ordained a Catholic Priest many years ago, the Muslim members of our extended family saw it as an achievement that raised the status of the family at large in the community. They not only contributed to the expenses, they came in their Haj dresses to show that whatever religion you are dealing with, the extended family of which the Babatunde family is just a unit has leaders who are holding their own and making the family proud. So, Muslims and Catholics see themselves, first as members of the larger Olola family, before they see themselves as Muslims and Catholics.

The Yoruba *Omoluwabi* template is the third most powerful element of transformation. Who is an epitome of the good person in Yoruba culture? One who has personal character, generosity, integrity as well as the ability to care for the feeble elderly and children. The foundation of these positive characteristics is hard work, thrift, and achievement. The Yoruba measure the worthwhileness of their existence in the symbols of Yoruba success. These are manifested in a man marrying many wives, having many children and building a big house. There is also a fundamental core requirement. What is important is the provision of proper and efficient parenting. To ensure this, children cannot be alone. They must always be in the company of some elder. It is the cultivation in the young of a sense of their importance as expressed in the time of their birth relative to that of others. Seniority is pervasive among the Yoruba, whether wives or children of the same lineage. In relation to wives, seniority is established on the time of incorporation of the female into marriage as a wife. In other words, her own age is not relevant in establishing her seniority over others. Anybody who was born prior to the incorporation of the woman as a wife is senior to her. She must assume the position of one junior. Even if they are very junior to her in age, she will not call them by name. She will call them by a reverential name that she gives them that is recognized by the extended kinfolk. Everyone who is born into the extended family is brought up to know why it is important that he knows who is junior to him in the group. In any traditional Yoruba grouping, the most senior makes it known that he is in charge.

## The Persona of Wife in Yoruba Culture

The persona of the wife is the end result of sound training in good behavior, decency, hard work, readiness to sacrifice and management skills. She is the epitome of good character. The term *Iyawo* is a Yoruba contraction of *Aya wo o* (we branch to admire her beauty). The Yoruba see the woman as the true currency with which to forge extra lineage interaction. The symbols of marriage involved in the ritual of engagement (*Idana*) reiterate fertility, fecundity and the superior management skills of a Yoruba woman as mother and homemaker. Her rights are the main focus of symbolic meaning and action. The items used to construct symbolic meaning which emphasize what Yoruba culture identifies as the reason for marriage are kolanut (*obi*), water (*omi*), native pepper (*ataare*) and palm oil (*epo pupa*). Also included are salt (*iyo*) and honey (*oyin*). The prayers that are composed around these symbols complement the Yoruba approach to life and its meaning. As Babatunde (2011) noted:

> The Yoruba hope that each of these items will communicate its quality, homeopathically, to the union of husband and wife. The prayers referring to honey and salt express similar wishes deriving from a common quality of "sweetness". It is hope that the life of the couple will be happy. Furthermore, the preservative quality of salt is evoked and made to express the wish that the couple should live to a ripe old age.

The Yoruba wife is the fulcrum on which the Yoruba family revolves. As a person, she combines the quality of motherhood and that of the facilitator of all that is needed in a stable family that is positioned to produce *Omoluwabi*, children who are epitomes of all that is desirable in the successful Yoruba person. The Yoruba symbol that summarizes the complicated roles that these expectations in the wife call for is the hen and its chicks. The Yoruba who liken the protection of God for the faithful on earth to that of a hen who is solicitous over her chicks, say prayers like, *raga bowa bi edie tii raga bo awon moor re* (cover us with your shelter like the hen covers its chicks).

Yoruba culture recognizes the tremendous stress that these complicated roles exact on the Yoruba woman. They know that the foremost roles of the woman are bearing children, nurturing them and keeping the whole family alive by house chores which keep the house clean and the children presentable. Faced with these priorities, the birth and nurture of multiple children exact their tolls on the wife as solicitous mother on whom the burden of keeping the family alive rests. The substantial nature of the preoccupations of the Yoruba mother to the  survival of the Yoruba collective consciousness is so paramount to the scheme of things in Yoruba society, that the comparison of the roles of the father and the mother is noteworthy.

> A gaping hole in the sophisticated analysis of Yoruba in Falola's *A Mouth Sweeter than Salt* is the absence of the celebration of motherhood. If the key to unraveling the complicated aspects of Yoruba culture is the family, the Yoruba father is the gate as well as its exterior appearance. The mother, on the other hand, is the key to the family. She is the thermostat that regulates the temperature of the home and the quality of homeliness. The homeliness

of the house is not a function of size but of the incarnated warmth, affection and level of comfort that is present in the family, exemplified by the Yoruba proverb, *bife ba wa, yara sokoti lee gbeyan merila* "where there is love, a small room can accommodate fourteen people" (Babatunde 2011, p. 70).

In Yoruba culture, the mother-child dyad is the foundation of wholesomeness and holiness whether expressed in the tenderness, nurture and coziness of breast-feeding or the natural warmth of being carried on one's mother's back.

> That bonding is expressed in the tenderness of breastfeeding; it is also found in the warmth of being carried by the mother on her back, or wiping tears from the face of a crying child. That bonding is found in the encouragement of the mother, urging her frightened child to stand up to the bully once and for all. Specifically in polygyny, when access to resources is a function of the mother's energetic resourcefulness, bonding with the mother becomes a child's only reliable passage into the future (Babatunde 2011).

More importantly to parenting is a balancing exercise between the complementary roles of the father and the mother. That role among the Yoruba is conceptualized in the categories of the right hand and the left hand. Among the patrilineal Yoruba, the cultural responsibility to bring up children in the disciplined manner that is required, lies with the father and all men. In the absence of men, an elder, male or female, corrects an offending child immediately. Of course, the treatment is reported to the Yoruba father who then imposes his own discipline. The act of correction reinforces the lesson that bad behavior will not be tolerated. However, when the child is dealt with in accordance to the level of severity that the father may impose as a future deterrence for foolish or stupid behavior, it is the duty of the mother to comfort the child and explain to the child why the punishment was necessary in the first case. That is why the Yoruba proverb reiterates that, *ti aba fi owo otun no omo, afi tosin wo o mora* (when we use the right hand to discipline a child, we use the left hand to bring the child close for comfort). The father is the right hand of punishment. The mother is the left hand of comfort and reason as to why the punishment was necessary so that the child may become a useful member of the society.

## Persona of the Concubine in Yoruba Culture

The rule of polygyny allows the Yoruba man to marry more than one wife. It also accommodates a promiscuous man to have, in addition, a concubine (*ale*). Another group that practiced this is a Hausa Muslim member of the Sokoto Caliphate who, as Lovejoy noted:

> Could have as many as four wives, who had to be free women, and they could have as many concubines, who were supposed to be slaves, as they could afford. … Although women were legally minors under Islamic law, there was a clear distinction between concubines and wives. Concubines were slaves, and wives were not. As slaves, a concubine could not marry, own property, or inherit without the consent of her master. A wife by contrast, had the rights of a free born, even though as a woman, she had fewer rights than a man (Lovejoy 1988).

While there is no suggestion here that the Yoruba converted to Islam because its practices were similar in terms of their attitudes to women, their status and their worth, it would be right to state along with Robin Horton and J.D.Y. Peel, that the only way to explain conversion is to relate it to the experience of its authors in the social context of its emergence. People interpret this new experience in terms of their existing ideas, which are adapted and transformed in the process. If alien ideas get incorporated in the course of adaptation, the fact has to be explained in terms of the appropriateness of such incorporation given the total social situation (Horton and Peel 1976).

What is similar between both groups of men, the Yoruba and the Fulani, is that concubinage concentrated women in the hands of those who could afford them. But concubinage was practiced among the Yoruba and not just among the Yoruba elite. Falola's deconstruction of polygyny identified a third model of polygyny which seemed to have increased the privileges of the mercantile class.

> The control in this model is sophisticated but certainly there. The Alhaji co-opts all his wives to serve as managers of his six stores. In an age in which male relations cannot be trusted with money and property, the wife as mother of one's children re-circulates any stolen money to take care of their children (owo ati dukia). Thus, the money is kept in the family (Babatunde 2011).

Among Yoruba converts into Christianity, concubinage did not help to consolidate the subculture of the household of the men who fathered the children of the concubine. Children born out of wedlock, in whatever circumstance, are seen to have the soul of a dead ancestor within them. The Yoruba need to be seen as a normal and obedient member of the congregation would force many monogamous Christians who have concubines or celibates who have multiple children by multiple wives to pretend to be monogamous or celibate in church circles. The desire to be seen as a good Christian makes the Yoruba in this predicament prefer the offence of being an untruthful follower of his faith. The gregarious Yoruba prefers the social approval of being seen as a churchgoer to the guilt and punishment that God would visit on the individual for transgressing the law of monogamy or celibacy. The shame from social disapproval is more important than the guilt and eternal punishment for attempting to deceive God. Heaven is not some permanent abode that one is consigned to after death. Heaven is leaving good memories in the heart of the living who keep the memory of the dead alive. The children who have been well brought up and schooled in the mannerisms, courtesy, work ethics, nurturing expectations by good parents are the ones who keep the memory of the dead alive. There is a difference between Christian beliefs and African expectations after death. The irony is that as the supposed celibate tries to keep his lapse hidden, he is unable to identify with the child in public, nor be as open in parenting the child in the elements of Yoruba good upbringing. This lapse will translate into very poor parenting.

To return to the persona of the concubine, the fundamental questions that need to be asked are, What pushes the concubine to become one in a society that is over-indulgent to its men and very taxing on its women? Is it desperation when women fight among themselves to please the men who oppress them? Is it the success of the

dominant practice of patrilineal ideology that has made most Yoruba women believe that what is against their best interest in an attempt to please their men, is actually good for society? Must one see the concubine only in her role as one and not in her role as a mother of her own children?

Claude Levi-Strauss has provided a taxonomy of social practices in terms of 'culture' versus 'nature'. Under these two headings come others such as the 'cooked' and the 'raw', the 'tamed' and 'wild'. This analysis of the dialectics of the wife versus the concubine locates the 'wife' under 'culture' and the concubine under 'nature' in terms of process, rules of engagement and expectations. The process of starting a relationship of concubinage is short and involves acquaintanceship, flirting and immediate gratification. The process of courtship of a wife in traditional societies is long, tedious and involves deferred gratification. The shortest process of courtship often takes 3 years and is fraught with tests and evaluations that show that the initiands going through them associate great value to what each stage means.

The concubine does not go through these phases. Yoruba does not accord the man and his *Ale* equal status because the concubine does not have public recognition. While in marriage, the wife is seen as an ambassadress of her extended kinship group, the concubine enjoys no such kinship support.

To return to the parameters of our ethnographic analysis based on Levi-Strauss' bipolar categories, the concubine belongs to the category of nature or the wild. She has the momentary attention of the husband and wants to keep him hooked. She is able to take him sexually to where the mother cannot take him. It is the birth of these children by the wife which transforms the parents to responsible members of the community. The wife's thrift ensured that the husband became a respected member of the community. What Falola noted about the expectation of the Yoruba wife in the urban center was true of most Yoruba before Free Primary Education provided equal opportunity for both sexes to go to school. Falola (2004) noted that:

> It was expected that the wife would have an unimportant part-time job, take care of children, and help the man to save and build a family house. The house was the ultimate testimony of success. Whether one wanted to listen to their stories or not, they would tell them, narrating their struggles in life, the good fortune of meeting a woman who was not wasteful, and the saving of pennies and pounds in order to build a house. In a system without mortgages, whoever had a house lived in what had been fully paid for. One would save money to buy the land, then save to build the foundation, followed by a long break and more savings to buy bricks and eventually to build. …It was when the house was completed, when the labor of years of joint effort had produced a result, that the man, now with time and some change in his pocket, began to look for mistresses. At least, this is what the betrayed women told me, and they all said much the same thing. The belief of the women at Ode Aje was that a struggling man was devoted to his wife, so as the wife paid for the husband to succeed, she was also asking God to bring sorrow into her life.

The wife was committed to the pursuit of what the Yoruba define as success of the husband. The concubine's periodic momentary controls over the husband is a throwback to the Yoruba phase of young adulthood when he was so busy trying to prove his manhood by having sex with unrelated maidens from other descent groups. It is yet another instance of what was referred to earlier as one of the many moral contradictions of a vibrant culture.

## Yoruba Traditional Parenting in Comparative Context

Seen in comparative context to modern Western families, there are three fundamental differences in the parenting of the Yoruba. The first is that the unit of analysis of the Yoruba is the community. Second, the social sphere of Yoruba parenting is single and unified whereas the modern Euro-American family has two spheres – that of the child and that of the parenting adult. Third, the style of parenting differs according to the intention of socialization in the comparable spheres of social experience.

The Yoruba style of parenting, like many sub-Saharan African cultures, is based on three responsibilities: hard work ethics, maintenance of discipline, and social etiquette built on respect for elders and their views about how to tackle life experiences. The definition of role as a set of culturally defined rights and responsibilities, related to expected behavior patterns, obligations and privileges squarely agrees with Yoruba parenting purpose. The core basis of the understanding of these responsibilities is a religion-based understanding of worthwhileness of existence and remembrance after death. Yoruba see the child as the most important measure of parental success in life and the only proof of resurrection. The fundamental question that the Yoruba ask at the moment of making crucial decisions about the future is, "Who would remember one after one is dead?" The answer is a disciplined and respectful child. The next question is, "How can one raise a child who would be able to combine all these qualities?" The answer is that the parent who wants to accomplish this feat would raise his or her child according to the Yoruba template of *Omoluwabi*, the Yoruba epitome of good person raised by the village community of committed hard-working, gratification-deferring, kind hearted people. The Yoruba believe that from the womb to the tomb, the child's uprightness and wellbeing is a function of the collective effort of the village keyed on the example of the father and the mother of the child.

The Yoruba parenting role is divided into two complementary parts: discipline and comfort. The father is the right hand of discipline. He accepts the role of being the parent who imposes harsh discipline when necessary on the child. The mother is the left hand of comfort. This is one of the very few occasions when the symbolism of the left hand is auspicious and very necessary to the social fabric of Yoruba parenting. The Yoruba principle of discipline is not harshness that disgraces one to ostracism. The goal of discipline is to reform, correct and reinstate into a situation that can lead to improvement. That is why the Yoruba repeat, *Ti aba fi owo otun ba omo wi, afi tosin faamora* (when we use the right hand to flog the child and he cries, then we use the left hand to bring him close and comfort him or her). At birth, the child sleeps in the warmth of the mother's bosom. The child suckles from the mother's breasts. She is carried not only by the mother but other family members. Any crying draws the attention of quite a few people. The warmth of being carried on the back means that not only the mother but also the child's grown sisters and females in the extended family can comfort the child. She is, already in childhood, the active business of all the community. When a teenager or young adult misbehaves, any adult provides instant discipline or

correction. Then when the parent of the offending young adult comes back home, the young adult is reported again to the parent. A second round of disciplinary correction is enforced on the recalcitrant to show that insubordination will not be tolerated in the young adult. This keeps the young adult disciplined and has been used in the schools to encourage students to perform better in the school environment by ensuring that the child that is punished in the school is reported to his parent who would punish him again at home.

The period of childhood from the age of reason to young adulthood is a period of internship with the adult in practical life experiences. These same three components of culture are expressed in internalized expectations of dependence on each other in the traditional Yoruba parenting principles.

## *Omoluwabi* and the Yoruba Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis of the Yoruba is the community. As Colin Turnbull said, in the absence of modern technology, the members of the traditional community serve as one another's technology (Turnbull 1974, pp. 227–228). The newborn Yoruba child is in the cozy environment of the mother's warmth. The child is breastfed and mounted on the mother's back for emotional and physical comfort. When she is weaned, she transfers to the company of her age mates. She will eat from the same plate with them, play in the same groups and sleep on mats in the same area of the house. The child is brought up to prepare to participate in the adult social world, on adult terms. That way of life is encapsulated in the Yoruba *Iwa Omoluwabi*, the template of good character.

The *Omoluwabi* is the child who is well trained in treating others with respect, speaking about others with cordiality, well-mannered and well behaved enough to be included in the activities of the group. The *Omoluwabi* is trained to begin the day by going up to her parents and greeting them on her knees if female, or flat on her chest if male, with the early morning Yoruba greeting, *Ekaaro O* (Good morning parent). The parent responds to the greeting by asking whether she slept well and praying for the child. Those Yoruba children who have reached the age of reason, thereafter without prompting, take the container for fetching water and go with their mates to get water from the river. After fetching water, the well brought up child takes a broom and sweeps the homestead. When the child does not attend school, the mother may send her to sell prepared food. If the child belongs to a farming family, s/he goes to the farm with her parents and contributes to the work in the farm, either by plucking peppers from their small trees or by ferrying cocoa pods to the place where the cocoa pods are broken and the cocoa seeds fermented. The child is always given a duty to perform. Idleness is severely discouraged. As the Yoruba proverb says, *Ti oma je asamu, lati kekere lati maa jenu shamushamu* (A child who is going to be smart and successful will prove to be smart and committed to success and hard work from childhood).

Yoruba culture has assigned roles that are very physically demanding to males and delicate and nurturing to the female. The female child begins to learn cooking prowess from a young age by staying near her mother in the kitchen and learning by watching her cook. The Yoruba are one of the few ethnic groups that insist that if the adult male is to become independent, he too ought to pay attention to her mother's cooking skills in the kitchen. He too, like his sister, ought to know how to perform chores in the family. These chores include keeping the house clean, fetching firewood for cooking, and knowing how to cook basic Yoruba foods. He too like his sister shares the responsibility of looking after his younger sisters or brothers. Traditional parenting begins to separate the roles of the sexes about the age of 14 around the time when the Yoruba female child begins her menstruation.

## Moments in the Parenting Experience

To the Yoruba, the role of parenting is a set of expected behavior patterns, obligations and privileges that include the father as a breadwinner, as an autonomous individual, who works hard to make the basic needs of life available for the members of his family. This role also includes him as an involved father who is often absent in order to take care of his family responsibilities. It is the extent of the internalization of the values in the child who goes on to succeed that really matters. That is why, in societies in which parenting is based on community effort, no one is praised at the expense of the other. Both parents are making sacrifices to transform their child to be one whose life is rooted in total dependence on others for the wellbeing of the group. It is only when the group is strengthened that the individual rights can be enforced for the benefits of all in the society. One's humanity is affirmed only in relation to that of others in the community of people brought up to think of and cooperate with others for community wellbeing. Whether parenting is gleaned from the perspective of the individual as the unit of analysis or the community is seen as the core of parenting, each culture aggregates values, norms and rules to construct the unit of analysis of its worldview and mobilizes the salient elements of its institutions to enthrone that construct.

For the Japanese and the Yoruba, the traditional unit of analysis is the compound family of grandparents, parents and children, all of whom play a role in looking after one another. The grandparents look after grandchildren. This trans-generational child care is highly regarded in the socialization pedagogy. The grandparents teach their children songs that pass on the achievements of their ancestors. They teach the children what their cultures regard as essential to life, community, loyalty, hard work and the importance of taking care of the young and the old. While Yoruba parenting is based on transforming the child into the *Omoluwabi*, Japanese parenting is based on the notion of *Amae*—complete dependence based on loyalty, love and caring for one another and the young. This caring is founded on the bond of belonging to common ancestors.

## Food and Parenting

The use of food to teach lessons on life is significant to traditional education and etiquette. The abundance of food is a function of the climatic seasons in most areas of West Africa which has only two seasons; the rainy season and the dry season. Since the rainy season is given over to planting seeds, tubers, vegetables and other food items, it is also the season for scarcity and patiently waiting for what has been planted to ripen for consumption. It is the season of mild forms of famine due to scarcity. Yoruba parenting is very tough on how the child must respond to offerings of food or to hunger. The child is trained not to visit other compounds during their meal time. If the meal time arrives around the time that a child is visiting, even when he is hungry, he ought to refuse the invitation to join the family to eat. If he accepts, he gives the impression that his parents cannot perform the basic duty of feeding their family members. When eating out of the family home becomes unavoidable, Yoruba parenting education teaches the child to be calm, not to rush to eat food and certainly to leave the meat or fish that the child is given untouched until the meal is about to be finished. Protein source foods such as chicken and meat are quite rare and expensive. In most of Yorubaland, people depend on wild game to provide meat for the family. This is an irregular source of animal protein. Breeding animal protein source foods like poultry and cattle for food is very limited.

The Yoruba use food as a means of teaching children what they need to do if they want to become successful. The well brought up child is the one who can defer gratification, be thrifty and accumulate wealth that can be used to build a modern house, marry many wives who will give birth to many children who will be trained to become good members of the society. The idea behind using food to teach discipline, etiquette and a sense of sacrifice is that, unless children are taught harshly to defer gratification, they will develop a syndrome of expensive tastes. Since animal foods are scarce, those who consume them regularly would not be able to save their money to do the things that the Yoruba see as constituting success. Hence children are taught not to eat eggs which are scarce and very expensive. The eating of eggs also reduces the projected population of chickens. As Paul Bohannan (1968) noted in his fieldwork notes among the Tiv of the Middle-Belt of Nigeria in what has become known as the theory of 'spheres of exchange', when eggs are hatched, they give rise to hens and roosters which fetch a lot of money when sold (Bohannan and Bohannan 1968). One who is thrifty converts the money accumulated from the sales to build a house, marry more wives and do something substantial in the community. The code of ethics of eating in the Yoruba cultural environment is therefore one useful moment of teaching the child to internalize the essential elements of the culture of discipline. The insistence that the child does not eat the little piece of meat allocated her during the meal but must wait until the meal is over is one of the opportunities to inculcate the need for deferred gratification.

## Conclusion

Parenting among the Yoruba clearly involves a movement from birth to death. It involves moving the child through socialization into the adult world built around Yoruba understanding of the key issues of survival and success. Parenting efforts make the child internalize the key issues about the meaning of life, the measure of success and the methods of achieving them. Yoruba socialization process allows the child to imbibe, through enculturation, the fundamental wisdom behind adult Yoruba views about life, its challenges, its triumphs and failures. Ultimately after death, as the Yoruba surmise, only the well brought up child will continue to remember and celebrate the memory of parents who have gone into the world of the ancestors. The Yoruba afterlife is ensured in the memory of the living.

Japanese parenting, based on the concept of *Amae*, agrees with the Tswana concept of *Botho* and the Yoruba style based on *Omoluwabi*. The uniting core of these three cultural concepts is reliance on others for durable and mutually enriching success and wellbeing. *Botho, Amae* and *Omoluwabi* concepts emphasize, 'I am because we are.' They reiterate that one's humanity is affirmed in relation to others. Without crushing the creative will of the individual in the society, the individual's potential to progress and wellbeing increases exponentially when individuals cooperate to pursue the common good of the society. These concepts introduce the child into the world of the adult, its challenges, triumphs, failures as well as its meaning of existence. They invite the individual to situate his or her world within this pragmatic existential narrative. When young people in the society do, they provide opportunities for themselves to receive correction from the adults while the adults are still alive and able to share the benefits of their experience with the young.

## References

Babatunde, E. (2011). Memoir, memory, and mnemonic device: The Yoruba in Toyin Falola's A mouth sweeter than salt: An African memoir. *OFO: Journal of Transatlantic Studies, 1*(2), 55–79.

Babatunde, E., & Setiloane, K. (2010). Mother is gold: A traditional mother-centered community based approach to food security and poverty reduction as the foundation of public health among rural poor women of South Western Nigeria. *International Journal of Social and Management Sciences, 3*(1), 70–97.

Bohannan, P., & Bohannan, L. (1968). *Tiv economy*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Durkheim, E. (1947). *Elementary forms of the religious life*. Glencoe: The Free Press.

Falola, T. (2004). *A mouth sweeter than salt: An African memoir*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Horton, R., & Peel, J. D. Y. (1976). Conversion and confusion: A rejoinder on Christianity in Eastern Nigeria. *Canadian Journal of African Studies, 10*(3), 497.

Lovejoy, P. E. (1988). Concubinage and the status of women slaves in early colonial Northern Nigeria. *Journal of African History, 29*, 246–247.

Turnbull, C. M. (1974). Introduction: The African condition. In E. G. Anthony & C. Koupernik (Eds.), *The child in his family: Children at psychiatric risk* (3rd ed., pp. 227–245). New York: Wiley.

# Parenting Among the Nso of the Northwest Province of Cameroon

**Relindis D. Yovsi**

## Introduction

Parenting is a cultural activity and a mechanism for the transmission of cultural values and practices from the older to the younger generation. Parents in all cultures rear their children to be competent and successful adults in their cultural environments (LeVine 1977). Infants are biologically equipped with behaviors that enable them to maintain proximity to caregivers to ensure their survival and establish social relationships. Caregivers are also equipped with complementary behavior patterns known as intuitive parenting, which is based on the convictions that caregivers know what children need (Papoušek and Papoušek 1987, 1995). The physical environment, means of subsistence, settlement patterns, population parameters, and socioeconomic structures tend to determine parenting strategies to meet the cultural practices. The Whitings (1975) six cultures study aimed at empirically demonstrating the interplay between culture and psychology and thus assigned a crucial role to the context for shaping the economy, means of subsistence and social structure of society that influences childrearing practices and early childhood experiences which form a special blueprint for later personality development. However, the environment of the child is composed not only of the physical surroundings and social network caring for him, but also his parents' conceptions and expectations about the developmental outcomes of their children (Super and Harkness 1986).

Despite the huge variation of parenting across and within cultures, (Keller and Greenfield 2000), the study of parenting in early childhood development is largely characterized by assumptions about universal propensities and practices (Papoušek and Papoušek 1995). Recently, the assumptions of the concept of parenting have been criticized as having a Euro-American and Western middle class perspective

R.D. Yovsi (✉)
Institute of Psychology (NIFBE), University of Osnabrück,
Artilliestrasse 34, D-49069 Osnabrück, Germany
e-mail: yovsirelindis@yahoo.com

(Harwood et al. 1995; Keller and Greenfield 2000; LeVine et al. 1994). Tremendous cultural and contextual differences between the parenting behaviors and styles of caregivers with children have also been reported (LeVine et al. 1994; Konner 1976; Super and Harkness 1996; Weisner 2002; Hewlett et al. 1998; Keller 2007; Keller et al. 2005b; Ogunnaike and Hauser 2002). Keller (2007) proposed that the different parenting strategies across cultures are related to different developmental goals. During a parent-child interaction, parents strive to achieve the cultural socialization goals by selecting and initiating sequences of behaviors that are imperative for the accomplishment of the set goal. In order to understand parenting practices and strategies, a sketch of the cultural setting is critical.

Cameroon is situated in Central Africa (see Map 1 and 2). Cameroon is a multicultural society with 268 ethnic groups having their own languages, values and traditional practices. Despite the plethora of languages, English and French are the two official administrative languages due to earlier colonization by the British and the French. As a bilingual country, there is still further demarcation in terms of Anglophone and Francophone cultural values. Any generalization about parenting in Cameroon will be questionable due to the cultural distinctiveness of the numerous Cameroonian cultures. This chapter focuses on the Nso of the North-West province (English speaking part) of Cameroon. The Nso is the largest ethnic group in the Western grassfields of Cameroon with Kumbo as its capital.

The Nso population estimate of 217,000 people (Goheen 1996) is scattered over 2,300 km$^2$, with a population density of some 85 inhabitants per square km compared to an average of 20 per square km nationwide (DeLancey 1989). The traditional language of the Nso is Lamnso, however many Nso speak a form of pidgin English used with non-Nso folks and in commercial settings, and standard English and French.

Nsoland has two distinct seasons in the course of each calendar year. The rainy season from April to October is generally mild. The dry season from October to March is usually cold in the mornings and evenings but hot during the day. Temperatures vary with the seasons but the mean annual temperatures ranges from 19 to 23 °C. The high plateau around Kumbo receives 1,800–4,000 ml of rainfall annually with the highest rainfall recorded in August (Goheen 1996). The vegetation is predominantly savannah with patches of natural forest or primary vegetation on the lower slopes of hills and valleys.

Comparing Cameroon national health socio-demographic figures in terms of infant mortality, maternal mortality ratio and death rates, figures for Nsoland are inferior to the national averages. Most Nso people are Christians and some are Muslims and all practice traditional African religion alongside. Monogamy is common among Christian families and polygamy is widespread among Muslim families, the Fon (Supreme leader of the Nso people) and lineage heads.

## Settlement Patterns

The Nso have a patrilocal and patrilineal settlement patterns where male offspring settle at their father's homestead or own land within the homestead, and married females live at their husband's homestead. Nso are organized into lineages made up of

**Map 1** Location for
Cameroon in Africa



**Map 2** Location of Kumbo,
capital of Nsoland
Source: www.sgfp.org.uk/
cameroonvisit.html

clans and sub-clans that are physically built around large communal settlements called compounds (Shemlon 2011). A compound is made up of several clusters of houses either from one or several families connected by orchards or open yards where many daily activities take place and other amenities are shared. Thus, the Nso display a general friendliness towards strangers and are always ready to invite people to join in a meal (Mbaku 2005). The average size of a Nso family is 6.7 persons per household (Yovsi 2003), and usually consists of parents, children, paternal grandparents and other relatives. Uncles, aunts, nieces and nephews usually live nearby, forming an extended family in a big compound with a household of at least three generations. A lineage head heads each extended family and the father heads the household to which he owes security and protection. Unmarried women occupy a perpetual child status and are considered almost incongruous as social persons (Mbaku 2005). It is only after marriage that women ascertain the full status with rights, privileges and obligations (Vubo 2005). Single mothers are supported by relatives particularly parents and female relatives and are as well integrated into the extended family system.

## Subsistence

The Nso are predominantly subsistence farmers growing maize, beans, potatoes, yam and a variety of fruits, nuts and vegetables. Subsistence is a combination of communal efforts, family members, children and friends. However, women are both the primary providers of subsistence and also do household chores such as cooking and providing childcare. They also sell part of the produce at the local markets and the money is spent on commodities they cannot produce and on their children's education. Cola nuts and palm wine are the commonest commodities and are used for local consumption and entertainment during ceremonies and rituals. The cola nut is the commonest gift from the elderly cohort; it symbolizes greetings, appreciation, motivation, love, care and reconciliation.

## Socio-political Structure

Nsoland comprises a number of villages and chiefdoms of various sizes and complexity (Chem Langhee and Fanso 1996). While these chiefdoms are linguistically and ethnically diverse, they have several features in common, including a chiefdom at the center, the presence of men's secret societies and an emphasis on title and rank as significant sociopolitical attributes (Goheen 1992). The Nso have a traditional hierarchical structure with the Paramount *Fon* as the supreme ruler who mediates between the ancestors and the people, ensuring the wellbeing of the land and members of the society. His power is controlled mainly by two main secret societies of the land known as the *Ngwerong* and the *Ngiri* sanctum. Spirits form an important part of Nso indigenous religion and Jujus, which are masked

representations of spirits, can be seen at important occasions such as the cultural displays and funeral celebrations of secret society members (Goheen 1992). Some of these masquerades come out to discipline and sanction those who have transgressed the traditional tenets, announce important events in the land and to quell conflict. Several lineages are grouped together under a *Shufaay* (Lords) or *faay* (sub-lords) (Goheen 1992; Yovsi 2003) who are other authorities after the Fon. There are other title holders who play important roles in the care and wellbeing of the land such as the *Vibaays*, (Advisers to the Fon), *Ataantos* (court retainers), *Nformi* (warrior commander) and *Sheeys* (persons with titles awarded for achievements). Women, having titles such as *Ayaah, Yefon,* and *Yesum*, are involved in the subsistence of the Fon and the Nso people. Children also play a vital role in the governance of Nsoland. A young girl between the ages of 3 and 6, known as *Shunghaiy* is usually enthroned alongside a new Fon. She sits on the throne after the death of the Fon until the enthronement of the new one. She is also responsible for holding the bag during state sacrifices by the Fon. She commands respect and authority that is comparable to that of the Fon. There are also the *Asheey ve kiser* or *Asheey ver ntoh*, who are young boys from about 5 years of age forced to be custodians of the Nwerong and Ngiri secret societies sanctum for a period of 9 years with little physical contact with females even with their family members.

## Nso Psychology of Childcare

Children are believed to be sacred gifts from the gods and mostly considered to be reincarnated ancestors. The Nso believe that wellbeing and immortality of the soul is secured by the birth of a child. Children are generally considered a blessing for the family, a reconciliatory medium between family, lineage and community members since that brings joy and solidarity within the social framework. Children are seen as the "firewood of their parents"; "support of parents" and social insurance for the parents as they age (Yovsi 2003). Infertility in Nso is seen more as a cosmo-cultural dearth and not as a physiological impediment (Nsamenang 1992). Infertility is considered a curse that is often blamed on women, and families visit traditional healers, offer sacrifices to the ancestors to avert the calamity. Pregnancy is not only the business of the individual woman, but that of the collective, as she gains material, psychological and physical support from family, community and largely from elderly women in terms of education on childcare. In addition to nutritional and behavioral taboos that pregnant women abide by, communal support is geared at ensuring the health and survival of the mother and child. The birth of a child is celebrated with jubilation, gifts to the mother and child, and nutritious food for the mother to eat and breastfeed the child properly. There is a saying in Nso that, "a child belongs to the mother only when in the womb, and when out he belongs to the community". This means that childcare is a communal responsibility and once born everybody has a liability to ensure that he grows into a successful and competent member of the society.

Naming is an identification of the child as a social being and member of the community. Children who die before naming are never mourned as they are believed not to be part of the living communion. Children are often given names of deceased relatives, symbolizing the return of the family member. The name of a child always has a meaning depending on the history, events of the time, circumstances of the child's conception and birth, experiences of the family or community, and even the personal situation of parents. The *yer a nyuy* (name of the gods) is a ceremony conducted by the traditional priest who deciphers which land the child comes from. Lineage head, grandparents, elderly aunts and uncles could also name the child and address him accordingly.

Nso beliefs acknowledge childhood years as those where the child gradually emerges from vulnerability to gain strength and a place in the social network. The boy child is circumcised 2–3 days after delivery. Amulets and mascots are tied around the child's waist, wrist, and ankles to protect the child from illnesses, spilling breastmilk, the evil eye and witchcraft.

Mother-child interaction entails significant teaching through mimic, verbal, non-verbal and tactile handling. The mother is the primary care giver of the child in the first 5–6 months of life because of frequent breastfeeding. Breastfeeding goes from birth to 2–3 years. However, this trend varies with maternal education as urban, better-educated and socioeconomically better-off mothers breastfeed less and introduce supplements earlier than their rural counterparts (Yovsi and Keller 2007). Mothers even breastfeed children who are not their biological ones. Co-sleeping is a common practice with the Nso and this is primarily to provide breastfeeding at night. The mother and the child are always together, as she takes the child to the farm and ceremonies, and even does chores or dances with the sleeping child on her back. From birth onwards children become observant participants of routine practices, cultural festivities and ceremonies as they sit on laps or are carried on a caregiver's back, or run around the compound. It is believed that children can never possess the cultural qualities such as obedience and respect if they were given too much protectiveness or not breastfed. Mothers of "spoilt children" are shamed in songs and can even be isolated as the mother is considered a murderer within the social context.

By the time the child is walking his world enlarges to neighbors and community. As the child starts leaving the mother's side and plays with peers, siblings, other children and caregivers, he is groomed to the basics of morality and cultural values. The child acquires the first rudiments of language from the mother and siblings and the vocabulary grows as he joins the band of peers in the community. The attachment for the boy and girl child diminishes progressively with social competence and differentiation between them in terms of dressing, types of play they are introduced to or required to play and gender social roles identity. They play with peers and organize forums where social roles like *awowone* (mother and fathers) and hide and seek, are rehearsed. These play activities range from household to public activities like cooking, buying and selling, singing and dancing, hunting, childcare, marriage and traditional ceremonies. The activities are carried out under the watchful eyes of elders like grandmothers and parents who often correct them when they falter.

Children play and learn from other kids and elderly persons. This is an arena where children are taught and corrected through demonstration and illustration, and they learn through imitation, observation and trial-and-error. Peers learn from each other and perceive how related they are, the uniformity of cultural values and how they constitute a bigger family.

As the child shows interest in household chores, mothers start taking the child to the farm to help in gathering harvested material and minding the younger children. Children are actively engaged with peers and help in household chores like washing the dishes, fetching water, gathering firewood, hunting insects, rabbits, tadpoles and beetles or bringing the harvest back from the farm. These activities are combined with climbing of trees and harvesting of bush nuts. In their activities, there is a high degree of solidarity and concern for one another. This is a scenario where the weak are supported to be strong and those with immoral tendencies are sanctioned. Children often manifest their artistic skills in tying their firewood and fabricating toys from sticks, bamboos, and roots of trees and plants. Gender roles are differentiated, and girls do household chores like washing the dishes, helping the mother in farm work and childcare while boys follow the father to raffia palm bushes to tap palm wine, gather firewood, clear the yard or build and manage the roof of the house. This is also the period when some children are sent to live and help grandparents or relatives especially those without children.

It is common for siblings to share an eating bowl, bed and even personal possessions like clothes. Sibling care not only helps the child to acquire social and cognitive skills to function properly in the wider community, but it also prepares the older siblings for parenting responsibilities, since Nso girls become mothers before they become wives.

Evenings for children in Nso are very hectic as households are bustling with activities such as dinner preparation, while children eat food brought by the mother from the farm. Mothers often bring roasted food and fruits from the farm to children back home. Evenings in Nso are also story telling sessions where children recount their day's activities as the entire family sits by the fireside while the evening meal is being prepared. This is also the time for parents to teach their children stories with moral lessons such as obedience and respect. Evening stories too keep the children from sleeping in order to eat the evening meal. At times parents ask the child to go and stand outside, send them on an errand to a neighbor, make them wash their faces with cold water in order to repel sleep. This is when parents assess the child's social development, efficiency in performing cultural activities and assimilation of social roles. Such knowledge guides parents to adjust teachings and discipline-reward strategies towards their children. Parents expect of children at this age honesty and proper demeanor (politeness, respect for elders and loyalty to the family). Maturity of a child does not depend on the chronological age but on how well the child acquires and masters social roles and tasks geared towards communal wellbeing. Maturity in Nso is a process of initiation where one demonstrates hard work, responsibility for others, respect for cultural values and authority. When the child reaches adolescence he is expected to have mastered cultural values and norms to become a full-fledged member of the society.

Adolescents perfect and put into practice their skills of cultural values, norms and moral teachings learnt from their parents, siblings, relatives, neighbors, peers and community. Initiation, regarded as a fundamental school, confers the appellation of "small father" and "small mother" for the boy and girl respectively, since they often exercise parental or adult tasks at this stage. Children in Nso cultural context are always children to parents no matter their age, and it is believed children should always obey their parents because of their experience and wisdom.

## Nso Parenting Strategies and Their Psychological Consequences

In order to accomplish the socialization agenda, Nso parents consciously use parenting outlines that lead to oneness, sharing, cooperation and a sense of belonging. There are several parenting systems that come into play and are influenced by the challenges of the sociocultural environment. The first system used by parents is the primary care system which includes all activities geared toward the health and survival of the child including breastfeeding, feeding, bathing, diapering and provision of safety and security. Investment in primary care is typical of poverty stricken environments where nursing is the main investment for infant's survival and public hygiene (LeVine 1994; LeVine and LeVine 1988; Keller 2007).

Mothers protect the infant from life-threatening illnesses and environmental dangers. The psychological function of this system is the emergence of a secured self where there is trust in the reliability of others in relieving child distress and danger (Bowlby 1986).

The second parenting technique is body contact between the child and the caregiver or social group. Nso children experience tremendous skin contact and bodily proximity as they are carried on laps or backs or held on the side or on the chest. Children are hardly left on their own. Siblings as young as 4 years old carry their younger siblings so that the mother can do her chores. Grandparents, neighbors and even passers-by are often in the pool of caregivers. Children are not only close to their parents and siblings, but identify with several relatives, kin, neighbors and community members as part of a larger family (Verhoef 2005; Verhoef and Morelli 2007). Houses form compounds, villages and clans which are regarded as one large family.

Body contact supports bonding between the mother and the child, and provides emotional warmth (MacDonald 1992). Another result of body contact is to promote family harmony and cooperation among the social group (Maccoby and Martin 1983). The point of this pattern of parenting is a social self that is group oriented with a collective identity.

The third parenting approach often used by the Nso is body stimulation which is based on body communication. Caregivers stimulate children by providing them with motor experiences through touch and movement (Keller et al. 1988). Siblings and peers interact routinely with the child during play. The experience of motor stimulation ranges from lifting the baby up and down in an

upright position, tickling, to gentle exercising the arms and legs of the infant (Keller et al. 2002). Before they are 2 years of age, they start running errands around the house and even to neighbors. This practice reflects the desire to increase the speed of physical development, because children who walk earlier can start training in household responsibilities and social tasks (Ogunnaike and Hauser 2002; Geber and Dean 1959). In farming communities children are needed to work at an early age (Keller et al. 2005b). Early motor development gives the child the opportunity to broaden his social spectrum outside the family. Older children are made to walk long distances to farms which becomes a routine for their future families. Body stimulation further enhances somatic development, thus preparing an organism for early reproduction (Keller et al. 2005a) which is widespread in rural Cameroon.

Activities that direct the child's attention to toys or the physical environment belong to the object stimulation system. The amount of object simulation depends on the availability of social interactional partners. Early object stimulation is prevalent in Western industrialized societies and in the educated middle class in non-western contexts where the object replaces human caregivers (Keller and Greenfield 2000). Object stimulation is also recognized among the Nso with the explicit expectation of fostering cognitive growth (Keller et al. 2005c). The function of early object stimulation is to nurture the cognitive system and disentangle the infant from dependency on social relationships. As children grow older, they tend to imitate the real activities from their parents and elders thus building their social and cognitive skills.

Parents talk to their children and their style of talking reflects the cultural models of the self and interpersonal relations (Wang 2004). Nso children's interactions with caregivers vary in intensity and structure of rhythm with a synchronous pattern that is a highly repetitive rhythm (Demuth et al. 2011). The Nso pattern thus corresponds to what Cowley (1994) described as *protosong*. The rhythmic organization of early mother-child interactions and its musical features play a crucial role that is transmitted to the child (Trevarthen 1993; Merritt 1994). The experience of synchronous and highly rhythmic chorusing and bodily stimulation, like with the Nso, may foster the conception of a socially-related self (Demuth et al. 2011; Cowley 1994; Rabain-Jamin and Sabeau-Jouannet 1997).

Caregivers differ with respect to their individual orientation towards positive and negative emotionality (Keller et al. 2005a; Yovsi et al. 2009). Sensitivity towards negative child signals is especially prevalent in traditional rural communities where child distress is responded to with immediate breastfeeding. With the Nso before the infant opens his mouth to cry, the nipple is put into it (Keller et al. 2005c; Yovsi and Keller 2003). Nso parents often respond to distress cues by picking the child up to cuddle, or carrying it on one's lap or back. This is a strategy which minimizes the child's distress.

Cultures differ with respect to the attention patterns that are prevalent in childcare. Most studies reported in the literature show that Western urban middle-class mothers have dyadic (mother and child) focus with children. Most attention patterns in much of the world constitute shared attention (Rogoff et al. 1993). Conceptualizing care

giving as a co-occurring activity (Saraswathi and Pai 1997) is when the mother attends to extra-dyadic activities and at the same time attends to the child in close proximity. Co-occurring care is considered a norm among the Nso where women's economic contribution to the family livelihood is routine and crucial. As a result of observing such activities from birth, children learn to perform the tasks at an early age.

## Discipline

Fathers provide little physical care to children except for the provision of school fees and persistent medical services. The main role of the father is to use his authority as an instrument of discipline while the mother provides other care. Parental warmth has been identified as a major parenting dimension in different human societies (Rohner 2002; Hetherington and Frankie 1967). MacDonald (1992) conceptualized warmth as an independent parental quality that has significant consequences for the development of early attachment relationships. The expression of warmth in Nso is a form of rewarding the child for proper behavior. In Nso warmth is shown by hugging, embracing, caressing and lap carrying. Facial warmth is shown by smiling and friendly facial expressions. Verbal warmth includes babytalk, praises, compliments and saying nice things. Some children are often referred to a grandmother (*Yaah*) or grandfather (*Taah*) who supply emotional closeness, love and valuation of the child, and also for positive behavioral reinforcement.

Parents, elderly siblings including community members discipline children if they do something wrong or if they are not conforming to the valued norms of the community. Disciplining children in Nso starts even from infancy with the mother at times ignoring the signals of the child at times of (crying, fussing, fretting) due to other chores. At times it is aimed at teaching the child that he is not the centre of interest. As the child grows, common punishment strategies are frowning, scolding, insulting, refusing the child favors, making the child sweep the yard, fetch water several times or fetch firewood. Extreme punishment used with older children are slashing, slapping and jaw dragging, refusing to feed the child when others are eating and stopping them from visiting relatives like grandparents. Punishment tends to disappear as the child reaches maturity.

## Conclusion

Parenting constitutes an investment that shapes individual life histories with respect to their reproductive strategies and parenting style. Parents in all cultures use different ways to care for their children so that they can be successful adults in their respective contexts. With the Nso, childcare is a communal responsibility geared to meet the moral standards of Nsoness. Parenting among the Nso is preparing the child for

communal life and a sense of solidarity with the larger community. Any non-compliance is meted with punishment ranging from light beatings to withdrawal of privileges to performance of regular household chores. Therefore, children learn parental principles as the best form of cultural instruction. Siblings are a good resource of teaching and disciplining the younger ones. The long-term consequence of the socialization agenda is developing a cohesive society where members are collaborative and cooperative, supportive and develop a collective identity (Keller et al. 2006; Yovsi 2003). In cities and in the Diaspora, Nso often choose names that reflect the spirit of solidarity, harmony, oneness and communal life.

Good parenting, healthy or pathological development should be defined in a cultural context and not measured in terms of Western or Euro-American ideologies. There is a need for culture-specific analysis of psychological functioning and wellbeing of individuals and families in order to understand the character of human development. Training for psychologists, social workers, teachers and pediatricians is needed so that they can take a cultural approach to ensure good counseling of clients.

# References

Bowlby, J. (1986). *The nature of the child's tie to his mother*. New York: New York University Press.

Chem Langhee, B., & Fanso, V. G. (1996). *Nso and its neighbours: Readings on social history*. Amherst: Amherst College.

Chilver, E. M., & Kaberry, P. M. (1967). *Traditional Bamenda: The history and ethnography of the Bamenda grassfields*. Buea: Ministry of Primary Education and Social Welfare.

Cowley, S. J. (1994). Conversational functions of rhythmical patterning: A behavioral perspective. *Language and Communication, 14*(4), 353–376.

DeLancey, M. D. W. (1989). *Cameroon: Dependence and independence*. Boulder: Westview.

Demuth, C., Keller, H., & Yovsi, R. (2011). Cultural models in communication with infants. Lessons from Kikaikelaki, Cameroon and Muenster, Germany. *Journal of Early Childhood Research, 10*(1), 70–87.

Geber, M., & Dean, R. (1959). The state of the development of newborn African children. *Lancet, 272*, 1216–1219.

Goheen, M. (1992). Chiefs, sub-chiefs and local control: Negotiations over land, struggles over meaning. *Africa, 62*(3), 389–412.

Goheen, M. (1996). *Men own the fields, women own the crops. Gender and power in the Cameroon grassfields*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Harwood, R. L., Miller, J. G., & Irizarry, N. L. (1995). *Culture and attachment: Perceptions of the child in context*. New York: Guilford.

Hetherington, E. M., & Frankie, G. (1967). Effects of parental dominance, warmth and conflict on imitation in children. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 6*(2), 119–125.

Hewlett, B. S., Lamb, M. E., Shannon, D., Leyendecker, B., & Schölmerich, A. (1998). Culture and early infancy among the Central African foragers and farmers. *Developmental Psychology, 34*(4), 653–661.

Keller, H. (2007). *Cultures of infancy*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Keller, H., & Greenfield, P. M. (2000). History and future of developmental cross-cultural psychology. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology, 31*(1), 52–62.

Keller, H., Schoelmerich, A., & Eibl-Eibesfeldt, I. (1988). Communication patterns in adult-infant interactions in western and non-western cultures. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology, 19*(4), 427–445.

Keller, H., Yovsi, R., & Voelker, S. (2002). The role of motor stimulation in parental ethnotheories: The case of Cameroonian Nso and German women. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 33*(4), 398–414.

Keller, H., Abels, M., Lamm, B., Yovsi, R. D., Voelker, S., & Lakhani, A. (2005a). Ecocultural effects on early infant care: A study in Cameroon, India, and Germany. *Ethos, 33*(4), 512–541.

Keller, H., Kuensemueller, P., Abels, M., Voelker, S., Yovsi, R., Jensen, H., Papligoura, Z., Lohaus, A., Rosabal-Coto, M., Kulks, D., & Mohite, P. (2005b). *Parenting, culture, and development. A comparative study*. San José: Universidad de Costa Rica.

Keller, H., Voelker, S., & Yovsi, R. (2005c). Conceptions of parenting in different cultural communities: The case of West African Nso and Northern German women. *Social Development, 14*(1), 158–180.

Keller, H., Lamm, B., Abels, M., Yovsi, R. D., Borke, J., Jensen, H., et al. (2006). Cultural models, socialization goals, and parenting ethnotheories: A multicultural analysis. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 37*(2), 155–172.

Keller, H., Otto, H., Lamm, B., Yovsi, R. D., & Kärtner, J. (2007). The timing of verbal/vocal communications between mothers and their infants: A longitudinal cross-cultural comparison. *Infant Behavior & Development, 31*, 217–226.

Konner, M. J. (1976). Maternal care, infant behavior and development among the !kung San. In R. B. Lee & I. DeVore (Eds.), *Kalahari hunter-gatherers* (pp. 218–245). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Konner, M. (1991). *Childhood*. Boston: Little Brown & Co.

LeVine, R. A. (1974). Parental goals: A cross-cultural view. *Teachers College Records, 76*, 226–239.

LeVine, R. A. (1977). Child-rearing as cultural adaptation. In P. H. Leiderman, S. R. Tulkin, & A. Rosenfeld (Eds.), *Culture and infancy: Variations in the human experience* (pp. 15–77). New York: Academic.

LeVine, R. A., & LeVine, S. E. (1988). Parental strategies among the Gusii of Kenya. In R. A. LeVine, P. M. Miller, & M. M. West (Eds.), *Parental behavior in diverse societies* (pp. 27–35). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

LeVine, R. A., Dixon, S., LeVine, S., Richman, S., Leiderman, P. H., Keefer, C. H., & Brazelton, T. B. (1994). *Child care and culture: Lessons from Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, J. A. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction. In E. M. Hetherington, & P. H. Mussen (Series Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 4. Socialization, personality, and social development* (4th ed., pp. 1–101). New York: Wiley.

MacDonald, K. B. (1992). Warmth as a developmental construct: An evolutionary analysis. *Child Development, 63*, 753–773.

Mbaku, J. M. (2005). *Culture and customs of Cameroon*. London: Greenwood Press.

Mbuy, H. T. (2012). *The faith of our ancestors. New perspectives in the study and understanding of African traditional religion*. Roma: Univerisita Pontificia Salesiana.

Merritt, M. (1994). Repetition in situated discourse – Exploring its forms and functions. In B. Johnstone (Ed.), *Repetition in discourse: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (pp. 23–36). Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Mzeka, P. (1996). *Rituals of initiation in the western grassfields of Cameroon. The case of Nso*. Bamenda: The Kaberry Research Centre.

Neba, A. S. (1987). *Modern geography of the Republic of Cameroon*. Camden: Neba Publishers.

Nsamenang, A. B. (1992). *Perceptions of parenting among the Nso of Cameroon*. Hawthorne: Aldine de Gruyter.

Nsamenang, A. B. (1994). Socialization of Nso children in Bamenda grassfield of north-west Cameroon. In P. N. Greenfield & R. R. Cocking (Eds.), *Cross-cultural roots of minority child development* (pp. 133–146). Hillsdale: Erlbaum.

Ogunnaike, O. A., & Hauser, R. F. (2002). Yoruba toddlers engagement in errands and cognitive performance on the Yoruba Mental Subscale. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 26*(2), 145–153.

Papoušek, H., & Papoušek, M. (1987). *Intuitive parenting: A dialectic counterpart to the infant's integrative competence*. Oxford: Wiley.

Papoušek, H., & Papoušek, M. (1995). Intuitive parenting. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting* (Biology and ecology of parenting, Vol. 2). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Rabain-Jamin, J., & Sabeau-Jouannet, E. (1997). Maternal speech to 4-month-old infants in two cultures: Wolof and French. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 20*(3), 425–451.

Rogoff, B., Mistry, J., Göncü, A., & Mosier, C. (1993). Guided participation in cultural activity by toddlers and caregivers. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 58*(8).

Rohner, R. P. (2002). Parental warmth, control, and involvement in schooling: Predicting academic achievement among. *Korean American adolescents Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 33*(2), 127–140.

Saraswathi, T. S., & Pai, S. (1997). Socialization in the Indian context. In H. S. R. Kao & D. Sinha (Eds.), *Asian perspectives on psychology* (pp. 74–92). New Delhi: Sage.

SGFP Organization. *Situation of Kumbo in the map of Cameroon*. Retrieved August 16, 2012, from http://sgfp.org.uk/cameroonvisit.html

Shemlon, S. S. (2011). *Men of title, power, influence and cult membership in the paramount kingdom of Nso*. Unpublished manuscript, Somerset.

Shweder, R. A., Jensen, L., & Goldstein, W. (1995). "Who sleeps by whom" revisited: A method for extracting the moral goods implicit in practice. In J. Goodnow, P. Miller, & F. Kessel (Eds.), *Cultural practices as contexts for development* (pp. 21–39). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Super, C., & Harkness, S. (1986). The developmental niche. A conceptualization at the interface of child and nature. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 9*, 1–25.

Super, C. M., & Harkness, S. (1996). The cultural structuring of child development. In J. W. Berry, P. R. Dasen, & T. S. Saraswathi (Eds.), *Handbook of cross-cultural psychology* (Basic processes and human development 2nd ed., Vol. 2, pp. 1–39). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Trevarthen, C. (1993). The function of emotions in early infant communication and development. In J. Nadel & L. Camaïoni (Eds.), *New perspectives in early communicative development* (pp. 48–81). London/New York: Routledge.

Verhoef, H. (2005). 'A child has many mothers': Views of child fostering in Northwestern Cameroon. *Childhood: A Global Journal of Child Research, 12*(3), 369–390.

Verhoef, H., & Morelli, G. (2007). "A child is a child": Fostering experiences in Northwestern Cameroon. *Ethos, 35*(1), 33–64.

Vubo, E. Y. (2005). Matriliny and patriliny between cohabitation-equilibrium and modernity in the Cameroon grassfields. *African Study Monographs, 26*(3), 145–182.

Wang, R. F. (2004). Action, verbal response and spatial reasoning. *Cognition, 94*, 185–192.

Weisner, T. S. (2000). Culture, childhood and progress in sub-Saharan Africa. In L. E. Harrison & S. P. Huntington (Eds.), *Culture matters. How values shape human progress* (pp. 141–157). New York: Basic Books.

Weisner, T. S. (2002). Ecocultural understanding of children's developmental pathways. *Human Development, 45*(4), 275–281.

Whiting, B., & Whiting, J. (1975). *Children of six cultures: A psycho-cultural analysis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Yarrow, L. J., Pedersen, F. A., & Rubenstein, J. (1977). Mother-infant interaction and development in infancy. In P. H. Leiderman, S. R. Tulkin, & A. Rosenfeld (Eds.), *Culture of infancy. Variations in human experience* (pp. 539–564). New York: Academic.

Yovsi, R. D. (2003). *Ethnotheories about breastfeeding and mother-child interaction. The case of sedentary Nso farmers and nomadic Fulani pastoralist in Mbven sub-division of the northwest province of Cameroon*. Muenster: Lit Verlag.

Yovsi, R. D., & Keller, H. (2003). Breastfeeding: An adaptive process. *Ethos, 31*(2), 147–171.

Yovsi, R. D., & Keller, H. (2007). The architecture of cosleeping among wage-earning and subsistence farming Cameroonian Nso families. *Ethos, 35*(1), 65–84.

Yovsi, R. D., Kärtner, J., Keller, H., & Lohaus, A. (2009). Maternal interactional quality in two cultural environments. German middle class and Cameroonian rural mothers. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 40*, 701–707.

# The Kenyan Parent in Changing Times

**Pamela Akinyi Wadende, Kathleen Fite, and Jon Lasser**

## Introduction

Throughout the world, different groups of people favor particular behaviors in carrying out parenting obligations. Just as with other aspects of human life, childrearing practices have been influenced by changing times and trends. Lately, enhanced communication and exchange of ideas have also enabled the sharing of different parenting styles and roles. Traditionally, Kenyan ethnic communities assigned distinct parental roles to mothers and fathers. With the passage of time, parenting in Kenyan ethnic communities has changed, blurring the roles of mothers and fathers and even introducing alternative providers of parenting services. Additionally, societal dynamics from within and outside the country continue to influence and redefine the traditional practices of parenthood among Kenyans. Other impacts of modernity include the unraveling of traditional family structures. Factors that pre-date modernity such as disease, poverty, and strife have also influenced how Kenyan parents rear their children. Yet, some aspects of traditional and pre-colonial childrearing practices are still practiced today. By focusing on traditional mother and father roles among Kenyan ethnic communities, such as the Luo and Kipsigis, this chapter examines the practice of parenthood in Kenya and the major influences that have shaped parenting roles. When we look at family structures around the world, they reflect the saying that it

P.A. Wadende (✉)
Chair, Department of Education, Administration, Psychology, and Foundations,
University of Kabianga, P.O. BOX 2030-20200, Kericho-Kenya
e-mail: wadende-pwadende@yahoo.com

K. Fite
Department of Education, Texas State University-San Marcos, San Marcos, TX, USA
e-mail: kf02@txstate.edu

J. Lasser
Department of Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education and School Psychology,
Texas State University-San Marcos, San Marcos, TX, USA
e-mail: lasser@txstate.edu

"takes a village to raise a child." This saying means that the parenting and cultural/ developmental instruction and care of children is assumed by the parents as well as the extended family and community. That almost everyone contributes to the development of children among them underlines the important position of the young in any community. They represent the future. Consequently, if they are prepared well, the community's, and by extension the world's, future is secured.

Parental roles and practices evolve to adapt to emerging ideas and trends. These roles are modified by the changing social, economic, cultural, and personal needs and ways of life of the community members. For instance, the effect of communication media such as the radio, television, and the Internet on parenting has been widely researched. Citing such studies, Schmidt and colleagues (2008) and *Science Daily* (2008) note that, for example, having a television program on in the background disrupts a child's toy play experience. Time spent watching television programs may also take away from positive parent-child engagement time. The content of the television program has featured as a factor that shapes behavior in children. For instance Tannis MacBeth (1986) and her colleagues studied the impact of television on the people in three Canadian towns. The study populations were codenamed Notel, Unitel, Mutitel to refer to populations in towns that hitherto had no television, one television channel and multiple channels respectively. The latter two towns acted as control groups to the experiment. The study found that many children thought men worked harder than women because television programs depicted them so (75 % of the time). The experiment also showed that watching television negatively impacted the children's cognition and reading fluency. Rapidly expanding scientific research and enhanced information technology has facilitated the sharing of information such as this about the effect of television on parenting and on many other aspects of life. Below are some features of traditional and evolving parenting practices among the Kenyan Luo and Kipsigis ethnic communities.

## Country Summary

Kenya, with a population estimated at 41 million (CIA World Fact Book 2009), is one of the three main East African countries, in addition to Uganda and Tanzania. She shares borders with Somalia to her West, Tanzania to her South, Uganda to her East, and Ethiopia and Sudan to her North. Kenya is slightly larger than the state of Texas in the United States of America. As a producer of tea, flowers, and coffee, Kenya's economic mainstay is agriculture. Politically, a multi-party grand coalition forms the government as a result of the negotiation to end the 2007/2008 election violence that emerged from perceived electoral fraud. There are 42 ethnic communities in Kenya, all of which have distinctive languages and cultural practices. These communities have what is considered their traditional ancestral lands, including, for example, the areas around Lake Victoria for the Luo and lands in the Rift Valley area of Western Kenya for the Kipsigis. However, due to internal migration, some ancestral lands have populations drawn from the many different ethnic communities in the country. Currently in Kenya, the literacy level for men is estimated at over 80 % and slightly below that for women. Since 2003, an education policy by the government

instituted free elementary school education and another such policy in 2008 introduced cost-sharing (where parents shared the cost with the government) in high school education. These two policies have increased school attendance by learners hitherto unable to get a school education. An assessment of the impact of this policy by United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in 2005 noted that attendance in elementary school had shot up from about 5 million learners in 2003 to about 8 million in 2005 (Kenya Ministry of Education 2005).

The family unit in Kenya consists of immediate and extended family members. This is especially the norm in families that reside in the rural and, in most cases, traditional ethnic community lands. In most, if not all these communities, when a woman marries, she is expected to move into the man's home and live with his extended family (Dietler and Herbich 1989) and often even with his multiple wives. Such family members relate with any children among them by mimicking the childrearing role of the parent of their gender. Younger family members are always expected to participate more actively in the child's upbringing when compared to elderly family members who only take up occasional advisory roles in the child's life (Oburu 2004). Younger people delve into the nitty-gritty of childrearing. In fact, younger, active, and productive members of the community were traditionally, and still are, expected to take care of elders such as grandparents as a reward for the time such elders raised them (Oburu 2004) (Fig. 1).

In Kenya, most communities customarily assigned distinct child rearing roles to mothers and fathers. In most of these, mothers are charged with taking care of infants' basic training until the children are able to operate independently (i.e., talk, walk and eat without much assistance). Before becoming independent, the children stayed close to their mothers in the home where usually the mothers served as homemakers and care providers (Ellis et al. 2007; Feldman 1983; Karani 1987; Wadende 2011). For male children, after gaining some independence, the fathers were expected to provide put a sizeable input into their sons' upbringing. Although the fathers got to know about the development of daughters, they did not play as direct a role in this process as they did in the lives of sons. For the Luo and Kipsigis, male children started to learn their traditional sex roles by closely associating with their fathers and other male family members. The same was also true for the girls as they increasingly interacted with their female relatives and other community members, in addition to their mothers. Although this traditional childrearing scenario has undergone change, among them the introduction of hired child-minders and the disruption of traditional family composition through internal migration of family members, aspects of the traditional practices persist. Below are some of the changes and possible impacts on parenting in the Luo and Kipsigis family life.

## The Luo and Kipsigis of Kenya

The Luo and Kipsigis are Kenyan ethnic communities who neighbor each other in their traditional lands situated in the Western part of Kenya. The Kipsigis belong to the umbrella Kalenjin linguistic sub-group of ethnic communities of which it is
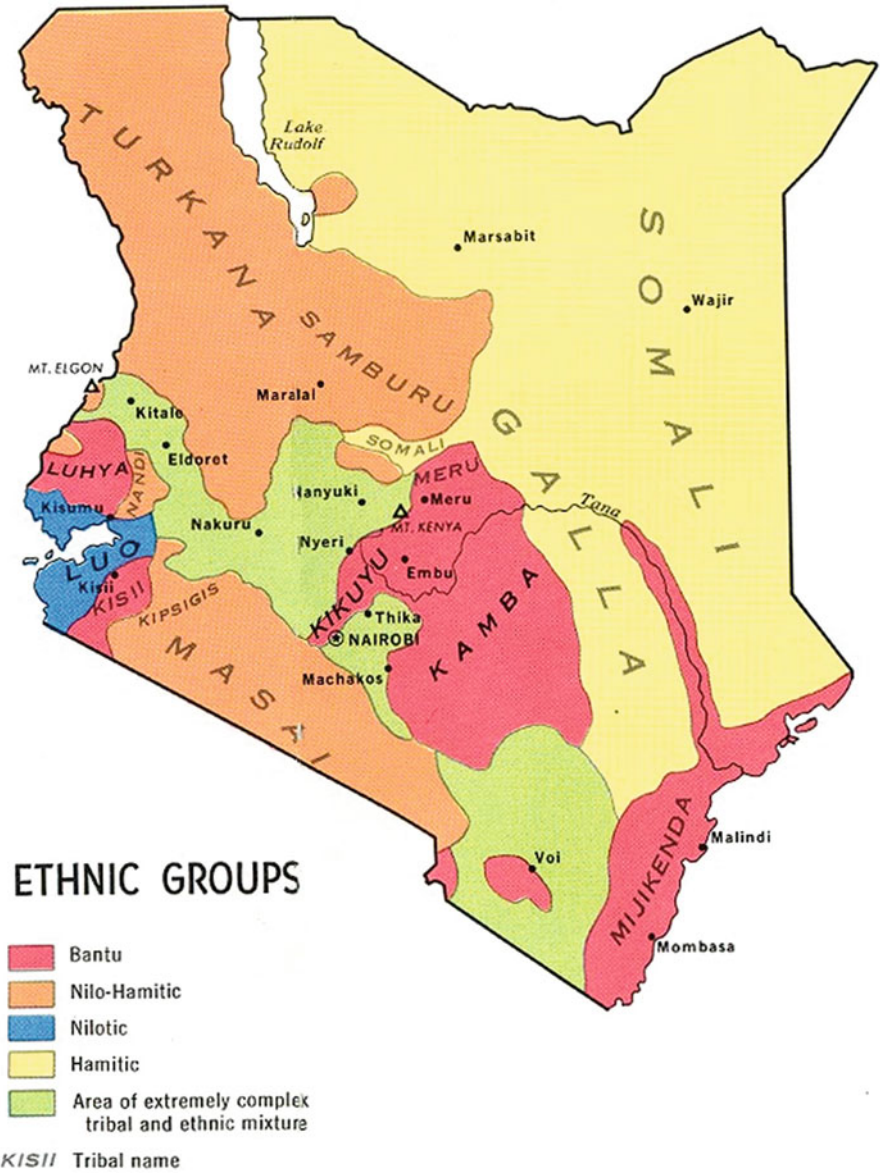
**Fig. 1** Map of Kenya showing the different ethnic communities' traditional lands (Retrieved from http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/kenya_ethnic_1974.jpg)

its largest member (U.S. Department of State 2012). Other communities in the Kalenjin linguistic sub-group include the Tugen, Nandi, and Maasai. In 2010, it was estimated that there were 4 million Luo and 1.7 million Kipsigis. Additionally, the Luo and Kipsigis as two totally distinct ethnic communities, belong to the major Nilotic linguistic group of Africa (Roberts and Bainbridge 1963). The name

Nilotic derives from their origin around the river Nile and its tributaries. The two communities, however, have different languages and, to a large extent, different ways of life. While the Kipsigis are traditionally herders, the Luo are fishermen. Another major difference between them is that the Kipsigis traditionally practiced, and still do to some extent, female and male circumcision in addition to teeth excision.

By tradition, among these communities, there were particular ways of raising the young. The instruction and care of all infants was the duty of mothers and their helpers, mostly any female relative available whom the Luo referred to as *Japidi* (Oburu 2004). From birth to about 3 years, the children stayed close to the mothers because of nursing and other needs. The mother nurtured the young during their most impressionable years. Motherhood was and is revered among all the ethnic communities in Africa. The mother is the symbol of life of the community (Shorter 1977).

In traditional African communities, where the collective need commonly overrode the individual's, mothers were the first members of the family to present this social lesson to their children. They and their helpers presented such lessons through teachable moments bound to daily life activities. They used a variety of instructional methods such as songs, sayings, proverbs, and play to teach the children the right attitudes and behavior expected of them in the community. The instructional methods and content proceeded from the philosophical tenets of African indigenous education. Among the tenets were that education was a preparation for successful life in the community, was holistic, was perennial and communal (Sifuna 1990). The mothers contrived teachable moments to train the children. There were some organized plans of instruction that the growing children were exposed to in community programs such as instruction at circumcision.

Mothers punished behavior that was frowned on by the community in various ways depending on its severity. The severity of the behavior hinged on how disruptive of communal and personal peace it was. This punishment ranged from reprimand, age appropriate learning chores, to infliction of pain such as paddling for children old enough to understand its meaning. Because of this close interaction between the children and their mothers in these formative years, the relationship that grew between them reinforced the important status mothers held in the family and in their children's eyes, even into the children's adulthood (Shorter 1977). Mothers are revered by their children who consult and defer to them in their major decisions throughout life.

Since girls were considered the mothers' protégés, the mothers acted as the supervisor of a group of females that interacted with and trained the growing girls. This started when the little girls had reached an age of about 3 years when they could get away from the close supervision of their mothers. These women involved the girls in activities that prepared them for their roles as women in the community. These activities included cookery, agriculture, indigenous architecture, and other care-giving tasks that the community expected of women (Ellis et al. 2007; Feldman 1983; Karani 1987; Wadende 2011). Although the fathers seldom took direct responsibility in training the girls, the mothers kept them abreast of the girls' development. However, they got involved when any emergencies, or out-of-the ordinary

happening concerning the girls, and even threatening the peace of the community, required their attention. Just as the instruction from mothers was loosely structured or not at all, that from female relatives followed the same format.

Among both the Kipsigis and the Luo people, while mothers led a group of female relatives in the instruction of girls, fathers also led a group of male relatives and gradually increased their presence in the boys' lives. Fathers did this through joint activities. These activities were educational and so offered the boys an opportunity to learn their roles and expectations in the community. For instance, in animal herder communities such as the Kipsigis, sons learnt to be herders under the supervision of their fathers and other male relatives. In the same vein, fathers and male relatives taught the Luo boys to be good fishermen. The fathers updated the mothers about their sons' development. In all these lessons, lack of good judgment was punished as appropriate. The appropriateness of this punishment would depend on how disruptive the child's behavior was as well as any prior history of such behavior by the child. For example, the first time a girl child neglected her domestic chores, the mother or any woman in authority would rebuke the child. But later, if the child was observed to repeat the same mistake the observing adult would administer a sterner punishment such as paddling the child. The scene changed when the mistake made had an impact on the community beyond the child's family. A child who exhibited a weakness or behavior that could cause widespread harm in the community could have some privileges such as play with other children suspended for some time. Two examples of such harmful mistakes include getting involved in spreading malicious gossip and fighting other children.

As the children grew older and increasingly engaged with community members, they became the responsibility of all in the community while still maintaining a strong attachment to their nuclear families. At the age of about 10 years, more structured instruction was designed for the children in the community. This kind of instruction was additionally contrived when compared to the instruction the children received from their parents and relatives. Some content that involved community members required specialized instructors such as community youth sexuality counselors. Such counselors organized instruction sessions for young people during rites of passage into adulthood, such as teeth extraction for the Luo girls and boys. These counselors also taught Kipsigi girls and boys about issues, such as family life, before and during, the circumcision and cliteridectomy sessions. It is important to note that cliteridectomy, or female genital mutilation (FGM) (Sala and Manara 2001), as it is currently called, is a practice that is dying among the Kipsigis of Kenya and is not practiced by the Luo. In fact, in 2001 the then president Daniel Arap Moi banned the practice for girls younger than 18 years. The ban stands although some people still conduct cliteridectomy illegally (ICW 2004).

## Life Today

With continued industrialization, internal migrations, poverty, disease, and strife, Kenyan ethnic communities have adapted their child-raising practices to the changing times. Initially, with the advent of the colonial period and the reorganization of

many families' structures, grandmothers have, by necessity, played a more active role in childcare. This type of role is an adaptation of the less hands-on tasks they performed as per tradition (Oburu 2004). This expectation for grandmothers started when the colonists needed and acquired family men to work in the administrative centers they set up all over the country. This process caused a disintegration of the traditional family structure when women took on the work left behind by the men as they moved to the new colonial administrative centers (Srujana 1996). The women thus spend more time away from home and, therefore, their child-raising duties. The grandmothers stepped in by taking a more active role in the lives of toddlers and children (Swadener et al. 1996).

Later, as mothers needed to take up paid positions in urban centers like the men, many were unable to rely on grandmothers for childcare. The grandmothers remained in the rural homesteads, being unable and often unwilling, so abhorring the disruption in their lives that would be caused by relocating into urban centers with their children's families to mind their grandchildren. The parents turned to paid domestic maids and, for ones unable to afford this help, early childhood education day care centers opened by the government (Swadener et al. 1996).

## Poverty and Strife

Strife and poverty have also impacted the child-raising practices among the Luo and Kipsigis of Kenya. Safety concerns due to internal strife and rising levels of poverty in many rural areas, have spurred rural-urban migrations as people seek paid employment and safety. This have resulted in an exodus of relatives and community members that would traditionally have helped parents in raising their children. Poverty has also meant that families cut back on spending their resources beyond the nuclear family boundaries. This means that it is increasingly untenable for parents to support relatives who would in turn help in raising the children in the family. The family unit is shrinking due to dwindling resources. Njue et al. (2007) note that poverty negatively impacts family processes. The impact of poverty on Kenyan families is realized in the inferior provision of such staple resources as nutrition, health, and education, in all of which girls and women lag behind boys and men.

## Disease

Disease, especially HIV/AIDS, has also taken a toll on the traditional family set up. This disease, that targets the most productive age group between 18 and 50 years, because they are the most active sexually, has resulted in many orphaned children in Kenya. In 1999 the then Kenyan president Daniel Arap Moi declared AIDS a "national disaster" and asked leaders to take the front row in fighting it (Dawes 1999). Because of the increased numbers of orphans, grandparents in most communities in Kenya, including the Luo and Kipsigis, have had to take up active

parental duties in their old age (Oburu 2004, Hagler 2003). This has commonly resulted in a conflicting situation in which children start life under the enthusiastic but firm hand and watchful eyes of their parents who punish and reward behavior as they deemed necessary for the success of the children. Such children, when suddenly orphaned, find themselves living with their grandparents who are often mellowed with age and are thus unable to take part energetically in the children's lives. In cases where there are no grandparents or other relatives willing to receive such orphans, the children may even end up in child-headed households and thus miss out on the wisdom of adult guidance in their growth. Lack of such guidance could result in anti-social behavior.

Disease and social strife has given rise to single parenthood, virtually unheard of in traditional society. All men managed to get wives in the community just as all women got husbands, even if as one of a man's multiple wives. Diseases such as HIV/AIDS have resulted in children being orphaned or having only one parent. Internal conflict has also given rise to more orphans or single-parent families. Children raised by such parents miss out on the often enriching experience that comes from both parents' contributing to their development. When a parent is sick or the busy sole provider for the family then he/she may be unable to devote the time necessary to oversee the child's physical and emotional development. Such parents may not have ample time to play, train and even help their children with homework. With the unraveling of the traditional family network that helped with child care, such parents then depend on alternative child care providers such as nannies and school teachers.

## *Globalization and Modern Trends*

Other issues that have affected childrearing practices between the Luo and Kipsigis of Kenya include globalization and especially its ever-increasing awareness of people and cultures across the world. This increasing awareness of other perspectives and ways of life may be attributed to modernity. Inkeles (1996) described "the modern man" when, in a group of researchers, they identified seven central characteristics attributable to such a person. These features are: openness to new experience in their environment, an increasing demand of independence from traditional authority figures such as parents and religious leaders, confidence in scientific and medical processes and therapy respectively, ambition for the betterment of self and family, propensity to orderliness and to demand the same in social engagements, participation in community governance, and keeping abreast of local and international occurrences (p. 572).

Increased exchange of information in the world, one result of modernity, has had an impact in childrearing practices among Kenyan parents. Parents are able to read results of research on raising children and copy aspects that they favor. These parents are also able to study and adopt aspects of parenting that they admire from various regions of the world. Such information exchange has given rise to institutions

that offer baby classes for children, even those under 3 years of age and who would previously still be within close watch of their parents. Children who are not raised in the traditional way avoid the sex casting of roles in the community that their counterparts raised in traditional settings put up with. Whereas children raised in the traditional settings would uphold their expected roles in the community, children brought up according to modern practices or even some aspects of it are able to be creative and choose non-traditional roles for themselves in the community such as girls wanting to be doctors or engineers.

## Conclusion

In exploring parenthood among the Western Kenyan Luo and Kipsigis communities, this chapter has dwelt on the traditional practices and adaptation to modern influences on the family. As is often the reality that social entities are impacted by cultural and economic shifts, the Kenyan family has undergone change. The Kenyan family may have shrunk due to internal migration, poverty, disease, and other influences but family members still maintain strong ties to the extended family as much as they are able. Such ties are manifested in the pride and sense of obligation with which people attend family gatherings during festive seasons or family ceremonies such as weddings and circumcisions. In this respect, Kenyan parenting is dynamic and responsive, maintaining traditional elements while simultaneously adapting to modern times.

## References

CIA World Fact Book. (2009). *Kenya population*. Retrieved October 21, 2009, from http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/

Dawes, M. (1999). *Moi: AIDS a 'national disaster.'* http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/538071.stm

Dietler, M., & Herbich, I. (1989). Tich Matek: The technology of Luo pottery production and the definition of ceramic style. *World Archaeology, 21*(1), 148–164.

Ellis, A., Cutura, J., Dione, N., Gillson, I., Manuel, C., & Thongori, J. (2007). *Gender and economic growth in Kenya: Unleashing the power of women*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Feldman, R. (1983). Women's groups and women's subordination: An analysis of policies towards rural women in Kenya. *Review of African Economy, 10*(27/28), 67–85.

Hagler, T. (2003). *An increasing burden on the elderly*. PBS.org. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/africa/july-dec03/kenya_12-30.html

Inkeles, A. (1996). Making men modern: On the causes and consequences of individual change in six developing countries. In A. Inkeles & M. Sasaki (Eds.), *Comparing nations and cultures: Readings in a cross-disciplinary perspective* (pp. 571–586). Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

International Community of Women Living with HIV. (2004). *Female genital mutilation FGM*. http://www.icw.org/fgm

Karani, F. (1987). The situation and roles of women in Kenya: An overview. *Journal of Negro Education, 56*(3), 422–34.

MacBeth, T. (1986). *The impact of television: A natural experiment in three communities*. New York: Academic.

Ministry of Education. (2005). *The success of free primary education in Kenya*. http://www.education.go.ke/ShowPage.aspx?department=2&id=22

Njue, J. R., Rombo, D., & Ngige, L. W. (2007). Family strengths and challenges in Kenya. *Marriage & Family Review, 41*(1/2), 47–70.

Oburu, P. O. (2004). *Social adjustment of Kenyan orphaned grandchildren, perceived caregiving stresses and discipline strategies used by their fostering grandmothers*. Ph.D. dissertation, Göteborg University, Sweden.

Roberts, D. F., & Bainbridge, D. R. (1963). Nilotic physique. *Journal of Physical Anthropology, 21*, 341–370.

Sala, R., & Manara, D. (2001). Nurses and requests for female genital mutilation: Cultural rights versus human rights. *Nursing Ethics, 8*, 247–258.

Schmidt, M. E., Pempek, T. A., Kirkorian, H. L., Lund, A. F., & Anderson, D. R. (2008). The effects of background television on the toy play of very young children. *Child Development, 79*, 1137–1151. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2008.01180.x.

Shorter, E. (1977). *The making of the modern family*. New York: Basic.

Sifuna, N. D. (1990). *Development of education in Africa: The Kenyan experience*. Nairobi: Initiatives.

Srujana, K. (1996). *Status of women in Kenya: A sociological study*. New Delhi: Kalinga Publications.

Swadener, et al. (1996). Does the village still raise the child? A collaborative study of changing childrearing in Kenya. *Early Education and Development, 8*(3), 285–306.

U.S. Department of State. (2012). *Background Note: Kenya*. http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2962.htm

Wadende, P. (2011). Chwuech: Sustained art education among Luo women of Western Kenya. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education, 17*(2).

# Argentine Culture and Parenting Styles

**María Cristina Richaud de Minzi, Viviana Lemos, and Jael Vargas Rubilar**

## Introduction

Parenting styles have been used to understand the complex behaviors and attitudes of caretakers and how they are related to child development and wellbeing (Domenech Rodriguez et al. 2009). Parenting styles differ by variations in the levels of parental sensitivity (i.e., warmth and affection) and parental control (i.e., the granting of autonomy), and both of these constructs are related to child development and wellbeing (Broderick and Blewitt 2003).

According to Darling and Steinberg (1993), it is necessary to distinguish parenting styles from parenting practices. Parenting practices are the behaviors that parents carry out to ensure their children reach specific academic, social, and emotional objectives. These authors state that the socializing behaviors of discipline and support and the interactions between parents and children vary by situation. They

M.C. Richaud de Minzi (✉)
Interdisciplinary Center of Research in Mathematical and Experimental Psychology, National Council of Scientific and Technological Sciences (CONICET), Buenos Aires, Argentina
e-mail: minzi@ciudad.com.ar

J. Vargas Rubilar
Interdisciplinary Center of Research in Mathematical and Experimental Psychology, National Council of Scientific and Technological Sciences (CONICET), Buenos Aires, Argentina

River Plate Adventist University (UAP)
e-mail: cipca9@uapar.edu

V. Lemos
Center for Research in Psychology and Related Sciences (CIPCA), River Plate Adventist University (UAP), Libertador San Martin, Entre Ríos, Argentina

Interdisciplinary Center of Research in Mathematical and Experimental Psychology, National Council of Scientific and Technological Sciences (CONICET), River Plate Adventist University (UAP)
e-mail: vivianalemos@doc.uap.edu.ar

also say that a parenting style is a combination of attitudes toward the child that creates an emotional climate in which parents act. Parental behaviors are expressed with characteristics such as tone of voice, body language, and sense of humor.

The first studies in this field proposed typologies of parental child-rearing styles. Baumrind's (1966) concept of parenting style was based on the control parents exerted over their children or *parental responsiveness* and on the degree parents respond to the child's needs or parental responsiveness. By the combination o these two dimensions, she proposed three different parenting styles: Authoritarian (high demandingness and low responsiveness), permissive (low demandingness and high responsiveness), and authoritative (moderate demandingness and moderate responsiveness). In later years Maccoby and Martin (1983) added a fourth style known as uninvolved and Baumrind (1991) later added a traditional style to her list. or neglectful parenting, characterized by lack or responsiveness and demandingness.

The first parenting style researchers, such as Baumrind (1966, 1996) and Bronfebrenner (1979), as well as more recent authors (Kotchick and Forehand 2002; Richaud de Minzi 2010a) emphasize an analysis of the contexts in which childrearing occurs. These authors recommend performing studies on parent-child interactions across a variety of socioeconomic, cultural, racial, and ethnic groups. Montandon (2005) underlined the importance of accounting for parental beliefs regarding education for their children. These beliefs are directly related to the parents' visions of childhood, which are in turn related to specific economic, cultural, and social contexts.

Izzedin-Bouquet and Pachajoa Londoño (2009) state that childrearing guidelines are linked to social meanings within each culture or social group. When analyzing the styles, practices, guidelines, and beliefs concerned with childrearing, an understanding of the different concepts that a social group holds regarding children, social class, customs, and socio-historical and cultural norms is essential.

In contrast, parental competencies are the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral resources or abilities of mothers and fathers that allow them to connect appropriately with their children and provide adequate and timely responses to their needs (Barudy and Dantagnan 2005, 2010). The primary parental capacities, according to Barudy and Dantagnan, are parental empathy and attachment capacity. Furthermore, these authors have demonstrated in several studies that social context plays an important role in the formation of social parenting.

Although the evidence for the universality of attachment is fairly sound, the evidence for the sensitivity and competence hypotheses is less clear (Van Ijzendoorn and Sagi 1999). Attachment behaviors are observed across cultures, and secure attachment is most typical. However, the cross-cultural evidence that supports the importance of sensitivity and developing competencies in later childhood is less firm (De Wolff and Van Ijzendoorn 1997). Parenting and the outcomes that parents value for their children differ across cultures, which might explain this ambiguity. Mothers, fathers, and families in general interact with their children based on their cultural beliefs and values. Cultural differences in the definitions of sensitivity and responsiveness affect how parents rear and relate to their children (Reebye et al. 1999). Cultural differences in the expectations of children at each stage of

development might also lead to varying patterns of parent-child interactions and differential child outcomes (Richaud de Minzi 2010a).

## Parenting Styles in Middle-Class Argentine Culture

Argentina is a country in South America; it is the continent's second largest by land area, after Brazil. It is constituted as a federation of 23 provinces and an autonomous city, Buenos Aires. It is the eighth-largest country in the world by land area and the largest among Spanish-speaking nations. Argentina is a constitutional republic and representative democracy. It is Latin America's third-largest economy, with a "very high" rating on the Human Development Index. It is classed as middle emerging economy. Argentina is considered a country of immigrants. The vast majority of modern Argentines are descended from settlers and immigrants from Europe from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, some of whom had later mixed and intermarried with the indigenous populations. The majority of these European immigrants came from Italy and Spain. 86.4 % of Argentina's population self-identify as being of European descent. An estimated 8 % of the population is *mestizo*, of mixed race. According to the World Christian Database Argentines are: 92.1 % Christian, and most are Roman Catholic, with estimates for the number of Catholics varying from 70 to 90 % of the population (though perhaps only 20 % attend services regularly) (Fig. 1).

Argentina retains Latin—people of Southern European origin (especially Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal)—and Catholic cultural traditions that have a high regard for collectivistic values, especially those related to the family. The family is considered to be much more important than country, religion, or politics. Argentine children feel a greater closeness to their parents (especially their mothers), siblings, and members of their extended family than to friends, when compared with their North American and Northern European counterparts (Facio and Resett 2006). Childrearing practices are based on power assertions during discipline, and Argentine parents control their children's outings, schedules, and friends in what may be a more intrusive manner than their North American and Northern European counterparts (Facio and Batistuta 1998).

In general, children observe a close relationship between their parents and their grandparents, especially between their mothers and their maternal grandmothers. The gap between the genders has narrowed over the decades with regard to work, education, and political activity (Facio and Resett 2006).

There are apparently no gender differences in Argentine formal education with regard to preparing for adult work roles; both genders attend the same schools, the vast majority of which are coeducational (Facio and Resett 2006). Although it is highly probable that due to cultural differences in norms and expectations regarding appropriate gender roles and behaviors, teachers and other officials would treat men and women differently.

**Fig. 1** Argentina on the Earth Globe (On line: Available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Argentina_orthographic.svg)

Several studies have been conducted in Argentina to study how children of different ages perceive parenting styles, and the results have supported the cognitive theory that the quality of the parent-child relationship affects the child only insomuch as the child perceives it. That is, a child's attributions regarding his or her father's or mother's behavior will be more related to his or her development than the actual parental behavior. Schaefer's (1965) proposed model allows for a joint and interactive consideration of the effects of different parenting behavior dimensions in studies of different parenting styles.

Gender differences in Argentine parenting and child outcomes can be attributed to societal norms. The mother is the central figure in Argentine family life, most likely due to the country's Latin and Catholic traditions. Facio and Batistuta (1998) asserted that there is a belief in the moral and spiritual superiority of women compared with men. The Catholic devotion to the Virgin Mary places a high

importance on motherhood. Women are expected to sacrifice themselves for their children and the rest of the family; in exchange, they are venerated and exercise a considerable amount of power at home. Boys and girls are more likely to forgive their mothers' faults than their fathers', and relationships with mothers deteriorate only as a consequence of serious circumstances. In this sense, 4- to 6-year-olds perceive a relationship of control with their mother; however, in an affiliative culture,[1] such as Argentina, control is not perceived as negatively as Schaefer defined it within the context of the United States (Richaud de Minzi 2002). Interestingly, children perceive the affirmation, "Your mom says that if you love her, you will behave well" positively as a natural reciprocity of affection, and not as emotional "blackmail" from the mother or as a source that generates anxiety. The social definition of a "good child" can explain this finding. However, younger children perceive control exerted by the father as more intrusive; that is, he spends the small amount of time he has with them controlling them (have they done what was ordered, did they tidy up their clothing, who were they with, and so on). It is also interesting that the aforementioned affirmation about behaving well out of love for their mother has a different meaning in the context of their father. As previously mentioned, Argentine culture exalts and honors the mother's selflessness, but this behavior is not as pronounced with respect to the father. Therefore, it might be more natural for children to return their mother's love than their father's (Richaud de Minzi 2002).

A similar pattern has been found in 8- to 12-year-olds (Richaud de Minzi 2007a, b). The statements related to control that Schaefer (1965) discussed in the context of the United States refer to possessiveness and intrusiveness. Argentine children do not always perceive these characteristics as undesirable. On the contrary, statements that begin, "My mother/father…" and conclude "…always wants to know where I am and what I am doing all the time", "…makes me come home on time", "…is always vigilant of what I do in school and during my free time", "…tells me that, if I truly love her/him, I must behave well to not upset her", or "…insists that I must do everything that she/he tells me" are indicative of acceptance. That is, they are expressions of affection and care. This finding is most likely due to cultural reasons, given that these are Latin children from an affiliative culture. Age might also play a role, given that 8- to 9-year-olds are expected to return home on time (e.g., from school) so that their parents know where they are and what they are doing.

Argentine children accepted specific expressions that began, "My mother/father…" and concluded "…worries when I misbehave because I will suffer the consequences when I grow older", "…tells me that, if I truly love her/him, then I must behave well so that I do not upset her/him", and "…says that misbehaving is bad, and I might have problems when I grow up". These statements indicate the use of control through anxiety and blame according to Schaefer's model. This

---

[1] In an affiliative culture, groups place a high priority on constructive interpersonal relationships. Members are expected to be friendly, open, and sensitive to the satisfaction of their group. Members are loyal to their work groups and feel they "fit in" comfortably. In Latin culture this refers specially to the familial group.

difference is due to Latin cultural guidelines regarding the definition of a good parent, which include worrying about and suffering for the children (Richaud de Minzi 2007a, b).

Conversely, Argentine children do not accept the statements that begin, "My mother/father…" and conclude"…makes me comply with what she/he orders", "…insists that I do my homework", and "…worries when I do something that I should not". These statements operationalize coercion to comply with orders and control according to Schaefer's model. However, these statements do not express extreme or harmful forms of control, such as hostility or rejection. They are perceived as expressions that are neither damaging nor benign. Specifically, these statements are perceived as a strict form of control that is fair but unpleasant. The control that we denote as pathological due to its negative effects on child development (i.e., hostility, isolation, guilt, distrust caused by intrusion and dependence, and possessiveness) is well differentiated from the two aforementioned forms of control.

Although women are highly regarded for their role as mothers, young people of both genders consider "being capable of caring for children" to be an important quality of adult males. Nevertheless, girls are socialized to be more involved in domestic chores and less involved in jobs than boys (Facio and Resett 2006). Children, especially boys, perceive that their fathers spend little time with them (Richaud de Minzi 2002, 2005). Children's perceptions of parental support and availability within their own unique cultural niche are likely to affect related social-emotional outcomes, such as depression, loneliness, and self-competence (Richaud de Minzi 2010a, b).

Argentine maternal attachment facilitates social involvement and is a protective factor against loneliness among girls and boys (Richaud de Minzi 2010a, b). As previously stated, the mother is typically the central figure in Argentine family life, whereas fathers tend to have less involvement in their children's friendships, homework, parent-teacher conferences, and so on. Despite the fact that the mother establishes family norms, she is also perceived as more tender, understanding, and devoted than the father (Facio and Batistuta 1998). Although in the last years there has been increased father involvement in families, and many women have entered the labor market, in Argentina it is still considered that a father's work is more important than a mother's and that fathers can be out of home more than mothers can. In fact, many women stop working when having a baby, especially in the low socioeconomic levels. Fathers help mothers in some housework, but the responsibility of home and children is mainly the mother's.

In Argentina, girls typically have close relationships with their mothers and maternal grandmothers (Facio and Reset 2006). These relationships are most likely an important protective factor against loneliness. In contrast, fathers tend to display affection for their sons in a different way, although they love them a lot. They accomplish household chores/tasks, play soccer, attend games, and engage in more functional tasks together. It is also common that men embrace each other and their children, and even say hello with a kiss. However, boys typically demand more availability from their fathers compared with girls (Richaud de Minzi 2002, 2005).

In Argentina, girls typically have more academic success than boys. However, they evaluate their scholastic competence as lower than that of boys, most likely because of the cultural belief that males are more capable than girls. Nevertheless, girls try harder than boys (Facio 2006; Richaud de Minzi 2005). Girls gain security and build scholastic competence by relying on their fathers and their mothers. Boys rely on their mothers and fathers to motivate them but seek their mother's help to a lesser degree. The only significant predictor of girls' social self-competence is the availability of the mother. This finding is likely due to the previously described Argentine mother-daughter relationship (Richaud de Minzi 2010a, b).

In general, Argentine children of middle socioeconomic levels perceive moderately high levels of acceptance, moderate to extreme levels of control, a moderately high level of accepted control, and a low level of extreme autonomy or negligence from their parents, especially their fathers. This style is characterized by a concern that focuses on the child to express affection and emotional support. At the same time, this style promotes open communication and exchange, freedom of expression, independent thought, and sensitivity to the child's needs. However, the establishment of boundaries and norms (which are perceived as caring for the child in Argentine culture) accompany these forms of acceptance. Moreover, close parental supervision establishes norms. Although the child might perceive these norms as an imposition and protest, they are not rejected. However, forms of excessive control, such as intrusion, imposition of strict norms, punishment, and reprimands are also found in moderation. Lax parental control in which the child is given total freedom without the imposition of rules or the establishment of boundaries appears infrequently. Furthermore, Argentine children generally perceive this style as parental negligence or ignorance with regard to meeting their needs.

## Parenting Styles in the Context of Argentine Poverty

Many theories have been generated to explain the differences between the parenting styles of middle- and low-economic level families (Danziger and Waldfogel 2000; Elder et al. 1985; Ghate and Hazel 2002; Harris and Marmer 1996; Jefferis et al. 2002). However, studies of parenting styles in the context of poverty should consider the economic levels and the cultures as well as the formal and informal social systems in which the family is embedded (Katz et al. 2007). Different authors (Barnes 2004; Deater Deckard 2004; Marsh and Mackay 1994) assert that economically-deprived parents who belong to different cultures respond differently to poverty stressors.

Parents who live in socially vulnerable conditions are likely to face a series of difficulties (beyond material deprivation) that can affect their parental competencies. These difficulties include less education, lower job qualifications, a lack of access to jobs and services, isolation, physical and mental illnesses, and domestic violence. These factors can act independently of each other; however, they are

likely to interact and affect both the parents' child-rearing style and their children's outcomes.

In this regard, Borstein and Bornstein (2010) argue that the environmental factors related to working in impoverished contexts (e.g., high-risk and urban-marginal zones), including insecurity, economic problems, and low access to services might significantly influence the development of parenting styles. Barudy and Dantagnan (2005, 2010) observed that the three most important functions of social parenting (nurture or affective behavior, socialization, and education) are weakened or reduced in the majority of the parents who live in poverty and social risk.

In Argentina, during the last three decades, there has been a persistent increase of poverty, modifications in the social classes, difficulties in generating good quality work, high indexes of unemployment, labor vulnerability and precariousness (Aguirre 2009). According to the 2012 Report of Barometer of Social Debt of the Argentine Catholic University, 21.9 % of the Argentine population is poor and 5.4 % is indigent.

A study of impoverished Argentine children compared parenting style from the perspective of the parents between groups of low and high psychosocial risk due to marginal urban poverty (Vargas Rubilar and Lemos 2011). In general, the marginal urban population comes from the interior of the country and especially from bordering countries. It is made up of very poor people, without work opportunities in their original places, that in many cases have lost their cultural habits, with a high rate of unemployment, economic shortages and grave social, emotional and family problems.

Vargas Rubilar and Lemos (2011) have found that the parents at greater psychosocial risk simultaneously used more physical punishment, severe reprimands, shouting, isolation, intrusion, withdrawal from relationships, and negligence. Therefore, parenting styles depend on socioeconomic status. However, this study found that these parents accepted their own statements that implied intrusive control, such as, "I want to know where my child is and what he/she is doing all the time" and "I want to control everything that my child does". In turn, they did not consider verbal expressions of affection toward their children to be necessary, such as telling their children that they love them, trying to make their child feel like the most important person in the world, or showing their children that they (the parents) feel proud of the children's actions. Although these parenting practices are inadequate from the perspective of Schaefer's model, these parents feel that they have an adequate style of childrearing that values control over affective expression displayed to their children.

The Argentine populations that are typically socially vulnerable come in general from indigenous or mixed-indigenous/Spanish communities, whereas the middle class generally has European origins, primarily Spanish and Italian. The cultures associated with each group differ, particularly with regard to expressiveness, the manifestation of affection, and child-rearing practices. The Latin culture of the Italians and Spanish is characterized by a lively expressiveness, verbal and physical demonstrations of affection, warmth, and nurture, less use of physical punishment, and greater use of psychological control. People from indigenous and

mixed-indigenous/Spanish cultures are more reflective and self-focused, and they use less verbal and affective expressiveness. These characteristics, which are aggravated by the marginality to which these social groups are subject, sometimes generate parental negligence and lead to severe physical punishments. As in the case of the middle class, the mother dominates the parental culture.

Importantly, the socially vulnerable children of the parents who perceived that they had a high acceptance based on an extremely controlling style that was beneficial for their children, judged their parents to have low acceptance and inconsistent discipline and to show negligence in meeting their needs. Children who are at psychosocial risk perceive less acceptance, less consistent discipline (fewer clear and firm boundaries), more pathological control (aggression, anxiety, and isolation), and greater negligence than those who are not at risk (Richaud de Minzi 2007a, b, 2010b). Overall, the former group judges their parents as having a punitive and coercive parenting style that is consistent and affective but also negligent.

These results coincide with those of Kagan (1978), who stated that hostile or affectionate parenting cannot be analyzed solely from the perspective of the parent because neither love nor rejection is a fixed characteristic in parental behavior. Parental love is also a belief that the child maintains; it is not only a collection of parental actions. In this sense, the impact of parenting behaviors on children depends not only on objective elements but also on the latter's perceptual and inferential processes. Parents and children do not necessarily perceive the same amount of parental love, demands, or punishment, and frequently, parents incorrectly infer the way in which their children perceive their behavior (Gracia 2002).

## Culture and the Relationship Between Parenting Styles and Child Development

Several researchers have concluded that an authoritative parenting style predicts generally positive results in children's development and wellbeing (Carlson et al. 2000; Radzisewka et al. 1996; Steinberg et al. 1992). However, a series of studies conducted across different cultures indicates that authoritative parenting style is not always related to optimal socialization for children and adolescents (Bornstein and Bornstein 2010; García and Gracia 2010). Therefore, the ideal parenting style for socialization depends on the culture in which it develops (Chao 1994; Kotchick and Forehand 2002).

Several studies have suggested that authoritarian parenting styles are necessary and protect children living in urban poverty (which places them at high risk) by facilitating their adaptation to a difficult environment (Brody and Flor 1998; Furstenberg et al. 2000).

Many investigators (Bronfebrenner 1979; Kotchick and Forehand 2002; Richaud de Minzi 2010a) recommend analyzing parenting styles across cultures. Although the theoretical models that relate parenting styles to the socio-emotional adjustment

of the child do not vary among different socioeconomic contexts and cultures, variations can occur in the characteristics or degrees to which these variables are presented and in the ways that children perceive parental behaviors. Therefore, middle-class children who attend safe schools or live in friendly neighborhoods might perceive always being asked where they are going, with whom, and at what time they will return, or being accompanied by a parent everywhere as intrusion. However, children who live in highly dangerous neighborhoods and whose schools are unprotected might perceive the same parenting style as acceptance and care. Therefore, control should be considered as acceptance in this latter case (Richaud et al. 2013a).

We examined whether the theoretical model that relates parenting styles to children's emotional development and aggressiveness holds true for Argentine and Spanish children who live in poverty (Richaud et al. 2013a). We found that the ways in which parenting styles affect children's development follow a pattern that is maintained throughout social class and culture. Specifically, dysfunctional parenting styles (e.g., excessively controlling or permissive) will lead to inadequate emotional development in children, which in turn will cause difficulties in psychosocial relationships regardless of the developmental context. The degrees of control, negligence, or acceptance that parents exercise can vary based on the context and what is perceived as acceptance or rejection.

Another study (Richaud et al., 2013) examined whether the parenting styles of participants living in poverty influenced children's socio-emotional functioning and their stress coping mechanisms differently across two cultures. The results indicated that parenting styles differed by group. The Argentine group showed medium-low parental acceptance and medium pathological control values but higher than those of acceptance. Furthermore, this group showed a significantly higher level of negligence (a parenting style with rejection characteristics) than the Spanish sample (Richaud de Minzi 2005, 2007b). The Spanish children perceived medium-high acceptance, which was significantly higher than that of the Argentine group; however, Spanish maternal pathological control was significantly higher but still with a medium effect size. Finally, the Spanish groups showed significantly less negligence than the Argentine group. This profile would be classified as an authoritarian parenting style.

With regard to whether parenting styles develop healthy children in each context, the results indicated that Argentine children (whose parents were less accepting and controlling but more negligent) have fewer prosocial qualities and adopt less efficient coping strategies compared with Spanish children. Furthermore, Argentine children greatly lack emotional control and use avoidance strategies, which involves greater emotional conflict. The Spanish children (whose parents practiced an authoritarian style with high levels of acceptance) showed slightly more social ability, efficient coping strategies, emotional control, and strategies focused on problem solving than the Argentine group.

In conclusion, even in the case of Argentine and Spanish contexts, which have several common elements, culture influences parenting style. Although the control style of the Spanish sample was somewhat inadequate, the parents' acceptance

favored children's socio-emotional development. The low levels of prosocial behaviors achieved suggest that parents negatively affected their children, and low acceptance and negligence were related to greater developmental problems. The same was found for middle-class children who perceived their parents' negative practices, such as excessive control and extreme permissiveness, as negligence and ignorance with regard to meeting their needs. These perceptions negatively affected the children's development, leading in part to behavior problems and aggressiveness. Thus, authoritative parenting remains the most efficient style (Caprara and Pastorelli 1993; Eisenberg et al. 2000; Gámez-Guadix et al. 2010; Mestre et al. 2007, 2010; Richaud de Minzi 2005, 2010b; Richaud de Minzi et al. 2005; Samper et al. 2008). Therefore, the typical parenting style within a culture might not be ideal for healthy child development.

Parenting styles can vary by culture, but the relationships between the characteristics of these styles and child development do not (Richaud et al. unpublished a).

## Intervention Possibilities and Research Implications

The studies presented suggest that the interactions between parents and children should be considered across diverse cultural and social groups (Bornstein and Bornstein 2010). This information will allow all types of families to benefit, especially if the research is used by government- or private-provided services that are psychosocial, communal, or both. Based on specific living conditions, certain authors assert that the activation of certain parenting competencies that permit the parents to resist adversity and provide children with better opportunities for development is unavoidable (Barudy and Dantagnan 2005).

Future interventions must be based on general psychological theory regardless of culture, but these interventions must account for particular cultural characteristics with regard to strategies and specific activities. For instance, feelings of parental acceptance always have positive implications for children. However, researchers must be careful given that parental vigilance can be interpreted as acceptance in one culture (or subculture) but intrusion in another.

There is a great need for intervention programs to focus on strengthening parenting in socially vulnerable contexts, particularly social risk contexts due to poverty in Argentina. To date, the attempts to repair the profound psychological and social deficiencies of families, especially with regard to parenting styles, have been insufficient. Interventions are also important for middle- and upper-middle-class groups who favor the accumulation of material goods. These present the risk of transforming parent-child relationships into mere formalities, thereby depriving children of affection and the parental presence necessary for an adequate socio-emotional development (Barudy and Dantagnan 2010), as has been the case in Argentina in recent years.

Our experience shows that approaches that seek to increase sensitivity and parental competencies and to provide relevant information regarding child

**Fig. 2** Parental strengthening workshop in contexts of social vulnerability



**Fig. 3** Parental strengthening workshop in contexts of social vulnerability

development allow parents to perceive their child in a manner that is less distorted by their own beliefs and family history and thus facilitate child, parental, and family resilience (Vargas Rubilar 2011). This type of intervention has also been known to reinforce sensitive behaviors, model adequate parental behaviors, and provide parental social support in other Latin American countries (Barudy and Dantagnan

2005, 2010; Gómez et al. 2008; Gómez and Kotliarenco 2010; Rey 2006). Many of the intervention programs directed toward parents who are affected by poverty, low socioeconomic levels, unstable living conditions, and a lack of education and social support showed significant improvements months after the intervention (Juffer et al. 2005; Gómez Muzzio et al. 2008). The construction of effective family intervention programs for people from diverse cultures depends on an adequate theoretical foundation and an appropriate evaluation of the target population. If these fundamental factors align with the objectives, techniques, strategies, and modalities of the proposed intervention, then the program can ensure better results for the people involved (Rey 2006; Vargas Rubilar and Oros 2011) (Figs. 2 and 3).

# References

Aguirre, P. (2009). La asistencia social vista por pobres y nuevos pobres en Buenos Aires durante la convertibilidad [Social assistance for poor sight and the new poor in Buenos Aires during the convertibility]. *Anthropology of Food, 6*. Available at: http://aof.revues.org/index6439.html

Barnes, J. (2004). *Place and parenting: A study of four communities. The relevance of community characteristics and residents' perceptions of their neighborhoods for parenting and child behaviour in four contrasting locations. Final report of the families and neighborhoods study (FANS) submitted to the NSPCC. Part 1: Quantitative results*. London: NSPCC.

Barudy, J., & Dantagnan, M. (2005). *Los Buenos tratos a la infancia: Parentalidad, apego y resiliencia* [Good manners in childhood: Parenting, attachment, and resilience]. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Barudy, J., & Dantagnan, M. (2010). *Los desafíos invisibles de ser madre o padre. Manual de evaluación de competencias y resiliencia parental* [The invisible challenges of being mother or father. Evaluation of competencies and parental resilience manual]. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Baumrind, D. (1966). Effects of authoritative parental control on child behavior. *Child Development, 37*, 887–907.

Baumrind, D. (1996). The discipline controversy revisited. *Family Relations, 45*, 405–414.

Bornstein, L., & Bornstein, M. H. (2010). Estilos parentales y el desarrollo social del niño [Parental styles and child's social development]. In R. E. Tremblay, R. G. Barr, R. DeV. Peters, & M. Boivin (Eds.), *Enciclopedia sobre el desarrollo de la primera infancia* [Encyclopedia about early childhood development] [online]. Montreal: Centre of excellence for early childhood development; Available at: http://www.enciclopediainfantes.com/documents/BornsteinESPxp.pdf. Consulted [May, 2012].

Broderick, P. C., & Blewitt, P. (2003). *The life span: Human development for helping professionals*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education.

Brody, G., & Flor, D. (1998). Maternal resources, parenting practices, and child competence in rural, single-parent African American families. *Child Development, 69*(3), 803–816.

Bronfebrenner, U. (1979). Contexts of child rearing: Problems and prospects. *American Psychologist, 34*, 844–850.

Caprara, V., & Pastorelli, C. (1993). Relazioni tra coetanei. La nomina dei pari come predittore delle forme di adattamento e disadattamento nella prima adolescenza [Relationships among contemporaries. Peer choosing as a predictor of ways of adjustment and un-adjustment in early adolescence]. *Età Evolutiva, 44*, 86–93.

Carlson, C., Uppal, S., & Prosser, E. (2000). Ethnic differences in processes contributing to the self-esteem of early adolescent girls. *The Journal of Early Adolescence, 20*(1), 44–67.

Chao, R. K. (1994). Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development, 65*(4), 1111–1119.

Danziger, S., & Waldfogel, J. (2000). *Securing the future: Investing in children from birth to college*. New York: Russell Sage.

Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting style as context: An integrative model. *Psychological Bulletin, 113*, 487–496.

Deater-Deckard, K. (2004). *Parenting stress*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

De Wolff, M., & Van Ijzendoorn, M. (1997). Sensitivity and attachment: A meta-analysis on parental antecedents of infant attachment. *Child Development, 63*(4), 571–591.

Domenech Rodriguez, M., Donovik, M., & Crowley, S. (2009). Parenting styles in a cultural context: Observations of "protective parenting" in first-generation Latinos. *Family Process, 48*(2), 195–210.

Eisenberg, N., Fabes, A., Richard, I., Shepard, S., Losoya, S., Murphy, B., Jones, S., Poulin, R., & Raiser, M. (2000). Prediction of elementary school children's externalizing problem behaviors from attentional and behavioural regulation and negative emotionality. *Child Development, 71*(5), 1367–1382.

Elder, G., Nguyen, T., & Caspi, A. (1985). Linking family hardship to children's lives. *Child Development, 56*(2), 361–375.

Facio, A. (2006). *Adolescentes argentinos: cómo piensan y sienten* [Argentine adolescents: How they think and feel]. Buenos Aires: Lugar.

Facio, A., & Batistuta, M. (1998). Latins, Catholics and from the far south: Argentinian adolescents and their parents. *Journal of Adolescence, 21*(1), 49–67.

Facio, A., & Resett, S. (2006). Argentina. In J. J. Arnett (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of adolescence* (pp. 1–15). New York: Routlegde.

Furstenberg, F. F., Jr., Cooke, T. D., Eccles, J., Elder, G. H., & Sameroff, A. (2000). *Managing to make it: Urban families and adolescent success*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gámez-Guadix, M., Straus, M., Carrobles, J., Muñoz, M., & Almendros, C. (2010). Corporal punishment and long-term behavior problems: The moderating role of positive parenting and psychological aggression. *Psicothema, 22*(4), 229–236.

García, F., & Gracia, E. (2010). ¿Qué estilo de socialización parental es el idóneo en España? Un estudio con niños y adolescentes de 10 a 14 años [What kind of parental style of socialization is the right in Spain? A study with children and adolescents between 10 and 14 years]. *Infancia y Aprendizaje, 33*(3), 365–384.

Ghate, D., & Hazel, N. (2002). *Parenting in poor environments: Stress, support and coping*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Gómez, E., & Kotliarenco, M. A. (2010). Resiliencia familiar: un enfoque de investigación e intervención con familias multiproblemáticas [Familiar resilience: A research and intervention approach with multiproblematic families]. *Revista de Psicología, 19*(2), 43–54.

Gómez Muzzio, E., Muñoz, M., & Santelices, M. (2008). Efectividad de las intervenciones en apego con infancia vulnerada y en riesgo social: Un desafío prioritario para Chile [Effectiveness of attachment interventions with hurt childhood and at social risk: A priority challenge for Chile]. *Terapia Psicológica, 26*(2), 241–251.

Gracia, E. (2002). Child maltreatment in the context of parental behavior: Parents and children perceptions. *Psicothema, 14*(2), 274–279.

Harris, K., & Marmer, J. (1996). Poverty, paternal involvement, and adolescent well-being. *Journal of Family Issues, 17*(5), 614–640.

Izzedin Bouquet, R., & Pachajoa Londoño, A. (2009). Norms, practices and beliefs about child rearing yesterday and today. *Liberabit, 15*(2), 109–115.

Jeffris, B., Power, C., & Hertzman, C. (2002). Birth weight, childhood socioeconomic environment, and cognitive development in the 1958 British birth cohort study. *British Medical Journal, 325*(7359), 305.

Juffer, F., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M., & Van Ijzendoorn, M. (2005). Enhancing children's socioemotional development: A review of intervention studies. In D. M. Teti (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in developmental science* (pp. 213–232). Oxford: Blackwell.

Kagan, J. (1978). The parental love trap. *Psychology Today, 12*, 54–61.

Katz, I., Corlyon, J., La Placa, V., & Hunter, S. (2007). *The relationship between parenting and poverty.* Report to the Joseph Rountree Foundation.

Kotchick, B., & Forehand, R. (2002). Putting parenting in perspective: A discussion of the contextual factors that shape parenting practices. *Journal of Child and Families Studies, 11*(3), 255–269.

Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, J. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family parent-child interactions. In E. M. Herherington & P. H. Mussen (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology* (Vol. 4, pp. 1–101). Nueva York: Wiley.

Marsh, A., & Mackay, S. (1994). *Lone parents and work. The effects of benefits and maintenance* (Department of Social Security Research Report No. 25). London: HMSO.

Mestre, M., Tur, A., Samper, P., Nácher, M., & Cortés, M. (2007). Estilos de crianza en la adolescencia y su relación con el comportamiento prosocial [Upbringing styles in adolescents and their relationship with prosocial behavior]. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología, 39*(2), 211–225.

Mestre, M., Tur, A., Samper, P., & Latorre, A. (2010). Inestabilidad emocional y agresividad: factores predictores [Emotional instability and aggressiveness: Predictor factors]. *Ansiedad y Estrés, 16*(1), 33–45.

Montandon, C. (2005). Parental education practices and children's experience. *Educación Social Campinas, 26*, 486–507.

Radzisewka, J., Richardson, C., & Flay, R. (1996). Parenting style and adolescent depressive symptoms, smoking, and academic achievement: Ethnic, gender, and SES differences. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 19*(3), 289–305.

Reebye, P. N., Ross, S. E., & Jamieson, K. (1999). A review of the literature on the development of attachment theory and the study of cross-cultural practices influencing attachment [Online]. Accessed: http://www.attachmentacrosscultures.org/research/

Rey, C. (2006). Entrenamiento de padres: Una revisión de sus principales componentes y aplicaciones [Parent's training: A review of its principal components and applications]. *Revista Infancia, Adolescencia y Familia, 1*, 61–84.

Richaud, M. C., Mesurado, B., Samper, P., Llorca, A., Tur, A., & Lemos, V. (2013a). Estilos parentales, inestabilidad emocional y agresividad en niños de nivel socioeconómico bajo en Argentina y España [Parental styles, emotional instability, and aggressiveness in low socioeconomic level children in Argentina and Spain]. *Ansiedad y Estrés, 19*(1), 53–69.

Richaud, M. C., Mestre, M. V., Lemos, V., Samper, P., Ghiglione, M. y Tur, A. (2013). La influencia de la cultura en los estilos parentales en contextos de vulnerabilidad social [The culture influence on parental styles in contexts of social vulnerability]. *Avances de Psicología Latinoamericana*, *31*(2), 419–431.

Richaud de Minzi, M. C. (2002). Inventario acerca de la percepción que tienen los niños y las niñas de las relaciones con sus padres y madres. Versión para 4 a 6 años [Children's perception of their relationships with their parents. 4 to 6 years version]. *Revista Interamericana de Psicología, 36*(1 y 2), 149–165.

Richaud de Minzi, M. C. (2005). Estrategias parentales y estilo de afrontamiento en niños [Parental strategies and coping styles in children]. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología, 37*(1), 47–58.

Richaud de Minzi, M. C. (2007a). Inventario de percepción de estilos parentales en niños de 8 a 12 años [Children's perception of parental styles in 8 to 12 year-children]. *Revista Iberoamericana de Diagnóstico y Evaluación Psicológica, 23*(1), 63–81.

Richaud de Minzi, M. C. (2007b). Parental styles and attachment in relation with self control, social skills and coping in children at risk for poverty. In D. M. Devor (Ed.), *New developments in parent-child relations* (pp. 87–110). Hauppauge: Nova Editorial Publishers.

Richaud de Minzi, M. C. (2010a). Gender and cultural patterns of fathers' attachment: Links with children's self competence, depression and loneliness in childhood. Special Issue Title: Fathering and attachment in context: Patterns across the lifespan. *Early Child Development and Care, 180*(1 & 2), 193–209.

Richaud de Minzi, M. C. (2010b). Different factors affecting psychological development of children at risk due to poverty. Possibilities of intervention. In A. Fiedler & I. Kuester (Eds.), *Child development and child poverty* (pp. 223–248). Hauppauge: Nova Editorial Publishers.

Richaud de Minzi, M. C., Sacchi, C., Moreno, J. E., & Oros, L. B. (2005). Tipos de influencia parental, socialización y afrontamiento de la amenaza en la infancia [Parental influence, socialization, and coping in childhood]. In J. R. Vivas (comp.). *Las ciencias del comportamiento en los albores del siglo XXI* (pp. 173–187). Mar del Plata: Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata.

Samper, P., Tur, A., Mestre, M., & Cortés, M. (2008). Agresividad y afrontamiento en la adolescencia. Una perspectiva intercultural [Aggressiveness and coping in adolescence. An intercultural approach]. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy, 8*, 431–440.

Schaefer, E. S. (1965). Children's reports of parental behavior: An inventory. *Child Development, 36*, 413–424.

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S., Darling, N., & Dornbusch, S. (1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent achievement: Authoritative parenting, school involvement, and encouragement to succeed. *Child Development, 65*(3), 754–770.

Van Ijzendoorn, M. H., & Sagi, A. (1999). Cross-cultural patterns of attachment: Universal and contextual dimensions. In J. Cassidy & P. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment theory and research* (pp. 713–734). New York: Guilford Press.

Vargas Rubilar, J. (2011). Características de las familias en pobreza ambiental: de los modelos centrados en el déficit a los centrados en los recursos y potencialidades [Characteristics of families at environmental poverty: From models centered in deficit to those centered in resources and potentialities]. In M. C. Richaud de Minzi & V. Lemos (Eds.), *Psicología y otras ciencias afines: compendio de investigaciones actuales* (pp. 113–135). Entre Ríos: Universidad Adventista del Plata y Ediciones CIIPME-CONICET.

Vargas Rubilar, J., & Lemos, V. (2011, junio). Parentalidad en situación de pobreza: una propuesta positiva en contextos de vulnerabilidad social [Parenting in poverty: a positive proposal in contexts of social vulnerability]. In V. Lemos (President) *Fortalecimiento de recursos cognitivos y socioafectivos en niños en vulnerabilidad social* [Strengthening of cognitive and socio-affective resources in children in social vulnerability]. Symposium in the XXXIII Interamerican Congress of Psychology, Medellín, Colombia.

Vargas Rubilar, J., & Oros, L. (2011). Una propuesta de intervención psicoeducativa para promover la autoestima infantil [A proposal of psycoeducational intervention to promote children's self-esteem]. *Revista Acta psiquiátrica y psicológica de América Latina, 57*(3), 235–244.

# Family Socialization in Brazil

**Isabel Martínez, Leoncio Camino, Cleonice Camino, and Edie Cruise**

## Socialization

Socialization has been defined as a learning and internalization process whereby the culture of one generation is transmitted to the next (Whiting 1974). Through this process, individuals acquire the cultural values, habits and norms necessary for adaptation to a society (Baumrind 1996). The objective of the study of the socialization process has been to understand the way in which individuals acquire and internalize the social habits, beliefs, values and norms that define a culture (Maccoby 1994; Zigler and Child 1969). From this stance, adaptation to a society or social group constitutes the main objective of socialization processes.

On the other hand, researchers such as Piaget (1975) have emphasized the dynamic aspects that intervene in the development of the child. By analyzing the moral development of the child, Piaget (1932) highlighted the importance of peers in the socialization process. According to Piaget, only through cooperation with their peers is the child able to develop autonomous morals. Also, from the 1980s onward, some theoretical perspectives, such as the study of intergroup relations (Tajfel 1981), demonstrate the role one's own group has as a socializing agent. The interaction between the psychological level and the sociological level is a bidirectional process of influence. Subjective processes are influenced by the specific characteristics that a social group adopts. An influence in the opposite direction also

––––––––––––––––––

I. Martínez (✉)
Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación y Humanidades, Departamento de Psicología,
Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, Avda. de los Alfares, 44, 16071 Cuenca, Spain
e-mail: MIsabel.Martinez@uclm.es

L. Camino • C. Camino
Departamento de Psicología Social, Universidade Federal da Paraíba, João Pessoa, Brazil

E. Cruise
Departamento de Psicología, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, Cuenca, Spain

exits, since social formations are dynamically constructed by the collection of its individual members' actions.

In this way, through the socialization process, children and adolescents begin to recognize their interests through active insertion in diverse groups in society. This aspect of socialization is founded on the process of social identity construction; groups construct their identities through intergroup relations and individuals are socialized in this process (Camino 1996). By interacting with other groups, individuals construct values and norms for themselves and for the groups they make up, defining their social identity. Youth will not adapt in an individual way to existing groups, but rather will participate in the construction of the norms and social identity of the groups to which they belong (Camino 1996). Finally, groups do not develop in a social vacuum, but inside social, economic and political formations with specific ideologies. The characteristics of these social formations will also influence the intergroup relations that are established within them.

## Some Characteristics of Brazilian Society

Given that characteristics of a given context and social formations influence socialization processes, it is important to consider some of the social, economic and political characteristics of Brazil. The Federative Republic of Brazil is the largest country in South America. It is the world's fifth largest country, both by geographical area and by population, with over 192 million people. Brazil is a federation composed of 26 States but from a socio-demographic point of view it can be organized into five regions: South and South East, which are the most industrialized; Central West, composed of large land plots with cattle, plantations of soy beans, or precious stone extraction; North East, which is predominantly rural and North where the main feature is the Amazon River. Since the arrival of the Portuguese in Brazil in 1500, considerable miscegenation between the country's indigenous peoples, Portuguese colonists and African slaves has taken place in all regions of the country. From the nineteenth century, other European and Asian immigrants have participated in this blending. Thus the culture of Brazil is the result of the mixture of traditions and customs of these groups that have shaped the current national identity.

However, the great prevalence of intermixing does not mean that social differences have weakened in Brazil. The great socio-economic differences that were established in the process of colonization have been maintained. Until relatively recent times, these social differences were on the rise. In the 1960s and 1970s, during the Cold War, the socio-economic efforts made in Brazil were suppressed by military coups which resulted in an even more deteriorated economic situation, similar to what happened in other Latin American countries. Since its re-democratization in 1989, Brazil has experienced a paradoxical situation: democracy did not directly give

rise to economic progress, but did reveal the corruption of the dominating elite during the dictatorships.

Regarding the economy, Brazil, like many Latin American countries, has experienced strong economic growth in recent years. In fact, today the Brazilian economy is the world's sixth largest and is one of the world's fastest growing major economies. However, despite this growth, Brazilians are witnessing a moral crisis in public institutions, reflected in the numerous impeachment proceedings, which demonstrate corruption even at the highest levels of government. Similarly, a moral decline can be seen in the private production sector reflected in rising prices that indicate a desire for profits.

In the general population, a crisis in moral values can be observed, exacerbated in some ways by the institutional crisis. This moral crisis is clearly expressed through mass media, mainly television. For example, in a study on values transmitted by television, Camino and Cavalcanti (1998), following the typology of Kohlberg (1976, 1984), analyzed several soap operas of the Rede Globo channel (the broadcaster with the greatest audience in Brazil). It was observed that the most frequently transmitted values were: opportunism (using others for personal benefit), dishonesty, and lack of obligation to consequences of one's own acts. Camino et al. (1992), demonstrate the influence that exposure to this type of values can have on television viewers. In their study, they observed that the higher the viewers' empathy for characters considered "triumphant bad-guys", the greater their adhesion to the values transmitted by these characters. This study shows that empathy with these characters is related to a more utilitarian and less moral attitude.



Source: http://www.welcome2worldholidays.com/brazil/index.htm

## The Socialization Process in the Family

There are complex ways in which the socialization process develops, so the study of the family as a socializing agent is fundamental. As much as norms and socialization processes vary depending on different social, economic and political contexts, the role of parents continues to be to evaluate if the child's behavior is in line with the norms of the social context in which both parents and child are found. This is due to society's assigning of responsibility to parents as socializing agents, which is constant and transcends the diversity of cultural norms (Darling and Steinberg 1993).

It can be said that research on family socialization responds to two fundamental questions: (1) how do parents socialize their children? That is, what practices, systems or strategies do parents use to achieve internalization of behaviors that are normative within a determined society, and (2) what repercussions do different forms of parental socialization have on their children? How does parental behavior relate to the personal and social adjustment of their children. Upon studying the role of parents in the process of socialization, the influence that the cultural context as well as the child's own behavior can have on the parents' behavior must be considered (Chapman 1979; Schaffer 1984).

## How Parents Socialize Their Children: Socialization Styles

In order to classify the relationship between parents and children in a specific context, a certain consistency is necessary in parental actions regarding the child's behavior. According to Musitu and García (2001), this consistency in parental conduct is how we define a socialization style. Socialization styles are patterns of persistent behavior that parents adopt in response to different behaviors on the part of the child in everyday life. However, a socialization style is not only the consistent employment of a set of socialization techniques or practices, defined as a response to a specific act on the part of the child. Parents use these practices by combining and orienting them toward an objective, which gives meaning to the use of the practices themselves.

Socialization styles allow for the classification of a great part of the relationship established between parents and children. Baumrind (1967, 1971) distinguished between three parental socialization styles—authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive—based on the type of authority and control exercised by parents. Authoritative parents would be those who tend to direct the activities of their children in a rational way; they give incentives to dialogue and reason, and exercise firm control over their children. Authoritarian parents would be those who control the child's behavior through punitive conduct, and they especially value obedience to the established family rules of conduct. Permissive parents would not use punishment and would be receptive to the wishes of the child. These parents would be more a resource for the

achievement of the child's wishes than a socializing agent or model that directs their behavior (Baumrind 1966).

Later, Maccoby and Martin (1983) proposed measuring socialization styles with a quadripartite typology model via two dimensions of parental conduct that are theoretically independent: demandingness and responsiveness (Darling and Steinberg 1993; Smetana 1995). Parental demandingness refers to parental attitudes and behaviors that try to control the behavior of the child in some way, imposing limits and establishing rules. Responsiveness refers to attitudes which favor autonomy, development and self-affirmation of the child through communication and emotional support. From these dimensions four socialization styles can be derived: authoritative—characterized by the use of high demandingness and high responsiveness; neglectful—characterized by low demandingness and low responsiveness; indulgent—characterized by low demandingness and high responsiveness; and authoritarian—characterized by the employment of high demandingness and low responsiveness.

## Styles and Practices of Parental Socialization in Brazil

Costa et al. (2000) found that the dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness were appropriate for measuring socialization in Brazil, translating the scale used by Lamborn et al. (1991) into Portuguese. In this self-report instrument, adolescents evaluated attitudes and practices related to demandingness and responsiveness of their mother and father separately. Demandingness is measured by eight items and responsiveness is measured by ten. Using the exploratory factor analysis technique, the two dimensions were replicated in the Brazilian population, specifically in a sample from Porto Alegre, in the state of Rio Grande del Sur. The distribution of the styles that the authors observed (Costa et al. 2000) does not present significant differences with the distribution found in the United States, using the same scoring system based on the parents' scores (low or high) in the demandingness and responsiveness dimensions (Lamborn et al. 1991). The authoritative and neglectful styles are the most frequent (36.7 and 35 %, respectively), while the styles least used by Brazilian parents are the indulgent and authoritarian (14.5 and 13.3 %, respectively). This distribution is similar to that observed by Weber et al. (2004), using the same scales, with a sample of children from the Curitiba region, in the south of Brazil (neglectful, 45.4 %; authoritative, 32.8 %; indulgent, 11.8 %; and authoritarian, 10.1 %), though here the authors highlighted the high number of neglectful families observed.

Weber et al. (2004) analyzed the differences in Brazil between the perceptions of parents and children in identifying the socialization styles that parents use. They compared the perception of parental conduct that parents and children have, which resulted in both mothers and fathers considering themselves to be more demanding and responsive than what their children considered their parents to be. The tendency for parents to see themselves as extremely demanding and responsive does not

coincide with the vision that their children have of them, which is more moderate. The authors argue that these differences could be due to parents feeling tempted to respond in a socially desirable way, considering the ideal parent to demonstrate demanding or responsive behaviors whenever the situation calls for them. It is also possible that the parents' and children's perceptions differ due to parental behavior being interpreted in a distinct way on the part of the child. These authors pointed out how it is possible for parents not to have full knowledge about the behaviors and activities of their children, which would imply that their real behavior was actually less demanding than what parents believed it was (Weber et al. 2004). This phenomenon could explain the differences in perception that parents and children have about the demandingness of the parents.

Martínez et al. (2011, 2012) also confirmed the existence of two dimensions equivalent to demandingness and responsiveness upon validating the ESPA29 family socialization scale, originally developed in Spain, with a sample of over 2000 adolescents in the Northeast of Brazil. This scale measures parental socialization styles (authoritative, indulgent, authoritarian and neglectful) using a contextual (Darling and Steinberg 1993) and situational perspective (Oliveira et al. 2002; Smetana 1995). The two independent dimensions, called acceptance/involvement and strictness/imposition in the scale, are configured by considering the level of employment that parents make of various practices of socialization. The socialization practices considered are: affection, indifference, dialogue, detachment, scolding, physical punishment and revoking privileges. The practices of scolding, physical punishment and revoking privileges define the strictness/imposition dimension. These practices are employed in situations in which the conduct of the child is inappropriate with the norms of family conduct. Their objective is to modify the child's conduct, imposing restrictions and limits on behavior so that the child can develop the ability to suppress prohibited behaviors and adopt more socially desirable ones (Mischel and Mischel 1976; Parke 1974). The acceptance/involvement dimension is made up of the practices of dialogue and affection in the positive extreme, and indifference and detachment in the negative extreme. These practices can be employed in situations where the child's behavior is contrary to that of the familial norms (dialogue) as well as in situations in which the child behaves in accordance with these norms in order to reward the behavior (affection). For the practices of dialogue to be employed, a long-lasting, optimal parent-child relationship must exist. If the relationship is characterized as such, it will be reflected in high scores in the acceptance/involvement dimension.

Regarding the degree to which Brazilian parents use the socialization practices measured by the scale, it was observed that the practices of affection and dialogue are employed to a similar degree by both parents (Martínez 2005). However, there are differences in the use of the strictness/imposition practices on the part of both mothers and fathers. Both use scolding to a higher degree, followed by revoking privileges, while physical punishment is the technique least employed (Martínez and Madrid 2008).

Beyond proving the suitability of the demandingness and responsiveness dimensions in order to measure parental socialization style in Brazil, other authors have

explored the use of a number of parental control techniques characteristic of Brazilian culture, especially of the rural environment of the Northeast. These techniques include threats of punishment from mythical or supernatural beings (e.g., if you don't go to sleep, the devil will hit you) and positive reinforcement techniques (e.g., if you behave nicely, I'll give you some chocolate) (Camino et al. 1996). Later, Camino et al. (2003) analyzed these control techniques, as well as the three control techniques outlined by Hoffman (1983, 1994): threat of a real punishment, threat of withdrawal of affection and explanation of the consequences of a prohibited act. The analysis centered on the mother's use of these practices in a low socio-economic setting in the same region of Brazil in diverse situations such as eating, sleeping, dressing and studying.

Using factor analysis, the authors found that all five control techniques grouped into two factors. These factors differentiated between external control techniques and the internal control techniques that mothers used in Brazil. It was found that the use of the techniques of a promise of reward, threats of real or supernatural punishment and the threat of affection withdrawal grouped into the same factor: external control. External control techniques try to control behavior through positive or negative consequences that are not directly related to the act of the child. Explanation of the consequences of the child's conduct loaded onto the other factor, constituting an internal control technique that, contrary to the others, reflects an attitude of control that emphasizes the intrinsic consequences that the child's behavior would have.

## Differences in the Use of Socialization Practices Between Mothers and Fathers in Brazil

The different role that mothers and fathers have in the raising of children in Brazil is reflected in the differences in the degree to which each parent employs the different socialization practices. Authors such as Costa et al. (2000), as well as Martínez et al. (2003), found that Brazilian adolescents scored their mothers higher than their fathers in behaviors that define the responsiveness dimension as well as behaviors that define the demandingness dimension. This reflects a more marked presence of mothers in the employment of child-rearing practices in the family environment. This result was confirmed by Weber et al. (2004) who found that mothers assigned themselves higher scores than did fathers in both dimensions—demandingness and responsiveness—when the parents themselves evaluated their parenting behavior.

However, this result does not solely characterize Brazilian culture given that similar results have been found in studies carried out in other countries. As affirmed by Costa et al. (2000), in general the mother is identified as the parent closer to the adolescent and with greater contact (Claes 1998; Hennigen 1994; Paulson and Sputa 1996). Mothers play a larger role than fathers in child rearing in Brazil when compared with other countries, such as Spain, where the presence of both parents seems to be more equal (Martínez et al. 2003).

With respect to the use of socialization practices, Martínez et al. (2003) found that Brazilian mothers tend to employ the practices of affection and dialogue more than fathers. Brazilian mothers also tend to employ strictness and imposition practices more than fathers do, such as revoking privileges, scolding and physical punishment. A more exhaustive analysis of the use of these practices revealed that the difference between mothers and fathers is only evident in the case of scolding, which is used much more by mothers, while revoking privileges and physical punishment are used equally by both parents (Martínez and Madrid 2008). Despite these findings, it can be concluded that mothers have a greater and more active presence in childrearing in Brazil.

## Employment of Socialization Practices in Boys and Girls in Brazil

Another aspect of the socialization process that has been shown to influence the socialization practices that parents choose to employ is the gender of the child (e.g., Martínez 2005). Studies have shown that Brazilian mothers as well as fathers employ more demanding practices with girls than with boys (Costa et al. 2000; Weber et al. 2004). In terms of the employment of responsive practices, Costa et al. (2000) showed that Brazilian mothers also used more acts of responsiveness with girls than with boys. Brazilian girls experience more intense childrearing practices than do boys. Weber et al. (2004) give a cultural explanation for these differences based on the belief that girls are more fragile and with more care needs than boys, who are considered to be stronger and more autonomous. This, in turn, leads to parents tending to display more neglectful behavior toward boys, which would also confirm the influence of a macho culture, which gives men greater freedom.

## Family Socialization Styles and Child Adjustment

The way in which the socialization style the parent employs relates to the behavior of children and their social and psychological adjustment could be the most widely studied phenomenon in family socialization literature. Baumrind (1966) proposed that authoritative parental control, rather than authoritarian and neglectful, was the most effective in raising children in her pioneering work (Baumrind 1966, 1971). In these studies, she argued that an authoritative parenting style, which combines firm control with dialogue, would better transmit social norms and values and would result in more mature, autonomous and responsible children (Baumrind 1967, 1971; Maccoby and Martin 1983).

Considering the quadripartite model, originating from the demandingness and responsiveness dimensions (Maccoby and Martin 1983), research carried out with middle-class European-American adolescents, has supported the idea that the use

of the authoritative style achieves more optimum results in child and adolescent development (Baumrind 1967, 1971; Dornbusch et al. 1987; Gray and Steinberg 1999; Johnson et al. 1991; Lamborn et al. 1991; Noller and Callan 1991; Radziszewska et al. 1996; Steinberg et al. 1989, 1991, 1992, 1994, 2006). Children from authoritarian and indulgent families displayed intermediate profiles of social and psychological adjustment, while children from neglectful families presented the lowest levels of adjustment.

Studies recently carried out in other cultural contexts have found that it is not always the authoritative style that is related to the best outcomes in child adjustment. For example, a number of studies carried out in the United States with Asian minorities show that the use of an authoritarian style by parents is associated with positive adjustment in children, especially in academic results (Chao 1994, 1996, 2001; Reglin and Adams 1990). The authoritarian style was also not found to be damaging to adolescent mental health in Arabic societies (Dwairy et al. 2006). In other cultural contexts, it seems that the indulgent style is associated with the best outcomes of adolescent adjustment or as equally as good as the results associated with the authoritative style. Among the studies that show positive outcomes in adolescents raised under the indulgent style are those carried out in the Philippines by Hindin (2005), as well as in countries in southern Europe such as Turkey (Türkel and Tezer 2008), Spain (Musitu and García 2001, 2004) and Italy (Marchetti 1997). This has also been found in Latin American countries, such as Mexico (Villalobos et al. 2004) and Brazil (Martínez and García 2008; Martínez et al. 2007).

## The Function of Dialogue in Family Socialization in Brazil

Other studies relating specific practices that parents use to social behavior in children have also been carried out in Brazil. These studies have included variables of psychological adjustment and psycho-social development of Brazilian adolescents. Among studies of this nature, Moraes et al. (2007) analyzed the relationship between the practices of acceptance, coercion and detachment on the part of the parents with the values displayed by their adolescent children. Through the practice of acceptance, parents reason with and show affection to their children, while the practice of coercion is based on the use of punitive strategies, and the practice of detachment on indifference in response to the child's behavior. The results of this study show that the practices of reasoning and affection are positively related to the internalization of values, including materialist, post-materialist and religious values. However, the practices of punishment and indifference were related negatively to the internalization of these values, with the exception of materialist values, which are related to the use of detachment practices by parents.

Another example of the positive outcomes that can be rendered by the use of the reasoning practice on children in Brazil is outlined in the study carried out by Camino et al. (2003) in the Northeast of the country with families from low socioeconomic levels, which was mentioned previously in this chapter. The authors

found that reasoning was the parental control technique associated with the highest moral development, as it promotes internal behavioral control.

The importance of reasoning in family socialization has been highlighted in two studies with a sample of Brazilian adolescents by Martínez et al. (2007) and Martínez and García (2008) in which the relationship between the four parental socialization styles (authoritative, authoritarian, neglectful and indulgent) and adolescent adjustment was analyzed. The results of these studies show that children raised by indulgent parents (high use of the practices of affection and reasoning) have equal or higher adjustment as compared to children reared by authoritative parents (high use of affection and reasoning, but also high use of coercive practices). Specifically, these studies found that Brazilian adolescents raised primarily under the practices of affection and reasoning have equal self-esteem, or even higher in the case of family self-esteem, than youth reared under the authoritative style (Martínez et al. 2007). Additionally, regarding value internalization, which has been pointed out as the key of well-developed children (Baumrind 1966), no differences were found in the adhesion to the values of self-transcendence and conservation between authoritatively and indulgently raised adolescents (Martínez and García 2008). Internalization of these values is important because they reflect consideration for others and acceptance of social norms (conservation values) and concern for the welfare and interests of others (self-transcendence values) (Schwartz 1992; Schwartz and Bilsky 1987, 1990). Children raised by authoritarian and neglectful parents would be the ones who least internalize these values.

All these results point out that coercive practices do not achieve improvement in psychological wellbeing or value internalization in Brazil, or other countries such as Spain (Martínez and García 2008), Italy (Marchetti 1997) or Mexico (Villalobos et al. 2004). These outcomes are better achieved in adolescents via the use of affection and reasoning.

## The Role of Cultural Characteristics

The discrepancies in studies on the relationship between socialization practices employed by parents and child adjustment among different countries and cultures in which the socialization process develops suggest that the ideal parental socialization style depends on the cultural environment (Chao 1994; Ho 1989).

Some authors have indicated the possibility of a socialization practice having different meanings depending on the socio-cultural context in which the socialization process is produced (Grusec et al. 1997). In this way, it seems that coercive socialization practices will only achieve positive outcomes in children in cultures where hierarchical relationships and respect for authority are positively valued. This would explain the use of coercion by parents to obtain positive outcomes in cultures such as Asia and the United States, where hierarchical relationships are emphasized and encouraged (Triandis 1995, 2001). However, these practices would not have such a positive effect in countries like Brazil where parent-child relationships have

a more horizontal nature (Gouveia et al. 2004), given that Brazil has been identified as a collectivist-horizontal culture (Gouveia et al. 2002, 2003). In Brazil, reasoning would be a more effective socialization practice to establish guidelines and limits on the child's conduct (Camino et al. 2003; Martínez and García 2007, 2008; Martínez et al. 2007), while affection would be the parental practice that provides emotional support to children.

# References

Baumrind, D. (1966). Effects of authoritative parental control on child behavior. *Child Development, 37*, 887–907.

Baumrind, D. (1996). The discipline controversy revisited. *Family Relations, 45*, 405–414.

Baumrind, D. (1967). Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behavior. *Genetic Psychology Monographs, 75*(1), 43–88.

Baumrind, D. (1971), Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology Monograph, 4*(1) Pt. 2.

Camino, L. (1996). A socialização política: Uma análise em termos de participação social. In L. Camino & P. R. M. Menandro (Eds.), *A sociedade na perspectiva da psicologia: Questões teóricas e metodológicas* (pp. 14–36). Rio de Janeiro: ANPEPP.

Camino, C., & Cavalcanti, M. G. (1998). Valores morais transmitidos por telenovelas brasileiras: Vale Tudo, Tieta, Salvador da Pátria. In M. L. T. Nunes (Ed.), *Moral & TV* (pp. 90–148). Porto Alegre: Evangraf.

Camino, C., Cavalcanti, M. G., & Rique, J. (1992). Empathy and morality. Brussels, Belgium: Resumos de comunicações científicas. *XXV International Congress of Psychology* (p. 226).

Camino, C., Camino, L., & Leyens, J. P. (1996). Julgamento moral, emoção e empatia. In Z. A. Trindade & C. Camino (Eds.), *Cognição social e juízo moral* (pp. 109–135). Rio de Janeiro: ANPEPP.

Camino, C., Camino, L., & Moraes, R. (2003). Moralidade e socializacao: Estudo empiricos sobre praticas maternas de controle social e o julgamento moral. *Psicologia: Reflexao e Critica, 16*, 41–61.

Chao, K. (1994). Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development, 65*, 1111–1119.

Chao, K. (1996). Chinese and European-American mothers' beliefs about the role of parenting in children's school success. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 27*, 403–423.

Chao, K. (2001). Extending research on the consequences of parenting style for Chinese Americans and European Americans. *Child Development, 72*(6), 1832–1843.

Chapman, M. (1979). Listening to reason: Children's attentiveness and parental discipline. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 25*, 251–263.

Claes, M. (1998). Adolescents' closeness with parents, siblings, and friends in three countries: Canada, Belgium, and Italy. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 27*, 165–184.

da Costa, F. T., Teixeira, M. A. P., & Gomes, W. B. (2000). Responsividade e exigências: Duas escalas para avaliar estilos parentais. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica, 13*, 465–473.

Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting style as context: An integrative model. *Psychological Bulletin, 113*, 487–496.

Dornbusch, S. M., Ritter, P. L., Leiderman, P. H., Roberts, D. F., & Fraleigh, M. J. (1987). The relation of parenting style to adolescent school performance. *Child Development, 58*, 1244–1257.

Dwairy, M., Achoui, M., Abouserie, R., & Farah, A. (2006). Adolescent-family connectedness among Arabs: A second cross-regional research study. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 37*(3), 248–261.

Gouveia, V. V., Alburquerque, J. B., Clemente, M., & Espinosa, P. (2002). Human values and social identities: A study in two collectivist cultures. *International Journal of Psychology, 37*(6), 333–342.

Gouveia, V. V., Clemente, M., & Espinosa, P. (2003). The horizontal and vertical attributes of individualism and collectivism in a Spanish population. *Journal of Social Psychology, 143*, 43–64.

Gouveia, V. V., Guerra, V. M., del Martinez, M., & Paterna, C. (2004). O individualismo e o coletivismo como explicadores do preconceito frente aos negros [Individualism and collectivism as explanations of prejudice toward black people]. In M. E. O. Lima & M. E. Pereira (Eds.), *Estereotipos, preconceitos e discriminacao: Perspectivas teoricas e metodologicas* (pp. 161–182). Salvador: EDUFBA.

Gray, M., & Steinberg, L. (1999). Unpacking authoritative parenting: Reassessing a multidimensional construct. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 61*, 574–587.

Grusec, J. E., Rudy, D., & Martini, T. (1997). Parenting cognitions and child outcomes: An overview and implications for children's internalization of values. In J. E. Grusec & L. Kuczynski (Eds.), *Parenting and children's internalization of values: A handbook of contemporary theory* (pp. 259–282). New York: Wiley.

Hennigen, I. (1994). *Dimensões psicossociais da adolescência: Identidade, relação familiar e relação com amigos.* Dissertação de Mestrado não publicada. Porto Alegre: Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul.

Hindin, M. J. (2005). Family dynamics, gender differences and educational attainment in Filipino adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence, 28*, 299–316.

Ho, D. (1989). Continuity and variation in Chinese patterns of socialization. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 51*, 149–163.

Hoffman, M. L. (1983). Affective and cognitive processes in moral internalization: An information processing approach. In E. T. Higgins, D. Rufly, & W. Hartup (Orgs.), *Social cognition and social development: A socio-cultural perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hoffman, M. L. (1994). Discipline and internalization. *Developmental Psychology, 30*, 26–28.

Johnson, B. N., Shulman, S., & Collins, W. A. (1991). Systemic patterns of parenting as reported by adolescents: Developmental differences and implications for psychosocial outcomes. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 6*, 235–252.

Kohlberg, L. (1976). Moral stages and moralization: The cognitive-developmental approach. In T. Lickona (Ed.), *Moral development and behavior: Theory, research and social issues* (pp. 31–53). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Kohlberg, L. (1984). *Essays on moral development: The psychology of moral development* (Vol. 2). New York: Harper & Row.

Lamborn, S. D., Mounts, N. S., Steinberg, L., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1991). Patterns of competence and adjustment among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child Development, 62*, 1049–1065.

Maccoby, E. E. (1994). The role of parents in the socialization of children: An historical overview. In R. D. Parke, P. A. Ornstein, J. J. Rieser, & C. Zahn-Waxler (Eds.), *A century of developmental psychology* (pp. 589–615). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, J. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction. In E. M. Hetherington (Ed.), P. H. Mussen (Series Ed.), *Handbook of Child Psychology: Vol. 4. Socialization, personality, and social development* (pp. 1–101). New York: Wiley.

Marchetti, B. (1997). *Concetto di se'relazioni familiari e valori.* Tesis de Licenciatura. Dir.: Augusto Palmonari. Facultad de Psicología. Universidad de Bolonia, Bolonia.

Martínez, I. (2005). *Estudio transcultural de los estilos de socialización parental*. Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha.

Martínez, I., & García, J. F. (2007). Impact of parenting styles on adolescents' self-esteem and internalization of values in Spain. *Spanish Journal of Psychology, 10*, 458–467.

Martínez, I., & García, J. F. (2008). Internalization of values and self-esteem among Brazilian teenagers from authoritative, indulgent, authoritarian, and neglectful homes. *Adolescence, 43*(169), 13–29.

Martínez, I., & Madrid, I. (2008). La utilización de prácticas coercitivas por parte de los padres en España y Brasil: un estudio comparativo. *Psicologia, Educação e Cultura, 12*, 283–294.

Martínez, I., Musitu, G., García, J. F., & Camino, L. (2003). Un análisis intercultural de los efectos de la socialización familiar en el autoconcepto: España y Brasil. *Psicologia, Educação e Cultura, 7*, 239–259.

Martínez, I., García, J. F., & Yubero, S. (2007). Parenting styles and adolescents' self-esteem in Brazil. *Psychological Reports, 100*, 731–745.

Martínez, I., García, J. F., Camino, L., & Camino, C. (2011). Socialização parental: adaptação ao Brasil da escala ESPA29. *Psicologia, Educação e Cultura, 24*(4), 640–647.

Martínez, I., García, J. F., Musitu, G., & Yubero, S. (2012). Family socialization practices: Factor confirmation of the Portuguese version of a scale for their measurement. *Revista de Psicodidáctica, 17*, 159–178.

Mischel, W., & Mischel, H. N. (1976). A cognitive social-learning approach to morality and self-regulation. In T. Lickona (Ed.), *Moral development and behavior* (pp. 84–107). New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

Moraes, R., Camino, C., Costa, J., Camino, L., & Cruz, L. (2007). Socialização parental e valores: um estudo com adolescentes. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica, 20*, 167–177.

Musitu, G., & García, J. F. (2001). *Escala de socialización parental en la adolescencia (ESPA29)*. Madrid: TEA Ediciones.

Musitu, G., & García, F. (2004). *ESPA29: Escala de estilos de socialización parental en la adolescencia* (2nd ed.). Madrid: TEA Ediciones.

Noller, P., & Callan, V. (1991). *The adolescent in the family*. London: Routledge.

Oliveira, E. A. F., Marin, A. H., Pires, F. B., Frizzo, G. B., Ravanello, T., & Rossato, C. (2002). Estilos parentais autoritário e democrático recíproco intergeracionais, conflito conjugal e comportamentos de externalização e internalização. *Psicologia Reflexao e Critica, 15*, 1–11.

Parke, R. D. (1974). Rules, roles, and resistance to deviation: Recent advances in punishment, discipline, and self control. In A. D. Pick (Ed.), *Minnesota symposium on child psychology* (Vol. 8, pp. 111–143). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Paulson, S. E., & Sputa, C. L. (1996). Patterns of parenting during adolescence: Perceptions of adolescents and parents. *Adolescence, 31*, 369–381.

Piaget, J. (1932). *Le jugement moral chez l'enfant*. Paris: Alcan.

Piaget, J. (1975). *L'equilibration des structures cognitives*. Paris: PUF.

Radziszewska, B., Richardson, J. L., Dent, C. W., & Flay, B. R. (1996). Parenting style and adolescent depressive symptoms, smoking, and academic achievement: Ethnic, gender, and SES differences. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 19*(3), 289–305.

Reglin, G. L., & Adams, D. R. (1990). Why Asian American high school students have higher grade point averages and SAT scores than other high school students. *The High School Journal, 73*, 143–149.

Schaffer, H. R. (1984). Parental control techniques in the context of socialization theory. In W. Doise & A. Palmonari (Eds.), *Social interaction in individual development* (pp. 65–77). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In M. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 25, pp. 1–65). New York: Academic.

Schwartz, S. H., & Bilsky, W. (1987). Toward a psychological structure of human values. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53*, 550–562.

Schwartz, S. H., & Bilsky, W. (1990). Toward a theory of the universal content and structure of values: Extensions and cross-cultural replications. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 58*, 878–891.

Smetana, J. G. (1995). Parenting styles and conceptions of parental authority during adolescence. *Child Development, 66*, 299–315.

Steinberg, L. D., Elmen, J. D., & Mounts, N. (1989). Authoritative parenting, psychosocial maturity, and academic success among adolescents. *Child Development, 60*, 1424–1436.

Steinberg, L., Mounts, N. S., Lamborn, S. D., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1991). Authoritative parenting and adolescent adjustment across varied ecological niches. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 1*, 19–36.

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Darling, N., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent achievement: Authoritative parenting, school involvement, and encouragement to succeed. *Child Development, 63*, 1266–1281.

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Darling, N., Mounts, N. S., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1994). Over-time changes in adjustment and competence among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child Development, 65*, 754–770.

Steinberg, L., Blatt-Eisengart, I., & Cauffman, E. (2006). Patterns of competence and adjustment among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful homes: A replication in a sample of serious adolescent offenders. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 16*(1), 47–58.

Tajfel, H. (1981). *Social identity and intergroup relations*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and collectivism*. Boulder: Westview.

Triandis, H. C. (2001). Individualism-collectivism and personality. *Journal of Personality, 69*, 907–924.

Türkel, Y. D., & Tezer, E. (2008). Parenting styles and learned resourcefulness of Turkish adolescents. *Adolescence, 43*(169), 143–152.

Villalobos, J. A., Cruz, A. V., & Sánchez, P. R. (2004). Estilos parentales y desarrollo psicosocial en los estudiantes de bachillerato. *Revista Mexicana de Psicología, 21*(2), 119–129.

Weber, L. N. D., Prado, P. M., Viezzer, A. P., & Brandenburg, O. J. (2004). Identificação de estilos parentais: o ponto de vista dos pais e dos filhos. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica, 17*(3), 323–331.

Whiting, J. W. M. (1974). Socialización, aspectos antropológicos. In Sillis D. L. (Dir.); *Enciclopedia Internacional de las Ciencias Sociales* (Vol. 10). Madrid: Aguilar.

Zigler, E., & Child, I. L. (1969). Socialization. In G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (Vol. 3, pp. 450–589). Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.

# Parenting and Parent-Child Relationships in Chile

**Kevin Ray Bush and Gary W. Peterson**

The purpose of this chapter is to review scholarly literature and theory related to parenting and parent-child/adolescent relationships in Chile. Consistent with most other societies, families play an important role in Chilean society, a fundamental aspect of which is the parent-child relationship. Strong family bonds are not unique to Chile, but play a vital role in the socialization of the young and as protective factors throughout the life span. Consequently, this chapter begins with a brief overview of the country itself and then an introductory description of Chilean society and family life. This is then followed by an overview of parenting and parent-child relationships in Chile that is based on previous studies as well as insights from existing data sets (e.g., the Global School-Based Student Health Survey Chile from the World Health Organization 2012 and the Cross National Adolescent Social Competence Study; Bush et al. 2002; Ingoldsby et al. 2003).

## Chile

Chile is a country that is fairly easy to recognize on maps because of its unique shape, location and size. Stretching approximately 2,600 miles along the Pacific Ocean across 38° of latitude from its northern borders with Peru to its southern borders with Argentina, Chile is the longest north to south trending country in the world (Central Intelligence Agency 2012). With the average width of the country being just 110 miles, and the widest being 250 miles, the ocean and mountains always seem in reach. The *World Factbook* from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) estimates the 2012 population of Chile to be just over 17 million people, with almost 90 % of the population living in urban areas. Prior to colonialization

K.R. Bush (✉) • G.W. Peterson
Miami University, Oxford, OH, USA
e-mail: bushkr@miamioh.edu

by the Spanish in the sixteenth century, the indigenous Inca and Mapuche ruled and inhabited present day Chile. Independence from Spain was gained in 1810, with a series of elected governments prior to a 1973 military coup which took power until a democratic government and president was elected in 1990. The majority of the population speaks Spanish, which is the official language, although Mapudungun, German and English are also spoken. Over 85 % of inhabitants are of Christian faith, with the majority (70 %) being Roman Catholic (Central Intelligence Agency 2012).



Map of Chile

## Chilean Society and Family

Similar to other developing nations, Chilean society has experienced numerous changes in the last few decades. Since the establishment of democracy in 1990, Chile has seen substantial alterations in governmental practice and social policies that impact families along with influences from globalization (e.g., media from the US and other nations) and increased urbanization. During these changing times, the Chilean family has undergone significant changes, including declining marriage rates and births to married couples, while age at marriage, cohabitation rates, and births outside of marriage have all increased (Salinas 2011). Although many of these trends started in the 1960s, marriage persists as the main form of domestic union and the nuclear family remains a popular family structure in Chile. Both marriage and nuclear families are, however, more common and attainable among higher socio-economic (SES) groups. A recent demographic trend of considerable note is the increase in cohabitation among higher SES groups. This current pattern goes against the traditional system in which married couples are more likely to be of higher SES and more cohabiting couples (consensual unions) are of lower SES (Salinas 2011).

Most parents in all cultures desire to foster positive outcomes in their children and go about doing this by setting expectations that are consistent with normative behavioral and value standards within their socio-cultural context (Bloom 1990; Bush and Peterson 2012). Parents in different cultures may face distinctive life conditions and thus have values and priorities that are somewhat unique and reflect these particular circumstances. Parents' general values and priorities, in turn, influence parental goals, expectations and related behaviors that are components of the socialization process (Peterson and Bush 2012). One commonality across most cultures is that parents are given the primary responsibility for socializing children to meet culturally acceptable norms for behavior. In Chile, socially acceptable norms for behavior have drastically changed over recent decades as society has adjusted from that of a military dictatorship to a democratically elected government (Martinez et al. 2006). As a consequence, contemporary Chileans increasingly appear to resist the authoritarian control that was common throughout society under military rule and to affirm more democratic values (Darling et al. 2008). An important result is that social norms within many arenas of interpersonal relationships, including parent-child relationships, are readjusting in like fashion to be consistent with broader social convictions. Although the society remains highly family oriented, individualistic values are on the rise and social and sexual norms have become more liberal, especially among younger cohorts (Martinez et al. 2006). Correspondingly, trends in dating and sexuality in recent decades are similar to those of the US, with 40 % of Chilean teens (15–19) reporting stable romantic partners and 83 % reporting the onset of sexual intercourse before age 20 (Instituto Nacional de la Juventud, 1999 as cited in Darling et al. 2007).

Beyond the political changes experienced by Chilean society, other general belief and value systems, such as those associated with individualism and collectivism, have become surprisingly different from what one might expect in a South

American country. Individualism and collectivism are useful constructs for conceptualizing differences and similarities across cultures. Collectivism refers to cultural influences that lead individuals to emphasize the values and goals of the group (family, community, etc.) over the values and goals of individuals (Triandis 1995). As a result, parents whose values and beliefs are based in collectivism are more likely to emphasize conformity, obedience and group values in their childrearing approach, whereas parents who identify with individualism are more likely to emphasize granting age appropriate autonomy and independence. Complicating things even more is the idea that individualism and collectivism are not mutually exclusive in the sense that the increased presence of one does not entail that the other become less evident or influential (Peterson and Bush 2012). Moreover, with the expanding reality of globalization, it is becoming more likely that parents in traditionally collectivistic cultures might increasingly adhere to some tenets of individualism and vice versa (Bush 2000; Ingoldsby et al. 2003). Illustrative of this is a notable meta-analytic study by Oyserman et al. (2002) who note that several countries with a Latino culture (Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Puerto Rico) scored higher on measures of individualism and lower on collectivism than did European Americans, who are typically considered to be one of the most individualistic groups. Both systems of values, however, were prevalent within both the European American and Chilean samples. Scholars have proposed that the changing political and societal circumstances of Chile have impacted socialization through increased underscoring of democratic or autonomy-granting values and decreased emphasis on authoritarian or autocratic values (Martinez et al. 2006). These findings suggest the importance of considering the influence of both individualism and collectivism as co-existing value and belief systems within Chile.

## Parenting

Turning to more specific issues about parenting children in Chile, an examination of the literature on parenting and parent-child relationships reveals few in-depth studies and is consistent with other assessments of the literature on Chilean socialization (e.g. Darling et al. 2007). Most studies have utilized single global assessments of family relationships, parent-child relationships, or single item measures to assess specific aspects of parenting such as support or monitoring/knowledge. Only a handful of studies have applied family functioning concepts, previously researched parenting constructs and empirically established instruments to samples of Chilean families. Given the dearth of in-depth studies on Chilean parenting and parent-child relationships, two sets of data also will be used to help explore the prevalence of parenting behaviors, the relationships between these parenting behaviors and child outcomes, as well as related parent-child relationship issues in Chile.

One set of data examined for this chapter comes from the 2004 wave of the Global School-Based Student Health Survey (GSBSHS) in Chile and consists of four representative samples in different areas/regions of Chile (World Health Organization 2012).

Each of the four area/regional samples in the GSBHS Chile study involved a two stage cluster sample to produce data representative of all students in grades 7 primary, 8 primary, and 1 secondary within each particular region. The four samples ranged from 1,971 child respondents to 2,111 child respondents. More information regarding the GSBSHS in Chile can be found on the website for the World Health Organization (2012) and has been described in other publications (e.g., Rudatsukira et al. 2008).

The second set of data comes from the Chilean sample (Ingoldsby et al. 2003) of the Cross National Adolescent Social Competence Study, which consists of a sample of 245 adolescents attending two public schools in Santiago, ranging from 14 to 18 years of age. Although this is a small convenience sample, it utilized standardized instruments (mostly developed in the US) that have been found to have good psychometric properties in the US and other countries (Bush 2000; Supple et al. 2004; Peterson et al. 1999). The sample was described and partially analyzed in Ingoldsby et al. (2003), and the instruments are described in-depth in previous publications (Bush et al. 2002, 2004; Supple et al. 2004; Peterson et al. 1985, 1999). The Cross National Adolescent Social Competence Study is an ongoing international adolescent self-report survey. To date, data has been gathered from over 5,000 adolescents in 11 countries (China, Chile, Columbia, The Czech Republic, Ecuador, Kenya, India, Mexico, Russia, South Korea, and the US).

## *Parental Support/Responsiveness*

Parental supportive practices refer to the extent to which parents are responsive and convey warmth, acceptance, confidence, affection, nurturance, companionship and love to their offspring. Parents convey supportive meanings to the young using both verbal and nonverbal communications. Findings from studies of other Latino groups suggest that children also may perceive supportive meanings in parents' use of certain forms of firm behavioral control (the use of reasoning and/or monitoring), provided that a close trusting relationship exists between child and parent (Bush et al. 2004; Hill et al. 2003). Data from four representative samples of the GSBSHS helps to obtain a picture of the prevalence of support (World Health Organization 2012). Examination of these data indicates that parental support is a fairly prevalent parenting strategy, with 61–65 % of children reporting that their parents communicate supportiveness by making efforts to understand their problems and worries. The consistency across four different regional samples adds credibility to this finding, but the use of only a single item to assess parental support leaves much to be desired. Fortunately, other studies have been conducted that employed multi-item psychometrically sound instruments and identify high prevalence rates for parental support. Examination of the Chilean data within the Cross National Adolescent Social Competence Study, for example, indicated that 89 % of teens reported that their mothers demonstrated supportive behaviors and 85 % reported that their fathers used supportive behaviors as a parenting strategy.

Studies among Chilean samples have found parental support to be positively related to perceptions of parents having legitimate authority (Darling et al. 2008) and obligation to comply with them (Darling et al. 2008). Similarly, studies have found parental support to be negatively related to aggressive behaviors (Bares et al. 2011), sexual intercourse (Sanchez et al. 2010), attention problems and rule breaking behaviors (Bares et al. 2011).

## *Parental Behavioral Control*

Firm parental socialization or disciplinary practices that are intended to regulate children's behavior through a consistent and coherent system of predictable rules and consequences are conceptualized as behavioral control (Bush and Peterson 2012). This follows Maccoby and Martin's (1983) conceptualization of parenting demandingness and what Hoffman (1983) refers to as rational power assertion, which involves the use of reasoning or induction in a firm manner to influence child outcomes that are components of social competence. The consistency and fairness associated with this system helps to foster positive parent-child relationships, trust and open communication (Bush and Peterson 2012). Parenting practices in this category include reasoning/induction, monitoring, clearly communicated expectations, enforced rules, and consistent discipline. Among these different aspects of firm control, parental monitoring and/or knowledge is the most prevalent dimension in studies of Chilean families and parent-child relations.

Parental monitoring refers to a type of firm control attempts through which parents track the activities and behaviors of their young, with the purpose being to increase their knowledge about and influence the everyday and long-term developmental outcomes of children that prevent problem behavior. Monitoring involves asking about or regulating where their children are, who they are with, and what they are doing. Monitoring increases parental knowledge and allows parents to understand the contexts in which their children exist and then implies that parents will adjust their socialization/disciplinary strategies accordingly (Darling et al. 2008; Patterson and Stouthamer-Loeber 1984). It also has been proposed that monitoring may convey care and concern to children and adolescents when parents are perceived as supervising the young to ensure their welfare (Hill et al. 2003). Based on data from the GSBSHS in Chile, a majority of children and adolescents report that their parents are knowledgeable about their behavior, which may acknowledge both their parents' supervisory role and the trust they have in their parents' appropriate judgment to do so. More specifically, across four representative samples from different areas/regions in Chile, between 70 and 73 % of youth agreed with the statement that their parents "really know what you were doing with your free time" (Rudatsukira et al. 2008; World Health Organization 2012). A downside of this study was that the measurement of monitoring/knowledge and parenting behavior was, once again, assessed with only single item measures that assessed parents' monitoring in general

rather than in reference to each parent and specific area of the child's activity. This particular study also examined monitoring of homework by parents (61–65 % endorsed). Although such methodological limitations are important to identify, the consistency of results across four different regions/samples is encouraging. Moreover, this finding for the prevalence of monitoring (or perception of parental knowledge from monitoring) is consistent with analyses conducted on the Chilean data within the Cross National Adolescent Social Competence Study, where 75 % of teens agreed that their mothers were knowledgeable about their behavior and activities (and 63 % for their fathers).

Among Chilean children and/or adolescents, parental monitoring/knowledge has been found to be positively related to self-efficacy (Ingoldsby et al. 2003), conformity to parental expectations (Darling et al. 2007, 2008), school achievement orientation (Ingoldsby et al. 2003), legitimate parental authority (Darling et al. 2008), and connectedness with mothers, fathers, peers, and school (McWhirter and McWhirter 2011). Similarly, parental monitoring has been found to be negatively associated with aggressive behaviors (Bares et al. 2011; Rudatsukira et al. 2008), sexual intercourse (Sanchez et al. 2010), rule breaking (Bares et al. 2011), and externalizing behaviors (Han et al. 2012).

## *Parental Psychological Control*

Parenting practices that are characterized as excessive, arbitrary, and coercive and which inhibit children's development of psychological autonomy fall into the category of parental psychological control attempts (Barber 1997, 2002a, b; Bush and Peterson 2012; Peterson 2005). Parental practices in this category are conceptualized as being both covert and indirect as well as overt through the use of unqualified power assertion (Hoffman 1983). This combination of two quite different kinds of arbitrary control has fostered a debate as to whether a single concept adequately represents both dimensions or whether separate constructs are needed (Bush and Peterson 2012; Peterson 2005). When considered in combination these practices enforce a rigid hierarchy in the family as parents demand prompt compliance without the use of reason, explanation or discussion, and focus on the manipulation of the child's emotional experiences (Baumrind et al. 2010). In other words, psychological control consists of two distinct dimensions, (1) punitiveness or unqualified power assertion and (2) intrusive forms of psychological control (cf. Bush and Peterson 2012).

Punitiveness is the form of psychological control that involves the use of verbal or nonverbal strategies in which unqualified power assertion is used to impose parental authority overtly. Intrusiveness, the second form of psychological control, is where parents impose their authority overtly or covertly through manipulation of the children's emotions to foster dependency and interfere with progress toward autonomy (Bush and Peterson 2012; Peterson 2005).

**Punitiveness**

Parents' use of unqualified power assertion or coercive control attempts (verbal or physical) constitutes punitiveness, which is commonly conceptualized as the featured behavior of authoritarian parenting (Baumrind 1978). That is, parents impose arbitrary authority to demand children's compliance (Bush and Peterson 2012; Peterson and Rollins 1987). Physical discipline is often a component of punitiveness and evidence from previous research indicates that the use of physical punishment with children has been a component of traditional, Chilean, child rearing practices (Vargas et al. 1995; Williamson 1972). Recent public discourse in Chile, however, reflects less favorable attitudes toward physical punishment, perhaps related to policies and campaigns in recent decades that are intended to decrease child abuse and domestic violence (Vargas et al. 1995). In a study conducted in the mid 1990s, for example, Vargas et al. (1995) found that 80 % of sampled Chilean parents, whose 4th to 8th grade children attended public school, indicated that they used physical punishment, while only 57 % of parents, whose children attended a private Catholic school, also acknowledged the use of physical punishment. Vargas and colleagues also surveyed school children (seventh and eighth graders) in these same schools and found congruence, with 87 % of the children in the public schools reporting being physically punished, while only 54 % of children in the private school reported being exposed to physical punishment by their parents. Despite these findings, 34 % of parents of children attending the public schools and 52 % of parents with children in the private school indicated that physical punishment should never be used.

In a more recent study, Runyan et al. (2010) used a modified version of the Parent-Child Conflict Tactics Scale to assess parental discipline across six countries, including Chile. The authors reported that, of the sampled Chilean mothers, 37 % of mothers used harsh verbal discipline, 69 % used moderate physical discipline, 25 % used harsh physical discipline, while only 4.5 % used harsh physical discipline that included hitting with an object. Based on these recent data by Runyan and colleagues, using a random cluster sampling strategy within the Chilean community of Santa Rosa, harsh physical discipline was not found to be quite as prevalent as that reported in previous decades. The credibility of these findings was reinforced by the in-depth and psychometrically-sound instruments and clearly specified definitions used by Runyan and colleagues. These findings also are more consistent with Chilean data from the Cross National Adolescent Social Competence Study, in which only 15 % of teens reported that their mothers used punitive behaviors, while even fewer (10 %) reported that their fathers used such harsh discipline. Three specific items (2 included in the punitiveness scale) assessed physical punishment and an examination of responses to these items indicated that a lower frequency of physical punishment was evident. More specifically, in response to the question, "This parent hits me when he or she thinks I am doing something wrong," 17 % of teens agreed with this item for their mothers, while 13.8 % agreed for their fathers. In response to the question "this parent punishes my by hitting me", 11 % of teens agreed in reference to their mothers, while only 10.2 % agreed in reference to their fathers. For the question, "During the past week did either parent hit you?", only 8.2 % said yes.

Studies examining the impact of parental punitiveness within Chilean samples were rare in the literature. Examination of a series of regression analyses conducted with the Chilean data within the Cross National Adolescent Social Competence Study revealed several statistically significant relationships between parental punitiveness and teen outcomes (academic achievement orientation, conformity to parental expectations, grade point average and self-esteem). Each of the regression equations was significant and conducted with parental punitiveness as a potential predictor along with parental support, monitoring, reasoning, and autonomy granting. Results in regards to teen's perceptions of maternal punitiveness revealed negative significant relationships to adolescent self-esteem and academic achievement orientation; while a positive significant relationship was found with conformity to maternal expectations. Similarly, teen's perceptions of paternal punitiveness was found to be negatively related to adolescent self-esteem, grade point average, and academic achievement orientation; while positively related to adolescent conformity to paternal expectations.

## Intrusiveness

The second component of parental psychological control is intrusiveness, which focuses on the emotional manipulation of children's dependency on parents rather than parents' using arbitrary force to demand children's compliance (Bush and Peterson 2012). Parental intrusive practices include love withdrawal and guilt induction, or the featured behaviors of intrusive or overprotective parenting (Holmbeck et al. 2002; Levy 1943; Parker 1983; Peterson et al. 1999; Peterson and Hann 1999; Peterson and Rollins 1987; Schaefer 1959, 1965). Love withdrawal refers to the efforts of parents to control the young by either threatening to or actually denying love (Peterson and Hann 1999; Holmbeck et al. 2002; Peterson and Rollins 1987). Guilt induction refers to parents' efforts to blame and disgrace to foster dependency, such as turning one's back or refusing to speak to the young in efforts to induce feelings of culpability as a means of influencing children's behavior (Peterson et al. 1985).

Examination of the Chilean data within the Cross National Adolescent Social Competence Study, revealed that only 12 % of teens reported that mothers as well as fathers (also 12 %) used strategies consistent with the love withdrawal category. Somewhat similar are findings that 21 % of teens reported that mothers and 18 % reported that fathers used guilt induction to influence their behavior. A series of regression equations with this data (including parental support, monitoring, reasoning and punitiveness in the analyses) examined the extent to which parental love withdrawal and guilt induction were predictive of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and conformity to each parent's expectations. Results indicated that maternal love withdrawal was a significant negative predictor of adolescents' self-esteem and self-efficacy, as well as a positive predictor of conformity to mother's expectations. Moreover, paternal love withdrawal was a positive predictor of teen's conformity to fathers' expectations, but guilt induction was not a statistically significant predictor of any adolescent developmental outcomes examined for either mothers or fathers.

## Parent-Child Relationships

An important aspect of parent-child relationships is the attachment relationship system that may have significant implications for children's subsequent relationships and individual development. Children with parents/caregivers who are responsive to them are more likely to develop secure attachments and also are provided a secure base from which they can explore the larger social environment at increasingly greater distances from their parents (Ainsworth 1989; Ainsworth and Bowlby 1991; Bowlby 1969, 1988). In contrast, children whose parents/caregivers are overly protective or unresponsive develop insecure attachments.

Recent scholarship suggests that both secure and insecure attachment types that form initially during infancy may increasingly have implications for the quality of intimate relationships and individual outcomes at later stages of the life course. Early attachment relationships may function as internal working models or early relationship templates that may provide the young with some predisposition toward either positive or negative patterns in future relationships (Bowlby 1969, 1988). Bowlby also originally proposed that the attachment relationship system was universal, applying across gender, culture and other contexts. Although some evidence supports this universal assumption, there also is evidence to the contrary, especially in regards to gender and SES. In a study by Pierrehumbert et al. (2009), for example, attachment systems for preschool children and caregivers across five countries were examined (Belgium, Chile, Italy, Spain, and Switzerland), with gender differences reported in children's expressions of emotions related to attachment experiences. Interestingly, the two Latino cultures (Chile and Spain) demonstrated the greatest magnitude of gender differences (statistically significant differences in effect sizes) compared to the other three countries.

Bowlby and other developmentalists have posited that universal parenting characteristics and behaviors, such as maternal sensitivity, are predictors of positive attachment, though the specific strategies through which maternal sensitivity is conveyed may vary across cultures. A study by Valenzuela (1997), for example, provided evidence that although more responsive Chilean mothers tended to have securely attached infants, there was no association found between maternal sensitivity and child behavior during play interactions at home. Such a finding is due likely to cultural or SES factors which predispose mothers to be less likely to use play as strategies for fostering secure attachment (Valenzuela 1997). Thus, the cultural context is likely to influence specific behaviors facilitative of or representative of secure attachment. Overall, the current findings regarding attachment relationships in Chile have been similar to those reported in other countries, with secure attachment being related to positive parenting, positive relationship quality and prosocial child outcomes. Insecure attachment, in contrast, has been found to predict negative individual psychosocial qualities and problematic relationship outcomes. Secure attachment has been reported to be positively related to adolescent self-esteem (Bravo and Tapia 2006), warm parental bonding, and family cohesion (among college students in Chile, Spain and Mexico) (Páez et al. 2006). Similarly, Chilean

children's insecure attachment is related to child maltreatment (Fresno and Spencer 2011), depression among teens (Bravo and Tapia 2006) child malnourishment (Valenzuela 1990; Waters and Valenzuela 1999), and maternal psychopathology (Quezada and Santelices 2010). Recent research from Chile suggests that the prenatal socioemotional context may have important consequences for future attachment relationships and child and maternal outcomes (Araneda et al. 2010).

## Parent-Adolescent Relationships

As children age, the importance of balancing age-appropriate levels of autonomy with connectedness within family relationships continues. This balance of autonomy and connectedness is important across cultures, but the processes leading to this balance and what actually constitutes a balance are likely to vary (Bush and Peterson 2012; Peterson and Bush 2012). Research by Darling et al. (2005), for example, examined autonomy in samples of Chilean and Filipino adolescents, with comparisons revealing that Chilean parents were less likely than Filipino parents to use rules to assert their authority. Chilean teens also were less likely to feel obligated to follow rules established by their parents who had affirmed the need for rules as a means to assert their authority. This contrasts with Filipino teens who were more likely to feel obligated to follow the rules that their parents had established to assert their authority. Some observers have concluded, therefore, that Chilean parents are uncomfortable with rule enforcement that is consistent with authoritarian control as contemporary Chilean society adjusts from being a military dictatorship to a democracy (Darling et al. 2008).

A key dimension of the parent-adolescent relationship, autonomy granting by parents, has been found to foster positive adolescent outcomes (Peterson and Bush 2012). Examination of the Chilean data within the Cross National Adolescent Social Competence Study indicates that teen's perceptions of parental autonomy granting serve as significant positive predictors of adolescent self-esteem and adolescent conformity to parents. A key point here is that as children age and strive for autonomy, optimum development does not result when children are simply given freedom without continued guidance. That is, autonomy should develop gradually within the context of close and connected parent-child relationships. As parents and older children negotiate autonomy, especially during adolescence, conflict is inevitable, but not necessarily negative. That is, conflict may merely signal the need for changes to occur in the parent-adolescent relationship, and perhaps a greater need for more negotiation that leads to self-directed behavior by adolescents within the context of continuing connections (Bush and Peterson 2012).

Cumsille et al. (2010) conducted a study examining the patterning of Chilean adolescent's decisions regarding six areas of parent-adolescent disagreement. The authors found five distinct patterns of teen's disclosure strategies, the first of which is teens "tell all" pattern, in which adolescents disclose everything to parents related to the particular area of concern. A "tell all" pattern had the highest levels of

obedience to parents, beliefs that their parents had legitimate authority, and agreement with their parents. Similarly, adolescents in the "tell all" pattern also reported the highest level of maternal warmth and maternal knowledge, but the lowest levels of problem behaviors. Although norms of communication and parent-child authority likely vary across cultures, Cumsille et al. identify the important role of parent-adolescent relationships in fostering positive adolescent outcomes within a diverse sample of Chilean families. That is, positive parenting (warmth, monitoring/knowledge, age appropriate autonomy granting) is related to positive adolescent communication and adolescent outcomes (self-esteem, academic achievement) that are components of social competence. Preliminary cross-cultural research has found that, in comparison to teens in the US, Chilean teens report lower levels of agreement with parents, but are more likely to fully disclose to parents and are less likely either to avoid the issue or only partially disclose (Darling et al. 2009).

## Conclusion

A review of existing scholarship and available data from ongoing research projects has provided evidence that parenting and parent-child relationships in Chile are influenced by two general value systems referred to as individualism and collectivism. Most all of the key parenting practices identified in the literature were found to be prevalent in Chile and related to outcomes in theoretically predictable ways. More specifically, parental supportiveness or responsiveness appears to be a key parenting practice that facilitates positive child and adolescent outcomes that compose social competence (Peterson and Bush 2012). Parental behavioral control also is used frequently by Chilean parents and serves to foster developmental outcomes indicative of social competence (Peterson and Bush 2012). Although several studies have examined parental psychological control within Chilean samples, most focused on the prevalence of the physical punishment aspect of punitiveness, but few have examined relationships between dimensions of psychological control and child and adolescent outcomes. The few studies in this area do appear to suggest that the use of physical punishment by parents has decreased in frequency during recent decades. A second dimension of psychological control, parental intrusiveness, could only be identified in one study and was not very prevalent or related to many developmental outcomes of youth. This may reflect the broader social-political changes that have occurred in Chile which may, in turn, have led to reductions in authoritarian or intrusive control strategies by parents with their young.

For the most part, patterns of attachment and autonomy development seem to follow general patterns commonly found in the U.S. and other Western societies. An illustration of such a similarity is the importance placed on autonomy development by Chilean adolescents who desire to achieve autonomy sooner than their parents are ready to accept this desire (Darling et al. 2005, 2007). In contrast, some differences or unique patterns also have appeared when Chilean parent-adolescent relationships are compared with those from other cultures. Chilean teens seem to disagree more

with their parents on a variety of issues, but also were more likely to communicate openly with their mothers and fathers (Darling et al. 2009). Such parent-adolescent relationship practices (autonomy granting and open communication) are consistent with the common preoccupation of youth with greater autonomy and seem consistent with the growth of individualism in Chile and with the corresponding resistance to authoritarian control. All these patterns seem consistent with the fact that individualism has had consequences on socialization practices throughout the world and perhaps is a result of globalization.

Significant methodological problems exist in the current Chilean research on parent-child relations, with most studies focusing only on sampling mothers as well as the use of measuring variables with overly generalized single item measures. Consequently, future parent-child research should assess both the mothers and fathers and measurements of constructs should be conducted with empirically developed multiple item measures having demonstrated reliability and validity.

Social norms related to father's roles in Chile also appear ambiguous, are changing rapidly, and differ across generations. Illustrative of this is a study from the early 1970s which found that while 40 % of households in the sample were described as father dominate for making decisions, almost 38 % were seen as using practices where parents share more equally in making decisions (Williamson 1972). Currently, despite the persistence of traditional patriarchal gender roles, younger working class men are finding themselves being expected to negotiate with their spouses/partners and participate more in child care and housework (Olavarría 2003). Some observers have commented that this transition has not been easy because more egalitarian fathering contradicts generations of male socialization for patriarchal roles. As a result of such historic patterns, accomplished models for more active parental involvement have been quite scarce. Thus fathers who have chosen to become more involved and take an active role in childrearing may not feel that they are being good fathers, especially if it takes away from their ability to provide for their family (Olavarría 2003).

An overall assessment is that some initial work has been accomplished, but a great need now exists for more high quality research on parenting and parent-child/adolescent relationships in Chile. Future parent-child research should focus on greater conceptual clarity, frequent cross-cultural comparisons, equal sampling of mothers and fathers, and the development/validation and implementation of psychometrically sound measurement instruments.

## References

Ainsworth, M. D. (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist, 44*, 709–716.

Ainsworth, M. D., & Bowlby, J. (1991). An ethological approach to personality development. *American Psychologist, 46*, 333–341.

Araneda, M., Santelices, M., & Farkas, C. (2010). Building infant-mother attachment: The relationship between attachment style, socio-emotional well-being and maternal representations. *Journal of Reproductive & Infant Psychology, 28*(1), 30–43.

Barber, B. K. (1997). Introduction: Adolescent socialization in context—the role of connection, regulation, and autonomy in the family. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 12*, 5–11.

Barber, B. K. (2002a). *Intrusive parenting: How psychological control affects children and adolescents*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association Press.

Barber, B. K. (2002b). Reintroducing parental psychological control. In B. K. Barber (Ed.), *Intrusive parenting: How psychological control affects children and adolescents* (pp. 3–13). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association Press.

Bares, C. B., Delva, J. J., Grogan-Kaylor, A. A., & Andrade, F. F. (2011). Personality and parenting processes associated with problem behaviors: A study of adolescents in Santiago, Chile. *Social Work Research, 35*(4), 419–423.

Baumrind, D. (1978). Parental disciplinary patterns and social competence in children. *Youth and Society, 9*, 239–276.

Baumrind, D., Larzelere, R. E., & Owens, E. B. (2010). Effects of preschool parents' power assertive patterns and practices on adolescent development. *Parenting: Science and Practice, 10*(3), 157–201.

Bloom, M. (1990). The psychosocial constructs of social competency. In T. P. Gullotta, G. R. Adams, & R. Montemayor (Eds.), *Developing social competency in adolescence* (pp. 11–27). Newbury Park: Sage.

Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss* (*Attachment*, Vol. 1). New York: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1988). *A secure base: Parent-child attachment and healthy human development*. New York: Basic Books.

Bravo, L., & Tapia, L. M. (2006). Relación entre Autoestíma, Depresión y Apego en Adolescentes Urbanos de la Comuna de Concepción, Chile. *Terapia Psicológica, 24*(1), 5–14.

Bush, K. R. (2000). Separatedness and connectedness in parent-adolescent relationships: The impact on adolescent self-esteem among Chinese and European-American families. *Marriage and Family Review, 30*(1/2), 153–178.

Bush, K. R., & Peterson, G. W. (2012). Parent-child relationships in diverse contexts. In G. W. Peterson & K. R. Bush (Eds.), *Handbook of marriage and family* (3rd ed., pp. 275–302). New York: Springer.

Bush, K. R., Peterson, G. W., Cobas, J., & Supple, A. J. (2002). Adolescents' perceptions of parental behaviors as predictors of adolescent self-esteem in mainland China. *Sociological Inquiry, 72*(4), 503–526.

Bush, K. R., Supple, A. J., & Lash, S. B. (2004). Mexican adolescents' perceptions of parental behaviors and authority as predictors of their self-esteem and sense of familism. *Marriage and Family Review, 36*(1/2), 35–65.

Central Intelligence Agency. (2012). *The world factbook 2012*. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency. Retrieved August 8, 2012, from https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ci.html

Cumsille, P., Darling, N., & Martinez, M. (2010). Shading the truth: The patterning of adolescents' decisions to avoid issues, disclose, or lie to parents. *Journal of Adolescence, 33*(2), 285–296.

Darling, N., Cumsille, P., & Peña-Alampay, L. (2005). Rules, legitimacy of parental authority, and obligation to obey in Chile, the Philippines, and the United States. *New Directions For Child And Adolescent Development, 108*, 47–60.

Darling, N., Cumsille, P., & Martinez, M. M. (2007). Adolescents as active agents in the socialization process: Legitimacy of parental authority and obligation to obey as predictors of obedience. *Journal of Adolescence, 30*(2), 297–311.

Darling, N., Cumsille, P., & Martinez, M. (2008). Individual differences in adolescents' beliefs about the legitimacy of parental authority and their own obligation to obey: A longitudinal Investigation. *Child Development, 79*(4), 1103–1118.

Darling, N., Cumsille, P., Pena-Alampay, L., & Coatsworth, J. D. (2009). Individual and issue-specific differences in parental knowledge and adolescent disclosure in Chile, the Philippines, and the United States. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 19*(4), 715–740.

Fresno, A., & Spencer, R. (2011). Efecto del maltrato físico en la calidad de las representaciones de apego infantil en Chile: Resultados preliminares. *Terapia Psicológica, 29*(2), 191–196. doi:10.4067/S0718-48082011000200006.

Han, Y., Grogan-Kaylor, A., Bares, C., Ma, J., Castillo, M., & Delva, J. (2012). Relationship between discordance in parental monitoring and behavioral problems among Chilean adolescents. *Children & Youth Services Review, 34*(4), 783–789. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.01.005.

Hill, N. E., Bush, K. R., & Roosa, M. R. (2003). Parenting and family socialization strategies and children's mental health: Low income, Mexican American and European American mothers and children. *Child Development, 74*(1), 189–204.

Hoffman, M. L. (1983). Affective and cognitive processes in moral internalization: An information processing approach. In E. T. Higgins, D. Ruble, & W. Hartup (Eds.), *Social cognition and social development: A socio-cultural perspective* (pp. 236–274). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holmbeck, G. N., Johnson, S. Z., Wills, K. E., McKernon, W., Rose, B., & Erklin, S. (2002). Observed and perceived parental overprotection in relation to psychosocial adjustment in preadolescents with a physical disability: The meditational role of behavioral autonomy. *Journal of Clinical and Consulting Psychology, 70*, 96–110.

Ingoldsby, B., Schvaneveldt, P., Supple, A., & Bush, K. (2003). The relationship between parenting behaviors and adolescent achievement and self-efficacy in Chile and Ecuador. *Marriage & Family Review, 35*(3/4), 139–159.

Levy, D. M. (1943). *Maternal overprotection*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, J. A. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction. In P. H. Mussen (Series Ed.) & M. E. Hetherington (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology* (Vol. 4: *Socialization, personality, and social development*, pp. 1–101). New York: Wiley.

Martinez, M. L., Cumsille, P., & Thibaut, C. (2006). Chile. In J. J. Arnett (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of adolescence* (Vol. 2, pp. 167–178). Oxford: Routledge.

McWhirter, B. T., & McWhirter, E. (2011). Connectedness among Chilean adolescents: Factor analysis of the Hemingway measure of adolescent connectedness. *Psykhe, 20*(1), 45–62.

Olavarría, J. (2003). Men at home? Child rearing and housekeeping among Chilean working-class fathers. In M. Gutmann (Ed.), *Changing men & masculinities in Latin America* (pp. 333–350). Durham: Duke University Press.

Oyserman, D., Coon, H. M., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2002). Rethinking individualism and collectivism: Evaluation of theoretical assumptions and meta-analyses. *Psychological Bulletin, 128*(1), 3.

Páez, D. D., Fernández, I. I., Campos, M. M., Zubieta, E. E., & Casullo, M. M. (2006). Apego seguro, vínculos parentales, clima familiar e inteligencia emocional: Socialización, regulación y bienestar. *Ansiedad Y Estrés, 12*(2–3), 329–341.

Parker, G. (1983). *Parental overprotection: A risk factor in psychological development*. New York: Grune & Stratton.

Patterson, G. R., & Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (1984). The correlation of family management practices and delinquency. *Child Development, 55*, 1299–1014.

Peterson, G. W. (2005). Family influences on adolescent development. In G. R. Adams & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.), *Handbook on the treatment and prevention of dysfunctional behavior: Theory, practice, and prevention* (pp. 27–55). New York: Kluwer.

Peterson, G. W., & Bush, K. R. (2013). Conceptualizing cultural influences on socialization: Comparing parent-adolescent relationships in the U.S. and Mexico. In G. W. Peterson & K. R. Bush (Eds.), *Handbook of marriage and family* (3rd ed., pp. 177–208). New York: Springer.

Peterson, G. W., & Hann, D. (1999). Socializing parents and children in families. In M. B. Sussman, S. K. Steinmetz, & G. W. Peterson (Eds.), *Handbook of marriage and the family* (2nd ed., pp. 327–370). New York: Plenum.

Peterson, G. W., & Rollins, B. C. (1987). Parent-child socialization. In M. Sussman & S. K. Steinmetz (Eds.), *Handbook of marriage and the family* (2nd ed., pp. 471–507). New York: Plenum.

Peterson, G. W., Rollins, B. C., & Thomas, D. L. (1985). Parental influence and adolescent conformity: Compliance and internalization. *Youth and Society, 16*, 397–420.

Peterson, G. W., Bush, K., & Supple, A. (1999). Predicting adolescent autonomy from parents: Relationship connectedness and restrictiveness. *Sociological Inquiry, 69*(3), 431–457.

Pierrehumbert, B., Santelices, M., Ibáñez, M., Alberdi, M., Ongari, B., Roskam, I., & Borghini, A. (2009). Gender and attachment representations in the preschool years: Comparisons between five countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 40*(4), 543–566. doi:10.1177/0022022109335181.

Quezada, V., & Santelices, M. (2010). Apego y psicopatología materna: relación con el estilo de apego del bebé al año de vida [Attachment and mother's psychopathology: Relation with baby attachment style in the first year of life]. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología, 42*(1), 53–61.

Rudatsukira, E., Muula, A. S., & Siziya, S. (2008). Prevalence and correlates of physical fighting among school-going adolescents in Santiago, Chile. *Revista Brasileira de Psiquiatria, 30*(3), 197–202.

Runyan, D., Shankar, V., Hassan, F., Hunter, W., Jain, D., Paula, C., & Bordin, I. (2010). International variations in harsh child discipline. *Pediatrics, 126*(3), e701–e711.

Salinas, V. (2011). Socioeconomic differences according to family arrangements in Chile. *Population Research & Policy Review, 30*(5), 677–699. doi:10.1007/s11113-011-9206-5.

Sanchez, N., Grogan-Kaylor, A., Castillo, M., Caballero, G., & Delva, J. (2010). Sexual intercourse among adolescents in Santiago, Chile: A study of individual and parenting factors. *Revista Panamericana De Salud Pública, 28*(4), 267–274.

Schaefer, E. S. (1959). Circumplex model for maternal behavior. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 59*, 226–235.

Schaefer, E. S. (1965). Children's reports of parental behavior. *Child Development, 36*, 552–557.

Supple, A. J., Peterson, G. W., & Bush, K. R. (2004). Assessing the validity of parenting measures in a sample of Chinese adolescents. *The Journal of Family Psychology, 18*(3), 539–544.

Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism & collectivism*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Valenzuela, M. (1990). Attachment in chronically underweight young children. *Child Development, 61*(6), 1984–1996.

Valenzuela, M. (1997). Maternal sensitivity in a developing society: The context of urban poverty and infant chronic undernutrition. *Developmental Psychology, 33*(5), 845–855.

Vargas, N. A., Lopez, D., Perez, P., Zuniga, P., Toro, G., & Ciocca, P. (1995). Parental attitude and practice regarding physical punishment of school children in Santiago de Chile. *Child Abuse & Neglect: The International Journal, 19*(9), 1077–1082.

Waters, E., & Valenzuela, M. (1999). Explaining disorganized attachment: Clues from research on mild-to-moderately undernourished children in Chile. In J. Solomon & C. George (Eds.), *Attachment disorganization* (pp. 265–287). New York: Guilford Press.

Williamson, R. C. (1972). Differential perception of the parental relationship: A Chilean sample. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 3*(2), 239–253.

World Health Organization. (2012). *Global School-Based Health Survey*. From http://www.who.int/chp/gshs/chiledataset/en/index.html. Accessed on 30 May 2012.

# Parenting in Ecuador: Behaviors That Promote Social Competence

**Paul L. Schvaneveldt**

Parenting in Ecuador is shaped by many cultural and contextual influences. Ecuador has a rich and complex history coupled with dynamic economic and political changes that influence the context in which parenting occurs. This chapter provides a review of factors influencing parenting in Ecuador, a review of the research literature on parenting practices and strategies in the country, and finally a discussion of a parenting education program and family policies in Ecuador.

## Historical Influences on Parenting and Family in Ecuador

In Latin America and Ecuador, the concept of family has shown gradual changes that are linked mainly to historical transformations in social institutions. A major impact on contemporary parenting practices in Ecuador was the colonization by Spain, which brought significant changes to the established forms of social functioning among indigenous groups in Latin America. Indigenous groups that inhabited Latin American territories before colonization had various kinship systems, with some practicing matrilineal patterns and polygamous marriages. Many groups allowed premarital sexual relationships and marital unions could be dissolved in many cases. In contrast, Spanish conquistadors considered marriage a sacred and permanent bond. They regarded premarital sex as immoral and created patriarchal kinship patterns. The Spanish crown commissioned conquistadors to dismantle native cultural beliefs and force conversion to Catholicism (Dueñas 1996). Thus, the introduction of Catholicism influenced not only the definition of marriage and family, but also other aspects of the legal system associated with family functioning.

P.L. Schvaneveldt (✉)
Department of Child and Family Studies, Weber State University, Ogden, UT, USA
e-mail: pschvaneveldt@weber.edu

Individuals inherited the European patriarchal practice that family was based on differential and unequal rights and obligations for men and women. Latin American colonies only recognized one form of family—the traditional nuclear family formed through a Catholic marriage. Men were regarded as the head of the family, were granted all rights, and were expected to perform the role of providers for the family. Men's authority over their wives and children dominated family life. Women were subordinated to men's authority; they had obligations to their husbands, children, relatives, and they played the role of provider and protector (Jelin 2005; Maurás 2005; Therborn 2007).

During the second half of the twentieth century, important changes in family life took place as a result of industrial modernization, the women's rights movements, and changes in cultural beliefs (Jelin 2005). Some of the social changes leading to transformations in the family were: (a) the introduction of civil marriage as a legal form of marital union; (b) new laws related to separation and divorce and to legal rights of mothers and fathers over their children; (c) movements for equal rights for men and women; and, (d) advances in birth control methods. Furthermore, other factors influenced family and parenting dynamics such as urbanization, women's increased level of education and participation in the labor force, the impact of mass media on individuals' lives, and the initiation of sexual behavior at earlier ages and the subsequent increase in adolescent pregnancy (Maurás 2005). These social forces have resulted in a diversification of family structures which vary in family size, number of children, and the roles and relations among family members and parents (Gutiérrez 1964; Pachón 2005).

## Economic and Political Influences on Parenting and Families

Ecuador has been a country of political instability. There have been 12 different heads of state since 1979 and military coups have been common (Andrade and North 2011). Subsequently, continuity in effective government, economic growth, and social policies impacting parents and families has been limited. Currently, Ecuador is enjoying a period of relative stability with the administration of President Rafael Correa beginning in 2007 and reelected for a second term to end in 2013 (Fig. 1).

Economically, Ecuador has experienced difficult periods as well. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Ecuador faced a major economic crisis that led to the abandonment of the national currency (the Sucre) in favor of the U.S. dollar. The result has been a stabilization of inflation and the economy, but an increase in the cost of goods and services without a corresponding increase in wages (Andrade and North 2011). Thus, many lower income families in Ecuador find themselves being stretched economically in trying to meet their needs with prices for goods and services in line with the U.S. dollar and wages more in line of the pre-dollarization Sucre economy. This has led to a rise in dual-earner families where both the

**Fig. 1** Map of Ecuador

mother and father participate in the paid labor force to support their families. It has also led to a rise in extended family relationships and increased economic interdependence among extended families.

## Poverty and Emigration

One consequence of the economic crisis of 1999 was a dramatic increase in emigration. There are an estimated 2.4 million Ecuadorians who live and work outside the country, with most going to the United States or Spain. The total population of the country is 13 million. Most emigrants leave family members behind in Ecuador and many are left to be cared for by neighbors, extended family, or coop groups and often face neglect and lack of adequate supervision and care (Equipo SAM 2008; Herrera et al. 2008). Migration within the country is also common with many people moving from rural to urban areas seeking employment who leave support networks and connections they have with communities and extended family (Herrera et al. 2008).

According to UNICEF (2011), children from indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian families are more likely to grow up in poverty and face a difficult time accessing educational opportunities. Approximately 97 % of children enroll in primary school, but less than 50 % enroll in secondary school. The government guarantees free education for all children, but most schools operate on a very limited budget. Parents often must cover the cost of teaching supplies, books, and utilities. Because of these fees, poor families are often forced to remove their children from school.

As a developing nation, Ecuador has a poverty rate of 42.2 % and an extreme poverty rate of 18.1 %. The adult literacy rate is 91 % and 29 % earn a high school degree (Torres 2006). While the overall literacy rate is high compared to many developing nations, there remains a large segment of the population lacking sufficient literacy skills for advanced education and employment. Individuals from less privileged backgrounds and indigenous populations have an adult illiteracy rate of 28 % (Ponce 2004). Educational attainment varies in that 36 % of Ecuadorians complete only a primary school education, an additional 25 % complete a high school education, and 2.7 % complete a university degree (SENPLADES 2009). Young people between the ages of 18–24 are more likely to be currently studying at a university (17.8 %).

The average age at first marriage in Ecuador is 29.7 for men and 26.6 for women (INEC 2009). Of those who marry, it is commonly believed that approximately 20–30 % of marriages end in divorce, yet no known study has studied the longer term outcomes of marriages in Ecuador. What is more known is that the total number of divorces has nearly doubled between 1999 to the year 2008 (8,968 and 17,111 divorces respectively). While the number of divorces has nearly doubled in this time frame, the number of marriages has actually decreased slightly from 77,593 in 1999 to 76,354 marriages in 2008 (INEC 2009). Cohabitation is common in Ecuador with 30.7 % of the total population living in Unión Libre or cohabiting, but this varies by region. Only 3.6 % of couples in the Sierra or mountainous region cohabit compared to 41 % of couples in the Los Ríos and Esmeraldas regions (INEC 2009).

Approximately 64 % of families consist of two parent families, 3 % are single parents who live alone with their children, and over 30 % of families are extended families (many single parents live with their extended families; INEC 2009).

The fertility rate in Ecuador is 2.51 and the average family size is 4.1. The average family size for indigenous populations in Ecuador is 4.8. Estimates are that 32 % of children are victims of physical child abuse and 21.4 % of children and adolescents report being sexually abused (INNFA 2009). These demographic characteristics illustrate that many Ecuadorian citizens experience poverty, limited educational opportunities, and that divorce and changes in family structure are increasing. These demographic shifts illustrate many of the challenges parents face in rearing and nurturing their children.

While poverty is a major concern for the health and wellbeing of Ecuadorian parents and their children, it is also important to consider the cumulative impact of multiple risk factors. A greater number of risks factors present in a child's life is correlated with an increase in negative impacts on their development (Clarke-Stewart 2006). Living in poverty and exposure to other risk factors, as in schools, the neighborhood or family structure, have multiple negative effects on individuals' physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development (Seccombe 2000). Such negative effects go beyond health risks, malnourishment, and low school attendance. Poverty and multiple risk factors have detrimental effects on family process and parenting skills such as communication, effective discipline, and problem-solving (Orthner et al. 2004). Parents also serve as mediators of how these external risks impact children living in disadvantaged communities (Masten and Schaffer 2006). Poverty affects children directly as well as indirectly through the negative effects it has on the parent-child relationship.

## Family and Parenting Dynamics in Ecuador

The nuclear family (a couple and their biological children) is the predominant family structure in Ecuador. However, other family types such as single-parent and extended families, are very common. In fact, the percentage of extended families in Ecuador indicates that an extended family structure is the second most common after the nuclear family. Within such families, adult figures such as uncles, aunts, and grandparents help parents in caring for their children (Therborn 2007).

Family in Ecuadorian culture plays a central role in the nurturing and care of children (Schvaneveldt and Ingoldsby 2006). The Ecuadorian law recognizes and protects the family as a natural space and as fundamental for the development of children and adolescents. Furthermore, fathers and mothers have the shared responsibility to respect, protect, care for children, to promote, respect and enforce their rights (Ecuadorian Code of Children and Adolescence, 2003).

Previous research shows that positive family process and positive parenting practices are predictive of higher levels of child wellbeing (Jaccard et al. 1999). Negative family process and parenting practices has been shown to predict lower levels of wellbeing and social competence (Billy et al. 1994; Feldman and Brown 1993). For several years, research has focused on parenting styles dating back to

the 1960s with the research of Diana Baumrind (1966, 1987). She originally discussed three parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive). Authoritarian parents demand obedience and conformity from their children, and favor punitive methods in gaining compliance. Permissive parents have few standards and avoid control. They tend to indulge rather than force or guide their children into acceptable behaviors. Authoritative parents have firm limits but are warm and nurturing in their approach. They prefer reasoning to coercion. Research on Western samples seems to confirm that an authoritative approach is most likely to result in children who manifest social competence and responsibility, achievement, and friendliness (Heath 1995).

Since 1966, Baumrind has added additional parenting styles to include a distinction between a permissive indulgent and permissive neglectful parenting style. Additionally, she has also discussed a traditional parenting style, which entails higher levels of parenting support and involvement, high levels of demandingness and expectations for obedience to parental expectations, high levels of communication and interaction between parent and child, and lower levels of negotiation with the child. This traditional style is more prevalent among collectivist cultural groups, such as Ecuador and many other Latin American cultural groups. [Ed. note: See the chapter on Parenting Styles in this volume.]

While parenting styles are useful and provide a general overview of tendencies in parenting behaviors, some argue that parenting behaviors should be unpacked or examined in more specific ways (Barber 1997; Barber and Olsen 1997). Looking at specific parenting behaviors is beneficial because it allows for a specific examination of a parenting behavior as related to child development outcomes and behaviors. This level of specificity is desirable within cultural contexts as a styles approach may not always be generalizable to various cultural groups.

I was part of a group that examined how parental behaviors impact the social competence of adolescents in Ecuador (Ingoldsby et al. 2003). Specifically, we studied the relationship between parenting behaviors (positive induction, monitoring, autonomy granting, punitiveness, and permissiveness) on adolescent achievement orientation and self-efficacy among samples of Ecuadorian adolescents.

Based on the review of the literature, we hypothesized that adolescents would have a higher achievement orientation (educational effort) and experience greater self- efficacy (sense of competence and initiative) when their parents interact with them using strategies of positive induction (reasoning and support), monitoring (keeping track of the child's activities) and autonomy (freedom granting). Parental punitiveness (punishing behaviors) and permissiveness (lack of control) were expected to result in lower levels of achievement orientation and self-efficacy.

Consistent with research among European American samples (c.f. Herman et al. 1997), parental positive induction, as well as monitoring (by fathers) predicted achievement orientation in Ecuador. Autonomy granting, on the other hand, was associated with lowered achievement orientation, which is contrary to previous empirical and theoretical work among US samples (Herman et al. 1997; Peterson and Hann 1999). Therefore, it seems autonomy granting is not as

important to the development of academic orientation (or self-efficacy) among these Ecuadorian adolescents.

Parents who were supportive and monitored their adolescents' behaviors without being punitive often resulted in achievement orientation for their children. Punitiveness and permissiveness resulted in lower self-efficacy, while positive induction from mothers was connected to greater self-efficacy. Parental induction and monitoring contribute to positive outcomes for adolescents, while being overly permissive or punishing has the opposite effect. The most powerful parental behavior seems to be monitoring. Knowing where their children are and what they are doing has a positive impact on achievement motivation. The biggest surprise was that positive parental induction was not as powerful as it has tended to be in other studies with Western samples.

I also conducted a different study recently on how specific parenting behaviors impact the social competence and wellbeing of younger Ecuadorian children. I utilized a mixed methods approach to understanding the social and academic competence of school-aged children in Ecuador. The sample consisted of a mix of lower and middle SES children, schoolteachers, and parents. Specifically, the research included focus group interviews and surveys with children, parents, and schoolteachers on family and parental influences on child social competence. Quantitative measures were administered to over 1,400 parents to identify family and parental factors impacting the social competence of their children.

Focus group interviews were conducted with five groups of children ages 5–12 to identify major themes related to parenting and family process as related to child development and competence. Major themes from the focus group interviews included the perception that parents who love and protect children were happier, had more friends, and did better in school. Spending time talking with children and being involved in the lives of children were identified as important themes. Another theme identified was the pain and fear children perceive with parental use of physical punishment and this was related to negative social competence. Focus group interviews were also conducted with schoolteachers at private and publically funded schools. Major themes identified a concern of over-involvement and overprotection by parents. Teachers perceived that when parents did not allow adequate separation and independence, the children were perceived to be less competent. This overprotection was viewed as a special concern for middle SES parents. Another theme found that negligence and lack of parental support negatively impacted social competence. Excessive force and harsh punishment by parents also detrimentally impacted child wellbeing. Teachers also identified the theme of financial stress as detrimentally impacting the social competence of children.

The quantitative measure was administered to over 1,400 parents of children enrolled in the same schools. Measures in this questionnaire included demographic characteristics, child competence which included child academic achievement, prosocial behaviors, antisocial behaviors, delinquent behaviors, and perception of connection to family. Parenting and family measures included democratic parenting behaviors, positive induction, punitive parenting practices, indulgence with children,

involvement in academic activities, overprotection of children, and family process (Bowen and Richman 2005). Measures were developed to address cultural and language validity in collaboration with research faculty in a family therapy department at a university in Ecuador.

Demographic characteristics of the sample found that 80.8 % of the parents from the private school were married compared to 59.2 % of the parents from the public school. Less than 1 % of the parents from the private school were cohabiting while 12.2 % of those from the public school were. 12.5 % of the parents from the private school were divorced or separated compared to 9.8 % from the public school. 15.1 % of the parents from the public school were single parents compared to 3.1 % from the private school. Over 73 % of the mothers and 75 % of fathers from the private school had completed at least a university degree or graduate degree completed to 12.1 % of mothers and 6.1 % of fathers from the public school. 49.7 % of the mothers and 51.7 % of the fathers from the public school had not completed a high school degree compared to less than 1 % of mothers and fathers from the private school. When asked about financial stress and difficulties meeting basic needs, less than 1 % of the parents from the private school reported serious problems meeting needs on a daily basis compared to 12.1 % of the parents affiliated with the public school. In fact, 80 % of the parents from the public school stated that they were very comfortable and rarely had financial problems compared to 44 % of parents associated with the public school.

Factor analyses were performed to identify constructs related to outcomes of social competence, parenting behaviors, and family dynamics. Several constructs were identified including child academic achievement, child prosocial and antisocial behaviors, and child-family interaction. Parenting and family factors included democratic parenting, positive induction, parental involvement in academic activities, punitive parenting practices, parental indulgence, family process, and parental negligence. Analyses were performed to predict various indicators of child social competence including academic achievement, prosocial behaviors, antisocial behaviors, delinquent behaviors, and connection to family.

Results show that positive parental behaviors and family process were predictive of greater levels of social competence, such as academic achievement, positive social skills, and connection to family. Important predictors of academic achievement include the use of democratic parenting, parental involvement in academic activities, positive family process, and punitive parenting practices (a negative predictor). Interestingly, among lower SES families, parental indulgence positively predicted higher levels of academic achievement. It appears that parents from lower SES backgrounds who provide extra attention and support have children who earn higher grades. Results also show that positive and healthy social skills with peers and others were predicted by positive family process, parental involvement, positive induction, and democratic parenting practices. Punitive parenting practices negatively predicted positive social skills. Few parents from the middle SES group reported engaging in punitive parenting practices. Finally, a sense of connection and belonging to family was predicted by positive family process, parental involvement, and punitiveness.

This research shows that parental behaviors and family dynamics have important impacts on the social competence and academic success of children in this Latin American country. Punitive parenting behaviors were predictive of lower levels of social competence. Conversely, positive parenting behaviors such as democratic practices, involvement, and positive induction were important predictors of higher levels of child social competence. Finally, overall healthier and more positive family processes were predictive of greater levels of academic achievement and social competence. Positive parenting and family communication skills, as hypothesized, contribute to higher levels of child social competence in Ecuador.

## Parenting Education Programs and Policies

The percentage of extended families in Ecuador indicates that such a family structure is the second most common after the nuclear family. Within extended families all adults contribute to caring for and disciplining children. There has been little to no research on the family and parenting dynamics of extended families in Ecuador or Latin America. It seems paradoxical that current family policies almost exclusively involve mothers in the implementation of programs and exclude other adult caregivers (INEC 2011).

In Ecuador, the Ministry of Social and Economic Inclusion reorganized the National Institute of Children and Families (in Spanish, Instituto de la Niñez y la Familia – INFA) in 2008 (INNFA 2008). The reorganized agency focuses mostly on promoting the healthy development of children ages 0 to 5 years. More specifically, INNFA (2008) has stated six major policy objectives: (1) No child under 28 days of age will die of preventable causes. (2) No child or adolescent will suffer from hunger or malnutrition. (3) No child or adolescent will be uneducated. (4) No child or adolescent will be maltreated. (5) No child or adolescent will be subject to dangerous or prohibited labor. (6) It is essential to develop citizen participation in social development.

The main goal of this program is to provide children between 0 and 5 years of age who live under poverty conditions with nurturing care, preschool education, and adequate nutrition. A major component of this program is to provide parenting education and support to the parents of young children living in poverty. Parents receive in-home education on how best to support the healthy development of their child, such as information on typical child development, nutrition, health care, and discipline. No evaluation data are available on the outcomes of this program; however, this program appears to be promising in supporting parents to foster healthy development of their children (Iberoamerican States Organization for Education 2005; INNFA 2008).

Other issues that represent challenges are the changing the roles of mothers and fathers. On one hand, despite women's increased participation in the work force during the last decades, existing policies seem to hold onto conservative views about men's and women's roles. Most policy initiatives developed in Ecuador rely

on mothers' cooperation to ensure that children and adolescents receive both health and educational services and do not involve fathers in such tasks. Men and fathers are often ignored in parenting education activities and policy initiatives. The alienation of fathers from important family tasks such as childrearing and caregiving has its roots in cultural ideologies about motherhood (Braverman 1988), which most policies and programs for families seem to reproduce.

When resources are limited, as it is the case for Ecuador, family-centered policies should prioritize programs to target families at greater risk (Clarke-Stewart 2006). They should also focus on periods of particular need in the family life cycle, such as the transition to parenthood and when children are younger. Programs also need to strengthen and enhance positive parenting skills and family functioning (Orthner et al. 2004).

I taught a pilot parenting education program to several hundred parents in Ecuador. The parenting education course was a 10-week course covering several topics, including child development, discipline strategies, emotional development, academic involvement, parent-child communication, and other topics. Evaluations show that parents learned a great deal on parenting skills and reported improved relationships with their children. Such parenting education programs, even with lower income families in developing countries such as Ecuador, are beneficial.

## Summary

Social, political, and economic forces in Ecuador control the context in which parenting practices occur. Historically, Ecuador experienced very traditional parenting practices shaped by Spanish colonists who implemented traditional gender roles and family patterns. While many of these cultural beliefs and practices still remain an important part of Ecuadorian parenting, modernization has led to many changes in family and parenting dynamics in Ecuador. Economic and political instability influence parenting behaviors. For example, many children live in extended households or dual-earner households largely out of economic necessity. Furthermore, many parents are separated from their children due to emigration out of Ecuador to seek better employment opportunities in North America and Europe. Thus, some children have limited contact and interaction with their parents. Greater economic and political stability are important in providing parents and their children stable environments and families.

As Ecuador tends to be more of a collectivist society, a strong connection to family is an important influence on parenting behaviors. A more traditional parenting style tends to be common. This includes higher levels of parental involvement, communication, love, and support, yet lower levels of negation coupled with higher levels of demandingness. This style appears to be associated with desirable outcomes with children. Specific parenting strategies that lead to desirable outcomes among children in Ecuador include monitoring of behaviors and the use of positive induction, whereas autonomy granting, permissiveness, and punitive parenting strategies were associated with less desirable outcomes for Ecuadorian adolescents.

Among younger children, the importance of positive family process, parental involvement, positive induction, and punitive parenting practices were associated with greater social competence. Among lower SES children, parental indulgence was associated with greater social competence, likely indicative of the influence of resources and attentiveness in promoting greater social competence. These parenting behaviors contributed to a sense of connection to family and healthy family process which also significantly impacted the wellbeing and success of Ecuadorian children. Thus, parents who are loving, involved, use democratic discipline strategies, and avoid punitive and neglectful practices, help their children to be more successful in the cultural context.

# References

Andrade, P. A., & North, L. L. (2011). Ecuador: Political turmoil, social mobilization, and a turn toward the left. In J. K. Black (Ed.), *Latin America its problems and its promise: A multidisciplinary approach* (pp. 413–428). Boulder: Westview Press.

Barber, B. K. (1997). Introduction: Adolescent socialization in context – The role of connection, regulation, and autonomy in the family. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 12*(1), 5–11.

Barber, B. K., & Olsen, J. A. (1997). Socialization in context: Connection, regulation, and autonomy in the family, school, and neighborhood, and with peers. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 12*(2), 287–315.

Baumrind, D. (1966). Effects of authoritative parental control on child behavior. *Child Development, 37*, 887–906.

Baumrind, D. (1987). A developmental perspective on adolescent risk-taking in contemporary America. In W. Damon (Ed.), *New directions for child development: Adolescent health and social behavior* (Vol. 37, pp. 93–126). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Billy, J. O. G., Brewster, K. L., & Grady, W. R. (1994). Contextual effects on the sexual behavior of adolescent women. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 56*(2), 387–404.

Bowen, G. L., & Richman, J. M. (2005). *School success profile*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, School of Social Work, Jordan Institute for Families.

Braverman, L. (1988). Beyond the myth of motherhood. In M. McGoldrick & C. Anderson (Eds.), *Women in families: A framework for family therapy* (pp. 227–243). New York: W.W. Norton.

Clarke-Stewart, A. (2006). What we have learned: Proof that families matter, policies for families and children, prospects for future research. In A. Clarke-Stewart & J. Dunn (Eds.), *Families count: Effects of child adolescent development* (pp. 321–336). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Dueñas, G. (1996). *Children of sin: Illegitimacy and family life in colonial Santafé de Bogotá*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

Ecuadorian Code of Children and Adolescence. (2003). *Ecuadorian National Congress,* Quito, Ecuador. Available at: http://www.oei.es/quipu/ecuador/Cod_ninez.pdf

Equipo SAM. (2008). *Childhood and emigration in Ecuador: Diagnosis of the situation.* Fundación Esperanza. Quito, Ecuador. Retrieved from: http://www.infomigrante.org/revista//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=626&Itemid=363

Feldman, S. S., & Brown, N. L. (1993). Family influences on adolescent male sexuality: The mediational role of self-restraint. *Social Development, 2*, 15–35.

Gutiérrez, V. (1964). *Familia y cultura en Colombia: Topologías, funciones y dinámicas*. Bogotá: Tercer Mundo.

Heath, T. (1995). Parents' socialization of children. In B. Ingoldsby & S. Smith (Eds.), *Families in multicultural perspective* (pp. 161–186). New York: Guilford Press.

Herman, M., Dornbusch, S., Herron, M., & Herting. (1997). The influence of family behavioral control, connection, and psychological autonomy on six measures of adolescent functioning. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 12*, 34–67.

Herrera, G., Genta, N., & Araujo, L. (2008). *Migration and trends in the field of social policies in Ecuador*. Rome: Centro Studi de Politica Internazionale.

Ibero American States Organization for Education. (2005). *INNFA Ecuador*. Retrieved from: http://www.oei.es/linea3/inicial/ecuadorne.htm#2

INEC – National Institute of Statistics and Census. (2009). *Vital statistics.* Quito, Ecuador. Retrieved from: http://www.inec.gob.ec/web/guest/ecu_est/est_soc/enc_hog/enc_con_vida

INEC – National Institute of Statistics and Census. (2011). *Annual report of marriages and divorces.* Quito, Ecuador. Retrieved from: http://www.inec.gob.ec/web/guest/publicaciones/anuarios/inv_soc/mat_div

Ingoldsby, B., Schvaneveldt, P. L., Supple, A. J., & Bush, K. R. (2003). The relationship between parenting behaviors and adolescent achievement and self-efficacy in Chile and Ecuador. *Marriage and Family Review, 35*, 139–160.

INNFA – Instituto Nacional de la Niñez y la Familia. (2008). *History of the National Institute of Children and Families.* Quito, Ecuador. Retrieved from http://www.infa.gob.ec/

Instituto de la Niñez y la Familia (INNFA). (2009). *Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF). Protección Especial para niñas, niños, adolescentes y sus familias*. Quito, Ecuador.

Jaccard, J., Dittus, P., & Litardo, H. (1999). Parent-adolescent communication about sex and birth control: Implications for parent based interventions to reduce unintended adolescent pregnancy. In W. Miller & L. Severy (Eds.), *Advances in population research: Psychosocial perspectives* (pp. 189–226). London: Kingsley.

Jelin, E. (2005). Latin American families in the context of global transformations. In I. Arriagada (Coord.), *Families and public policy in Latin America: A history of disagreements* (pp. 93–123). Santiago de Chile: CEPAL.

Masten, A. S., & Shaffer, A. (2006). How families matter in child development: Reflections from research on risk and resilience. In A. Clarke-Stewart & J. Dunn (Eds.), *Families count: Effects of child adolescent development* (pp. 5–25). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Maurás, M. (2005). Families and public policy: Towards a "network society". In I. Arriagada (Ed.), *Policies to families: Social protection and inclusion* (pp. 61–67). Santiago de Chile: CEPAL.

Orthner, D. K., Jones-Sanpei, H., & Williamson, S. (2004). The resilience and strengths of low-income families. *Family Relations, 53*(2), 159–167.

Pachón, X. (2005). La familia en Latino América a lo largo del siglo XX. In Y. Puyana & M. H. Ramírez (Eds.), *Familias, cambios y estrategias* (pp. 145–159). Bogotá: Secretaría Distrital de Integración Social, Alcaldía Mayor y Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

Peterson, G. W., & Hann, D. (1999). Socializing parents and families. In M. Sussman & S. K. Steinmetz (Eds.), *Handbook of marriage and the family* (pp. 471–506). New York: Plenum Press.

Ponce, J. (2004). *Ethnicity in Ecuador.* Paper presented at the Ecuadorian Congress of Sociology, Quito, Ecuador.

Schvaneveldt, P. L., & Ingoldsby, B. R. (2006). Teaching family science in Ecuador. In R. Hamon (Ed.), *International family studies: Developing curricula and teaching tools* (pp. 139–150). New York: Haworth Press.

Seccombe, K. (2000). Families in poverty in the 1990's: Trends, causes, consequences, and lessons learned. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 62*(4), 1094–1113.

SENPLADES. (2009). *Law of education in Ecuador*. Quito: Secretary of National Planning and Development.

Therborn, G. (2007). Families in the world: History and future in the 21st century. In I. Arriagada (Ed.), *Families and public policy in Latin America: A history of disagreements* (pp. 31–61). Santiago de Chile: CEPAL.

Torres, R. M. (2006). *Illiteracy and literacy education in Ecuador: Options for policy and practice*. Quito: Fronesis Institute.

UNICEF. (2011). *The boys and girls of Ecuador.* New York: United Nations Children's Fund. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/ecuador/children.html

# Parenting Across Social Classes: Perspectives on Jamaican Fathers

**Patricia Anderson and Camille Daley**

## Introduction

Parent-child contact and interaction is an essential component of effective parenting and provides the opportunity for growth and emotional development for both parent and child. For Jamaican fathers, however, these exchanges are not predictable, as they are mediated by the family structure which is characterized by considerable variability. In some instances, the Jamaican father is located within a traditional two-parent family, while in other cases he occupies a distant or visiting role, with little authority or opportunity to mould the development of his offspring. Accordingly, the outcomes for fathers and for children may be the source of joy or may lead to much dissatisfaction.

The Afro-Caribbean family has been the subject of considerable research, and like the Afro-American family, its distinguishing features have been a high incidence of female-headed households, children born outside of legal unions, multiple partners over time, and households that may include different sets of children who are the result of earlier unions. Historically, these features have been explained in terms of the disruptive effects of slavery (Frazier 1939) or are attributed to the inheritance of specific African cultural patterns (Herskovits 1941; Robotham 1990). However their persistence is undergirded by both cultural and economic factors. The sometimes tenuous relationship between fathers and children has often laid the basis for accusations of male irresponsibility (Barrow 2001), and it is only since the early nineties that there has been any systematic study of men's parenting behaviour and their commitment to their fathering roles. These more recent

P. Anderson (✉) • C. Daley
University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica
e-mail: patandy44@yahoo.com ; camille.daley@uwimona.edu.jm

analyses have sought to explore directly with men their conceptions of the fathering role, their approach to the socialization of children, and the extent of their actual "fatherwork". As a result, a more nuanced picture has emerged in which it becomes clear that Jamaican men across all social classes have a deep attachment to their identity as fathers. There is also wide agreement among fathers on the qualities which children should be encouraged to develop, as well as the methods of child rearing endorsed. However in many cases economic factors as well as family structure limit the satisfactory performance of these roles. This chapter describes the family context within which fathering roles are executed in two urban communities, one middle income and the other low-income. We wish to highlight the similarities and differences across social classes in fathering attitudes and behavior among Afro-Jamaican males.

## Background

Jamaica emerged as an independent country in 1962, but the previous centuries of colonial domination have served to shape its demography, culture and economy in far-reaching ways. This colonial history continues to define the island's character and to limit its development. Having been seized by the Spanish Discoverers in 1492, the island was subsequently captured by the British in 1655, and remained a British colony for the next three centuries. After the failure to find any gold or precious metals, the Spanish turned to the production of sugar and spices for the European market. The large-scale production of sugar, rum and molasses continued under the British, with the enslavement and trans-Atlantic transportation of Africans to provide a source of labour. The exploitation of Africans and some degree of inter-mixture with Europeans established a social structure in which colour, class and economic opportunity were closely intertwined. Since gaining independence, popular governments in Jamaica have sought to wrestle with and to ameliorate the legacies of social inequality. The expansion of access to education has been one of the country's central development strategies. However, a high debt burden, a stratified education system and severe fiscal constraints have limited the success of these efforts. Jamaica experiences a high level of poverty (Planning Institute of Jamaica 2010), and the economy remains extremely vulnerable to external shocks, given its dependence on the export of primary commodities to Europe and the United States, remittances and tourism (Anderson and Witter 1994; Planning Institute of Jamaica 2012).

The population of Jamaica was estimated at 2.71 million in 2011, and based on the 2001 census, the population that was classified as being of African descent represented 91.6 %, with an additional 6 % being of mixed race. Over the last four decades, there has been a steady contraction in the agricultural sector, accompanied by a pronounced shift towards services. The other key sectors of the economy include tourism, the leading foreign exchange earner, and bauxite and alumina production, which has felt the impact of the major recession experienced in the

United States since 2007. Unemployment rates stood at 14.1 % in January 2012, with the female rate being roughly twice as high as male unemployment. The sectoral changes in economic production have been reflected in the movement of rural populations to urban centers, so that currently more than half of the population resides in urban areas.

## Family Structure

Jamaican children may be reared within a diverse range of families and households, as these social structures are closely linked to the alternative types of conjugal unions which their parents establish, both at the time of the child's conception and over the period of their growing up. These conjugal union types include visiting unions in which there is no common residence, common-law or consensual unions in which there is common residence, and legal marriages. It has been shown that in many cases these unions follow a cyclical pattern linked with increasing age, so that partners move from their initial visiting union to common-law unions, and eventually they may formalize the union through legal marriage (Roberts 1957; Priestley 2010). Data from the 2001 census showed that among males 20–44 years, only 18 % were in legal marriages, while 24 % were in common-law unions, with the remainder (58 %) not being in any residential unions. These males either indicated that they were single or in a visiting union. In contrast, among males 45 years and older, 46 % reported that they were legally married, 14 % maintained common-law marriages, and 40 % were not in a residential union.

The stability of this pattern varies considerably in rural and urban areas, and the foundation research has consistently shown that variations in conjugal patterns are often linked to the availability of economic support (Clarke 1957; Blake 1961). Educational attainment and other social class factors also serve to distinguish the type of conjugal union, and the type of family that is established (Roberts and Sinclair 1978). Early studies of the Afro-Caribbean family showed that as women moved through a cycle of conjugal unions over their childbearing period, the family became increasingly matrifocal and male partners often became separated from this female-centered unit (Smith 1973; McKenzie and McKenzie 1971).

Data from the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions continue to highlight the impact of economic factors on household headship, showing that while 45.5 % of all households were headed by women in 2009, amongst the poorest quintile the proportion with female heads stood at 50.2 %, as compared with 36 % among the wealthiest quintile (Planning Institute of Jamaica 2010).

The outcomes for children are also clearly evident in data from this annual survey which reported that in 2009, 34 % of all children 18 years and younger lived with both of their natural parents, while 45 % lived with only their biological mother, and 6 % with their fathers only. In addition, 15 % lived with neither of their biological parents. Among those in the poorest quintile, 34 % lived with both parents in contrast to 42 % of children in the wealthiest quintile.

In Jamaica, masculinity ideologies emphasize virility, as demonstrated through having multiple partners, and since childbearing is often viewed as proof of manhood, many Jamaican men will report having several baby-mothers over time. This emphasis on fertility which has been frequently noted among Caribbean women as a core element defining their identity (Powell 1986) has also been observed by researchers who have examined masculine identity. On the basis of his study in a rural Jamaican community, Whitehead (1992) observed that men at all social levels took pride in both their "inside" and "outside" children, as these served as testimony both to their virility as well as their relative independence from their female partner. He concluded that there was considerable support for Wilson's argument that children are evidence and embodiment of a man's maturity and manhood, earning him respect both in the wider society and among his peers (Wilson 1973). Although adherence to this macho ideology is stronger at lower social class levels, and at younger ages, it is nonetheless evident across all classes (Anderson 2012).

Children who are born outside of an existing co-residential union, or who later become separated from their fathers as the result of the disruption of a union, often come to occupy the marginalized status of "outside children" (Barrow 1996, 2010). The extent of their interaction with their biological father may become attenuated over time, while on the other hand, the father may find that blockages are put in the way of interaction with these earlier children, depending on his relationship with his children's mother. Accordingly, while Jamaican men identify strongly with their father role, and increasingly desire to play a positive role in their children's lives, these attempts, often belated, are not always successful.

## Data and Sample

The perspectives and experiences of Jamaican fathers which are discussed in the following sections are based on community surveys in the capital city of Kingston, conducted in 2005. This study is a replication of a study conducted in 1991 by the Caribbean Child Development Center at the University of the West Indies (Brown et al. 1993), but includes a wider range of social classes. The communities were selected in order to identify any similarities or differences in fathering behavior across social classes, given the fact that previous research has consistently pointed to social class differences in family structure. The middle class community was Havendale, while the low-income community was Denham Town, an inner-city community. The sample was derived by visiting all households in the community and compiling a list of all fathers in these households. The attempt was made to interview all available fathers, with a resulting coverage rate of 59 % in Havendale and 66 % in the Denham Town. The sample accordingly included 229 fathers in Havendale and 382 fathers in Denham Town. The differences between these two communities may be appreciated by noting that in Havendale, 60 % of all respondents reported having tertiary education, in contrast to only 3 % of Denham Town fathers. In this

low-income area, slightly more than three-quarters (78 %) had secondary education, compared with Havendale, where only 29 % had not proceeded beyond the secondary level. When asked to identify their own social class, 54 % of Havendale respondents classified themselves as middle class or higher, while in Denham Town, the large majority (66 %) labeled themselves as working class.

The study also found the expected social class differences in conjugal unions and number of partners. In Havendale, 47 % of all fathers resided with wives to whom they were legally married, and only 19 % reported being in a common-law union. In contrast, among Denham Town fathers, only 11 % lived with married wives, while 42 % had common-law partners. Similarly, in Havendale two-fifths (40 %) of all fathers said that they had more than one baby-mother, while the matching proportion was 56 % in Denham Town. In the discussion that follows, these two communities are simply referred to as middle-income and low-income.

## The Good Father and the Ideal Child

Across both communities there was a strong identification with the father role, as men generally agreed that they liked being known as a father, that they were now willing to sacrifice for their children's needs, and that they considered it important to set an example for their children. When asked to define the word "father", respondents had no difficulty in identifying that a father was a responsible person, one who provided for his family, a loving man who cared for his family, a man who set an example and gave guidance, and a man who provided emotional support to his family. A similar set of qualities was listed when men were asked what a good father should do. It was evident that Jamaican fathers did not see their role as limited to being only the economic provider, as summed up in the words of a young construction worker: "Be good to the children. Take care of them. Own the children.[1] Be there for them. Talk to them. Eat with them. It's not just about giving them money".

When asked to define the Good Mother, there was the expected emphasis on providing emotional support and caring for the children. In addition, Jamaican mothers were often expected to contribute to the financial support of children, as roughly a quarter of fathers listed this among the responsibilities of mothers.

The specific qualities which fathers thought were important to encourage in children reflected both broad cultural values as well as gender-differentiated ideals. In general, fathers agreed that the most important qualities which should be encouraged in children were: showing good manners, being polite, showing deference, respect for others, honesty and integrity, being loving, self-discipline, the fear of God and getting a good education.

---

[1] To "own a child" is to acknowledge paternity.

Despite these common agreements, it was apparent that fathers in each community placed somewhat different weights on what were considered the most important principles. In the middle-income community, the qualities which were cited most frequently were honesty and integrity (20.6 % citing this), respect for others (15.8 %) and the fear of God (13.6 %). In the low-income community, the importance of having good manners was identified most frequently (35.5 %) and this was followed by respect for others (21.6 %) and by the need for children to learn to be loving and kind (8.7 %).

In the inner-city community, considerable importance is assigned to having good manners, a requirement that may be easily understood within the context of a highly volatile environment where showing disrespect may lead to violent confrontations. Traditionally, in both rural areas and poorer communities, Jamaican children are taught early to be "mannersable". These expected behaviours may be taken for granted in middle-income communities. It is also evident that in the low-income community, there was explicit mention of children learning to value education, as these fathers were twice as likely as those in the middle-income community to list this among the most important principles.

Self-direction was emphasized by fathers in both communities, and in relation to both boys and girls. This included a range of qualities, of which the most frequently mentioned were to have self-respect and self-discipline, to value education, to have ambition, to be focused and independent and to be responsible. Regardless of social class standing, fathers placed particular emphasis on children's learning to become independent and self-directing. This was seen as particularly important for girls, and it may be understood in light of the family structure, and the major economic responsibility which many Jamaican women have in relation to their children. For these fathers, there was no contradiction between arguing that women should become self-directed, while at the same time specifying the traditional female qualities of being ladylike. It was noteworthy that among low-income fathers, almost a quarter (23 %) stressed that girls should value education and do their school work, while this was mentioned as an important attribute for boys by only 8 % of these fathers. In the middle-income community, 7 % of fathers identified this as important for boys, while 5 % mentioned this for girls. The stress on educational attainment for fathers of low-income girls is to be understood in light of the potential for formal educational qualifications to rescue these inner-city girls from their limited occupational opportunities, and to divert them from early pregnancies.

When asked whether there were any specific qualities which they thought were important for boys and for girls, between a quarter and a third of the fathers said they did not have any other requirements apart from those listed for all children. The moral principles identified by fathers were generally expressed as "Do the right thing" and "Know right from wrong". For boys, it also included specific directives such as "Not to cheat or steal" and "Do not turn to the gun".

Where gender-specific qualities were identified, it was noted that that boys were to be encouraged to be manly, and in particular this meant that they should be rough and able to tough it, to take part in sports, and to be the breadwinners. Almost equal importance was assigned to their being taught not to abuse women, to take care of

their sisters, and to love and respect their wives. Other lesser concerns included avoiding homosexuals, and in this regard boys should be taught not to allow themselves to be touched inappropriately, to sit in a man's lap, or allow a man to kiss or hug them. Being a good father, protecting the home and not being promiscuous were also part of the directives for boys.

Where specific gender roles were stated for girls, these were directed primarily towards encouraging them to be ladylike, and to delay entry into sexual relationships or avoid having many boyfriends. Other principles included being neat and tidy, and knowing how to dress. Girls were also to be encouraged to be modest and love their family, to be faithful and obedient, and to behave in a way that men will respect them.

## Child Rearing Methods

The methods of child rearing endorsed by Jamaican fathers were explored through two sets of questions, relating to the general approaches to child rearing, as well as those specific to age and gender. The first two questions asked:

> What is the most important thing that fathers can do to train their children in the right and proper way?
> What else can they do?

After discussing the qualities desired in boys and in girls, fathers were asked:

> When you want to let your child know that you are pleased with him or her, what do you do?
> And when you are vexed with them, what do you do?

All of these questions asked respondents to specify their actions in regard to boys or girls under 10 years and those who were 10 years or older.

The three main approaches which were universally endorsed by fathers in bringing up children were to set a good example, to provide guidance and to spend time and reason with the child. Other important techniques which were identified by fathers included being around at all times, instilling Godly principles, providing education, showing love and being a good friend to the child, and providing chastisement where needed.

There were relatively small differences between communities in the methods which they recommended although middle-income fathers appeared to place more emphasis on setting a good example, while low-income fathers stressed taking the time to talk with the child and to reason with the child in regard to desired behaviours. Fathers in all communities recommended providing guidance, as this was listed either as the most important method or as another important method by roughly 40 % of middle-income fathers, and nearly 50 % of low-income fathers.

When fathers went on to identify the ways in which they rewarded or punished boys and girls, there were fairly common practices across class lines. In conveying approval to children under 10 years, the main methods reported by fathers

were to hug children, to tell them how much they were pleased, and to bestow praise and encouragement. Fathers in both communities were most likely to give hugs, regardless of whether the child was male or female. In each community, at least a third of respondents said they would give a hug, while fairly similar proportions would tell the child that they were pleased. Giving praise and encouragement was more frequently reported by middle-income fathers, as they were twice as likely as low-income fathers to verbalize their satisfaction in this way. In the middle-income community, 31 % of fathers said they would praise their young sons, and 28 % said they would praise their young daughters. In contrast, only 12 % of low-income fathers said that they praised their young children, whether boys or girls. Giving a gift, a reward or money was another means of expressing approval, as roughly a quarter of fathers in each community said that they would acknowledge their sons in this way. While this was reported more frequently by middle-income fathers in relation to their young daughters (21 %), only 14 % of low-income fathers indicated that they responded in this way. Giving the child a kiss was reported by 14 % of middle-income fathers and by 17 % of low-income fathers, in relation to young boys. In regard to girls under 10 years, 23 % of middle-income fathers and 25 % of low-income fathers expressed their satisfaction in this way. In regard to older children there was little evidence that fathers considered that kissing was still appropriate.

In describing the ways in which they expressed disapproval, there was some evidence of gender-specific patterns. The resort to physical punishment was reported more often in regard to boys than girls, although it was also noted that as children got older, there was a general shift away from corporal punishment towards talking and reasoning with the offending child.

At least a fifth of all fathers admitted that in dealing with younger children, they would sometimes slap or rough them up. This tendency was more pronounced in regard to the treatment of boys, when low-income and middle-income fathers were compared. For boys under 10 years, close to a quarter (24 %) of the middle-income sample reported that they slapped or roughed up their sons, while 28 % of low-income fathers also reported doing this. In regard to young girls, this method was reported by 21 % of middle-income fathers, and by 19 % of those in the low-income community. The use of corporal punishment is not uncommon in Jamaica (Wint and Brown 2001; Evans and Davies 1997) and has been explained in terms of a general lack of knowledge among parents about the stages of child development, and what should reasonably be expected from children. As noted by Le Franc et al. (1998) the Caribbean parenting style has tended to be authoritarian, relying primarily on punitive measures. Parental stress and parent-child interaction patterns are also related to the tendency to resort to corporal punishment as evident in the analysis of a parenting module attached to the 2004 Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (Ricketts and Anderson 2008, 2009).

The generally harsher treatment of boys is consistent with earlier findings from Caribbean research on gender socialization (Brown and Chevannes 1998; Chevannes 2001) which highlighted the belief that boys should be treated more roughly so that they would become tough. Le Franc et al. observed that parents in

low-income communities often believed that boys required a regime of discipline that included "nuff licks" (Bailey et al. 1998, 23). In the present study, the large majority of fathers in each community expressed support for the statement that, "A father has to toughen up his son, so that he can deal with life". In the middle-income community, 75 % of fathers endorsed this statement, while in the low-income community 90 % agreed.

While some parents adopted the expedient of denying the child something that they liked, there was very limited use of such strategies as isolation of the child, limiting television access or grounding them. In the intervention study reported by Wint and Brown (2001), parents acknowledged that they knew that beating the child was ineffective, but that they did not know what alternative to try. Within the crowded living arrangements of inner city homes, these alternatives may not have been easily implemented.

## Fatherwork with Inside and Outside Children

The pattern of multiple conjugal relationships which is commonly found among Jamaican men of all social classes increases the likelihood that some children will not grow up in the same households with their fathers. However fathering activities do take place across household boundaries, and children generally know who their fathers are. It is also considered important that fathers should acknowledge paternity. As noted by Raymond Smith (1982), the Caribbean family is characterized by a domestic system that does not confine relations within an easily defined and bounded household. This is evident from data from the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions which has consistently reported that many households receive income as child support from parents living elsewhere. These are usually fathers. In 2009, the percentage of households receiving these income transfers from parents who resided in Jamaica was estimated at 23 %, while 11 % also received child support from overseas parents. Among households in the poorest quintile, 32 % received child support from non-resident parents as compared with 11 % in the wealthiest quintile.

The present study asked fathers about the frequency of specific activities with their children, and probed this both in regard to those children who lived at home with the father, and for those who lived elsewhere. A distinction was also made between younger children (those below 15 years) and older children. In regard to fathering activities such as playing with younger children, reasoning, and assisting with schoolwork, the study found that outside children, although not always neglected, were at a clear disadvantage. There were few differences by social class.

Although none of these specific activities is dependent on father and child sharing a common residence, and they do not depend on financial resources, it was observed that in each community, fathers were more involved with the children who lived under their roof than with those who resided elsewhere. While roughly four-fifths of all fathers played with their resident children at least once weekly, sat and

reasoned with them, and helped with schoolwork, less than a half reported doing this with non-resident children. The patterns in regard to all three activities were quite similar, but the low proportions who reported that they engaged in regular weekly discussions with their children below 15 years who lived separately, points to opportunities that are bypassed for guidance and general socialization.

Previous researchers have suggested that in general, Jamaican parents do not fully appreciate the important role of communication in the child's development (Leo-Rhynie 1993). From her review of the research on the socialization practices for working-class children in Jamaica, Evans was able to conclude that children in this income group had few opportunities for verbal exchange or extended conversation with parents or guardians, given the family arrangements, the irregular work hours and the limited space within the home (Evans 1989). In addition, Wint and Brown (2001) have observed that many parents do not realize the significant learning value of playing with their children. While it is likely that over the last two decades, the country's increased focus on early childhood education would have widened parents' understanding of child development, there has been little change in the family structure, so that structural impediments still exist in regard to the interaction of fathers and children.

It is worth noting that where fathers in this study indicated that they had children who did not grow up in the same household with them, the relationship was often said to be satisfactory. In the middle-income community, a half of all fathers had outside children, and of these roughly a half (55.3 %) said they were satisfied with their relationship with the child. In the low-income community, 72 % had outside children, and nearly two-thirds (64.7 %) of these fathers expressed general satisfaction with the relationship. Where fathers said that they were not satisfied, or only partly satisfied, in regard to their relationship with some of the children, several barriers were identified. These centered on the living arrangements which made it difficult for them to spend enough time to exert sufficient influence, the hostile attitudes from the mother, her family or the child's stepfather, and insufficient income to meet their responsibility to the child.

## Fathering as Role Change

The major finding which has emerged from this study of Jamaican fathers is that becoming a father, and meeting the demands of this master role, is a developmental process. Some fathers are able to grow as their children grow, others are more successful with later children, while some remain cut off from this acknowledged source of satisfaction. In both the earlier 1993 Fathers Study (Brown et al.), and in this replication, Jamaican fathers were unequivocal about what this role meant to them. When asked how they would feel if they did not have children, the large majority of men said that they would feel unhappy and depressed, useless, like a dry tree, or like a man who is not blessed. Low-income fathers were somewhat more likely to say that they would have difficulty dealing with being childless, as only

15 % said they would be comfortable with this, and an additional 5 % said they were not sure how they would feel. This may be compared with responses from the middle-income fathers where a quarter said they would feel okay, and 16 % said they were not sure how they would have reacted. The intensity of this drive to procreate may also be appreciated from the fact that when asked whether they would marry a woman who could not have children, 27 % of fathers in the middle-income community said they would not, while 66 % of fathers in the low-income community gave a similar response. This emphasis on fertility which has been frequently noted among Caribbean women as a core element defining their identity (Powell 1986) was also observed by earlier researchers who have examined masculine identity. On the basis of his study in a rural Jamaican community, Whitehead (1992) observed that men at all social levels took pride in both their inside and outside children, as these served as testimony both to their virility as well as their relative independence from their female partner.

Embarking on the path of fatherhood inevitably required changes in men's lives, and this was acknowledged by roughly two-thirds (67.3 %) of middle-income fathers and three-quarters (76.8 %) of low-income fathers. This transformation entailed changes that were economic, social and personal. The economic changes reported by fathers included better money management, working harder or intensifying the search for employment, spending less on their own needs and establishing some security such as home purchase. The social changes included less partying and spending time with friends, avoiding promiscuity, less drinking, smoking and gambling, and spending more time with children.

The personal changes were generally referred to as becoming "more responsible". This meant that they became less self-centered, tried to set standards and become role models, and to become more focused. Some fathers explained that they also became less selfish as indicated by the comment of one father, "I got to the stage of thinking of myself last in the house".

In reflecting on his personal transition, a 50 year-old vendor and father of six in the low-income community recalled, "I stopped spending carelessly. I reach home early from work. Bring home little gifts".

Others who had been involved in various levels of criminal activity were frank about these changes. "I stop stealing from people up-town by grabbing their bags. I stop rob store" and "I put down the gun thing", said a 31-year old vendor and father of two children in the inner-city community.

The study also explored how far respondents consciously tried to improve on the performance of their own fathers. In this regard, three-quarters of the men in each community said that they did try to be different. Where fathers had grown up only with their mothers, they were significantly more likely to say that they tried to be different when compared with those who experienced other family situations around the age of 12.

The main ways in which these modern-day fathers tried to be different included:

- to play an active role in their children's lives
- to provide for children financially
- to be homely, to be a Family Man

- to be more loving, kind and affectionate
- to try not to beat kids or be abusive
- to communicate more
- to have a good relationship with their children
- to show an interest in children's school work

## Family Structure, Masculinity and Fathering Across Social Classes

The options and resources which are available to Jamaican fathers to execute their parenting roles differ across social classes. Middle-income fathers are likely to operate from the basis of the traditional western nuclear family, and to be accorded the authority of household head. In the work environment and in the social lives of these fathers, the role of Family Man is also accorded respect, so that they are more easily able to reconcile different demands. For low-income fathers, and particularly for young fathers, children may be the unplanned by-product of conjugal unions, or obtained as the proof of virility, and accordingly there is often insufficient preparation for fathering. Parenthood is also most likely to occur within the context of a non-residential union.

Where there is adherence to a traditional macho ideology which emphasizes virility, sexual dominance and multiple relationships, these patterns serve to create blockages to effective parenting. At lower income levels, the fragility of unions is compounded by the difficulties in providing financial support for different baby-mothers and sets of children. This continuing pattern of multiple relationships has been shown to contribute to significant conflict between partners (Anderson 2009) and in turn increases the likelihood of family breakdown. Where fathers fail to contribute to the maintenance of their children for an extended period, their authority becomes eroded, and they may be denied access to their children by the mother (Brown and Chevannes 1998). The father's role and impact consequently become more marginal.

In making retrospective assessments of their own performance as fathers, roughly half of the fathers in each community said that they were satisfied with their own role. Where fathers acknowledged that they were not completely satisfied with their performance, the reasons they gave hinged on the inability to provide adequate financial support, the physical separation from the child, and their recognition that they needed to allocate more time to this activity.

However it is undeniable that the commitment to parenting that is articulated by Jamaican fathers, and the changes which they make in order to reach these widely accepted cultural standards, would augur well for the future of the country's children.

It is expected that as the image of the Good Father becomes more widely popularized through the media and through public education, and is accorded more status, men will be able to establish a greater degree of congruence between their family roles and their public roles. However successful fathering will also hinge

on the expansion of economic opportunities for low-income men and women. Currently, there is considerable preoccupation within Jamaica with societal problems such as educational under-achievement (Figueroa 2004), sexual risk-taking (Norman and Uche 2003; Gayle et al. 2004) and crime and violence (Harriott 2003; Gray 2004). All of these have distinct gender dimensions. In both popular discussion as well as policy-oriented debate, parenting education is increasingly being identified as the solution to these critical problems. While this may be a part of the way forward, this has little chance of succeeding without more far-reaching economic transformation.

# References

Anderson, P. (2009). *The Changing roles of fathers in Jamaican family life* (Working Paper No. 10). Kingston: The Planning Institute of Jamaica.

Anderson, P. (2012). Measuring masculinity in an Afro-Caribbean context. *Social and Economic Studies, 60*(1), 49–93.

Anderson, P., & Witter, M. (1994). Crisis, adjustment and social change: A case study of Jamaica. In E. Le Franc (Ed.), *Consequences of structural adjustment: A review of the Jamaican experience* (pp. 1–54). Kingston: Canoe Press.

Bailey, W., Branche, C., & Le Franc, E. (1998). Parenting and socialisation in Caribbean family systems. *Caribbean Dialogue: A Policy Bulletin of Caribbean Affairs, 4*(1), 21–27.

Barrow, C. (1996). *Family in the Caribbean: Themes and perspectives*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.

Barrow, C. (2001). Men, women and family in the Caribbean. In C. Barrow & R. Reddock (Eds.), *Caribbean sociology: Introductory readings* (pp. 418–426). Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.

Barrow, C. (2010). *Caribbean childhoods – 'Outside', 'Adopted' or 'Left Behind'*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.

Blake, J. (1961). *Family structure in Jamaica*. New York: Free Press of Glencoe.

Brown, J., & Chevannes, B. (1998). *Why man stay so*. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press.

Brown, J., Anderson, P., & Chevannes, B. (1993). *Report on the contribution of Caribbean men to the family* (Submitted to the IDRC). Kingston: Caribbean Child Development Centre.

Chevannes, B. (2001). *Learning to be a man: Culture, socialization and gender identity in five Caribbean countries*. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press.

Clarke, E. (1957). *My mother who fathered me*. London: George Allen & Unwin.

Evans, H. (1989). Perspectives on the socialization of the working-class Jamaican child. *Social and Economic Studies, 38*(3), 177–203.

Evans, H., & Davies, R. (1997). Overview of issues in childhood socialization in the Caribbean. In J. Roopnarine & J. Brown (Eds.), *Caribbean families: Diversity among ethnic groups* (pp. 1–24). London: Apex Publishing Company.

Figueroa, M. (2004). "Male privileging" and "Academic underperformance" in Jamaica. In R. Reddock (Ed.), *Interrogating Caribbean masculinities* (pp. 136–166). Kingston: University of the West Indies Press.

Frazier, E. F. (1939). *The Negro family in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gayle, H., with Grant, A., Bryan, P., Yee Shui, M. & Taylor, C. (2004). *The adolescents of urban St. Catherine: A study of their reproductive health and survivability.* Spanish Town: Children First Agency.

Gray, O. (2004). *Demeaned, but empowered: The social power of the urban poor in Jamaica*. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press.

Harriott, A. (2003). *Understanding crime in Jamaica: New challenges for public policy*. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press.

Herskovits, M. (1941). *The myth of the Negro past*. Boston: Beacon.

LeFranc, E., Bailey, W., & Branche, C. (1998). Gender role definition and identity: The centrality of primordial Values. *Caribbean Dialogue: A Policy Bulletin of Caribbean Affairs, 4*(1), 11–19.

Leo-Rhynie, E. (1993). *The Jamaican family: Continuity and change* (Grace Kennedy Foundation Lecture). Kingston: Institute of Jamaica Publications Limited.

McKenzie, H., & McKenzie, H. (1971). *Sociology and the Caribbean family* (Unpublished paper). Kingston: Department of Sociology, University of the West Indies.

Norman, L., & Uche, C. (2003). *The Machismo culture in Jamaica: Implications for HIV prevention.* Roundtable presentation at Annual Sociological Association Meeting, August, Atlanta, GA, USA.

Planning Institute of Jamaica. (2012). *The economic and social survey of Jamaica 2011*. Kingston: Planning Institute of Jamaica.

Planning Institute of Jamaica and Statistical Institute of Jamaica. (2010). *Jamaica survey of living conditions*. Kingston: Planning Institute of Jamaica.

Powell, D. (1986). Caribbean women and their response to familial experiences. *Social and Economic Studies, 35*(2), 83–130.

Priestley, S. (2010). *An analysis of the impact of fertility change in Jamaica.* Doctoral dissertation, Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work, University of the West Indies, Kingston.

Ricketts, H., & Anderson, P. (2008). The Impact of poverty and stress on the interaction of Jamaican caregivers with young children. *International Journal of Early Years Education, 16*(1), 61–74.

Ricketts, H., & Anderson, P. (2009). *Parenting in Jamaica* (Working Paper No. 9). Kingston: The Planning Institute of Jamaica.

Roberts, G. (1957). *The population of Jamaica*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Roberts, G., & Sinclair, S. (1978). *Women in Jamaica: Patterns of reproduction and family*. Millwood: TKO Press.

Robotham, D. (1990). *The African background to the Jamaican family* (Unpublished paper). Department of Sociology and Social Work, University of the West Indies, Mona.

Smith, R. (1973). The matrifocal family. In J. Goody (Ed.), *The character of kinship* (pp. 121–144). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, R. (1982). Family, social change and social policy in the West Indies. *New West Indian Guide, 56*(3–4), 111–142.

Whitehead, T. (1992). Expressions of masculinity in a Jamaican sugartown: Implications for family planning programs. In T. Whitehead & B. Reid (Eds.), *Gender constructs and social issues* (pp. 103–141). Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Wilson, P. (1973). *Crab antics: The social anthropology of the English-speaking societies of the Caribbean*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wint, E., & Brown, J. (2001). The knowledge and practice of effective parenting. In C. Barrow & R. Reddock (Eds.), *Caribbean sociology: Introductory readings* (pp. 436–448). Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.

# Parenting in Mexico: Relationships Based on Love and Obedience

**Pedro Solís-Cámara, Michael P. Fung, and Robert A. Fox**

## Mexico: An Introduction

Mexico, the third largest population in the Americas, has the largest Spanish-speaking population in the world. A significant proportion of the Mexican adult population is married (40.5 %) while only a small percentage is divorced (0.7 %). The average age of first marriage among Mexican adults is 28.7 for men and 25.8 for women. There is a substantial emphasis on marriage and family within Mexican culture. Mexico has a relatively younger population with a mean age of 26 years, second in the Americas only to Guatemala (mean age = 19 years). As a result of Mexico's unemployment and underemployment rates of 5.6 and 25 %, respectively (Index Mundi 2012), many of these young individuals migrate to other countries, primarily the United States of America (US), in order to pursue better job opportunities. The majority of migrants are males, which along with a birth rate of 2,643,908 in 2010 (Index Mundi 2012), leads to an inordinate number of single mothers in Mexico, many of which are under the age of 20 (18.8 % in 2001). Mexico is also a country with considerable ethnic diversity; it has about 89 indigenous languages (e.g., Nahuatl, Maya, Mixtec, Tzeltal, Otomi, Totonac, Mazatec, and Chol). In Mexico 6,695,228 people speak an indigenous language, which is 6.8 % of the total population; nearly 85 % of individuals who speak an indigenous language also speak Spanish while 980,894 individuals only speak an indigenous language. Mexico is a relatively large country covering 1,972,550 km$^2$

P. Solís-Cámara (✉)
Social, Universidad de Guadalajara, Campus Cuciénega, Guadalajara, Mexico
e-mail: psolis@mexis.com

M.P. Fung
Counseling Psychology, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, USA

R.A. Fox
Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology,
Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, USA

**Fig. 1** Map of Mexico (Drawn by the authors)

which is nearly one fifth the size of the United States (see Fig. 1). While these statistics paint a broad picture of the current life in Mexico, it is necessary to examine the underlying themes found within Mexican traditions to understand better its culture surrounding parenting.

The first half of the twentieth century brought forth a substantial effort by Mexican writers, psychologists, and anthropologists to conceptualize individual characteristics of the Mexican culture, often within the context of the family. One such individual was Octavio Paz (1914–1998), who received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1990. His descriptions of Mexicans included such characteristics as a deep sense of religion, the relatively greater importance associated with men rather than women, a sacrificial quality of women, particularly mothers, and an emphasis on participating in celebrations. An early description of the mother's role in the family comes from Mexican psychoanalyst, Santiago Ramírez (1986, p. 26) who described family dynamics in Mexico as an "excess of mother and father absence". This indicates a general perception that the mother served as primary caregiver in the family while the father played a less direct family role.

Following these initial descriptions of Mexican culture, Mexican psychologist Rogelio Díaz-Guerrero (1918–2004) developed a new systematic approach to examining specific cultural characteristics, which he referred to as ethnopsychology (Díaz-Guerrero 1982). In his own words, "Ethnopsychology is the science that discovers and studies the psychologically important beliefs in each culture and their consequences upon the cognition, the psychological conduct and personality of individuals, groups and institutions in each habitat or behavioral ecosystem"

(Díaz-Guerrero 2003b, p. 27). Essentially, ethnopsychology helps determine how cultural beliefs impact everyday life, of which family relationships and parenting are significant contributing factors.

## A Comparison of Parenting in Urban and Rural Mexican Families: Case Studies

Before the known theoretical and research literature on parenting in Mexico is examined, we thought it might be helpful to show the range of families and their respective parenting styles by briefly contrasting two families in Mexico, one that represents parenting in an urban area and a second that illustrates family life in the country. These two anecdotal stories will assist the reader in gaining a practical view of life as a parent in Mexico.

### *A Day in the Life of a Mexican Family Living in a Small City*

This family is composed of Marisol (mother, age 34), Eliel (father, 29), Isai (son, 5), Karen (daughter, 4), and Maria (paternal grandmother). They live in a small house with three bedrooms in Zitacuaro, Michoacán; they have working utilities (water, electricity, phone, internet, cable). Mom and Dad sleep together, but the children sometimes cuddle up with them in bed while Grandma has her own room. Monday morning, Marisol and Eliel leave for work. Marisol teaches 4th and 5th grade while Eliel is a professor of physical education. During the day, the children are left in the care of the paternal grandmother. The children wake-up at 10 o'clock in the morning and grandma serves them bread and milk for breakfast. The children play, watch cartoons on television, and then grandma helps them with their homework. Grandma shows a certain preference to help Karen with her homework, devotes time, caresses, and congratulates the little girl's activities. In contrast, with Isai, she limits her responses to correcting him and telling him how the exercises should be done. At noon, grandma bathes the children and helps them dress into their school uniforms; she also hurries to clean the house and serves them food. At about 2:00 p.m., they take a "combi" (a collective taxi for about eight people) to their kindergarten. Mom and Dad return from work later in the afternoon. Dad picks up the children from school and they are allowed to play in the yard. The family has its dinner around 9:00 p.m.

Mom and Dad finish dinner and head to their room to sleep, but the children are taking a long time to go to bed so their parents begin to scold them stating that it is time to go up to bed. After almost half an hour of scolding and fights between the children, Dad goes upstairs with Karen and a few minutes later Mom does the same with her son. Grandma is still cleaning up the leftovers after dinner and heads to her room about 15 min later, taking a magazine and falling asleep after a few minutes.

## *A Day in the Life of a Mexican Rural Family*

Mariano wakes up early, stretches his arms and body, and even in the midst of his stupor and drowsiness feels that, "this is the time of year". He notes the clock that hangs on the other end of the wall made of adobo bricks. That wall provokes in him emotions of earlier days, recalling that years ago he had laid these bricks with the help of his father. He met his wife Jacinta at the Fair of the Mango, the greatest festival of the year in their area. The town is known as San Cristobal de Barranca in Jalisco, Mexico, which provides much of the country with mangos. Jacinta wakes up and reminds her husband to drop the children near school before he begins his day in the mango orchards. Jacinta prepares breakfast on a fire, a pot of coffee and some *quesadillas* (a tortilla filled with cheese) in the *comal* (an earthenware dish for baking tortillas). Then, she takes the *molcajete* (stone-made pot) and prepares a sauce with hot chilies for breakfast. They have two children, José Mariano and Guadalupe, their son and daughter, who are quarrelling because after waking in the usual way, they race to the hammock, which sits in the portico at the entrance to the house. This is a common game that they play where the winner sits rocking on the hammock and laughing triumphantly, while the other child has to wait until the other becomes bored or simply leaves the hammock. However, today the game ends in a brawl because they argue about who had been the first to arrive. Jacinta rebukes both of them, "You lost time on this nonsense game when you should already have eaten breakfast."

Mariano already has taken a shower and is about to go to work in the field, but he sits down to eat with the family. The issues during the meal always vary, but on this day are dedicated to remembering Don Refugio Lopez, father of Mariano and grandfather of Pepe and Lupita. Today is the second anniversary of the death of their grandfather, and it is commemorated, not only by them, but also by the people of the town, with a mass in his honor. Once the children are ready, he starts his truck and drives to the elementary school; it is the first year for Lupita (age 6) and the third for Pepe (age 8). Jacinta devotes the rest of the morning to cleaning the house. Mariano drops off the children at school and goes to work in his *huerta* (orchard) of mangos, where he carefully handles the soil, laying the fertilizer to help new trees develop and cultivate the fruits of the old trees. As it used to happen year after year, this last May has brought good harvests. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, he realizes it is time to eat. He opens the bag of food that Jacinta had prepared: lime juice, grilled onions, steak tacos, and sauce. After he finishes his food, it is time to harvest more mature mangoes, as well as load baskets and baskets filled with mangoes in the van. He returns home to calculate and save the fruits that he harvested, since the next day he is going to sell them at the market. Subsequently, he goes to the mass commemorating the anniversary of his father's death. There is Jacinta, his mother-in-law, his brothers and their small children. The children are often bored during religious celebrations, so they spend time talking, rocking their feet in their chairs or simply looking at each other and laughing while the adults do not seem bothered by their children's behavior. At the end of the religious celebration, Mariano and

Jacinta walk out of the church holding hands, as when they were dating, while the grandmother, Doña Olga, takes the children for a chocolate ice cream, which they both love. Soon the family is back together and goes to dinner at grandma's house; she makes a living selling tamales (minced meat and red peppers wrapped in corn husks) and *atole* (a drink made from cornflour and milk). Jacinta is exhausted and gives Mariano a slight pat on the back, which he usually understands to mean that it is time to go home. The children arrive home and want to continue playing. However, their plan dissolves as soon as they see their father turning off the lights of the house and saying the phrase that announces the end of the day, "Children, it is time to sleep, go now." Jacinta goes to bed after ensuring that the children are already in their room. Mariano is already lying down on the bed fast asleep.

## Historical-Socio-cultural Premises

Now that we have offered a brief glimpse into the daily activities of two families in Mexico, we will review some of the extant research available on cultural factors and parenting in Mexico. In the 1950s, Díaz-Guerrero and his colleagues developed a survey of traditional Mexican sayings and proverbs, which he entitled historical-socio-cultural premises (Díaz-Guerrero 1986). He then examined Mexicans' adherence to these premises within the context of the family. According to Díaz-Guerrero (2003b, p. 28), "When premises are shared by 80 % or more of the people of a given culture, they are designated as cardinal premises. Cardinal premises are assumed to have pervasive effects on behavior." Two primary cardinal premises emerged in the Mexican culture: machismo (the absolute supremacy of men) and family obedience (Díaz-Guerrero 1986). Other factors included virtuous behavior and self-sacrifice of women, emphasis on authority, family unity, respect, and cultural rigidity. These factors reflected Díaz-Guerrero's 1955 statement regarding the Mexican family structure: "The Mexican family is based on two fundamental propositions: (a) the unquestionable and absolute supremacy of the father and (b) the necessary and absolute self-sacrifice of the mother" (Díaz-Guerrero 1982, p. 147). In more recent research, subsequent authors identified similar cardinal premises of the Mexican culture: (1) family unity, (2) relatively greater importance of men, (3) emphasis on authority, (4) self-sacrifice, and (5) submission (Díaz-Loving et al. 2011).

## Traditional Culture Versus Counter-Culture

In the early 1980s, Díaz-Guerrero developed the concept of culture versus counter-culture (Díaz-Guerrero 2003a). According to Alarcón (2010a, p. 558), this concept was proposed:

> To draw the inevitable conflict between the traditional culture, which means conservatism and attachment to the legacy of living according to ancient premises. Against these ideas

are forces known as counter-cultural, representing the openness to change, modernization, and scientific, technological and social revolutions which are, certainly, the antithesis to traditionalism.

That is, eventually new beliefs will challenge traditional cultural premises leading to individual differences between those who endorse traditional beliefs and those who rebel against them.

To evaluate the counter-cultural influence, longitudinal studies have evaluated the stability of the original historical-socio-cultural premises over time and have found that adherence to traditional Mexican beliefs has slowly deteriorated (Díaz-Guerrero 2000). For example, one study showed that the agreement with the premise of female submissiveness declined from 57.1 % in 1959 to 29 % in 1994, while the premise that "one should never question the word of a father" decreased from 76.3 % in 1959 to 56.3 % in 1994 (Díaz-Guerrero 2003a, b). Moreover, women showed greater disagreement with the beliefs of the traditional culture than men, including a decreased maternal emphasis on child obedience (Díaz-Loving et al. 2011; García-Campos 2008). The declining endorsement of these premises points to a counter-cultural evolution "away from a traditional belief that data show as harmful or an impediment to progress" (Díaz-Guerrero 2003b, p. 29).

One example of the counter-cultural revolution is liberal education. Individuals with higher educational levels have shown stronger counter-cultural beliefs (García-Campos 2008), while Avila-Méndez (1986) found that peasants in 15 Mexican rural areas reported significant agreement (89 % for men; 83 % for females) with traditional premises, such as the submissiveness of women. This supports one of Díaz-Guerrero's initial theories that exposure to a more liberal education tends to generate an endorsement of counter-cultural premises (Díaz-Guerrero and Castillo-Vales 1981).

Despite the counter-cultural movement, Díaz-Loving's recent survey with more than 500 high-school students found that respect for parents, fear of parents, self-sacrifice of the mother, obedience of children, and virginity until marriage were still commonly endorsed in the family context (Díaz-Loving et al. 2011). This data supports a continuation of some traditional culture beliefs and practices among younger populations, despite a more progressive change among more educated adults.

## The Impact of Traditional Culture on Parenting

As traditional Mexican cultural premises continue to influence family dynamics in Mexico, they also inevitably should be expected to have a direct and influential effect on parenting beliefs and practices. A cross-cultural study by Holtzman et al. (1975) found that mothers from Mexico and the US implemented different parenting strategies. For example, Mexican mothers used more verbal and corporal punishment than American mothers, particularly mothers from a lower socioeconomic status (SES). In addition, Mexican mothers emphasized family interaction and family-oriented success while American mothers preferred nurturing independence

and individual success in their children. Díaz-Guerrero (1982) also identified the concept of authority as an integral component of Mexican parenting. This concept refers to a father's distinct role of power within the family. While Mexican fathers can offer affection and nurturing, the importance of authority and obedience often takes precedence in their parenting practices. It is clear that traditional Mexican culture has a long-standing influence on the parenting in Mexico, typically emphasizing a collectivist, family-oriented approach to raising children.

## Mexican "Views of Life"

Style of coping is another construct influenced by Mexican culture, which in turn impacts parenting (Díaz-Guerrero 1984). Díaz-Guerrero assessed Mexican and American coping strategies and found that Mexicans typically cope through self-modification, which is contrasted with the common American practice of modifying the social and physical environments (Díaz-Guerrero 1984). These styles of coping have been described as "views of life" and the original four dimensions that relate to Mexican culture included: (1) affiliation obedience, (2) external control, (3) caution, and (4) interdependence (Díaz-Guerrero and Iscoe 1984). These four dimensions, again, speak to the collectivist perspective of Mexican families.

Recently, a new dimension, love versus power, was found to be a significant aspect in Mexican attitudes (Díaz-Guerrero 2003a). A study of high-school individuals found that "love" was given greater importance over "power" by more than 80 % of the Mexican participants (Díaz-Guerrero and Balderas González 2000). This demonstrates the importance of love in Mexican culture, and in particular, shows that love occurs through denial and subjugation of self rather than through obtaining power. Other studies have identified "unassertiveness" and "abnegation" as Mexican traits or coping styles (Avendaño-Sandoval and Díaz-Guerrero 1990; Flores 2010). This emphasis on love and self-denial is vital to understanding Mexican parenting practices, particularly the mother's expected role of self-sacrifice for the family (Díaz-Guerrero 2003b).

In addition to love, Mexican mothers of adolescent-age children reported that the most commonly identified characteristics of Mexican parenting are communication between parents and children, acceptance of the child's identity, sufficient material resources, control over children's activities, care of family members' mental and physical health, limits and expectations, and environment and housing (Robles and Van Barneveld 2010). Factors typically considered important in American culture, such as daily routines, a strong social network, and adequate relations at home, were less relevant for Mexican mothers. This difference can be explained by the collectivistic culture in Mexico, or its emphasis on community rather than individualism. For instance, a strong social network may imply a promotion of independence and autonomy in children rather than obedience and affiliation to the family (Robles and Van Barneveld 2010). Regularity and structured activities at home (e.g., the establishment of a fixed homework schedule and bedtime) are also foreign characteristics

for traditional Mexican families. They tend to imply a "cold" and dispassionate relationship between family members. Instead, the typical and more affectionate Mexican relationship involves knowing one's expectations in the family rather than establishing structured rules. Essentially, family relationships are of primary importance in Mexico and children are expected to learn this facet of Mexican culture. However, this lack of rules may occasionally engender confusion among children regarding expectations. This confusion, along with the counter-cultural revolution may eventually lead to new adaptations within the Mexican family context.

## Mexican Parenting in Relation to Other Cultures

While the previous section focused on the evolution of Mexican culture and its impact on parenting, this information tends to arise from culturally-compromised research. That is, the research was conducted in Mexico from an indigenous cultural psychology perspective. While this approach is vital to understanding Mexican parenting, it is only one of two major approaches to studying culturally-specific parenting. It is also necessary to examine parenting research conducted with a universal frame of reference, namely, research on Mexican families conducted outside of Mexico. The following studies represent the bulk of parenting research in Mexico, and they also offer a relationship between indigenous Mexican cultural psychology and mainstream psychology.

A major concern of scholars in Mexico has been the generalization of studies of Hispanic parents living in the US to explain the beliefs and behaviors of Latin American parents, particularly Mexicans. However, the accumulated evidence supports the use of a universal frame of reference when examining Mexican culture. For example, Ritts (2003, p. 14) explains that: "In traditional Mexican culture the man is the disciplinarian and his wife and children respect him." The role of the father has been characterized as "remote authoritarianism". Later she adds: "In fact, the discipline in Mexico and the United States is very similar." This belief that parents of young children from Mexico and the United States may have much in common regarding their child rearing practices has been supported in studies with Mexican mothers (Solís-Cámara and Fox 1995, 1996) and Mexican fathers (Fox and Solís-Cámara 1997). Therefore, this research on Mexican families conducted in the US supports many of the cultural concepts regarding parenting that were found from studies within Mexico.

## Mexican Parenting Attitudes

One problem often found in studies conducted outside of Mexico is a single designation of Hispanic or Latino origin, which ignores specific Mexican cultural variables. For example, the findings of a comparison between two Latin American

samples of parents and adolescents indicated that Mexican and Bolivian adults have similar expectations towards children and towards punishment, but differ in empathy toward children (Solís-Cámara et al. 1999). In addition, Bolivian adolescents reported more appropriate expectations and empathy than Mexican adolescents, and expressed greater support for the use of physical punishment. This finding indicates that a specific Mexican culture may have a unique influence on parenting attitudes and family dynamics that differs from other Spanish-speaking cultures.

Some studies have indicated that Mexican parents exhibited inappropriate expectations (too high or too low) and a lack of empathy toward their children compared to a sample of American parents (Díaz et al. 1990). However, other findings have indicated that Mexican parents exhibit empathic behaviors and responses with their children; although, gender differences were found as Mexican mothers and fathers showed greater empathy for daughters than sons (Solís-Cámara and Díaz 1996). This contradiction could stem from a lack of cultural recognition within studies conducted in America, perhaps failing to correctly identify how Mexican parenting practices incorporate empathy. Another possible explanation could be socioeconomic status. For example, Mexican parents from high SES groups reported greater levels of empathy and lower incidence of verbal and corporal punishment than parents from low-SES groups (Díaz et al. 1991). From the same study, high-school adolescents from low-SES groups reported higher levels of empathy and lower endorsement of punishment than their parents. This may be explained by the fact that these adolescents had already surpassed their parents' educational levels (90 % elementary). That is, as Díaz-Guerrero previously acknowledged, education and SES appear to be significant factors in the counter-cultural revolution affecting Mexican family interactions.

In addition to SES and education, some authors have identified acculturation, or years of assimilation into another culture, as an important factor influencing parenting attitudes. One study compared Mexican, Guatemalan, and Puerto Rican mothers living in their native countries to those who lived in the US (Solís-Cámara and Díaz 2000). Mothers living in their country of origin (Guatemala or Mexico) and foreign-born mothers living in the US (origin: Mexico or Puerto Rico) showed similarities in their expectations of children and expressions of empathy. However, foreign-born mothers living in the US expressed more negative attitudes toward their children than mothers living in their countries of origin. Mexican mothers living in the US preferred the use of verbal and corporal punishment while Puerto Rican mothers showed the lowest level of role-reversal (i.e., expectations that children understand parental behavior). These results reflect the unique qualities of Mexican culture as well as add to the growing list of contextual variables that impact Mexican parenting.

## Parenting Practices

Parenting practices can be defined as specific parent behaviors used to socialize children (spanking a child to achieve obedience, monitoring homework to facilitate academic achievement, offering praise to promote self-esteem). One purpose of

parenting research in Mexico has been to prevent or intervene in practices that potentially lead to abuse and neglect of children. This has helped amass extensive knowledge of child development and appropriate expectations of child behavior, as well as an understanding of nurturing and disciplinary practices of young children in Mexico. These areas of study help delineate the bidirectional influences between parents and young children and how to intervene early in the parenting process.

Due to the lack of parenting questionnaires in Mexico, the Parent Behavior Checklist (PBC; Fox 1994) was translated to Spanish and standardized in a representative Mexican sample. The new scale was named the Behavioral Scale for Mothers and Fathers with Young Children (ECMP). This scale measures parental expectations, disciplinary strategies (use of corporal and verbal punishment), and nurturing practices (Solís-Cámara 2007b; Solís-Cámara et al. 2002c, 2005, 2007). Several studies comparing Mexican and American mothers using this instrument found overall similarities of parental expectations, discipline, and nurturing practices with children under the age of 6. One of the few differences found that Mexican mothers showed a decrease in severe disciplinary practices when nurturing activities increased, which has not been observed in Caucasian mothers (Fox and Solís-Cámara 1997; Solís-Cámara and Fox 1995, 1996).

In another study, Solís-Cámara et al. (2003) analyzed the effects of parental perception of a child's disability on parenting practices. Parents of children with special needs did not show the typical increase in developmental expectations and discipline as their children aged. Apparently, when parents perceived their children to have more significant limitations, parents lowered their expectations and decreased their discipline practices. In a recent attempt to determine associations between parenting beliefs and practices, significant gender differences were found between Mexican mothers and fathers (Solís-Cámara and Díaz 2007). Mexican mothers' parenting beliefs tended to relate to higher levels of nurturing while Mexican fathers' parenting beliefs translated to disciplinary practices. This corresponds with the aforementioned gender roles of a submissive mother and authoritarian father within the Mexican family structure.

Relatedly, previous research has identified verbal and corporal punishment as one factor in the development of child behavior problems (Brenner and Fox 1998). Clearly considering the father's position of authority in Mexico, fathers who use verbal or corporal punishment as an expression of their authority over their younger children, may also expect to experience more rather than fewer behavior problems among them. In addition, stress and anger also appear to influence the use of verbal and corporal punishment. Solís-Cámara (2007a) found that parents who reported high levels of both stress and anger also reported significantly lower child expectations, greater severity of discipline strategies, a high number of child behavioral problems, and higher levels of child stress. Conversely, the group with low levels of stress and anger reported age-appropriate expectations, less severe disciplinary practices and greater nurturing while their children exhibited fewer behavioral problems and lower stress levels. Furthermore, Mexican mothers' anger-aggression and nurturing practices showed the strongest relationship to aggression and impatience with their children.

Overall, it appears that parenting of young children under the age of 6 is fairly similar in Mexico as it is in the US; expectations of and disciplinary practices toward young children seem to be consistent across these two cultures. However, as children become older, Mexican parents tend to decrease their use of nurturing, although gender impacts this factor. For example, in many studies, Mexican mothers showed stricter discipline practices and more nurturing than fathers (Solís-Cámara and Díaz 2007). The former result may appear to contradict the assumptions of Mexican ethnopsychology, which refer to fathers as rigid disciplinarians. However, if we consider the increasing migration of fathers to the US, Mexican mothers may be forced to serve both the self-sacrificing and authoritarian role in the family. Once again, low-SES factors also appear to play a significant role in the evolution of parenting in Mexico.

Ultimately, there appears to be a cycle in which Mexican parents who are undergoing high levels of stress and anger use strict discipline and negative verbal and physical behaviors. This in turn, predisposes children to developmental problems, generating negative interactions that are exacerbated by low-SES levels. There is evidence that differences between Mexican and American parents are related to these stress and economic factors (Uno et al. 1998) while these factors coincide with risk and protective factors identified in samples of Mexican families (Ayala et al. 2002). Essentially, the economic climate of Mexico plays both a direct and indirect role in Mexican parenting.

## Intervention Programs for Parents

Mexican culture plays a significant role in coping styles, parenting attitudes, and parenting practices. In turn, these factors affect family life in Mexico in both positive and negative ways, much like any other culture. In order to support Mexican families, intervention programs have been developed to offer parent–child training programs and other interactive activities. For example, the Parenting Young Children Program (Fox and Nicholson 2003) was originally created in the US and offered parent training to families whose children presented with more significant behavior problems, such as aggression, severe tantrums and oppositional behavior. This program was translated into Spanish, and several studies have shown that it leads to improved parental expectations and increased positive parenting attitudes (Fox et al. 1995a, b, c, d, e; Solís-Cámara and Díaz 2002; Solís-Cámara et al. 2002a, b). As attitudes and expectations improved, parental use of harsh discipline decreased, which in turn led to a reduction in child behavior problems. As these findings were similar for Mexican and American mothers, it stands to reason that a parent-training program, such as Parenting Young Children, can effectively assist Mexican parents with child behavior problems.

Since it appears that verbal and corporal punishment is used in Mexican childrearing, at least in some capacity, it is necessary to determine whether intervention programs can help Mexican parents adapt their parenting strategies and limit forms

of punishment, such as spanking and yelling. One study by Solís-Cámara et al. (2004) found that following training, parents significantly reduced or eliminated spanking and yelling responses and introduced appropriate educational strategies, such as giving effective instructions, using time-outs, and providing nurturing practices (e.g., reading and walking with children). Consequently, parents noticed a decrease in children's negative physical behavior and improved interactions with both parents and peers. Further, videotaped interactions revealed that parents implemented more positive behaviors with their children, such as friendly conversations, flattery, touching, and hugging, as well as fewer negative behaviors such as criticism, yelling, pushing, and hitting. In turn, children cooperated more frequently with less punitive parenting practices. Although parental disciplinary practices decreased substantially, parents with lower-SES levels continued to rely at times on stricter parenting practices than parents with higher-SES levels. This, again, supports the importance of SES within Mexican culture, in particular its impact on parenting and any interventions implemented in Mexico.

One recent study of Mexican parents identified four distinct parenting styles: democratic/authoritative, permissive, authoritarian and indifferent/negligent (Jiménez and Guevara 2008). The findings showed that low-SES mothers often implement an authoritarian parenting style with the use of strict discipline. Further, Mexican children predominantly rated their mothers as authoritarian. To address these issues, the researchers offered a program to teach communication skills between mothers and their children, such as establishing home rules and routines, negotiating family activities, and interacting in an emotionally sympathetic and assertive way. Trainers also modeled positive interactions with young children. The results indicated that the training program significantly modified parent–child interactions. Children reported increased authoritative parenting by mothers with a corresponding decrease in authoritarian parenting. This result indicates that Mexican culture's initial influence on parenting styles can be adapted through training programs.

Recent literature has found that Mexican parenting may be more nuanced than previously thought. For example, Domenech-Rodríguez et al. (2009) evaluated Latino parenting behaviors and found that 61 % of parents did not fit traditional classifications of authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and neglectful parenting styles. Rather, these parents were classified into a "protective" category. This category reflected similarities to the authoritarian parenting style, but with a higher level of warmth and nurturing. While initial interventions have shown positive results, parent–child training programs should continue to evolve to incorporate these intricacies of Mexican parenting most effectively.

## Bridging the Gap Between Mexican Ethnopsychology and Mainstream Psychology

Recently, parenting research has explored the possibility of bridging indigenous psychologies, such as Mexican ethnopsychology with mainstream psychology. One of these studies found that Mexican parents who endorsed love over power

**Fig. 2** A young father playing a counter-cultural role (Photo by Chema Martinez used with his kind permission)

supported more traditional cultural variables, such as interdependence, caution, external locus of control, and family obedience. Meanwhile, other Mexican parents scored high on counter-cultural variables, such as self-affirmation, boldness, and internalization while showing better parenting attitudes and parenting practices (Solís-Cámara 2011). In addition, Mexican housewives have indicated endorsement of both traditional and counter-cultural values in recent research (Vargas et al. 2011). This indicates a gradual infusion of counter-cultural variables into Mexican parenting attitudes and practices. These are only the first forays into examining the interaction between ethnopsychology and mainstream psychology. However, the initial findings appear to support the idea that traditional Mexican values continue to exist while a progressive infusion of counter-cultural values are gradually altering Mexican parenting attitudes and practices. Figure 2 shows clear evidence of a change in parenting practices that would not have been observed in the past.

## Comments and Interpretations of the Mexican Family Descriptions

As we saw in the two descriptions of family life in Mexico, the relationships between parents and children in Mexico are seasoned by a healthy dose of love and obedience, regardless of whether the family lives in the city or country. In addition, these two family descriptions indicate that the role of the father is often limited to that of the provider while the women serve as primary educators and caregivers,

**Fig. 3** Solidarity of women in a Mexican family (Photo by Chema Martinez used with his kind permission)

not only of children but also of men. These true stories seem to indicate that women in many Mexican families are dedicated to the household chores and may share this work between multiple women, reflecting a strong solidarity among them. For example, Fig. 3 shows four generations of women together, taken in the City Centre in Guadalajara.

However, these observations also indicate that women seem to be more strongly committed to their children than to the relationship of the couple while men seem to have more interest in the couple than in their children. It is too complex for this limited space to argue whether a matriarchy or a patriarchy is present in Mexico. However, we can venture that it is a patriarchy sui generis, which can be encompassed in the old popular saying: "in the House my mother rules because my father wants."

Both the family descriptions and the research presented earlier in the chapter highlight the struggle between traditional and counter-cultural values for Mexican women. These anecdotes point to the continued existence of the maternal role of housewife along with the additional burden of work outside the home. When concerns over child development arise, women carry the burden of responsibility; however, at the same time women are asked for their cooperation with domestic economic concerns. Mexican women likely suffer from a dilemma between supporting traditional beliefs and heeding counter-cultural beliefs. If, as suggested by the world today, women are searching for work or studies to advance their personal development, why should they continue alone with household chores as well as being in charge of the wellbeing of all members of the family? Should not

men also change their traditional beliefs and participate more actively in the home and in the education of children?

## Conclusions

This chapter has reviewed Mexican cultural beliefs, views of life, parenting attitudes and practices, and interventions affecting parenting. Two major perspectives were examined: Mexican ethnopsychology and mainstream psychology, as well as recent attempts to bridge these two perspectives and enrich our understanding of Mexican parenting. As described, collectivist cultural patterns play a significant role in Mexican parenting, engendering a family-oriented approach to parenting. This approach emphasizes traditional cultural beliefs, including the obedience of children, obligations to family, and parental authority. Subsequently, there has been a gradual counter-cultural movement in middle- and upper-class Mexican society, placing a greater emphasis on individualism rather than the interdependence of family members. Nevertheless, interdependence and unity of the family are still integral parenting beliefs in Mexico.

There are many factors that influence Mexican cultural values, which in turn affect parenting in Mexico, including ethnicity, education, SES, and the children's ages (Willemsen and Van de Vijver 1997). Since a significant percentage of cultural differences may be due to these contextual variables, it is vital to incorporate these potential variables when evaluating Mexican parenting. Two of the most consistently recognized factors have been lower SES and education, which have often been associated with authoritarian parenting styles (Aunola et al. 1999). The lower level of education in Mexico is associated with adverse conditions, such as reduced income, that may exacerbate the negative parenting practices. This relates back to the original issue of migration to America, leaving a significant number of single mothers in Mexico. In addition, the stress and anger caused by poverty-stricken conditions in Mexico is clearly relevant to parent–child interactions. These cultural factors, therefore, must serve as mediating variables in any examination of parenting in Mexico.

Finally, as in any culture, Mexican parenting has its strengths and weaknesses, which are in some part influenced by the ethnic culture. One of the significant challenges to Mexican parenting seems to be how to adapt to this counter-cultural movement, which can lead to conflicting values within the family context. Under the current socio-economic pressures in Mexico, family relationships seem to be undergoing difficult times as well as a gradual transformation of family structure. While this transformation will be a challenge, it also will be exciting to witness, as Mexican parenting strategies will inevitably undergo significant changes, being both impacted by the culture and in turn influencing cultural values. Hopefully, families will be able to strike that difficult balance between maintaining traditional values and adapting to more recent cultural beliefs; it should be an enlightening development to follow over time.

# References

Alarcón, R. (2010). El legado psicológico de Rogelio Díaz-Guerrero. *Estudos e Pesquisas em Psicologia, UERJ, RJ, 10*(2), 553–571.

Aunola, K., Nurmi, J. E., Onatsu-Arvilommi, T., & Pulkkinen, L. (1999). The role of parents' self-esteem, mastery-orientation and social background in their parenting styles. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 40*, 307–317.

Avendaño-Sandoval, R., & Díaz-Guerrero, R. (1990). El desarrollo de una escala de abnegación para los mexicanos. In AMEPSO (Ed.), *La psicología social en México* (Vol. III, pp. 9–14). Mexico City: AMEPSO.

Avila-Méndez, M. (1986). Premisas socioculturales en el campesino Mexicano. In AMEPSO (Ed.), *La psicología social en México* (Vol. I, pp. 283–288). Mexico City: AMEPSO.

Ayala, H., Pedroza, F., Morales, S., Chaparro, A., & Barragán, N. (2002). Factores de riesgo, factores protectores y generalización del comportamiento agresivo en una muestra de niños en edad escolar. *Salud Mental, 25*, 27–40.

Brenner, V., & Fox, R. A. (1998). Parental discipline and behavior problems in young children. *Journal of Genetic Psychology, 159*, 251–256.

Díaz, R. M., Fonseca, R. B., & Solís-Cámara, R. P. (1990). Comparaciones transculturales del Inventario de Paternidad para Adultos y Adolescentes. *Archivos de Investigación Médica, 21*(3), 35–39.

Díaz, R. M., Meda, L. R., & Solís-Cámara, R. P. (1991). Comparación de actitudes paternas en padres y adolescentes de distintos niveles socioculturales. *Revista Sonorense de Psicología, 5*, 87–96.

Díaz-Guerrero, R. (1982). *Psicología del mexicano* (4th ed.). Mexico City: Trillas.

Díaz-Guerrero, R. (1984). Psychology for the Mexican or for the masses? *Psychology – A Quarterly Journal of Human Behavior, 21*(2), 1–7.

Díaz-Guerrero, R. (1986). Historio-sociocultura y personalidad: definición y características de los factores de la familia mexicana. *Revista de Psicología Social y Personalidad, 2*(1), 15–42.

Díaz-Guerrero, R. (2000). Evolución de la obediencia afiliativa. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología, 32*(3), 467–483.

Díaz-Guerrero, R. (2003a). *Bajo las garras de la cultura. Psicología del Mexicano 2*. Mexico City: Trillas.

Díaz-Guerrero, R. (2003b). Ethnopsychology and culture conflict. *Cross-Cultural Psychology Bulletin, 37*(3), 27–32.

Díaz-Guerrero, R., & Balderas González, A. (2000). Amor versus poder, el nuevo primer factor de la filosofía de vida. In AMEPSO (Ed.), *La psicología social en México* (Vol. VIII, pp. 134–142). Mexico City: AMEPSO.

Díaz-Guerrero, R., & Castillo-Vales, V. M. (1981). El enfoque cultura-contracultura y el desarrollo cognitivo y de la personalidad en escolares yucatecos. *Enseñanza e Investigación en Psicología, 7*(1), 5–26.

Díaz-Guerrero, R., & Iscoe, I. (1984). El impacto de la cultura iberoamericana tradicional y del stress económico sobre la salud mental y física: instrumentación y potencial para la investigación transcultural I. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología, 16*(2), 167–213.

Díaz-Loving, R., Rivera Aragón, S., Villanueva Orozco, G. B. T., & Cruz Martínez, L. M. (2011). Las premisas histórico-socioculturales de la familia mexicana: su exploración desde las creencias y las normas. *Revista Mexicana de Investigación en Psicología, 3*(2), 128–142.

Domenech-Rodríguez, M., Donovick, M. R., & Crowley, S. L. (2009). Parenting styles in a cultural context: Observations of "protective parenting" in first-generation Latinos. *Family Process, 48*(2), 195–210.

Flores, G. M. (2010). Etnopsicología de la asertividad. *Revista Conducta, 8*(16), 31–44.

Fox, R. A. (1994). *Parent behavior checklist*. Austin: ProEd (Currently available from the author, Marquette University, School of Education, P.O. Box 1881, Milwaukee, WI 53201–1881; Email: robert.fox@marquette.edu).

Fox, R. A., & Nicholson, B. C. (2003). *Parenting young children: A facilitator's guide*. Longmont: Sopris West.

Fox, R. A., & Solís-Cámara, R. P. (1997). Parenting young children by fathers in Mexico and the United States. *Journal of Social Psychology, 137*, 489–495.

Fox, R. A., Fox, T. A., Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Díaz, R. M. (1995a). *Guía de Líderes: Programa de Paternidad ESTRELLA*. Bellevue: STAR Parenting, lnc.

Fox, R. A., Fox, T. A., Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Díaz, R. M. (1995b). *Paternidad ESTRELLA: Edades de Tres a Cinco Años*. Bellevue: STAR Parenting, Inc.

Fox, R. A., Fox, T. A., Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Díaz, R. M. (1995c). *Paternidad ESTRELLA: Edades de uno a tres años*. Bellevue: STAR Parenting, Inc.

Fox, R. A., Fox, T., Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Díaz, R. M. (1995d). *Paternidad Estrella: Una nueva opción para educar a su niño (1 a 3 años)* (Serie Infantes. Audio-casetes No. 1, 2, 3, & 4). Bellevue: STAR Parenting, Inc.

Fox, R. A., Fox, T., Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Díaz, R. M. (1995e). *Paternidad Estrella: Una nueva opción para educar a su niño (3 a 5 años)* (Serie Preescolares. Audio-casetes No. 1, 2, 3 & 4). Bellevue: STAR Parenting, Inc.

García-Campos, T. (2008). Cultura tradicional y masculinidad feminidad. *Revista Interamericana de Psicología/Interamerican Journal of Psychology, 42*(1), 59–68.

Holtzman, W., Díaz-Guerrero, R., & Swartz, J. (1975). *El desarrollo de la personalidad en dos culturas: México y Estados Unidos*. Mexico City: Trillas.

Index Mundi. (2012, June 12). Mexico – country profile – 2012. Retrieved from http://www.index-mundi.com/mexico/

Jiménez, D., & Guevara, Y. (2008). Programa de intervención para mejorar el rendimiento escolar a través de la interacción madre-hijo. In Y. Guevara Benítez (Ed.), *Fracaso escolar en educación básica primaria. Investigación sobre algunos factores de influencia y programas de intervención* (pp. 116–126). Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

Ramírez, S. (1986). *Infancia es destino* (9th ed.). Mexico City: Siglo XXI Editores.

Ritts, V. (2003). *lnfusing culture into parenting issues: A supplement for psychology instructors*. St. Louis Community College. Available from: http://users.stlcc.edu/departments/mcbehavior/Faculty%20Pages/vicki_ritts.htm

Robles, E., & Van Barneveld, H. O. (2010). Validación de un cuestionario de tareas de crianza en mujeres mexicanas. *Pensamiento Psicológico, 7*(14), 73–80.

Solís-Cámara, R. P. (2007a). Determinantes de la interacción reciproca madres-niños pequeños y el origen del patrón de comportamiento Tipo-A. *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology, 7*(1), 123–140.

Solís-Cámara R. P. (2007b). *Manual de la Escala de Comportamientos de Madres y Padres con Niños Pequeños*. Available from: http://www.biblomedia.com/product_details.php?item_id=80

Solís-Cámara R. P. (2011, September). *Personalidad y crianza: una aproximación a su desarrollo desde la etnopsicología mexicana*. Conference paper presented at: V Congreso Internacional e Interuniversitario, Psicología y Transdisciplinariedad en un Mundo Complejo, Puerto Vallarta.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Díaz, R. M. (1996). La congruencia de las actitudes paternales entre padres e hijos. *Salud Mental, 19*(1), 21–26.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Díaz, R. M. (2000). Comparaciones transculturales de las actitudes hacia la paternidad de madres latinoamericanas. *Revista Psicología Contemporánea, 7*(2), 28–31.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Díaz, R. M. (2002). Efectos de un programa de crianza para mamás y papás de niños pequeños: La importancia del nivel educativo de los padres. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología, 34*, 203–215.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Díaz, R. M. (2007). Relaciones entre creencias y prácticas de crianza de padres con niños pequeños. *Anales de Psicología, 23*, 133–140.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Fox, R. A. (1995). Parenting among mothers with young children in Mexico and the United States. *Journal of Social Psychology, 135*, 591–599.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., & Fox, R. A. (1996). Parenting practices and expectations among Mexican mothers with young children. *Journal of Genetic Psychology, 157*, 465–476.

Solís-Cámara, R., Díaz, R. M., & Rollano de Trigo, M. (1999). Expectativas, empatía, castigo e inversión del rol, en adultos y adolescentes de Bolivia y México. *Avances en Psicología Clínica Latinoamericana, 17*, 95–106.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., Díaz, R. M., Fox, R. A., & Fox, T. (2002a). *Libro de trabajo: Paternidad Estrella. Un enfoque positivo y práctico para la paternidad eficiente 3 a 5 años* (2nd ed.). Guadalajara: Paternidad Estrella, Inc.

Solís-Cámara, R., Díaz, R. M., Fox, R. A., & Fox, T. (2002b). *Paternidad Estrella: Una nueva opción para educar a su niño 3 a 5 años* (Serie Preescolares. Audio-casetes No. 1, 2, 3 & 4 2nd ed.). Guadalajara: Paternidad Estrella, Inc.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., Díaz, R. M., Medina, C. Y., Barranco, J. L., Montejano, G. H., & Tiscareño, L. A. (2002c). Estructura factorial y propiedades de la Escala de Comportamientos para Madres y Padres con Niños Pequeños (ECMP). *Psicothema, 14*, 637–642.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., Díaz, R. M., Bolívar, R. E., & García, A. N. (2003). Expectativas del desarrollo y prácticas disciplinarias y de crianza en parejas con niños con necesidades especiales. *Salud Mental, 26*, 51–58.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., Covarrubias, S. P., Díaz, R. M., & Rivera, A. B. (2004). Efectos multidimensionales de un programa de crianza en la interacción recíproca de padres y sus niños con problemas de comportamiento. *Psicología Conductual, 12*, 197–214.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., Díaz, R. M., Cortes, M. N., Patiño, M. D., Pérez de la Torre, T., & Robles, B. C. (2005). Propiedades psicométricas de la Escala de Comportamientos para Madres y Padres con Niños Pequeños. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología, 37*(1), 59–70.

Solís-Cámara, R. P., Fox, R. A., Medina, C. Y., Barranco, J. L., & Díaz, R. M. (2007). *Escala de Comportamientos de Madres y Padres con Niños Pequeños* [Software: Instrumento, perfiles y plantillas]. Available from: http://www.biblomedia.com/product_details.php?item_id=80

Uno, D., Florsheim, P., & Uchino, B. N. (1998). Psychosocial mechanisms underlying quality of parenting among Mexican-American and white adolescent mothers. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 27*, 585–605.

Vargas, R. L., Iñiguez, M. D., Arámbula, C., Cortes, D., Castolo, R. J., Aguirre, M., et al. (2011). Relaciones entre la filosofía de vida de amas de casa y sus prácticas de socialización con preescolares. In M. R. Domínguez, F. S. M. Núñez, & R. G. Montes (Eds.), *Memorias del V Congreso Internacional Interuniversitario. Psicología y transdiciplinaridad en un mundo complejo* (pp. 483–495). Puerto Vallarta: Prometeo Editores.

# Parenting in Two Cultural Worlds in the Presence of One Dominant Worldview: The American Indian Experience

**Betsy Davis, Renda Dionne, and Michelle Fortin**

## Pre-colonization Parenting Context

"Start at the beginning." These words have been heard many times from elders when we approached them with questions about why so many American Indian parents and children continue to suffer today and why we feel that there is something bigger we are missing when attempting to strengthen these families. From these elders, we found that we must not only explore the beginning of the indigenous peoples, but also the beginning of the colonizing peoples that came to this land and, in the process of building a nation, sought to subjugate indigenous families and the communities within which they lived.

Our exploration arrived at the importance of first understanding worldviews. Worldviews act as: (a) the lens through which we see and accept what is proper in the world; (b) unseen foundations from which we operate within the world based on our definitions of what is right; and (c) internal maps and guides to the actions we display and words we use to reflect both our own world and the definition of what is right (Goheen 2002). The worldview that is shared among a group of people is said to have its etiology in a common creation story (Patterson 2002). These stories are typically religious and define for humans their relations to their chosen creator, the earth upon which they live, and one another.

Worldviews stemming from creation stories are also said to guide the social construction of a society (Schlitz et al. 2010). Through societal interactions with those of similar worldviews, internal constructs or mental representations are

B. Davis (✉)
Oregon Research Institute, Eugene, OR, USA
e-mail: betsy@ori.org

R. Dionne
Indian Child and Family Services, Temecula, CA, USA

M. Fortin
Watari Youth, Community and Family Services, Vancouver, BC, Canada

formed that help members to define what is good or. bad, right or wrong, or effective or ineffective (Berger and Luckmann 1966). These types of social constructs are those that help to guide families within a society in how best to live and parent their children.

In pre-Columbian North America, millions of indigenous people resided in tribal groups, nations or bands. Across these different societal groupings, thousands of different languages were spoken, different customs and traditions were adhered to, and different matriarchal and patriarchal societal structures were formed. However, even though tribally diverse in many ways, common American Indian values have been identified across tribal groups (Axelson 1985; Brown 1991; DuBray 1985). These tribal commonalities perhaps stem from a common worldview whose foundation derives from each tribe or nation's story of creation.

Wherever a tribe or nation was located, its creation story was based upon that piece of earth from which they and all else in the world sprang forth. Indigenous creation stories are primarily animistic, wherein humans, as with all other animals, plants, rocks, mountains, rivers, and every entity in the natural environment, are imbued with a soul or spirit, birthed from the same mother, Earth, and thereby seen as equal (Bird-David 1991). All in nature is to be respected and each individual is seen as having a responsibility for the care of all spiritual entities, as brothers and sisters, upon the earth.

Though creation stories differ across tribes and account for great diversity in customs, traditions, and beliefs, the animistic foundation for all stories can be seen as the underpinning of commonalities across tribes relative to "oneness" in an indigenous worldview that guides values regarding humanness on this earth (Hart 2010). These commonalities derive from the importance of kinship between the human world, the spirit, and inanimate entities as well as the responsibilities we have for one another. This worldview can be seen as underlying the commonly identified indigenous social constructs of interconnectedness, which holds that the human self is integrated and connected to the total workings of the world, and interdependency, which holds that among all in nature there is equal relation (Hart 2010).

For indigenous humans, this interconnectedness and interdependency is reflected in the importance placed on extended kinship and family obligation as well as community mindedness and the values of sharing, cooperation, and consensus decision-making (Gone and Alcantara 2010; Weaver and White 1997; Wise and Miller 1983). In the indigenous view, family is a much broader concept. Family members can include both blood relatives and non-blood relatives who are close to the family but all are connected and interdependent on one another (Manson et al. 1996; Wise and Miller 1983).

Connection and responsibility are not only for those humans walking the earth, but also for generations past and future (Weaver and White 1995). Within this generational view, children within families are regarded as gifts from the Creator and are seen and respected as both the future and survival of the peoples (Greenwood 2004). Elders are respected within the family and community as

they are viewed as the ones who hold the wisdom of the ancestors. They pass down to the next generation the tribal values and ways of being to children and youth to ensure continued beliefs, and traditions (Greenwood 2004). Within this generational transmission of knowledge, parents also learn the ways of protecting and raising their children to be proud and productive members of the tribal community.

Traditionally tribes had systems of protecting children and families (Cross 1986). The tribal model was one of circles of care; the family who supports the child, is, in turn, supported by the clan who is supported by the entire community. American Indian culture's strong sense of communalism, with children as the focal point, stems from the importance placed on extended family, relationships within the clan, as well as the positive value placed on children (Brave Heart 1999). Historically, learning by children within tribal communities was through direct experience and natural consequence. Children were allowed to roam and learn protected and watched over by all. This experiential learning fostered in children a sense of independence in decision-making, but this independence was also balanced with interdependency and responsibility to family and community. A cornerstone of American Indian childrearing was allowing children to make their own decisions; this was their right as unique persons (Witt 1980).

The importance of the parent–child relationship within tribal communities can be seen relative to discipline. When a child was in need of discipline, many times these actions were undertaken by extended family members (Sizemore and Langenbrunner 1996). As described by Witt (1980), discipline of a younger child who was misbehaving often was quiet and involved shunning or ignoring the child. Many American Indian adults today who have experienced shunning describe this as a mother or grandmother "looking right through them as if they weren't there". Within the traditional home, rarely would a young child be directly told not to do something; removing or distracting a child from something they should not be doing was not done as punishment. It was believed that this behavior simply indicated a lack of self-control in the child that would naturally come in time.

For older children, traditionally, ridicule was used to shape behavior. However, as explained by many American Indians today, this ridicule was done with humor, with the goal of teaching. It was very important for older children to learn how to live within the tribal community's beliefs, values, and rules because it was their responsibility to tend to and lead the younger children. It was believed that this responsibility instilled interdependency and interconnection between tribal children of all ages and genders.

Prior to colonization, though diverse in creation stories, traditions, and beliefs, American Indian tribal communities were universally strong in ancestral respect for elders, organized around families and children, governed by protective ways of raising children, and always focused on the strength and survival of future generations through interdependence, interconnectedness, and the passing down of wisdom and knowledge.

# Colonization's Disruption of Families and Traditional Parenting

From the 1492 arrival of European explorers to America, onward in time as more immigrants came to form their own nation, these explorers and colonists encountered groups of Indigenous peoples who carried within them a different way of viewing the world. For the Europeans who came to this land, their creation story stemmed primarily from the Judeo-Christian story in which man is created in God's image and therefore given divine permission to subdue the earth and have dominion over every living thing (Genesis 1:27–28). This worldview was far from the interconnectedness and interdependency of the American Indians to their mother, Earth, and to all brothers and sisters who live with their mother.

What the colonialists saw was too different and therefore not understandable. The dominion-based worldview allowed colonizers to believe they had the right, given by God, to define the indigenous peoples they encountered as savage, thereby allowing them to either tame, civilize or kill these people who were getting in the way of their God-given right to own land, build upon that land, and live as they desired (Patterson 2002).

In viewing the development of this nation, the policies and laws undertaken by the forming government were purposeful in intent relative to disrupting American Indian communities, breaking apart families, and separating children from parents. Colonizers were consistent in their removal of American Indians from their lands of creation, as reflected in the nineteenth century congressional act of territorial expansion known as Manifest Destiny.

The doctrine of Manifest Destiny paralleled other governmental attempts at cultural elimination. Many great grandparents and grandparents today were taken away from their families, becoming wards of the state and being placed in government-run boarding schools. The tenet upon which the boarding school system was built is reflected in a report by Capt. Richard H. Pratt, founder of the Carlisle school that served as the model for all boarding schools in the nation. In his report on Indian education to the government, he said, "Kill the Indian, and save the man" (Official Report of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of Charities and Correction 1892; 46–59). In essence, removal of the indigenous culture, their languages, names, and ways, was the only way to create acceptable American citizens.

Forced attendance in boarding schools and mission programs sadly introduced corporal punishment and insensitivity, as well as authoritarian behaviors to many American Indian children. These behaviors were in contrast to the strong ancestral ways for raising and teaching children. Instead, many of these children grew up to become parents themselves who transferred these boarding school practices into the parenting of their own children (Brave Heart 1999; Duran et al. 1998; Evans-Campbell 2008; Hull 1982; Morrisette 1994). This transfer continues the hurtful ways of history within some American Indian families today.

The mid-twentieth century also brought forth governmental policies aimed at increasing American Indian assimilation through relocation efforts geared towards bringing American Indians into mainstream society. Many American Indian parents

left their tribal communities and relocated to urban areas driven by the promised hope of employment, reaching for this promise in order to provide support for their families. For many relocation did not bring about the desired outcome; employment was not forthcoming and more was lost than gained. By leaving reservation land, traditional rights to health, education and welfare were relinquished along with the communal bonds that could serve as protective factors for families (Barter and Barter 1974). Much as with boarding schools that began almost a century earlier, government policies that thought that these efforts would be beneficial ended badly for American Indian families.

## Colonization Trauma Through the Generations

Writings on colonization have the highlighted historical trauma that affects American Indians today (Brave Heart 1999, 2000; Clarke 2002; Evans-Campbell 2008; Walters et al. 2002; Whitbeck et al. 2004). In our own work, in order to focus the field of research on the importance of acknowledging history as the etiology of difficulties for American Indian families today, we developed models of colonization's effects through the generations. Our models are predicated on the indigenous value of seven generations (Sotero 2006). The seven generations belief holds that the actions and decisions made today will affect the next seven generations. Given the trauma of colonization and its devastating effects on families and communities, seven generations holds that increased colonization experiences for one parental generation would increase the probability of this trauma affecting parents in the next generation thereby continuing its effect for the next seven generations (See Fig. 1). Our models correspond to Evans-Campbell's (2008) discussion of family level effects of historical trauma and the indirect path of intergenerational transmission through parenting.

In two studies with a total of 175 parents of American Indian children ages 5–7 years old, living in Southern California and representing over 60 tribal affiliations, we found that the number of colonization trauma events occurring in ancestral generations (G5, G4, & G3), including boarding school attendance, relocation and disconnection from family and culture, significantly related to current G1 child externalizing difficulties, including acting out behaviors, as well as internalizing difficulties, including intrusion and depressive symptoms. Both of the direct paths of history's effect on child difficulties today, however, were mediated by history's effects on G2 parents. In essence, the ancestral colonization effect was transmitted to G1 children today through trauma's disruption of G2 parenting, including a lessened sense of parenting competence as well as increased negative/harsh parenting behaviors.

The effects of history through the generations, particularly boarding schools and relocation, can also be seen in words from First Nations parents of adolescents who worked with us to find family strength while living in a high-risk urban area in British Columbia. These words were given to us publicly via radio interview about our project or video creation in support of our project.
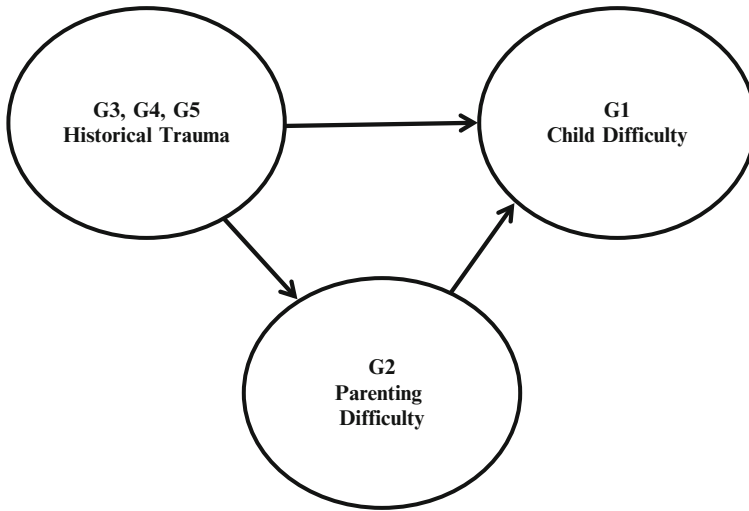
**Fig. 1** Parenting through seven generations

*An elder who participated with her 12-year-old granddaughter*: "I'm a 60-year-old great-grandmother who survived the trauma of being forced into the residential school system. I was 6 years old…I fought for dignity until I was kicked out at the age of 15. I was physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually abused and I passed this on to my family with alcohol and drug addictions. I was desperate to find someone who could help my family use methods to move in our struggle to become a healthy family."

*A single parent whose children were ages 14, 13, and 7*: "My grandmother went to residential school and it did impact her kids, my father, and on my mother's side it was the same…the communication barrier was just so great that it impacted our whole family, even with my brother and the cousins today…how they were taught in residential school not to talk…I think the biggest hurdle was communication…I grew up with not having a father and not having a mother. He (my father) fell into the street life…and I jumped from foster home to foster home until my grandparents took me back to the reserve…"

*A professional single mother with four children ranging in age from toddler to teen*: "The legacy I inherited is authoritarian…as being somewhat like a drill sergeant…it was so hurtful to reenact it in *my* family…"

*A single mother of boys ages 8 and 12*: "Both my parents and grandparents had been through residential school and I could see how it affected our whole community…I seen a lot of pain and suffering and the way people tried to take away their pain with drugs and alcohol. It was horrible…"

Colonization's effects on families and communities through the generations have led researchers to identify potential protective factors that can ward against these effects on American Indian individuals today. These models have focused on

enculturation as an important buffer not only against the stress of historical trauma relative to health outcomes (Walters et al. 2002) but also against discrimination faced today relative to alcohol use (Whitbeck et al. 2004). Enculturation for American Indians involves either retaining, if passed through the generations, or reviving, if disrupted through history, the strengths and protective ways of the ancestors. Enculturation is a process distinguished from acculturation and assimilation by its focus on retaining American Indian culture as a way of viewing the world. It can be compared to learning aspects of mainstream culture in order to survive (acculturation) or taking on mainstream culture solely as one's own (assimilation). Enculturation is typically reflected today by the retention of traditional spirituality, American Indian identity, and traditional activities within one's life (Whitbeck et al. 2004).

A colonization history of community and family disruption has resulted today in a majority of American Indians parents' living and raising children within mainstream society, with only 22 % of American Indians residing on reservation or Indian trust lands (U.S. Census 2011). Among those families, there are many that are also culturally disconnected from their tribal and ancestral story. The focus on enculturation as a protective factor leads to the question of how traditional ways, spirituality, and Indian identity are for parents and children who are surrounded by mainstream influences.

## Continued Colonization: A Legacy That Lingers?

During the time of colonization and removal of American Indians from their lands, a new government and society was being formed. Ideas were being formed and foundations were being developed for national systems that remain today, systems of government, commerce, finance, education, and justice. The American Indian voice was purposefully removed from the foundation of the nation's institutions of power. Mainstream society, though more diverse today than at the nation's inception, still have at their operational base remnants of a dominant worldview (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Kleinman 1998; Schlitz et al. 2010).

For the majority of American Indians parents and children living off-reservation, it is this mainstream society and its institutions that they encounter on a daily basis. Parents raising children within a dominant society, one that does not understand their worldview, their ancestral history, or how to respectfully support them in their culture, can often experience feelings of being misunderstood, and as a result, far too many experience frustration, sadness, and anger. The expression of these emotions, for some parents, can contribute to destructive forms of interaction within the family.

In our work with First Nations adolescents and their parental caregivers we found that, in addition to increased family conflict, current feelings of discrimination contributed to the display of adolescent HIV-risk behaviors, including early initiation of alcohol and drug use as well as sexual behaviors. Parents had a hard time understanding adolescent difficulties (Davis et al. 2010). For too many

indigenous families, they must walk through this world with the impact of an ancestral history of colonization and be in a society that may, unknowingly, exacerbate these historical effects.

## Parenting in Two Cultural Worlds: Finding Balance

In past work, we incorporated what we have come to term "societal blindness" into our work, a lack of societal acknowledgment and understanding of the American Indian story. We knew that we must bring forth the truth of the ancestral story for many families because the history of colonization had corrupted the flow of this story through the generations. As such, we created a two-stage conceptual approach to implementing evidence-based parenting programs in American Indian and First Nations communities which allowed this story to come forward. We experienced a level of success using this procedure when working with indigenous community families both in the United States and Canada (Dionne et al. 2009; Davis et al. 2010).

The number of U.S. families coming to us through the court and child welfare systems began to increase. As a result, we were beginning to glimpse the variability in families relative to the impact of their ancestral path, the quality of their involvement with mainstream society, and their level of healthy vs. unhealthy functioning today. There were families with high levels of historical trauma events in their ancestral history, some suffering greatly, others suffering less. There were families with less trauma in their ancestral history, but they were suffering greatly, while others suffered less. With both ancestral paths, some experienced stress in mainstream society while others did not. How could we make sense of this variability on our path to strengthen families?

It was at this point in our search that we turned to the elders and "started at the beginning" as described above. As a result of this journey, we are currently in the process of allowing our motivational interviewing procedure to reflect not only colonization history but also the larger societal issues driven by this history and faced by so many parents and children today. To understand variability and resilience to history, we explored work indicating variations in what is termed "Native identity". Red Horse and colleagues (1978) documented three different American Indian family lifestyle patterns. One set of families have a high level of enculturation where traditional life defines their style of living. Second are those families who are either acculturated or assimilated where non-Native styles of living have been adopted, the distinguishing factor being whether their Native culture remains a part of their self. Third is what Red Horse refers to as "pantraditional" families who are struggling with their reclamation of traditional ways that have been lost today. More recent work stresses the need to separate out historical trauma events that have occurred for families from the manifestation of that trauma in the life of today's parent and child. A contributing factor to the presence of enculturation within families where the ancestral story is strong and

protective is whether the ancestral story, contains strategies of resilience or defeatism for families (Denham 2008).

It is our view that the mainstream story, and the stress that it places on families, can interact with the ancestral story to exacerbate difficulties. The mainstream story can vary in families related to both how present it is in the family's life (how involved are they with mainstream institutions, such as justice, child welfare, and education as well as teachers and neighbors) and the quality of this presence (the strength of resonance).

From this understanding we have created a scale of balance for living in two worlds and have brought this discussion of balance into our motivational interviewing process with families prior to engaging in parent and family strengthening. This scale applies regardless of whether a family resides on or off reservation because mainstream society will nonetheless surround all families at some point and have the potential to impact their lives. We explore the presence and quality of both ancestral and mainstream stories in the lives of parents and their children. For some families, the strength of the ancestral story has been weakened and the story or lack thereof weighs heavily on them. Moreover, some parents are involved in drug use and/or domestic violence, their children have been removed until the parents address their issues, but services to address these issues are culturally mismatched to the family. Sadly, the stresses of both stories for these families can result in children s not being returned to the home unless the services are completed.

In our process, the goal is to assist each parent in finding a balance between the two worlds, both ancestral and mainstream, in any form that works for them. In essence, parents can create their own social constructs related to who they are from history and within this society. As individual parental knowledge is collected, we also provide parents with the opportunity to visualize the balance they value for their children and future generations between these stories. We help parents to identify how they can achieve this balance and encourage them to receive parenting skills strengthening. We have begun to view existing evidence-based parenting programs that have been developed. We are currently going back to those basic domains of parenting known to be protective for children and attempting to conceptualize these domains to preserve the ancestral ways of interdependency and interconnectedness between parent, child, family, community, and earth. We view our re-conceptualization of parenting interventions, relative to the research-based distinction between "culturally specific" vs. "culturally sensitive" intervention, in a different way.

Our journey through the exploration of worldviews has led us to understand not only how these worldviews continue to clash but also how we can incorporate an acknowledgement of this clash in working with families to help them find balance and strength. We have also learned from elders that our journey of learning will never end; it will continue and affect the work we do as long as we walk this earth. We should honor this process, never lose patience, and see it as what is important.

# References

Axelson, J. A. (1985). *Counseling and development in a multicultural society*. Monterey: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

Barter, E. R., & Barter, J. T. (1974). Urban Indians and mental health problems. *Psychiatric Annals, 4*(11), 37–43.

Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. New York: Anchor.

Bird-David, N. (1991). Animism revisited: Personhood, environment, and relational epistemology. *Current Anthropology, 40*, 67–91.

Brave Heart, M. Y. H. (1999). Oyate Ptayela: Rebuilding the Lakota Nation through addressing historical trauma among Lakota parents. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 2*(1–2), 109–126.

Brave Heart, M. Y. H. (2000). Wakiksuyapi: Carrying the historical trauma of the Lakota. *Tulane Studies in Social Welfare, 21–22*, 245–266.

Brown, D. A. (1991). *Bury my heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian history of the American West*. New York: Henry Holt and Co.

Clarke, S. A. (2002). *Social and emotional distress among American Indian and Alaska Native students: Research findings*. New York: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. (ERIC No. ED459988)

Cross, T. L. (1986). *Positive Indian parenting: Honoring our children by honoring our traditions*. Portland: National Indian Child Welfare Association.

Davis, B., Dionne, R., Madrigal, L., & Fortin, M. (2010). *Findings from two culturally-based family prevention studies with indigenous populations*. Invited presentation at the National Institute of Drug Abuse, State of Science and Grant Development Workshop, Building Bridges: Advancing American Indian/Alaska Native Substance Abuse Research.

Denham, A. R. (2008). Rethinking historical trauma: Narratives of resilience. *Transcultural Psychiatry, 45*(3), 391–414.

Dionne, R., Davis, B., Sheeber, L., & Madrigal, L. (2009). Initial evaluation of a cultural approach to implementation of evidence-based parenting intervention in American Indian communities. *Journal of Community Psychology, 37*(7), 911–921.

DuBray, W. H. (1985). American Indian values: Critical factor in casework. *Social Casework: The Journal of Contemporary Social Work, 66*(1), 30–37.

Duran, B., Duran, E., & Brave Heart, M. Y. (1998). American Indian and/or Alaska Natives and the trauma of history. In R. Thornton (Ed.), *Studying Native America: Problems and prospects* (pp. 60–76). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Evans-Campbell, T. (2008). Historical trauma in American Indian/Native American communities: A multi-level framework for exploring impacts on individuals, families, and communities. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 23*(2), 316–338.

Goheen, M. (2002, July). *The European worldview and education*. Paper presented at the Education Conference in Tivadarfalvai. http://www.biblicaltheology.ca/blue_files/European%20Worldview%20and%20Education.pdf

Gone, J. P., & Alcantara, C. (2010). The ethnographically contextualized case study method: Exploring ambitious achievement in an American Indian community. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 16*(2), 159–168.

Greenwood, M. (2004). Voices from the field – An aboriginal view on child care. In R. E. Tremblay, R. G. Barr, & R. DeV. Peters (Eds.) *Encyclopedia on early childhood development* (pp. 1–3). Montreal: Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development. Available at: http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/documents/GreenwoodANGps.pdf. Accessed July 12, 2012

Hart, M. A. (2010). Indigenous worldviews, knowledge, and research: The development of an indigenous research paradigm. *Journal of Indigenous Voices in Social Work, 1*(1), 1–16.

Hull, G. H., Jr. (1982). Child welfare services to Native Americans. *Social Casework: The Journal of Contemporary Social Work, 63*, 340–347.

Kleinman, A. (1998). *Experience and its moral modes: Culture, human conditions, and disorder*. Presentation at the Tanner Lectures on Human Values, Stanford University.

Manson, S. M., Beals, J., O'Nell, T. D., Piasecki, J., Bechtol, W., Keane, E. M., & Jones, M. C. (1996). Wounded spirits, ailing hearts: PTSD and related disorders among American Natives. In A. J. Marsella, M. J. Friedman, E. Gerrity, & R. M. Scurfield (Eds.), *Ethnocultural aspects of posttraumatic stress disorder: Issues, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 255–283). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Morrisette, P. J. (1994). The Holocaust of First Nation people: Residual effects on parenting and treatment implications. *Contemporary Family Therapy, 16*, 381–391.

Patterson, C. (2002). *Eternal Treblinka: Our treatment of animals and the Holocaust*. New York: Lantern Books.

Red Horse, J., Feit, M., Lewis, R., & Decker, J. T. (1978). Family behaviors of urban American Indians. *Social Casework, 2*, 67–72.

Schlitz, M., Vieten, C., & Miller, E. (2010). Worldview transformation and the development of social consciousness. *Journal of Consciousness Studies, 17*(7–8), 18–36.

Sizemore, P. S., & Langenbrunner, M. R. (1996). Native Americans: Fostering a goodness-of-fit between home and school. *Family Science Review, 9*(2), 93–105.

Sotero, M. M. (2006). A conceptual model of historical trauma: Implications for public health practice and research. *Journal of Health Disparities Research and Practice, 1*(1), 93–108.

U.S. Census. (2011, November). *Facts for features: American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month.* Retrieved July 10, 2012, from http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/cb11-ff22.html

Walters, K., Simoni, J., & Evans-Campbell, T. (2002). Substance use among American Indians and Alaska Natives: Incorporating culture in an "Indigenist" stress-coping paradigm. *Public Health Reports, 117*(1), 104–117.

Weaver, H. M., & White, B. J. (1995). The Native American family circle: Roots of resiliency. *Journal of Social Work, 2*(1), 67–79.

Weaver, H. N., & White, B. J. (1997). The Native American family circle: Roots of resiliency. *Journal of Family Social Work, 2*(1), 67–79.

Whitbeck, L., Adams, G., Hoyt, D., & Chen, X. (2004). Conceptualizing and measuring historical trauma among American Indian people. *Journal of Community Psychology, 33*(3/4), 119–130.

Wise, F., & Miller, H. B. (1983). The mental health of American Indian children. In G. J. Powell, J. Yamamato, A. Romeo, & A. Morales (Eds.), *The psychosocial development of minority group children* (pp. 344–361). New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Witt, S. (1980). Pressure points in growing up Indian. *Perspectives: The Civil Rights Quarterly, 12*(1), 24–31.

# Parenting in Canadian Aboriginal Cultures

**Karen M. Benzies**

> *It takes a village to help mom and dad to raise their children.*
>
> John Pantherbone

The population of Aboriginal peoples is an estimated 1.17 million comprising approximately 3.8 % of the total Canadian population (Statistics Canada 2008). Aboriginal refers to First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada, and includes those who live on and off reserve, and in urban, rural, and remote settings (Statistics Canada 2003). There are over 600 First Nations communities in Canada, many in geographically remote locations. The majority (70 %) of Canadian Aboriginal peoples live in urban centers. Between 1996 and 2006, the Aboriginal population grew at a faster rate than non-Aboriginal Canadians at 45 and 8 %, respectively (Statistics Canada 2008). Aboriginal peoples are demographically younger with an average age of 25.5 years, as compared to the Canadian population with an average age of 35.5 years. Among Aboriginal peoples, children and youth under the age of 24 comprise 48 % of the population, and this proportion is expected to continue growing at a rate that is double the expected increase among non-Aboriginal people. Compared to non-Aboriginal children, Aboriginal children under the age of 14 years were more likely to live in a single parent mother- or father-led family, or with a grandparent or other kin caregiver, and were twice as likely to live in households containing multiple families. Aboriginal children are seven times more likely to be born to an adolescent mother than non-Aboriginal Canadian children; and one of the primary reasons given by Aboriginal women for leaving school early is to care for a child (Ball 2008; Guimond and Robitaille 2008; Health Council of Canada 2011).

K.M. Benzies (✉)
Faculty of Nursing, Faculty of Medicine, University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: benzies@ucalgary.ca

There are large inequalities in social determinants of health for Aboriginal peoples (Ball 2008; Lavergne et al. 2008; Reading and Wien 2009; Ring and Brown 2003; Sheppard and Hetherington 2012). In 2006, between 41 and 52 % of Aboriginal children lived in poverty, compared to only 17 % of Canadian children as a whole (Statistics Canada 2008). Aboriginal children are 1.5 times more likely than non-Aboriginal children to die before their first birthday (Canadian Institute for Health Information 2004) and Aboriginal children are greatly over-represented among Canadian children in foster care (Blackstock et al. 2004). Thus, there is a desperate need to improve the quality of supports and services for Aboriginal children and their families. These improvements need to be situated within the broader perspective of their culture and historical experiences (Smith et al. 2006). Canadian Aboriginal peoples are culturally diverse, and geographically dispersed with vastly different local circumstances. This diversity includes education, language, literacy, numeracy, socio-economic status, and experiences with Western culture. This diversity and the historical impact of colonialism call for sensitivity and respect with regard to Aboriginal peoples and their parenting practices.

## Historical and Cultural Impact of Colonialism

Prior to colonization, North American Aboriginal societies were egalitarian; all individuals, including children, were perceived to contribute equitably to the collective good. Colonialism has influenced Aboriginal peoples through social, political, and economic inequities that continue to exist today (Reading and Wien 2009). At the time it was occurring, colonialism displaced and dispossessed Aboriginal peoples from their hunter-gatherer traditions and their longstanding relationship with the land. In addition to the historic trauma associated with being uprooted, residential schools were established by the government of Canada and 25 different religious orders to assimilate Aboriginal children into Western culture (Bull 1991). Children were removed from their families to be re-socialized in residential schools, and in the process lost culture, language, family ties, and ultimately their cultural identity. Traditionally, Aboriginal peoples did not practice corporal punishment of their children. Typically, Aboriginal parents, grandparents, and other caregivers taught by example and guided by following the child's interests. In this context, the harsh discipline delivered in residential schools may have been particularly harmful and formal education was limited to 6–8 years for the majority of children. Traditionally, Aboriginal children may have been expected to care for young siblings, and play outdoors with limited adult supervision. The lack of opportunity to experience these roles and responsibilities has had an intergenerational effect on Canadian Aboriginal peoples; many have disengaged from traditional parenting practices. Thus, colonialism and residential schools created inter-generational trauma that obscured traditional parenting roles and practices (Smith et al. 2005). To provide a foundation to begin to understand the complexity of parenting in Aboriginal cultures, an exploration of theories of child development follows.

## Theory and Child Development

A comprehensive theory of child development would provide a complete explanation, including cultural and social mechanisms underlying development (Murray 1991). Increasingly attention has been given to the contribution of cultural contexts for development. Studies have found differential cultural responses to interventions. For example, Canadian Aboriginal children have more advanced gross motor development than their same aged peers attending the same two-generation early intervention program (Benzies et al. 2012). A complete theory of child development would find a way to make sense of these cultural differences. Similarly, theories of social and emotional development emerging from dominant Western cultures have been applied in Aboriginal cultures disregarding historical differences in approaches to parenting.

Attachment theory is one of the most important ways to understand social and emotional development in young children (Bretherton 1992). Attachment is believed to be instinctual and fulfills the need for an ongoing, warm, positive, and responsive relationship with a primary caregiver, typically the child's mother. It is believed to be a significant factor in shaping individual capacity for relationships with others. In maternal-infant interactions, sensitivity and responsiveness to the child's needs are related to attachment security; the greater the sensitivity and responsiveness, the greater the security of attachment.

Mother-infant attachment has been most frequently measured by the Strange Situation Procedure (Ainsworth et al. 1978). Infants are classified as securely attached when they believe that the primary caregiver will consistently provide for their basic needs, as well as comfort and reassurance, particularly when they are distressed. In contrast, infants who are classified as insecurely attached have their basic needs met only sporadically. In response to unpredictable caregiving, insecurely attached infants are mistrustful and uncertain (Bretherton 1992). Early brain development is compromised because these infants are focused on meeting their own basic needs and cannot seek new learning experiences in their world. Inability to seek new experiences during early childhood when the brain is highly plastic (Kolb et al. 2003) compromises all future coping and learning (Shonkoff 2011).

Attachment theory has been applied widely in early interventions where the goal is to enhance parent–child relationships. Yet, there is little evidence of its explanatory power outside non-Western cultures (Neckoway et al. 2007). This raises questions about the relevance of attachment theory in cultures where beliefs, family structures, and parenting practices differ from Western norms. Although Canadian Aboriginal cultures are heterogeneous with great variation by geography and band, parenting is typically viewed as a collective responsibility of the extended family and the community. In Aboriginal cultures, the goal is to create a nurturing environment for child development utilizing multiple relationships with extended family and other community members. In the cultural context of a shared parenting model, mothers of Aboriginal heritage believe that other caregivers are capable and will be attentive and responsive to the child's needs. The primacy of a purely dyadic

mother-infant relationship does not exist in a shared parenting model and Aboriginal mothers may be considered insensitive and unresponsive. Attachment theory with its primary focus on the mother-infant relationship may be insufficient to explain child development in the context of Canadian Aboriginal cultures where there is an expectation of multiple relationships with other caregivers who are available to respond to the child's needs.

A holistic and ecologically contextualized theory of development may be more satisfying than attachment theory to explain child development in Canadian Aboriginal cultures (Ball 2004). The bioecological theory of human development (Bronfenbrenner 2005) views child development as a dynamic process of "progressively more complex reciprocal interactions" (p. 6) between the child and caregivers at the micro-system level. It is the positive interactions in these relationships that are the "primary engines of development" (p. 6). From a bioecological perspective, the role of fathers in supporting their child's development can be acknowledged (Ball and Moselle 2007; Pleck 2007). For Canadian Aboriginal cultures with embedded expectations of shared parenting and multiple relationships with sensitive, responsive caregivers, bioecological theory may be more useful to understand child development. This is particularly true as our population of interest interacts within complex environmental systems. In addition, bioecological theory seems better suited to support the design of interventions for parents of Aboriginal heritage and to understand the mechanisms underlying their effectiveness on child outcomes. This way we can develop interventions relevant to Aboriginal cultures (Eni and Rowe 2011; Van Herk et al. 2012). Addressing the underlying environmental conditions, and supporting mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunties and others to raise their children may be valuable strategies to create sustainable change in future generations of Canadian Aboriginal peoples.

In addition to supporting health, safety, and child development, parenting is about socializing the child to culturally shared beliefs, values and practices. Culturally shared cognitive and behavioral qualities frame how parents, grandparents and other caregivers interpret and respond to children's behaviors in relationships. There is a growing body of evidence that these early relationships have direct and indirect influences on children's cognitive and language development, and emotional and social competence with lifelong implications (Shonkoff 2011). In rearing their children, ideally parents understand their own cultural values and beliefs, and guide their children to develop the desired qualities. The difficulty in understanding parenting in Aboriginal cultures is often the lack of clarity about the Aboriginal values and beliefs that were lost through colonialism and the multi-generational influences of residential schools (Morrissette 1994). In addition, individuals within cultural groups may internalize norms and parenting practices differently (Harkness and Super 2002). Tensions may develop when individual parenting norms and practices conflict with perceived cultural norms and practices. These tensions may be context specific and vary depending on whether an Aboriginal family lives on-reserve, off-reserve in an urban center, or moves frequently between the reserve and city. In addition, on-reserve contextual variation exists depending on geographic location (remote versus rural) and access to transportation and services. Adding further to the challenges of

creating a comprehensive description of parenting in Aboriginal cultures is the economic maturity of an Aboriginal community. Some Aboriginal communities have a strong economic base and independently and efficiently manage their federal transfer payments; other communities are less self-sufficient and its members live in extremely impoverished conditions. The diversity among Aboriginal peoples and the contexts in which they live influence their approaches to socialization of the next generations. Thus, it is critical to recognize that in any discourse about parenting in Aboriginal cultures there is great within group variation, and characteristics that apply to parenting in one context are unlikely to apply to all parents of Aboriginal heritage. While the literature on Aboriginal parenting is extremely limited, an evidence-based overview of cultural beliefs and values follows.

## Aboriginal Parenting Beliefs and Practices

In a study comparing urban dwelling Aboriginal ($n=50$) and European Canadian ($n=51$) mothers' beliefs, more similarities than differences were identified (Cheah and Chirkov 2008). Although mothers of Aboriginal heritage acknowledged their cultural values, their individual goals for parenting and outcomes for their children were similar to those of European Canadian mothers. Aboriginal mothers differed from European Canadian mothers in the greater importance attributed to education for their children in order to avoid negative stereotypes of Aboriginal peoples. These differences in the valuing of education may be related in part to the impact of residential schools, where children in previous generations had limited opportunity for educational attainment. In contrast European Canadian mothers may have already achieved educational goals and assume that these goals are simply *status quo.*

Compared to European-Canadian mothers, more Aboriginal mothers were likely to value their cultural and spiritual beliefs (Cheah and Chirkov 2008). Given the previous attempt to assimilate Aboriginal beliefs and values, it is likely that maintaining culture and spirituality is more important to Aboriginal mothers than those of the dominant European-Canadian heritage. In addition, knowing and understanding the influence of colonialism and residential schools on Aboriginal culture may serve to promote healing across generations (Morrissette 1994).

Mothers of Aboriginal heritage were more likely than European-Canadian mothers to experience tension between their personal goals for parenting and their perceptions of culturally sanctioned goals (Cheah and Chirkov 2008). While acknowledging the importance of family and elders, most important for Aboriginal mothers living in urban centers were parenting goals that would support the future success of their children. In contrast to European-Canadian mothers who wanted their children, regardless of gender, to be kind and considerate to achieve personal gains, mothers of Aboriginal heritage were more likely to reason that kindness and consideration were important to society. It is important to note that mothers in this study were living in urban centers and the majority of them expected their children to continue to live in the city. These results may not apply to Aboriginal mothers

who live on-reserve or frequently move between reserve and city. This study did not provide any evidence about the values and beliefs of Aboriginal fathers. The results further emphasize the extreme diversity of Aboriginal peoples and the differences in cultural beliefs and values at the individual and societal levels. These findings beg the question of whether or how parenting in Aboriginal cultures is unique from other cultures, and what parents of Aboriginal heritage need to achieve their parenting goals.

## Interventions for Parents of Aboriginal Heritage

Smith and colleagues (2006) advocated for prenatal and parenting interventions that provide a safe environment and respond to the unique experiences of Aboriginal peoples. Given that most interventions are designed and implemented with a predominantly Western focus, a critical examination of the effects of colonialism and experiences of residential schools on Aboriginal peoples needs to be incorporated. Also, an awareness of the complex social and political factors that influence parenting in Aboriginal cultures is important to the success of such interventions (Ball and George 2007).

### *Need for Interventions*

There is evidence that early interventions can prevent developmental delay, promote literacy, numeracy, and social competence and improve school readiness, especially in economically disadvantaged families (Barnett and Hustedt 2005; Barnett and Ackerman 2006; Karoly et al. 1998, 2005; Randall 2001; Young and Richardson 2007). Given that early interventions have demonstrated efficacy, interventions that target parents of children under the age of 5 years are most likely to have the greatest impact on long-term health and developmental outcomes for children of Aboriginal heritage. Currently, only 50 % of Aboriginal children attend any sort of early intervention program (Statistics Canada 2004). By Grade 4, teachers report that more Aboriginal children fail to meet expectations as compared to non-Aboriginal children (Ball 2008). Only 52 % of Aboriginal children will go on to complete high school, as compared to 74 % of the general population (Statistics Canada 2004).

### *Promising Two-Generation Programs*

Except for a few studies (Benzies et al. 2011b; Health Canada 2001), there has been very little research about outcomes of programs to improve parenting in Canadian Aboriginal cultures. Effective parenting interventions for high risk families with

low income and associated challenges need to target parents and their children. Typically, these two-generation programs are designed to improve child health and developmental outcomes while simultaneously, supporting parenting to decrease parenting stress, depressive symptoms, and risk for child maltreatment, as well as increase self-efficacy and ability to access community resources.

## Aboriginal Head Start

Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) is a federally-funded, two-generation preschool program inspired by the Head Start movement in the United States (Health Canada 2001). AHS is designed to improve educational disparities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children (Ball 2008). AHS provides a safe, supervised, and stimulating environment for young children in addition to nutritious food. Concurrently, AHS offers parenting education, life skills, and food preparation training (Ball 2008; Health Canada 2001; Statistics Canada 2004). While AHS appears to have the necessary components for a successful early intervention program, comprehensive evaluation has been challenged by measurement issues and data availability (dela Cruz and McCarthy 2010). Regardless, AHS has demonstrated positive effects on school readiness (dela Cruz and McCarthy 2010) and has been well-received in the community by participants and staff.

## CUPS One World

Similar to AHS, the Calgary Urban Project Society (CUPS), One World Child Development Centre (One World) is a two-generation preschool program designed to provide comprehensive, integrated, early intervention to simultaneously address the needs of low-income preschool children and their caregivers. Unlike AHS, CUPS One World serves a culturally diverse population and has undergone extensive evaluation of its effects on child and parent outcomes (Benzies et al. 2006, 2009, 2011a). Recent research (Benzies et al. 2011b) reports the effects of CUPS One World on outcomes for 45 children of Aboriginal heritage and their parents. CUPS One World aims to provide a safe, supportive, stable environment that is conducive to learning for preschool children and their caregivers living in low-income families (Benzies et al. 2009, 2011a, 2012). Parenting education and family support programming were expected to operate synergistically with early childhood education to enhance the sustainability of positive gains for both the child and parent. A unique feature of the program was that parenting education and family support services were tailored to meet the needs of parents, and were implemented on-site by program staff. While other two-generation preschool programs exist (see for example the Comprehensive Child Development Program (St. Pierre and Layzer 1999) and Chicago Child–Parent Center Program (Reynolds and Temple 2006)), few provide such comprehensive, integrated services on-site to address the needs of the children and their caregivers simultaneously.

Characteristics of Aboriginal Parents and Children

On average, parents were 30 years old (minimum 18 years; maximum 43 years) and most were the biological mother of the program child. Only 30 % of parents had completed high school. More than half were married or lived in a common-law relationship. Nearly one-third of parents were employed; half reported social welfare as their primary source of income. More than half of the parents reported that they had a child welfare file open as a child. A generation later, nearly two-thirds of parents reported that they had a child welfare file open as the parent of a child. Aboriginal parents reported between one and seven children in their households. There were slightly more Aboriginal boys than girls in the CUPS One World program. On average, these children were 46 months old (minimum 33 months; maximum 67 months) at program entry.

Results

Between program entry and program exit, there was a significant positive improvement in parental perceptions of their ability to use community resources. Between program entry and program exit, there were no significant differences in parental perceptions of parenting stress, self-esteem, or risk for child maltreatment. Parents' scores were highly correlated between program entry and program exit.

Between program entry and program exit, the Aboriginal children significantly improved their receptive language scores. On average, however, Aboriginal children continued to score below average at program exit. Of note, the standard deviation decreased between program entry and program exit suggesting that CUPS One World reduced the variability in receptive language scores over the duration of the program. Using multiple linear regression and controlling for the child's receptive language score at program entry, there was a trend to suggest the amount of time the child spent in the program contributed to the receptive language scores at program exit.

Discussion

For the Aboriginal parents, CUPS One World provided high quality, intensive supports and services at no cost to the family. In addition to parent education and family support, the program provided parents with supportive, developmentally appropriate care for their children. For parents, the early childhood education component of the program provided a break from the day-to-day demands for survival. On-site parent education and family support enabled caregivers to take a serious look at their own lives, seek additional services outside the program to make appropriate changes, and achieve the goals they set for themselves and their families. One caregiver said, "I always think…when you're flying on an airplane and you have a child with you and you know something's wrong and the mask

comes down who do you give it to – do you give it to your child or give it to you, you have to take it because then you can save your child." Aboriginal parents demonstrated positive effects on the acquisition of daily life management skills. Contrary to expectations, there were no significant differences in parenting stress, self-esteem, and risk for child maltreatment. Critical to the success of the program was the typically strong and positive working alliance or partnership based on trust and mutual respect (Trute and Hiebert-Murphy 2007). In the study reported here, past negative experiences with other programs and services, such as child welfare agencies, may have influenced parental ability to develop a positive working alliance with the program staff. Establishing a positive working alliance that builds trust increases the likelihood that caregivers will remain engaged and see positive outcomes.

In many cases, personal and family issues were multi-generational as suggested by the high proportion of caregivers who were involved in child welfare as children. This finding is consistent with other research about inter-generational transmission of risk in heterogeneous Canadian and US samples (Bifulco et al. 2002; Serbin and Karp 2004). There is limited research with Canadian Aboriginal populations; however, one qualitative study regarding the impact of pregnancy and parenting for Aboriginal women stands out (Smith et al. 2005). A high priority to improve the health outcomes of Aboriginal families involved "turning around" (p. 39) the inter-generational influences of residential schools (Smith et al. 2005). Through access to high quality resources and services, CUPS One World may create opportunities for Aboriginal women to reflect on their lives as parents and to begin to turn around the pervasive and negative impact of residential schools on the lives of their children and families.

For Aboriginal children, participation in a two-generation preschool program had a statistically significant positive effect on their receptive language scores. On average, children gained nearly 10 standard deviation units during the time they participated in the program. This increase is better than well known programs in the US, such as the High Scope Perry Preschool Program that reported an 8 point increase in cognitive skills (Campbell et al. 2002; Weikart and Schweinhart 1992). While populations and outcomes differed across the programs, such improvements in child receptive language skills suggest that CUPS One World holds promise for improved outcomes for Aboriginal children.

Of concern however, is that, on average, the Aboriginal children continued to have receptive language scores below the typically developing child even after participating in an intensive early childhood intervention program. The results suggest that the amount of time the child spent in the program was related to receptive language scores at program exit. It may be early intervention programming needs to begin during infancy and continue throughout the preschool years to support Aboriginal children living in low income families to be ready to learn at school age. This suggestion is consistent with advocates of early intervention who suggest that preschool interventions are too late for children at risk for developmental delays due to environmental influences such as low income (McCain et al. 2007). Given the high rates of poverty (Ball 2008) and lack of educational attainment (Statistics Canada 2004) among people of Aboriginal ancestry, supporting early childhood

development with two- generation preschool programs may increase chances of success in school among Aboriginal children, which may have long lasting effects on life outcomes.

## Recommendations

More work is needed to explore the unique needs of Aboriginal parents and measures of success in this population. Given the negative effects of colonialism and residential schools on Aboriginal parenting, efforts to address spiritual healing may need to supersede efforts to improve parenting (Quinn 2007).

### *Program Design*

Curricula to support Aboriginal parenting interventions need ensure cultural relevance with core content and the potential for minor contextual adaptations. Interventions that include active participation of the parents with their own children may be most effective. Aboriginal songs and games should be included in activities for parents and children. Books and other program resources should include pictures and photos of Aboriginal communities and activities. It is important to employ well-educated and trained professionals to deliver programs directly, or to provide close mentorship and supervision of para-professionals such as community health workers. Regardless, it is important to consider the values and beliefs of Aboriginal peoples, their concepts of childhood, parenting practices, and what they want their children to know and do. Only then can parenting programs be tailored to match resultant expectations of the diversity in Aboriginal culture in Canada. More broadly, community development and capacity building to improve family and community environmental conditions will ultimately improve outcomes for children. Ball (2008) noted that early childhood development centres in First Nations communities were demonstrating the potential to improve child health, safety and development; increase opportunities for education, employment, and support for parents; and served as hubs for a range of community health and social programs to promote social cohesion and cultural continuity.

### *Program Evaluation*

There is a pressing need for well-documented evidence and understanding of emerging and promising programs designed to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal peoples. Bioecological theory with its focus on relationships in the environment proximal to the child may be best suited to understanding the

mechanisms underlying a shared parenting model that is consistent with Aboriginal cultures. General principles to support parenting in Canadian Aboriginal cultures include respect for the diversity of Aboriginal culture and its traditions and values. Using participatory research approaches, these principles can be used to refine, implement, and evaluate interventions to support parenting, and ultimately to improve child developmental outcomes. To be culturally sensitive, these participatory approaches need to integrate traditional ceremonies, talking with elders, spirituality, and traditional information gathering (Quinn 2007). Data should include stories gathered from knowledgeable individuals identified by community members and elders that seek to understand the interconnectedness in the natural world. Analyses should follow repeated exploration and interpretation to seek the meaning of experiences that positively support shared parenting models. A deeper understanding and awareness of the experiences and resources that contribute to successful parenting experiences for Aboriginal peoples will also suggest ways to increase access to and effectiveness of existing resources. This knowledge can provide direction for creating targeted services that are appropriate for Aboriginal parents.

## Conclusion

Interventions to support parents of Canadian Aboriginal heritage need to focus on restoring cultural roles that have been disconnected through colonialism and insensitive social policy. There is a strong desire among Aboriginal peoples to ensure that the next generation of children will be healthy and maintain a secure connection to their Aboriginal heritage. To accomplish this, we need to restore what has been destroyed or removed by the painful history of colonialism and residential schools. Perhaps through broad health promotion efforts of the elders (Varcoe et al. 2010) the threads of parenting and the needs of children can be rewoven into culturally sensitive models of shared parenting. It may be the elders, particularly the grandmothers, who know the unrelenting suffering of their own children and grandchildren. Tired of the despair and resentment associated with generations of trauma, it may be the grandmothers who are best positioned to gently restore shared parenting, in all of its ecological complexity. Shared parenting is an integral piece of the healthy family for Canadian Aboriginal peoples.

## References

Ainsworth, M., Blehar, M., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ball, J. (2004). Indigenous early childhood development programs as 'hook' and 'hub' for inter-sectoral service delivery. *Variegations, 1*, 3–9.

Ball, J. (2008). Promoting equity and dignity for Aboriginal children in Canada. *IRPP Choices, 14*(7), 1–27.

Ball, J., & George, R. (2007). Policies and practices affecting Aboriginal fathers' involvement with their children. In J. P. White, S. Wingert, D. Beavon, & P. Maxim (Eds.), *Aboriginal policy research: Moving forward, making a difference* (Vol. 3, pp. 123–144). Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing.

Ball, J., & Moselle, K. (2007). *Fathers' contributions to children's well-being*. Father Involvement Initiative, Ontario Network. Ontario, Canada: Carleton Place.

Barnett, W. S., & Ackerman, D. J. (2006). Costs, benefits, and long-term effects of early care and education programs: Recommendations and cautions for community developers. *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society, 37*(2), 86–100.

Barnett, W., & Hustedt, J. (2005). Head Start's lasting benefits. *Infants and Young Children, 18*(1), 16–24.

Benzies, K., Tough, S., Edwards, N., Rotstein, K., Johnson, M., Marokus, B., Bowen, G., & Donnelly, C. (2006). *CUPS One World Child Development Centre: A multiple intervention preschool program for children living in extreme poverty*. Calgary: University of Calgary.

Benzies, K., Tough, S., Edwards, N., Nagan, K., Nowicki, B., Mychasiuk, R., & Donnelly, C. (2009). Effects of a two-generation Canadian preschool program on parenting stress, self-esteem, and life skills. *Early Childhood Services, 3*(1), 19–32.

Benzies, K., Edwards, N., Tough, S., Nagan, K., Mychasiuk, R., Keown, L. A., & Donnelly, C. (2011a). Effects of a two-generation preschool programme on receptive language skill in low- income Canadian children. *Early Child Development and Care, 181*(3), 397–412.

Benzies, K., Tough, S., Edwards, N., Mychasiuk, R., & Donnelly, C. (2011b). Aboriginal children and their caregivers living with low income: Outcomes from a two-generation preschool program. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 20*(3), 311–318.

Benzies, K., Mychasiuk, R., Kurilova, J., Tough, S., Edwards, N., & Donnelly, C. (2012). Two-generation preschool programme: Immediate and 7-year-old outcomes for low-income children their parents. *Child and Family Social Work*. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2206.2012.00894.

Bifulco, A., Moran, P. M., Ball, C., Jacobs, C., Baines, R., Bunn, A., & Cavagin, J. (2002). Childhood adversity, parental vulnerability and disorder: Examining inter-generational transmission of risk. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 43*(8), 1075–1086.

Blackstock, C., Trocmé, N., & Bennett, M. (2004). Child maltreatment investigations among Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal families in Canada. *Violence Against Women, 10*(8), 901–916.

Bretherton, I. (1992). The origins of attachment theory: John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth. *Developmental Psychology, 28*(5), 759–775.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). The biological theory of human development. In U. Bronfenbrenner (Ed.), *Making human beings human: Biological perspectives on human development* (pp. 3–15). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Bull, L. (1991). Indian residential schooling: The native perspective. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 18*, 3–63.

Campbell, F. A., Ramey, C. T., Pungello, E., Sparling, J., & Miller-Johnson, S. (2002). Early childhood education: Young adult outcomes from the Abecedarian Project. *Applied Developmental Science, 6*(1), 42–57.

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2004). *Aboriginal peoples health*. Ottawa: Canadian Population Health Initiative.

Cheah, C. S. L., & Chirkov, V. (2008). Parents' personal and cultural beliefs regarding young children: A cross-cultural study of Aboriginal and Euro-Canadian mothers. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 39*(4), 402–423.

dela Cruz, A. M., & McCarthy, P. (2010). Alberta Aboriginal Head Start in urban and northern communities: Longitudinal study pilot phase. *Chronic Diseases in Canada, 30*(2), 40–44.

Eni, R., & Rowe, G. (2011). Understanding parenting in Manitoba First Nations: Implications for program development. *Family & Community Health, 34*(3), 221–228.

Guimond, E., & Robitaille, N. (2008). When teenage girls have children: Trends and consequences, Aboriginal youth and Canada's future. *Horizons, 10*(1), 49–51.

Harkness, S., & Super, C. M. (2002). Culture and parenting. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting* (2nd ed., Vol. 2, pp. 253–280). Mahwah: Erlbaum.

Health Canada. (2001). *Aboriginal Head Start in urban and northern communities: Program and participants, 2000*. Ottawa: Health Canada.

Health Council of Canada. (2011). *Understanding and improving Aboriginal maternal and child health in Canada: Conversations about promising practices across Canada*. Toronto: Health Council of Canada.

Karoly, L. A., Greenwood, P. W., Everingham, S. M. S., Houbé, J., Kilburn, M. R., Rydell, C. P., Sanders, M., & Chiesa, J. (1998). *Investing in our children: What we know and don't know about the costs and benefits of early childhood interventions*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation.

Karoly, L. A., Kilburn, M. R., & Cannon, J. S. (2005). *Early childhood interventions: Proven results, future promise*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation.

Kolb, B., Gibb, R., & Robinson, T. (2003). Brain plasticity and behavior. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 12*(1), 1–5.

Lavergne, C., Dufour, S., Trocmé, N., & Larrrivée, M. (2008). Visible minority, aboriginal and Caucasian children investigated by Canadian Protective Services. *Child Welfare, 87*(2), 59–76.

McCain, M. N., Mustard, F. J., & Shanker, S. (2007). *Early years study 2: Putting science into action*. Toronto: Council for Early Child Development.

Morrissette, P. (1994). The holocaust of first nation people: Residual effects on parenting and treatment implications. *Contemporary Family Therapy, 16*(5), 381–392.

Murray, F. B. (1991). Questions a satisfying developmental theory would answer: The scope of a complete explanation of development phenomena. In P. Van Geert & L. P. Mos (Eds.), *Annals of theoretical psychology* (Vol. 7, pp. 237–247). New York: Plenum Press.

Neckoway, R., Brownlee, K., & Castellan, B. (2007). Is attachment theory consistent with Aboriginal parenting realities? *First Peoples Child & Family Review, 3*(2), 65–74.

Pleck, J. H. (2007). Why could father involvement benefit children? Theoretical perspectives. *Applied Developmental Science, 11*(4), 196–202.

Quinn, A. (2007). Reflections on intergenerational trauma: Healing as a critical intervention. *First Peoples Child & Family Review, 3*(4), 72–82.

Randall, P. E. (2001). Investing in our children: What we know and don't know about the costs and benefits of early childhood interventions. *Social Work and Social Sciences Review, 9*(1), 68.

Reading, C. L., & Wien, F. (2009). *Health inequalities and the social determinants of Aboriginal peoples' health*. Prince George: National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health.

Reynolds, A. J., & Temple, J. A. (2006). Impacts of the Chicago child–parent centers on child and family development. In N. F. Watt, C. Ayoub, R. H. Bradley, J. E. Puma, & W. A. LeBoeuf (Eds.), *The crisis in youth mental health: Critical issues and effective programs, Vol. 4: Early intervention programs and policies* (pp. 229–249). Westport: Praeger Publishers.

Ring, I., & Brown, N. (2003). The health status of indigenous peoples and others. *British Medical Journal, 327*, 404–405.

Serbin, L. A., & Karp, J. (2004). The intergenerational transfer of psychosocial risk: Mediators of vulnerability and resilience. *Annual Review of Psychology, 55*(1), 333–361.

Sheppard, A. J., & Hetherington, R. (2012). A decade of research in Inuit children, youth, and maternal health in Canada: Areas of concentrations and scarcities. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health, 71*, 1–13.

Shonkoff, J. P. (2011). The lifelong effects of early childhood adversity and toxic stress. *Pediatrics, 129*(1), e232–e246.

Smith, D., Varcoe, C., & Edwards, N. (2005). Turning around the intergenerational impact of residential schools on Aboriginal people: Implications for health policy and practice. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research, 37*(4), 38–60.

Smith, D., Edwards, N., Varcoe, C., Martens, P. J., & Davies, B. (2006). Bringing safety and responsiveness into the forefront of care for pregnant and parenting Aboriginal people. *Advances in Nursing Science, 29*(2), E27–E44.

St. Pierre, R. G., & Layzer, J. I. (1999). Using home visits for multiple purposes: The Comprehensive Child Development Program. *The Future of Children, 9*(1), 134–151.

Statistics Canada. (2003). *Aboriginal peoples survey 2001 – initial findings: Well-being of the non-reserve aboriginal population*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Housing, Family and Social Sciences Division.

Statistics Canada. (2004). *A portrait of Aboriginal children living in non-reserve areas: Results from the 2001 Aboriginal peoples survey*. Ottawa: Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division.

Statistics Canada. (2008). *Aboriginal peoples in Canada 2006: Inuit, Metis and First Nations, 2006 census*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

Trute, B., & Hiebert-Murphy, D. (2007). The implications of "Working Alliance" for the measurement and evaluation of family-centered practice in childhood disability services. *Infants and Young Children, 20*(2), 109–119.

Van Herk, K., Smith, D., & Tedford Gold, S. (2012). Safe care spaces and places: Exploring urban aboriginal families' access to preventive care. *Health & Place, 18*(3), 649–656.

Varcoe, C., Bottorff, J., Carey, J., Sullivan, D., & Williams, W. (2010). Wisdom and influence of elders: Possibilities for health promotion and decreasing tobacco exposure in First Nations communities. *Canadian Journal of Public Health, 101*(2), 154–158.

Weikart, D. P., & Schweinhart, L. J. (1992). High/Scope preschool program outcomes. In J. McCord & R. E. Tremblay (Eds.), *Preventing antisocial behavior* (pp. 67–86). New York: The Guildford Press.

Young, M. E., & Richardson, L. M. (2007). *Early child development: From measurement to action – A priority for growth and equity*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

# Global Grandparents: New Roles and Relationships

**Barbara H. Settles**

## Introduction

Today grandparents are more likely than in past history to be available over longer periods to their grandchildren. "Despite popular belief to the contrary the widespread experience of grandparenthood is a recent phenomenon" (Hoff 2007, 643). Life expectancy has gone up rapidly since the middle of the twentieth century. In most regions of the world life expectancy is over 70 years and only in Africa is it less than 60 (World Population Prospects 2006). "Quite a few live to see their great-grand children growing up" (Hoff 2007, 644). Many children have significant interaction and longer term relationships with many more elders including grandparents, great-grandparents and these elders' siblings and their spouses, their great aunts and uncles.

When we look at grandparenting today we need to be aware that the three or four generations that are being examined may differ as to what cohorts are being included in different families (McDaniel 2009). Some countries have relatively homogeneous generational periods, but in most large societies there is considerable variance in how generations are patterned. Cohort, in contrast to generation, directs attention to socio-political events as they intersect for people who share the same birth date. McDaniel (2009) makes a case for using cohort and generation clearly and not conflating them in our discussions of intergenerational family relationships. For grandparents then we must see the wide variation into which cohorts they belong in terms of age and experiences.

B.H. Settles (✉)
Human Development and Family Studies, University of Delaware, Newark, DE, USA
e-mail: settlesb@udel.edu

## Impact of Demography

The demography of age and generations has been dramatically altered giving more opportunities for the aged to be involved with their grandchildren and their families (Spence et al. 2001). Bengtson (2001) suggests that, "For many Americans, multi-generational bonds are becoming more important than nuclear family ties for wellbeing and support over the course of their lives" (5). Decreasing morbidity and mortality across the life course creates a large reservoir of both middle aged and elder grandparents and great grandparents (World Population Prospects 2006). Families have shifted to fewer children and smaller completed family size. These two demographic trends are relatively recent and dramatic. The demographic transitions to smaller family size and longer life spans have meant that many more grandparents' attention is focused on fewer children. The situation is accentuated by the 'age-condensed family' phenomenon of childbearing occurring among teenage females and the delay in birth among older females (Hooyman and Kiyak 1996, 523). Where family size has continued to remain larger, the association of poverty, ill health and maternal mortality has made elders even more important to children as a potential resource.

## Proximity, Co-residence and Caregiving

Being a grandparent is dependent on the actions of one's own children. Being involved with one's grandchildren is shaped by one's adult children's actions. The relationships with both one's own offspring and his or her partner are critical to access to grandchildren. This wide variation results in the occurrence of different grandparenting careers and trajectories with early and late grandparenthood (Spence et al. 2001). The wide variation of age and cohort structures means that some grandparents may be quite young and physically strong and involved in their own work and other children. Later marriage and childbearing make other grandparents quite a lot older, likely to be retired, and often more frail, when grandparenting begins. Grandparent involvement is positively associated with satisfaction and wellbeing, especially with younger grandchildren (Barnett et al. 2010). Positive relationships between parents and grandparents encourage interaction with grandchildren.

Co-residence has in many cultures been a support to grandparents, adult children and grandchildren interaction (Nauck and Suckow 2006). Maternal grandparents, especially grandmothers, often provide a refuge for young unmarried mothers (Monserud and Elder 2011). Paternal grandparents are often the preference in cultures that emphasize patriarchy, and in some cultures it has been almost a mandate for the oldest son and his wife to be co-resident. Co-residence meets the needs of younger families and supports direct and indirect transfers.

Co-residence is often a stage or a phase in family trajectories. Frail elders may be taken in when they need more extensive care. Adult children may return home

when they are unemployed or when there is a greater need for child care. Traditional co-residence is disappearing in many places due to changing economic options and preferences. Ruggles (2007) notes that rising opportunities help youth and young adults to have independent households. However, even in the United States economic downturns can result in more young adults living in their parents' homes (Parker 2012).

In many places the close location of relatives to each other makes social and economic exchange relatively easy. Grandchildren may go to their grandparents' homes after school or parents may drop off young children before going to work. Being able to drop by informally makes it relatively easy for grandparents to be involved. Caregiving varies across the children's development and needs. "Grandparents, in particular, are recognized as being the 'first line of defense' when families are troubled, disrupted or in need, often contributing time, caregiving, and financial resources as necessary" (Mutchler and Baker 2009, 1576). Stepping in to provide the central child rearing itself may require a negotiation. Some of these households represent "skipped generations" with no parents in the household and often include school age children. Others have shared care including parent(s) in the household, but with grandparents taking major responsibility. About half of the grandparent care households include both grandparents.

Within the US, the specific experiences of sub–groups differ. Goodman (2007) examined African American, Latino, and White grandmother-headed households and found some differences in family dynamics. In African American families the parents and grandparents were equally connected. In Latino families more were in parent linked families and the more of the white grandmothers were in isolated or disconnected families. Lumpkin (2008) found that American grandparents coped with stress by problem solving and taking action. In a study of American Indian grandparents, Cross et al. (2010) found that their respondents were reacting in terms of their groups' previous traumatic experiences with Indian boarding schools and foster care. They felt strong responsibility for their grandchildren and were sole caregivers even when resources were scarce.

In Asia, grandparents are more likely to live with extended families than by themselves or with only their spouse (Kamo and Zhou 1994). In China, three-generation households still persist and approximately 25 % of Chinese live in such households (Guo et al. 2008). In the 65+ age group 60 % of males and 70 % of females are in three-generation households. In East Asia co-residence is about 70 % while in Europe the number of families is 26 %; in North America it is 19 % (Yasuda et al. 2011). Behavioral and attitudinal changes combined with steep declines in fertility to create this situation. From 1970 to 2007 fertility rates dropped from 5.7 to 1.7 in China; 2.1 to 1.3 in Japan; 4.3 to 1.2 in South Korea, and 4.0 to 1.1 in Taiwan. Co-residence was most likely in Taiwan and least likely in South Korea. Attitudes do not track with action as many believe that co-residence is good, but do not necessarily do it. In Japan those with low income and young children were more likely to have a three generation household. In South Korea, a widowed grandparent or fulltime employed mother were most likely to share their residence. The concept of "quasi-co-residence", living close together and having close relationships, seems

to be feasible (Yasuda et al. 2011). In Taiwan, co-residence is often done in order to receive help for child care (Yi and Lin 2009). The authors suggest that while there is steadily declining co-residence in Taiwan, elders like to be neighbors and therefore can give childcare and receive help easily. Sons often provide financial support; daughter-mother closeness is more frequently seen. Some aboriginal families in Taiwan, whose experiences were studied qualitatively by Chang and Hayter (2011), find themselves raising grandchildren because of their parents' problems like divorce or their employment elsewhere.

In Shanghai and Tianjin, Chinese grandparents often live with a married child (43 % of those over 60) and many live in close proximity to their children and grandchildren (Goh 2006). Some grandparents have migrated in order to be available to give care. Mostly the households include the paternal grandparents, but better educated couples may live with the wife's parents if they have a choice. "Social and economic change in China has changed the terms of intergenerational relations in rural areas where out migration of young adults has altered the way older and younger adults rely on each other (Cong and Silverstein 2008, 21). In contrast to urban China, grandparents and grandchildren are likely to remain in rural communities. Parents are not able to obtain the documents needed for children to attend schools or access health care in the industrial areas. Pensions are rare in rural areas and elders need support. Maternal grandparents are more likely to get financial aid from their working daughters and those who receive financial support are less likely to be depressed. About one-half provided care for at least one set of grandchildren and one-quarter for two or more offspring's children. Grandparents claimed emotional closeness to their adult children, but also found co-parenting could cause conflicts. Some parents are concerned as to whether grandparent care is sufficiently educational for younger children (Nyland et al. 2009).

In a qualitative study in Japan and Singapore, grandparents were also helping the mother stay in the workforce (Thang et al. 2011). While the families studied were relatively well off and in Singapore usually had some domestic help, there was a real interest in grandparents as caregivers. Sometimes there were conflicts with the household help and parents did not trust them for child care. There was also an expectation that grandparents had their own lives. Grandparents attend events, help with illnesses, and are available for emergencies. In Japan postretirement is spoken of as second lives. In Singapore grandparents sought to balance child care with social and leisure lives. Grandparents speak of needing to be open minded and respecting boundaries. A norm of non-interference with parents' preferences in discipline and values was widely expressed. Transmitting values, sharing experiences, learning together especially in term of technology and communication, and continuing the line was the core of grandparents' involvement.

In Europe, contrasts among countries in terms of social and family change tend to suggest that northern nations have been able to provide more support for such services as child care with the Mediterranean nations having fewer developed supports. However, Portugal has had many women in full time employment despite fewer services (Lewis et al. 2008). While Portuguese women want more formal child care, grandparents are filling the gap in the meantime. In contrast, Sweden has

had somewhat higher fertility rates and some mothers opting for part time work and fewer single earner families.

In Greece, 38 % of grandparents provide child care and many middle class grandmothers help the parent generation financially when they are employed (Svensson-Dianellou et al. 2010). In this interview study, grandparents ranged from 33 to 85 years of age. Mothers prefer grandparent care and distrust public child care facilities. Long work hours and low pay of mothers who work often mean that grandparents fill the gap for parents in child care for school children, doing a lot of picking up and dropping off. Grandparents primarily reported their own enjoyment in caring for their grandchildren and were concerned about avoiding interference and providing emotional support.

In Great Britain, research has revealed the ambivalence grandparents feel in negotiating their relationships with their grandchildren and their own children. That the norms of grandparenting prefer "not interfering", but always "being there" is broadly accepted (Mason et al. 2007). They note that these are often the exact words grandparents use. The parenting norms that one's' children should become independent and self-determined, means that the power in the relationships is usually vested in the parents not the grandparents. One comment that summarized many other stories was that, "being a grandparent is a privilege" (Mason et al., 898).

Relationships with grandchildren can last more than 20 years and for younger grandparents may survive into the adult years. The later adolescence and young adult years are quite busy times and the amount of interaction when grandchildren no longer need care may not lead to intensive relationships. As they become employed, leave home, develop partner relationships, marry and have children, contact becomes more sporadic (Geurts et al. 2009). In the Netherlands, the authors found that grandchildren were important actors in continuing relationships and contact.

Jenkins (n.d.) noted how essential grandparents were to childcare in Australia as nearly one-fifth of children under 12 years were being cared for this way in 2008 and most grandparents were unpaid for this care. The availability of grandparents for non-standard hours and unusual situations was also important. Grandparents see nurturing and active engagement with their grandchildren as leading to "strong and potentially enduring bonds" (9). They also expressed feeling of stress and limited choices. In Australia, the Martu Aborigines have rather open caregiving practices that involve many family and community members (Scelza 2009). In a qualitative study, a fine grained analysis of specific care found grandmothers not far behind mothers in the amount of care given.

The spread of HIV/AIDS infections has especially affected the sub-Saharan African countries. There has been a great hollowing out of young and middle aged adults due to early death (Nyasani et al. 2009). Grandparents and grandchildren have often been left only with each other. Over 1.4 million are orphaned in South Africa with 15 million estimated worldwide. In South Africa between 40 and 50 % of orphans are living with grandparents. The government has been paying a small stipend for meeting the basic needs of children. In rural areas this is often the only reliable income. The government recognizes the needs of grandparents for social

support, health access, information on child discipline, and education. "Orphan care is not a 'once-off' activity" (Nyasani et al. 2009, 183). In a qualitative study in Kenya, Odour found "that farm yields had dropped and on average her respondents walked 3 h to attend and return from the nearest health center. School fees and related costs had gone up. Most were worried about what would happen to their grandchildren if they themselves were sick or died. Almost all of the caregivers were female and in many (about 1/3) of the households the children were caring for the elder" (Settles et al., 2009, p. 839). Geissler and Prince (2004) describe the traditional pattern of grandchildren's being cared for by their grandmothers, sharing closeness, joking, and enjoying amity with their grandchildren. They suggest that these grandmothers have considerable scope in their commitments and grandchildren speak of their grandmothers' generosity and flexibility in these relationships. In the East Cameroon, Notermans (2004) describes a complex situation in which women decide when to undertake providing a household for their grandchildren and others that they foster in building connections for the matrilineal side among a patriarchal polygamous marriage and informal couples practice. Sharing home, food and bed become the foundation of solidarity, warmth and intimacy in the relationships, and their own and their grandchildren's sense of being the "real" mother.

## Globalization, Mobility and Economic Opportunities

Economic delocalization and globalization in the later part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century has affected nuclear and extended families. Young adults have had to become more mobile. Capital and means of production have become even more portable, with few national barriers. Labor has had many more regulations, especially in terms of mobility (Legrain 2008). National borders have been strengthened in terms of immigration policies and enforcement and often only the worker is admitted or the narrowly defined nuclear family is allowed to immigrate. The extended family may be allowed to follow if their adult children can show economic resources to sponsor them in the new country (Settles 2012). Clearly the choice of legal definitions of family and limitations on freedom of movement affect the grand-generations.

Remittances from this labor force provide much of the income in poorer countries and are essential to the connections and upkeep of children and grandparents left behind. They represent the second largest source of external funding for developing countries (Lopez-Ekra et al. 2011). Women send almost half of the remittances; they also send money more regularly and for longer periods. Senyurekli and Detzner (2008) suggest that the support and resources being shared with relatives are fundamental to transnationalism. Grandparents often shoulder the full responsibility for day-to-day care or else must be in constant communication with their distant adult children as decisions are made. Families are often split for much longer than planned. In some Central American families, separation often extends over 4 years (Suarez-Orozco et al. 2010).

## Bridging the Gaps: Keeping Up with Mobility and Distance

People work hard at overcoming distance and separation. Grandparents with the resources to travel or to bring their grandchildren and their families together may be able to maintain close relationships in spite of distance (Freidman et al. 2008). Between countries the myriad of passport, visa requirements, invitations, time limits, health requirements and lead time to get these clearances can make it problematic, and trips to deal with crises are nearly impossible. Going home may also make returning to work chancy. The history of families is filled with letters home and business afar, and early technologies such as the telegraph, the telephone and the short wave radio linked families in the last two centuries (Yzer and Southwell 2008). Boase and Wellman (2004) see neither utopian nor dystopian views as helpful to view contact through the Internet, but rather see an extension of ordinary patterns and contact within the internet environment. The rapidity of new technology changes has challenged the hierarchies of the generations in meeting the need both to learn technology and to use it well. There are digital divides not only in terms of access to technology, but also in the online skills and use of the opportunities (Jung et al. 2005). Grandchildren are often good tutors to older family members on the quickly changing technologies and media fads. In a qualitative study in England, the grandparent/young grandchild dyads used collaborative talking to share thinking as they worked together with a computer (Kenner et al. 2008). It was not just conversation, but also grandparents' touch, smiles, and gaze that encouraged children in their exploration. Guided participation created synergy and mutuality leading to new linguistic and cultural competency. Aarsand (2007) notes the high investments in computers in Europe and the United States. In research in U.S., Italy, and Sweden, it was suggested that the digital divide "may be drawn upon as social resources in social interaction" (Aarsand 2007, 237). Doing something together the child's technical advantage is played off with the elder's larger view and knowledge so they may be helping each other.

In a study of Chinese international students in a large U.S. university, Kline and Liu (2005) found that they were using both phone (95 %) and email (60 %) quite frequently along with letters, web, video, and instant messages. While most of the contact was with parents and siblings, 20 % had contact with extended family/close friends and 10.1 % communicated with grandparents. Phone cards have been especially useful for those with limited funds (Cavanaugh and Settles 2009). Email was shown to have transformative effects within transnational families by encouraging a variety of kin to initiate contact (Wilding 2006). Email and text messaging can also be used at one's leisure, allowing both parties to tailor communication to their own day and time. As more grandchildren have cell phones and are on the Internet, the association for relationship strengthening without parental mediation may be stronger in upcoming generations through mobile technology (Holladay and Seipke 2007). Parents and grandparents can also join in to supervise from afar or check on health and safety issues (Jung et al. 2005). More studies on adolescent use of mobile phones and computers are becoming available. Some cultures are early adopters and

youth are well integrated into larger networks and small groups of friends. They noted the high rate of access in Seoul (70 %), Singapore (62 %) and Taipei (62 %) and that the ease of use and richness of use of Internet ties was positively influenced by parents', especially mothers', own use and educational achievement and the ease of getting help. Using the Internet for scheduling and keeping up with near contacts as well as distant ones is common (Boase and Wellman 2006). Grandparents can be more proactive if they are skilled in communication technologies.

## Legal Barriers and Supports

Grandparents do not automatically have access to their grandchildren. This process is mediated by the child's parents and may be adversely affected by such changes as divorce, mobility, and estrangement from the adult children. Drug, alcohol, and mental and physical health problems are widespread and grandparents may be called upon to rescue grandchildren and care for their adult children (Hayslip and Kaminski 2005). Changing family structures such as divorce and remarriage or impairment or death of a parent(s) may expand or contract opportunities for elder involvement. Extra step-grandparents and other extended kin may increase the competition for grandchildren's attention.

Doron and Linchitz (n.d.) describe how in Israel there have been slowly evolving changes to allow grandparents to have some standing in court to ask for access and visitation when couples separate or divorce. Following the Yom Kippur War some paternal grandparents found their son's widows unwilling to have them visit with their grandchildren and a narrowly framed law was passed to give these grandparents some potential access. Slowly grandchildren's rights and wishes became more recognized; close friends were able to come to court on behalf of the children. In 2006 a "parent of the parent" law allowed legal standing for a grandparent to request access through the courts.

In Ireland paternal grandparents especially have been marginalized when marital or couple breakups lead to custody findings. Doyle, O'Dwyer, and Timonen suggest that the legal situation is unclear, that the right to apply for access does not lead to automatic findings for access (2010, 589). Custody restrictions cut down on spontaneity and often even when events are set up in advance last minute cancelations lead to an erosion of trust. Even close proximity to the child's home does not expand the options for informal visits.

In Spain, Fuentes et al. (2008) note the stability of grandparent care. This averages for more than 12 years and often begins in the toddler years. Grandparents are considered as a first option in placing children for foster care.

Recently kin care has been promoted and many grandparents are serving as foster parents. In the United States, there has been a dramatic increase of grandparents being primary caregivers for their grandchildren. This is especially true with African-Americans (Mills et al. 2005; Neely-Barnes et al. 2010). In the U.S., each state has its own legal structure so the preference for kin care may be

more evident in some states than others. Goodman and Hao, reporting on changes that occurred in New Mexico after their law was changed in 1990 to require kin and especially grandparents to be considered first for placement of vulnerable children, note that their social services are "outpacing the nation as a whole" with the number of children placed with their grandparents increasing 45 % (2007, 1117). African-Americans in New Mexico were more likely to have children in kinship care. Hispanics tended toward co-parenting. Most (70 %) grandchildren greatly appreciated and recognized their grandparents as caring for them and sharing deep emotional closeness and many saw returning to parents as fraught with fear, instability, and confusion. Some also worried about their grandparents dying.

Mills et al. (2005) were concerned that the change in U.S. welfare policy resulting in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (T.A.N.F) had work requirements which were not feasible for many older people. While grandparents tend to be younger and over half were caring for preschoolers, they were also more likely to be poorer financially (68 %), have poor health themselves, and have experienced psychological stress. Of these disadvantaged, the African Americans were most likely to be poor and take some assistance. Strong relationships with both the grandchild(ren) and parents were reported overall. Henderson and Cook (2006) in studying poor African American grandmothers, who were caring for their grandchildren, found that some grandmothers felt the large disparity between their T.A.N.F support and what foster parents received to be unfair. Smith and Hancock (2010) examined dyads of custodial grandparents in skipped generation households for effects on the grandparents' marriages. Among the issues they found were decreased privacy, less sexual activity, increased tension and some jealousy over the time involved in raising grandchildren. They saw some implications for training, therapy and parental skill developments.

New Zealand pioneered prioritizing grandparent placement in their 1989 law. This law also addressed the problem of the Maori minority having had many placements of children outside their communities who were overrepresented in the foster child population (Worrall 2006). In this situation grandparents may not have decision making authority. Under the new law, Family Group Conferences were an innovative development in decision making which included extended families in the process. About one third of the families had an informal agreement; one fifth had a family agreement, one fifth had no legal status and the rest had used the Family Group Conference. One of the difficulties for a third of the grandparents was the legal challenges and costs they faced. Some felt that they were being forced to take custody. The question of transferring custody is fraught with emotion and conflicts as grandparents hope the parents may be able to resume care for their children. The claim to enjoying grandchildren as the premise of the relationship allows a certain choice over what activities are fun and therefore enjoyable, but taking full responsibility modifies the relationships and increases the responsibility of grandparents and grandchildren. It may be out of "sync" with where the grandparents own needs are (Neely-Barnes et al. 2010). They note that multiple problems of both the grandparent(s) in terms of health, stress, low income and loss of social support and

the child(ren) in terms of health, emotional or behavioral problems are typical. However, the positive effects of engaging grandchildren can be important. Decreased privacy and increased stress are common.

The emergence first of partnerships and then of marriage as an expectation for same sex couples has boomed in western countries (Settles 2006). Not only are same sex couples making long term commitments, but a significant number of them include children as part of their family life. At first it seemed that children from previous relationships were becoming step children in the new households. Then, fostering and adoption held out some hopes for including children. Some same sex couples are using assisted reproductive techniques to have a child (Johnson and Collucci 2005). Having grandchildren is sometimes a path to easier relationships. Parents may have assumed that same sex relationships would deprive them of a next generation. When grandparents themselves have come out about their own sexual orientation, the child's parents may not be so open to that situation either. Some research indicators which suggest that child rearing is not much affected by same sex parenting (Stacey and Biblarz 2001), or maybe even more positive for lesbian couples (Biblarz and Stacey 2010), so we may anticipate that grandparenting in these families may also prove to be rather ordinary.

## Intergenerational Transfers

A vast literature on intergenerational transfers has attempted to explain why and when grandparents and their adult children help each other and give each other significant gifts or inheritance. The fact that these exchanges could be monetized or reflected in time use patterns made them especially interesting to quantitative methodologists and economic and biological theorists (Freidman et al. 2008). Overall the studies note the largest transfers go from the older to the younger generations (Freidman et al. 2008; Hank and Buber 2009; Nauck and Suckow 2006). There is a sense of mutual support, but clearly the majority of older people are supportive to the younger generation. There is also a shift from transfers to the parents to the grandchildren over time (Hoff 2007).

Providing extra financial support and enriched socialization experiences are options that many grandparents are using. In Europe and Asia living in close proximity is quite possible, so exchange is relatively easy (Swartz et al. 2006). The flow of generational transfers has begun to include grandchildren and great grandchildren. The transfer to grandchildren may be more vivid and dramatic than those to adult children (Freidman et al. 2008). Congeniality with the adult child is also crucial to such exchanges. The value of education and sponsorship in adolescence and young adult life has attracted a growing number of grand and great grandparents to providing assistance for educational and enrichment activities. The leverage is often greater than an inheritance later in life. To the extent that grandparents have their own aging needs already met they may enjoy seeing the results of their generosity now.

## Memory

Elders, as the preservationists of family and cultural history and as builders of children's memories, seem to have a key role. Being interested in how children and young adults see their worlds and having time to entertain their views can be rewarding to grandparents as well as their grandchildren. There are many intergenerational exchanges that cement relationships that are not captured well in the exchange literature. Shared experiences and memories are the ties that underlie many other exchanges. Talk about events is a key to children's memory of them and talking about memories makes them more accessible (Peterson et al. 2008). In a Canadian qualitative study of grandparents/grandchild dyads, Hebblewaite and Norris (2011) found that leaving a legacy was enhanced because their grandchildren were open to receiving it. They used leisure experiences to cultivate strong family ties through shared family history. Grandfathers from the American midwest also expressed a similar interest in value transfer, mentoring and close interpersonal relationships (Waldrop et al. 1999). A study of families in Tonga and immigrants from Tonga to Hawaii suggested that the role of grandparents continued in the new location with the goal of education being added to the unconditional love, support and cultural knowledge they had traditionally stressed (Ofahengaue Vakalahi 2010). The new literature on brain growth and development and developing literacy has emphasized the importance of interaction and discussion around shared experiences and meaning. Research has focused on mother's involvement in helping young children grasp the concepts in narrative construction and reminiscing (Fivush et al. 2006). This research might well be extended to include other family and social network members. Elder generations can provide much of the families' stories and beliefs. In older children's development the ability to construct coherent life narratives may contribute to self-worth and self-efficacy (Bohanek et al. 2008, 40). In their study, style of parental narratives and communication in helping children discuss the past had different impacts on children's self concept, collaborative, and coordinated perspectives. Reminiscing with higher elaborative style seems to facilitate children's involvement and contribute to children's coping skills and adjustment (Bohanek et al. 2008). Also, adolescents who have heard narratives that include the generations and know more family history also show better adjustment and higher self-esteem (Fivush 2008).

Telling stories, reading books, creating new stories and linking experiences are all common activities that have proven important in helping children become better learners and more creative. Most of the research has focused on the mother-child dyad, but grandparents, especially those who spend a lot of time with their grandchildren, have many options to build memories and the skills of remembrance (Cavanaugh and Settles 2009). In an intervention with elementary school children, Weber and Abscher (2003) incorporated grandparents into an activity of creating a memory box and found great pleasure for both generations. Where there are elders it is often possible to recount many decades of events, history and family lore which puts a face on time concepts and gives children connections to the past and their own memories.

Hebblewaite and Norris suggest that Erickson's concept of generativity should be seen more broadly, "Generativity is a dynamic process constructed out of interaction between generations that evolves across the lifespan" (2011, 130). Grandparents have been reported to have a protective quality for grandchildren. The correlation between grandparents' availability and young children's survival has been widely discussed especially in subsistence societies (Sear and Mace 2008; Tanskanen et al. 2011). Maternal grandparents and especially grandmothers are more often reported as important. When Strassmann and Garrard (2011) revisited the Sear and Mace meta-review of studies of patrilineal, high fertility/high child mortality groups, they found that their new methodology as well as the earlier approach emphasized that the maternal grandparents, especially the grandmother, was positive. Most of these studies do not have any window on how these relationships protect or whether the same variables lead to both child and elder survival.

## Conclusion

Families are really much more complex than usually acknowledged and the new generations of grandparents are being challenged by changing social arrangements and legal structures. Divorce, cohabitation, and remarriage became more common and acceptable in the twentieth century for both parents and grandparents. Divorced fathers were often marginalized and accepted to the extent they paid support. As grandfathers, their relationships with their children as adults are often fragile and their contact with grandchildren may be even less certain. Remarriage in either generation can be problematic in terms of access to grandchildren and making substantial relationships. Cohabitation either as a long-term relationship or as a short term strategy adds to the complexity. While we do research on children of single parents or stepchildren it is not often recognized that for any child several of these types of families may exist over his or her life course and that these changes also happen in adulthood and matter for the relationships among kin and contacts with grandparents.

Grandparents need to be active in developing and retaining their relationships with grandchildren. Even the grandparent who has resources has to negotiate what help is acceptable. There is considerable awareness that social and economic change have modified traditions everywhere. Many of the grandparents of today were part of the movements toward gender, ethnic, and racial equality. They have fought for change and innovations. In wealthier nations there was a concept that one could retire and have an active life. For both those younger grandparents still in the labor market and retired grandparents, the role of grandparent was thought to be that of sharing leisure and events. Being a grandparent was seen to be fun and somewhat optional. Caregiving was as a backup to nursery schools or when a child or parent was ill. There is research that suggests there may be some sense of commonality that leads to meaningful communication and relationships not based not on caregiving, but on mutuality.

The literature on grandparenting draws from many disciplines and service professions including such areas as family studies, family therapy, gerontology, intergenerational relationships, nursing, public health, education, communication, psychology, and economics. The research has been more often at the qualitative level to examine specific cultures and roles or at the demographic or population level. The issues of child care and socioeconomic exchange and transfers have been examined in some depth. Comparable data on a large number of countries is emerging from Nauck's and Trommsdorff's Value of Children studies with information on three generations. There have been some efforts to link fields. Hanks and Ponsetti (2004) explored the literature and links in family and intergenerational relationships and suggest that while each is a separate field, the reciprocal nature of relationships across the life course and between generations is a natural foundation for collaboration. Several qualitative studies in communication and memory studies suggest a greater emphasis on looking at the qualities and content of grandparenting interaction with both grandchildren and adult children would be rewarding. Some of the techniques used to track maternal input in early child development could easily be applied to both fathers and grandparents. While it is true that grandmothers have an edge on longevity and traditional caregiving expectations, the dearth of attention to grandfathers leaves a rich area for new research and theory. Expanding the socioeconomic exchange perspective to include affective, emotional and interactive processes would provide more refined understanding of how family processes really work in terms of grandparents and their grandchildren. The grandparent-grandchild interaction has become more important to contemporary family life and would appear to be a nexus for new research and theory building in many areas of study.

## References

Aarsand, P. A. (2007). Computer and video games in family life: The digital divide as a resource in intergenerational relations. *Childhood, 14*, 235–256. doi:10.1177/0907568207078330.

Barnett, M. A., Scarmella, L. V., Neppl, T. K., Ontail, L., & Conger, R. D. (2010). Intergenerational relationship quality, gender, and grandparent involvement. *Family Relations, 59*(1), 28–44.

Bengtson, V. L. (2001). Beyond the nuclear family: The increasing importance of multigenerational bonds. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 63*(1), 1–16.

Biblarz, T. J., & Stacey, J. (2010). How does the gender of parents matter? *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 72*(1), 3–22. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00678.x.

Boase, J., & Wellman, B. (2004, December 20). Personal relationships: On and off the internet. Forthcoming in D. Perlman & A. L. Vangelelisti (2006, eds.) *Handbook of personal relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~wellman/publications/personal_relations/

Boase, J., & Wellman, B. (2006). Personal relationships: On and off the internet. In D. Perlman & A. L. Vangelelisti (Eds.), *Handbook of personal relations* (pp. 709–723). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bohanek, J. G., Marin, K. A., & Fivush, R. (2008). Family narratives, self and gender in early adolescence. *The Journal of Early Adolescence, 28*(1), 153–176. doi:10.1177/0273431607308673.

Cavanaugh, A., & Settles, B. H. (2009, June). *Replacing the porch with a screen: Developing a family identity and understanding of the past*. Oslo: Committee for Family Research, International Sociological Association.

Chang, Y., & Hayter, M. (2011). Surrogate mothers: Aboriginal grandmothers raising grandchildren in Taiwan. *Journal of Family Nursing, 17*(2), 202–223.

Cong, Z., & Silverstein, M. (2008). Intergenerational time-for-money exchanged in rural China: Does reciprocity reduce depressive symptoms of older grandparents? *Research in Human Development, 5*(1), 6–25. doi:10.1080/15427600701853749.

Cross, S. L., Day, A. G., & Byers, L. G. (2010). American Indian grandfamilies: A qualitative study conducted with grandmothers and grandfathers who provide sole care for their grandchildren. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology, 25*, 371–383. doi:10.1007/s10823-010-9127-5.

Doron, I., & Linchitz, G. (n.d.). *The legal standing of grandparents to visitation rights with their grandchildren: The Israeli story* (pp. 1–13). http://www.uws.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/156337/Doran_Linchitz.pdf

Doyle, M., O'Dwyer, C., & Timonen, V. (2010). "How can you just cut off a whole side of the family and say move on?" The reshaping of paternal grandparent-grandchild relationships following divorce or separation in the middle generation. *Family Relations, 59*(4), 587–598. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2010.00625.x.

Fivush, R. (2008). Remembering and reminiscing: How individual lives are constructed in family memories. *Memory Studies, 1*(1), 48–58. doi:1177/1750698007083888.

Fivush, R., Haden, C., & Reese, E. (2006). Elaborating on elaborations: Role of maternal reminiscing style in cognitive and socioemotional development. *Child Development, 77*(6), 1568–1588. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2006.00960.x.

Freidman, D., Hechter, M., & Kreager, D. (2008). A theory of the value of grandchildren. *Rationality and Society, 20*(1), 31–63. doi:10.1171/1043463107085436.

Fuentes, M. J., Bernedo, I. M., & Fernandez-Molina, M. (2008). Adolescents in foster care with their grandparents. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 5*(4), 41–58. doi:10.1300/J194v05n04_04.

Geissler, P. W., & Prince, R. J. (2004). Shared lives: Exploring practices of amity between grandmothers and grandchildren in western Kenya. *Africa, 74*(1), 95–120. doi:10.3366/afr.2004.74.1.95.

Geurts, T., Poortman, A., van Tilburg, T., & Dykstra, P. A. (2009). Contact between grandchildren and their grandparents in early adulthood. *Journal of Family Issues, 30*(12), 1698–1713. doi:10.1177/0192513X09336340.

Goh, E. C. L. (2006). Raising the precious single child in urban China: An intergenerational joint mission between parents and grandparents. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 4*(3), 6–28. doi:10.1300/J194v04n03_02.

Goodman, C. C. (2007). Family dynamics in three-generation grandfamilies. *Journal of Family Issues, 28*(1), 355–378. doi:10.1177/0192513X06296672.

Goodman, M. R., & Hao, S. P. (2007). Grandparents raising grandchildren in a US-Mexico border community. *Qualitative Health Research, 17*(8), 1117–1136. doi:10.1177/1049732307308457.

Guo, B., Pickard, J., & Huang, J. (2008). A cultural perspective on health outcomes of caregiving grandparents. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 5*(4), 25–40. doi:10.1300/J194v05n04_03.

Hank, K., & Buber, I. (2009). Grandparents caring for their grandchildren: Findings from the 2004 survey of health, ageing, and retirement in Europe. *Journal of Family Issues, 30*(1), 53–73. doi:10.1117/0192513X08322627.

Hanks, R. S., & Ponsetti, J. J. (2004). Family studies and intergenerational studies: Intersections and opportunities. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 2*(3–4), 5–27. doi:10.1300/J194v02n03_02.

Hayslip, B., & Kaminski, P. L. (2005). Grandparents raising their children. In R. K. Caputo (Ed.), *Challenges of aging on US families: Policy and practice implications* (pp. 147–169). New York: Haworth Press. doi:10.1300/J002v37n01_10.

Hebblewaite, S., & Norris, J. (2011). Expression of generativity through family leisure: Experiences of grandparents and adult grandchildren. *Family Relations, 60*(1), 121–133. doi:10.1111/j. 1741-3729.2010.00637.x.

Henderson, T. L., & Cook, J. L. (2006). Grandma's hands: Black grandmothers speak about their experience rearing grandchildren on TANF. *International Journal of Aging & Human Development, 61*(1), 1–19.

Hoff, A. (2007). Patterns of intergenerational support in grandparent- grandchild and parent–child relationships in Germany. *Aging & Society, 27*, 643–665. doi:10.1017/S0144686X07006095.

Holladay, S. J., & Seipke, H. L. (2007). Communication between grandparents and grandchildren in geographically separated relationships. *Communication Studies, 58*(3), 281–297. doi:10.1080/10510970701518371.

Hooyman, N. R., & Kiyak, H. A. (1996). *Social gerontology: A multidisciplinary perspective*. New York: Allyn & Bacon.

Jenkins, B. (n.d.). *Grandparent childcare in Australia: A literature review*. Downloaded September 26, 2012. http://www.uws.edu.au/__data.assets/pdf_file/0009/156339/Jenkins.pdf

Johnson, T. W., & Collucci, P. (2005). Lesbians, gay men, and the family life cycle. In B. Carter & M. McGoldrick (Eds.), *The expanded family life cycle: Individual, family, and social perspectives* (3rd ed., pp. 346–361). New York: Allyn & Bacon.

Jung, J., Kim, Y., & Cheong, P. H. (2005). The influence of social environment on internet connectedness of adolescents in Seoul, Singapore and Taipei. *New Media Society, 7*, 64–88. doi:10.1177/1461444805049145.

Kamo, Y., & Zhou, M. (1994). Living arrangements of elderly Chinese and Japanese in the U.S. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 56*, 544–558.

Kenner, C., Ruby, M., Jessel, J., Gregory, E., & Arjy, T. (2008). Intergenerational learning around the computer: A site of linguistic and cultural exchange. *Language and Education, 22*(4), 298–319. doi:10.2167/le774.0.

Kline, S. L., & Liu, F. (2005). The influence of comparative media use on acculturation, acculturative stress and family relationships of Chinese international students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 29*, 367–390. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.17.001.

Legrain, P. (2008). Immigrants: Your country needs them. *Canadian Diversity, 6*(3), 18–21.

Lewis, J., Campbell, M., & Huerta, C. (2008). Patterns of paid and unpaid work in Western Europe: Gender, commodification, preferences and implications for policy. *Journal of European Social Policy, 18*(1), 21–37.

Lopez-Ekra, S., Aghazarm, C., Kotter, H., & Mallard, B. (2011). The impact of remittances on gender roles and opportunities for children in recipient families: Research from the International Organization for Migration. *Gender and Development, 19*(1), 69–80. doi:10.1080/13552074.2011.554025.

Lumpkin, J. R. (2008). Grandparents in parental or near parental role: Sources of stress and coping mechanisms. *Journal of Family Issues, 29*(3), 357–372. doi:10.1177/0192513X07307848.

Mason, J., May, V., & Clarke, L. (2007). Ambivalence and the paradoxes of grandparenting. *The Sociological Review, 55*(4), 687–706. doi:10.1111/j1467-954X2007.00748.x.

McDaniel, S. A. (2009). The "growing legs" of generation as a policy construct: Reviving its family nexus. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 40*(2), 243–254.

Mills, T. L., Gomez-Smith, Z., & De Leon, J. M. (2005). Skipped generation families: Sources of psychosocial distress among grandmothers of grandchildren who live in homes where neither parent is present. *Marriage and Family Review, 37*(1/2), 191–212. doi:1300/J002v37n01_12.

Monserud, M. A., & Elder, G. H., Jr. (2011). Household structure and children's educational attainment: A perspective on coresidence with grandparents. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 73*, 981–1000. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2011.00858.x.

Mutchler, J. E., & Baker, L. A. (2009). The implications of grandparent coresidence for economic hardship among children in mother-only families. *Journal of Family Issues, 30*(11), 1576–1597. doi:10.1177/0192513X09340527.

Nauck, B., & Suckow, J. (2006). Intergenerational relationships in cross-cultural comparison: How social networks frame intergenerational relations between mothers and grandmothers in Japan, Korea, China, Indonesia, Israel, Germany, and Turkey. *Journal of Family Issues, 27*(8), 1159–1185. doi:10.1177/0192513X06288125.

Neely-Barnes, S. L., Graff, C., & Washington, G. (2010). The health-related quality of life of custodial grandparents. *Health & Social Work, 35*(2), 87–97.

Notermans, C. (2004). Sharing home, food, and bed: Paths of grandmotherhood in East Cameroon. *Africa, 74*(1), 6–27. doi:10.3366/afr.2004.74.1.6.

Nyasani, E., Sterberg, E., & Smith, H. (2009). Fostering children affected by AIDS in Richards Bay, South Africa: A qualitative study of grandparents' experiences. *African Journal of AIDS Research, 8*(2), 181–192. doi:10.2989/AJAR.2009.8.2.6.858.

Nyland, B., Zeng, X., Nyland, C., & Tran, L. (2009). Grandparents as educators and carers in China. *Journal of Early Childhood Research, 7*(1), 46–57. doi:10.1177/1476718X08098353.

Ofahengaue Vakalahi, H. F. (2010). Tongan grandparents and grandchildren: The impact of grandparenting. *International Social Work, 54*(4), 580–598. doi:10.1177/0020872810382683.

Parker, K. (2012). The boomerang generation: Feeling OK about living with mom and dad. *Pew Social and Demographic Trends*. http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2012/03/PewSocialTrends-2012-BoomerangGeneration.pdf

Peterson, C., Smorti, A., & Tani, F. (2008). Parental influences on earliest memories. *Memory, 16*(6), 569–578. doi:10.1080/02687030802025984.

Ruggles, S. (2007). The decline of intergenerational coresidence in the United States, 1850 to 2000. *American Sociological Review, 72*(6), 964–989. doi:10.1111/j1741-3737,2010.007194.x.

Scelza, B. A. (2009). The grandmother niche: Critical caretaking among the Martu Aborigines. *American Journal of Human Biology, 21*, 449–454. doi:10.1002/ajhb.20934.

Sear, R., & Mace, R. (2008). Who keeps children alive? A review of the effects of kin on child survival. *Evolution and Human Behavior, 29*(1), 1–18. doi:10.1016/jevolhumbehav.2007.10.001.

Senyurekli, A., & Detzner, D. (2008). Intergenerational relationships in a transnational context. The case of Turkish families. *Family Relations, 57*(4), 457–467. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2008.00514.x.

Settles, B. H. (2006). *Marriage policy and political discourse. The quest of gay and lesbian partners for legal marriage in the USA*. International conference on policy & politics: Reconnecting policy and politics, Bristol.

Settles, B. H. (2012). Borders & boundaries: Immigration and families. In R. H. Rubin & B. H. Settles (Eds.), *The Groves Conference: History and impact on family science* (Groves monographs on marriage and family, Vol. 2). Ann Arbor: MPublishing.

Settles, B. H., Zhao, J., Mancini, K. D., Rich, A., Pierre, S., & Odour, A. (2009). Grandparents caring for their grandchildren: Emerging roles and exchanges in global perspectives. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 40*(4), 827–852.

Smith, G. C., & Hancock, C. R. (2010). Custodial grandmother-grandfather dyads: Pathways among marital distress, grandparent dysphoria, parenting practice, and grandchild adjustment. *Family Relations, 59*(1), 45–59. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2009.00585.x.

Spence, S. A., Black, S. R., Adams, J. P., & Crowther, M. R. (2001). Grandparents and grandparenting in a rural southern state. *Journal of Family Issues, 22*(4), 523–534. doi:10.1177/019251301022004007.

Stacey, J., & Biblarz, T. J. (2001). (How) does the sexual orientation of parents matter? *American Sociological Review, 66*(2), 159–183.

Strassmann, B. I., & Garrard, W. M. (2011). Alternative to the grandmother hypothesis: A meta-analysis of the association between grandparental and grandchild survival in patrilineal populations. *Human Nature, 22*, 201–222.

Suarez-Orozco, C., Bang, H. J., & Kim, H. Y. (2010). I felt like my heart was staying behind: Psychological implications of family separations & reunifications for immigrant youth. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 26*(2), 222–257. doi:10.1177/0743558410376830.

Svensson-Dianellou, A., Smith, P. K., & Mestheneos, E. (2010). Family help by Greek grandparents. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 8*(3), 249–263. doi:10.1080/15350770.2010.498737.

Swartz, B., Trommsdorff, G., Kim, U., & Park, Y. (2006). Intergenerational and cultural analyses of Korean and German women. *Current Sociology, 54*(2), 315–340.

Tanskanen, A. O., Rotkirch, A., & Danielsbacka, M. (2011). Do grandparents favor granddaughters? Biased grandparental investment in UK. *Evolution and Human Behavior, 32*, 407–415. doi:10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2011.02.001.

Thang, L. L., Mehta, K., Usui, T., & Tsuruwaka, M. (2011). Being a good grandparent: Roles and expectations in intergenerational relationships in Japan and Singapore. *Marriage & Family Review, 47*(8), 548–570. doi:10.1080/01494929.2011.619303.

Waldrop, D. P., Weber, J. A., Herald, S. L., Pruett, J., Cooper, K., & Juozapavicus, K. (1999). Wisdom and life experience: How grandfathers mentor their grandchildren. *Journal of Aging and Identity, 4*(1), 33–46. INNS 2162-.

Weber, J. A., & Abscher, A. G. (2003). Grandparents and grandchildren: A "memory box" course assignment. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education, 24*(1), 75–86. doi:10.1300/J021v24n01_06.

Wilding, R. (2006). 'Virtual' intimacies? Families communicating across transnational contexts. *Global Networks, 6*(2), 125–142. doi:1117/j.1471-0374.2006.00137.x.

World Population Prospects. (2006–2007). The 2006 revision population database. [Data file]. Retrieved from http://esa.un.org/unpp

Worrall, J. (2006). Challenges of grandparent custody of children at risk in New Zealand. *Families in Society, 87*(4), 546–554.

Yasuda, T., Iwai, N., Yi, C., & Xie, G. (2011). Intergenerational coresidence in China, Japan, S. Korea, and Taiwan: Comparative analysis based on East Asian Social Survey 2006. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 42*(5), 703–722.

Yi, C., & Lin, J. P. (2009). Types of relations between adult children and elderly parents in Taiwan. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 40*(2), 305–329.

Yzer, M. C., & Southwell, B. G. (2008). New communication technologies, old questions. *American Behavioral Scientist, 52*(1), 8–20. doi:10.1177/0002764208321338.

# Parenting Styles and Children's Academic Performance

**Kingsley Nyarko**

## Introduction

Developmental theories have described the development of the child as the outcome or fall-out of reciprocal interactions between children and the multiple environments in which they are located (Bronfenbrenner and Ceci 1994; Sameroff 1994). In this sense, authorities at home and in school become the child's parent since they both play active roles in promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. According to Nyarko (2007), the environment within which children are reared must provide the conditions that are needed to develop their innate characteristics. In other words, the family should ensure that the proper development of the growing child is not jeopardized.

The quest to improve the educational standards in Ghana has led governments, educators, civil society, social commentators, and other stakeholders to look at various and diverse alternatives to achieve this noble end (Nyarko 2007). These people in most cases look outside the family and thus gloss over the immense influence of the family in charting the academic trajectory of their children (Nyarko 2007).

Parenting is the process of raising children by promoting and supporting their physical, emotional, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual development from infancy to adulthood (Parenting 2011). Parenting refers to the dimensions of bringing up a child aside from the biological relationship. One of the most robust approaches in the development of children's social and academic achievement has been termed "parenting style". In the social science literature, there is enough evidence to suggest that parenting styles are correlated with children's school achievement.

K. Nyarko (✉)
Psychology Department, University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana
e-mail: kingpong73@yahoo.com

# Parenting Styles and Children's Outcomes

Researchers who try to describe this broad parental categorization depend mostly on Diana Baumrind's typology of parenting style. Parenting style as a construct is used to capture normal variations in parents' attempts to control and socialize their children (Baumrind 1991). In understanding this definition, two points are very crucial. First, parenting style is meant to describe normal differences in parenting. This is to say that the parenting style model Baumrind developed should not be seen to comprise deviant parenting, such as might be observed in abusive or neglectful homes. Second, Baumrind assumes that normal parenting hinges around issues of control. Although parents may differ in how they try to control or socialize their children, it is assumed that the primary role of all parents is to influence, teach, and control their children.

Parenting style focuses on two major elements of parenting: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness (Maccoby and Martin 1983). Parental responsiveness (parental warmth or supportiveness) refers to the extent to which parents deliberately foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands (Baumrind 1991). Parental demandingness, also known as behavioral control, refers to the demands parents make on children to become connected to the family unit, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and preparedness to confront the child who disobeys (Baumrind 1991).

Grouping parents as to whether they are high or low on parental demandingness and responsiveness brings about a typology of four parenting styles: indulgent (permissive), authoritarian, authoritative, and uninvolved (Maccoby and Martin 1983). Each of these parenting styles shows different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices, and behaviors (Baumrind 1991) and a distinct balance of responsiveness and demandingness.

Authoritarian parenting is a very restrictive style of parenting whereby adults impose many rules, expect strict compliance, will rarely explain to the child why it is essential to comply with these rules, and will often depend on punitive, forceful tactics (i.e., power assertion or love withdrawal) to gain compliance. Authoritarian parents are not sensitive to their children's contrasting ideas, expecting instead for their children to accept their word as law and to respect their authority. Authoritarian parents tend to raise obedient adolescents who do not question authority (Baumrind 1991; Jackson et al. 1998; Steinberg et al. 1994), and these adolescents also tend to have low self-esteem and less social competence in school (Jackson et al. 1998). In other words, verbal give-and-take between parent and child is discouraged. Authoritarian parents can be categorized into two types: nonauthoritarian-directive, who are directive, but not intrusive or autocratic in their use of power, and authoritarian-directive, who are highly intrusive (Darling 1999). Baumrind's study of preschool children observed that such a type of parenting style was related to low levels of independence and social responsibility. Baumrind later described the authoritarian style as being high in demandingness on the part of the parents and low in parental responsiveness to the child. In another study which focused on children between the ages of 8 and

9 years old (Baumrind 1971, 1973), she observed that the authoritarian pattern, high in demandingness and low in parental responsiveness, had different consequences for girls and for boys. Girls who came from authoritarian families were more socially assertive. For both sexes, intrusive-directiveness was associated with lower cognitive competence (Dornbusch et al. 1987). Children and adolescents from authoritarian families (high in demandingness, but low in responsiveness) tend to perform moderately well in school and be uninvolved in problem behavior, but they have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression (Darling 1999). On a more specific note, adolescents from authoritarian homes are more likely to report positive school performance as compared to their counterparts from neglecting parenting homes but not to those from authoritative parenting homes (Dornbusch et al. 1987; Jackson et al. 1998).

Authoritative parenting is a more flexible style of parenting in which parents permit their children considerable freedom, but are careful to provide reasons for the restrictions they impose and will ensure that the children follow these laid down procedures. Authoritative parents are responsive to their children's needs and ideas and will often seek their children's views in family deliberations and decisions. But, they expect that their children will abide with the restrictions they deem as essential and will use both power, if need be, and reason (inductive discipline) to ensure that they do. The female children of authoritative parents in the preschool sample were socially responsible and more independent than other children. Male children were also as independent as the other children were, and they seemed to be socially responsible. Between the ages 8 and 9, both male and female children of authoritative parents were high in social and cognitive competence (Baumrind 1991; Weiss and Schwarz 1996). Baumrind (1991) avers that, "unlike any other pattern, authoritative upbringing…consistently generated competence and deterred problem behavior" (p.91). Authoritative parenting has been found to be an essential factor in an adolescent's life in comparison with the other parenting styles. Authoritative parenting has been seen as the most effective in enhancing personal and social responsibilities in adolescents, without constraining their newly formed autonomy and individuality (Glasgow et al. 1997). Several studies have documented the positive impact of authoritative parenting style on academic achievement. These studies have indicated that parental authoritativeness is associated with higher academic achievements (Amato and Gilbreth 1999; Slicker 1998; Steinberg et al. 1992; Nyarko 2011). Dornbusch and colleagues (1987) found that adolescents raised by authoritative parents, when compared with adolescents raised by authoritarian parents, have higher levels of academic performance in high school. But, other researchers, for example, Jackson et al. (1998) observed that authoritative parenting style was positively associated with academic success for European and Mexican Americans but was not related to Asian and African Americans' academic achievement. Moreover, several researchers (Amato and Gilbreth 1999; Dornbusch et al. 1987; Slicker 1998; Steinberg et al. 1994) have shown that authoritative parenting is associated with less propensity for disruptive behavioral practices.

Permissive or indulgent parenting is a warm but lenient pattern of parenting in which parents make relatively few demands, allow their offspring to freely express their feelings and impulses, use as few punishments as possible, make few demands

for mature behavior, do not closely monitor their children's activities, and rarely exert firm control over their behavior (Dornbusch et al. 1987). Baumrind observed in the study of her preschool children that children of permissive parents were immature, lacked impulse control and self-reliance, and showed a lack of social responsibility and independence. In the follow-up studies of children between the ages of 8 and 9 years, she found that these children were low in both social and cognitive competence (Dornbusch et al. 1987).

Uninvolved parents show an extremely lax, uncontrolling approach. The parents have either rejected their children or are so inundated with their own stresses and problems that they don't have enough time or energy to devote to the child rearing process (Maccoby and Martin 1983). Even though children of uninvolved parents lack both social and academic competence, they also tend to be very hostile and rebellious adolescents who are vulnerable to such antisocial or delinquent acts as alcohol and drug abuse, truancy, sexual misconduct, and a variety of criminal offences (Darling 1999; Patterson et al. 1989). These children also report lower levels of self-esteem, peer acceptance, self-control, and are more likely to report substance use and being engaged in an aggressive act (Baumrind 1991; Jackson et al. 1998; Slicker 1998; Steinberg et al. 1994). According to Slicker (1998), "high school students who rated their parents as neglectful or permissive participated in significantly more problem behavior…than those students who rated their parents as authoritative" (p.361).

## Ethnic Groups and Parenting Styles in Ghana

The choice of a particular parenting style cannot be properly discussed without critically examining the culture and demography of the people in question. In Ghana, the culture of the different tribes is crucial in the adoption of a particular parenting style. Similar to most other African countries, Ghana has a unique traditional culture, which varies from one ethnic group to the other. All the ethnic groups in Ghana uphold communal values; customs and social values are maintained throughout the extended family system.

Nearly half of the Ghanaian population is made up of the Akan community. It is a matrilineal society and encapsulates the Fante, Asante and Akyem. The common parenting style among the Akans is the authoritarian, followed by the authoritative style. The Ewes, the Mole-Dagbanis, the Guans and Ga-Adangbes all use the authoritarian parenting style in parenting their young.

## Family Structure and Parenting Styles

Research on the effect of family structure on academic achievement of children in the country has shown that single mothers adopt the permissive style of parenting. Lumor (2011) conducted a study to investigate the influence of single parenting on

adolescents' academic performance. Results from the study indicated that adolescents from single parent homes performed poorly academically and also reported low self-esteem as juxtaposed with their counterparts from homes with both parents. Similarly, Nunoofio (2011) in her study on the effect of single parenting on the academic performance of primary school children showed that a significant difference exists between the academic performance of students from two-parent families and those from single parent families. Children with both parents outperformed their counterparts from single parent families. The difference in the study outcome was predominantly attributed to the lack of control in single parent homes.

It should, however, be noted that although the poor performance of children has been attributed to the permissive style of parenting by the single mothers, there is also the possibility that other confounding variables such as the educational status of the mothers, their financial status, as well as their level of involvement in the educational of their children could be reasons why the educational performance of their children is not encouraging.

## Parenting Styles and Academic Achievement

According to Akyeampong et al. (2006), the discourse analysis of classroom teaching and learning in sub-Saharan Africa, and specifically Ghana, generally shows the African teacher as an authoritarian classroom figurehead, who expects students to listen and memorize correct answers or procedures rather than construct knowledge themselves. Research has shown that there is a positive correlation between parenting styles and children's academic achievement. For example, Dornbusch et al. (1987) asserted that inconsistency and mixed parenting styles are correlated with lower grades for adolescents. The traditions of the different tribes described above influence the choice of a parenting style by Ghanaian parents.

Most studies conducted in Ghana have revealed inconsistent findings regarding parenting styles and children's outcome, especially their academics and self-esteem. Asamoah (2011) investigated the effect of parenting styles on the self-esteem and peer relationship of basic school children. The findings established a positive correlation between authoritative parenting style and self-esteem as well as peer relationships. It was also established that a positive correlation exists between authoritative parenting style and academic performance among school children. In addition, Nyarko (2011) carried out a study to find out the influence of parental authoritativeness on adolescents' academic achievement. The findings indicated that both parental authoritativeness including mothers and fathers relate positively to the academic achievement of the students.

However, Seho (2012) in his study about the effects of parenting styles on adolescents' academic performance found that parenting styles do not affect adolescents' academic performance. This is because no difference was found among parents who use permissive, authoritative, and authoritarian style of parenting. Similarly, Dogbatse (2012) discovered that parenting styles do not influence the academic

performance and self-esteem of upper primary pupils. This was because there was no significant difference between the means of parents who use authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive styles of parenting. Again, Peprah (2012) found no significant difference between parents who use authoritative style of parenting and those who use authoritarian style of parenting on the perception of the academic achievements of university students. Finally, Amoo (2011) investigated the difference in the self-esteem levels of children living with single parents and both parents. The difference in the self-esteem levels of children living with single fathers and single mothers were also ascertained. The results revealed that school children living with either both or single authoritarian parents had very low self-esteem.

## Conclusion

An insight into the culture of a people reveals much about their way of life. It is in this sense that the discussion on the Ghanaian parenting style on academic performance was done within its cultural context. Although, the Ghanaian culture shows that the preferred parenting style is the authoritarian style, which is predominantly used in collectivistic cultures, its impact on children's school achievement has not been well established. The available empirical studies conducted in the country indicate conflicting findings regarding the effects of parenting styles on children's academic achievements. As some of the studies indicate a positive and significant relationship between parental authoritativeness and children's academic achievement, others indicate no effect of parenting styles on children's school outcomes.

## References

Akyeampong, A. K., Pryor, J., & Ampiah, J. G. (2006). A vision of successful schooling: Ghanaian teachers' understandings of learning, learning and assessment. *Comparative Education, 42*(2), 155–176.

Amato, P. R., & Gilbreth, J. G. (1999). Nonresident fathers and children's well-being: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 61*, 557–573.

Amoo, S. (2011). *The difference in the self esteem levels of children living with single parents and intact parents*. Thesis submitted to the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana.

Asamoah, A. Y. (2011). *The effect of parenting styles on self esteem and peer relationship in children*. Thesis submitted to the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana.

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology Monograph, 4*(1), 1–103.

Baumrind, D. (1973). The development of instrumental competence through socialization. In A. D. Pick (Ed.), *Minnesota symposium on child psychology* (Vol. 7, pp. 3–46). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Baumrind, D. (1991). Parenting styles and adolescent development. In R. M. Lerner, A. C. Peterson, & J. Brooks-Gunn (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of adolescence* (pp. 746–758). New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Ceci, S. J. (1994). Nature-nurture reconceptualized in developmental perspective: A bioecological model. *Psychological Review, 101*, 568–586.

Darling, N. (1999). *Parenting style and its correlates*. Champaign: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, University of Illinois (ERIC Digest ED427896).

Dogbatse, E. D. (2012). *The effects of parenting styles on the academic performance and self-esteem of children in upper primary school*. Unpublished thesis submitted to the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana.

Dornbusch, S. M., Ritter, P. L., Leidermann, P. H., Roberts, D. F., & Fraleigh, M. J. (1987). The relation of parenting style to adolescent school performance. *Child Development, 58*, 1244–1257.

Glasgow, K. L., Dornbusch, S. M., Troyer, L., Steinberg, L., & Ritter, P. L. (1997). Parenting styles, adolescents' attributions, and educational outcomes in nine heterogeneous high schools. *Child Development, 68*, 507–529.

Jackson, C., Henriksen, L., & Foshee, U. A. (1998). The authoritative parenting index: Predicting health risk behaviors among children and adolescents. *Health Education and Behavior, 25*(3), 319–337.

Lumor, F. (2011). *The influence of single parenting on an adolescents' academic performance*. Unpublished thesis submitted to the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana.

Maccoby, E., & Martin, J. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent–child interaction. In P. H. Mussen (Series Ed.),& E. M. Hetherington (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology*: *Vol. 4. Socialization, personality, and social development* (pp. 1–101). New York: Wiley.

Parenting. (2011, April 29). *New world encyclopedia*. Retrieved October 6, 2013, from http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/p/index.php?title=Parenting&oldid=951065

Nunoofio, P. M. (2011). *The effect of single parenting on the academic performance of primary school children in Accra*. Accra: Department of Psychology, University of Ghana.

Nyarko, K. (2007). *Parental involvement: A sine qua non in adolescents' educational achievement*. A dissertation submitted to the University of Munich. www.uni-muenchen.de

Nyarko, K. (2011). The influence of authoritative parenting style on adolescents' academic achievement. *American Journal of Social and Management Sciences, 2*(3), 278–282.

Patterson, G., DeBarsyshe, B., & Ramsey, E. (1989). A developmental perspective on antisocial behavior. *American Psychologist, 44*, 329–335.

Peprah, J. (2012). *The influence of parenting styles on university students' perception of their academic achievement*. Unpublished thesis submitted to the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana.

Sameroff, A. (1994). Developmental systems and family functioning. In R. D. Parke & S. G. Kellam (Eds.), *Exploring family relationships with other social contexts* (pp. 199–214). Hillsdale: Erlbaum.

Seho, H. K. (2012). *Effects of parental efficacy on adolescents' academic performance*. Unpublished thesis submitted to the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana.

Slicker, E. K. (1998). Relationship of parenting style to behavior adjustment in graduating high school seniors. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 27*(3), 345–372.

Steinberg, L., Dornbusch, S. M., & Brown, B. B. (1992). Ethnic differences in adolescent achievement: An ecological perspective. *American Psychologist, 47*, 723–729.

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S., Darling, N., Mounts, N., & Dornbusch, S. (1994). Over-time changes in adjustment and competence among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child Development, 65*, 754–770.

Weiss, L. H., & Schwarz, J. C. (1996). The relationships between parenting types and older adolescents' personality, academic achievement, adjustment and substance use. *Child Development, 67*, 2101–2114.

# The Indulgent Parenting Style and Developmental Outcomes in South European and Latin American Countries

**Fernando García and Enrique Gracia**

## Parenting Styles, Parenting Practices and Their Relation to the Child's Psychosocial Adjustment: The Two-Dimensional Model of Parental Socialization

During the last decades research has demonstrated the influence of parenting socialization on the psychosocial adjustment of their children (Becoña et al. 2012; Fontaine et al. 1994; Gavazzi 2011; Levine and Munsch 2010; Maccoby and Martin 1983). Traditionally, the relationships between parental styles and children's adjustment have been studied following the two-dimensional model of parental socialization (e.g., Maccoby and Martin 1983), in which the dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness, also called acceptance/involvement and strictness/imposition (Lamborn et al. 1991; Steinberg et al. 1994), were theoretically orthogonal (Darling and Steinberg 1993; Maccoby and Martin 1983). Earlier scholars used other labels such as acceptance (Symonds 1939), assurance (Baldwin 1955), warmth (Becker 1964; Sears et al. 1957) or love (Schaefer 1959), that have similar meanings to acceptance/involvement. Labels such as domination, hostility, inflexibility, control or restriction were used in earlier research with similar meanings to strictness/imposition (Baldwin 1955; Becker 1964; Schaefer 1959; Sears et al. 1957; Symonds 1939). As Steinberg noted, "responsiveness was often operationalized using measures of parental warmth and acceptance, while demandingness came to be defined with respect to parental firmness" (Steinberg 2005, p. 71). These two key

F. García (✉)
Department of Methodology of the Behavioral Sciences,
University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain
e-mail: fernando.garcia@uv.es

E. Gracia
Department of Social Psychology, University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain
e-mail: enrique.gracia@uv.es

parenting dimensions reflect two distinctive and unrelated (i.e., orthogonal) consistent patterns of parenting behavior in the socialization process (Darling and Steinberg 1993; García et al. 1994). Scholars have stressed the importance of combining the two major dimensions of this parental socialization model in order to analyse accurately their relationships to children's psychosocial adjustment (see Lamborn et al. 1991; Maccoby and Martin 1983; Steinberg et al. 1994). Thus, from the confluence of these two cardinal dimensions, four seminal parenting styles have been defined: *Authoritative*: high levels of acceptance/involvement and strictness/imposition; *Indulgent*: high levels of acceptance/involvement but low levels of strictness/imposition; *Authoritarian*: low levels of acceptance/involvement but high levels of strictness/imposition; and *Neglectful*: low levels of acceptance/involvement and strictness/imposition (Lamborn et al. 1991; Maccoby and Martin 1983; Steinberg et al. 1994; Steinberg 2005).

Parenting styles, the parental practices that characterized each style, and their relations to children's psychosocial adjustment, has been traditionally one of the most central approaches in the study of parent-child relationships (Darling and Steinberg 1993; Lamborn et al. 1991; Maccoby and Martin 1983). In fact, parenting styles remain a standard in developmental psychology curricula (Berns 2011; Gavazzi 2011; Levine and Munsch 2010; Sigelman and Rider 2012; Weiten et al. 2012; White and Schnurr 2012). The parenting styles approach, which includes global long-time parenting characteristics, allows us to integrate and organized specific parenting practices better. Parenting styles were developed initially as a heuristic device to describe the parenting background. To the extent that this background was accurately captured by measures of parenting styles, analyses using this wider perspective construct had clearly more advantages in analyzing parents' influence on children's psychosocial adjustment than analyses based on specific and isolated parenting practices (Darling and Steinberg 1993; Maccoby and Martin 1983; Symonds 1939).

## Measuring Parenting Styles Across Cultures

Scholars have used very different instruments to measure parenting styles constructs. One of the instruments more widely used in South European and Latin American countries, the Parental Socialization Scale ESPA29 (Musitu and García 2001) was specifically developed to measure socialization styles from a contextual (Darling and Steinberg 1993) and situational (Smetana 1995) perspective. In this instrument, children report the frequency of several parental practices (father's and mother's practices are asked about separately in different situations). Twenty-nine situations are assessed: 13 of them refer to adolescents' compliance situations (e.g., "If I respect the schedules set at home") and 16 refer to adolescents' noncompliance situations (e.g., "If I don't study or I don't want to do my homework from school"). In each of the 13 compliance situations, children had to rate the parenting practices of warmth ("he/she shows affection") and indifference ("he/she seems indifferent"). In each of
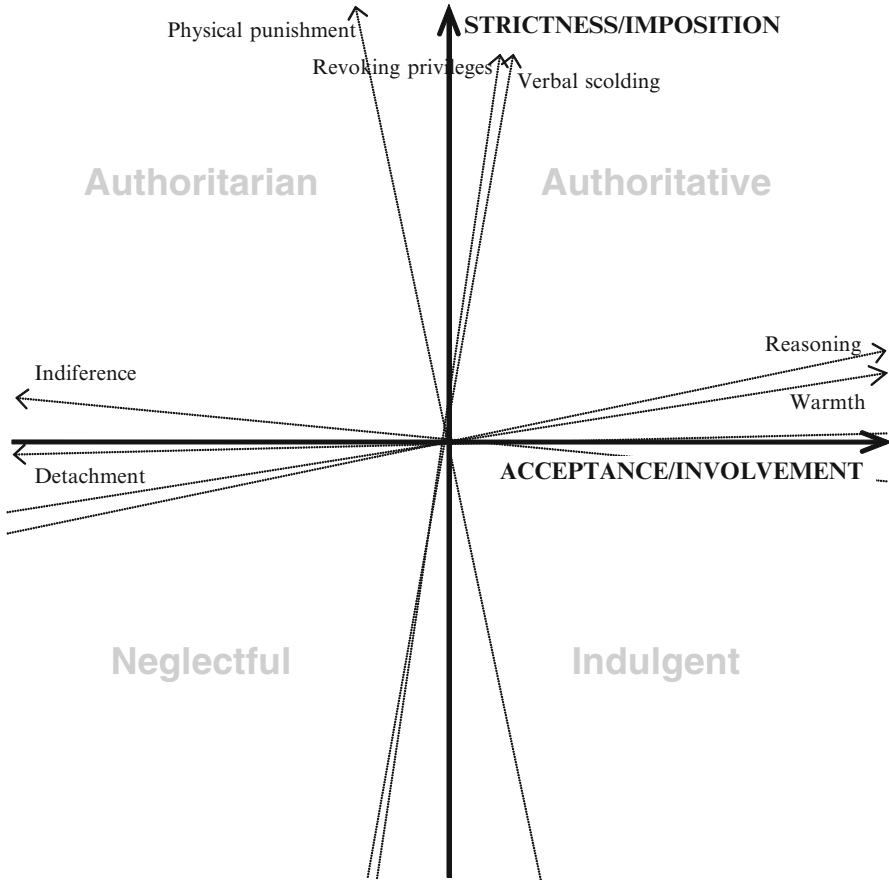
**Fig. 1** Representation in a bidimensional space of correlations between parenting practices and the two socialization dimensions from the ESPA29 (Musitu and García 2001)

the 16 noncompliance situations, they had to rate the parenting practices on reasoning ("he/she talks to me"), detachment ("it's the same to him/her"), verbal scolding ("he/she scolds me"), physical punishment ("he/she spanks me"), and revoking privileges ("he/she takes something away from me"). In total, there are 212 responses from the child, 106 given for each parent. The score for the acceptance/involvement scale is obtained by averaging the responses to the subscales of warmth, reasoning, indifference and detachment for the mother and father (the subscales of the last two practices are inverted as they are inversely related to the dimension). The score for the strictness/imposition scale is calculated by averaging the responses to the subscales of revoking privileges, verbal scolding, and physical punishment for the mother and father. Higher scores represent a greater sense of acceptance/involvement and strictness/imposition (see Fig. 1).

To conduct their analyses, researchers usually merged adolescents' ratings of fathers' and mothers' parenting practices in a family score (e.g., Lamborn et al. 1991; Steinberg et al. 1994). With the ESPA29 questionnaire, researchers used the family score rather than fathers' and mothers' scores separately, because the normed study (Musitu and García 2001), as well as later studies using the ESPA29 questionnaire with Spanish samples, reported high correlations between fathers' and mothers' parenting practices and styles (Martínez et al. 2011, 2012). Although the ESPA29 scales were normed separately by parent sex and adolescent sex and age, the studies with Spanish and Brazilian samples of ESPA29 confirmed that the factorial structure was invariant between parent sexes, adolescent ages, and adolescent sexes. Finally, through the two dimensions of parental conduct, parents can be classified into the four parental socialization typologies (authoritative, indulgent, authoritarian, or neglectful) by dichotomizing (Lamborn et al. 1991; Steinberg et al. 1994) the scores for the family (or mother and father separately) of the acceptance/involvement and strictness/imposition dimensions either at the tertile (García and Gracia 2009; Musitu and García 2004) or at the median (Chao 2001; Kremers et al. 2003; García and Gracia 2010). As can be seen in Fig. 1, empirical studies report that the two parenting dimensions (acceptance/involvement and strictness/imposition) were practically orthogonal (i.e., mutually independent) and the distribution of the four parenting style homogeneous (Gracia et al. 2012).

Another well-known parenting style measure used is the Authoritative Parenting Measure (APM, Lamborn et al. 1991; Steinberg et al. 1992). This instrument measures three parenting dimensions: acceptance/involvement, psychological autonomy granting, and behavioral control. These scales reflect the three major dimensions of authoritative parenting, similar to those proposed by Baumrind (1991), and have been applied in different studies to form the two-dimensional model (e.g., Chao 2001; Kremers et al. 2003; Lamborn et al. 1991; Steinberg et al. 1994). The involvement/acceptance scale contains nine items and looks at the degree to which adolescents perceive their parents as responsive, caring, and involved (e.g. "I can count on my parents to help me out if I have some kind of problem"). The psychological autonomy granting scale contains nine items which assess the degree to which parents use non-coercive and democratic discipline, allowing for an adolescent's expression of their individuality (e.g., reverse scored, "My parents say that you shouldn't argue with adults"). The strictness/supervision scale contains six items and measures the degree to which parents regulate and monitor adolescent behavior and whereabouts (e.g., "How much do your parents try to know…where you go out at night/ Where you are most afternoons after school?"). Another two items indicated how late the teenager was allowed out on school nights and Friday/Saturday nights, the answers being 1 (*I am not allowed out*), 2 (*before 8:00*), 3 (*8:00 to 8:59*), to 6 (*11:00 or later*), and 7 (*as late as I want*).

Another widely used parental socialization measure is the S(hort)-EMBU. The S(hort)-EMBU is a 23-item reliable and factorial valid equivalent (Arrindell et al. 1999) of the original 81-item EMBU (Perris et al. 1980). It measures Rejection ("My parents criticized me and told me how lazy and useless I was in front of others"), Emotional Warmth ("I felt that warmth and tenderness existed between me and my

parents"), and (Over)-Protection ("When I came home, I then had to account for what I had been doing, to my parents"). The short version of the EMBU has been demonstrated to be valid and reliable in several countries and languages (Spanish version: Arrindell et al. 2005).

In socialization studies, a specific measure of psychological control is commonly used: the Psychological Control Scale – Youth Self-Report (PCS-YSR), adapted by Barber (1996) from the Schaefer (1965) original Child's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI). This scale was constructed to measure parental controlling behavior that intrudes into the psychological and emotional development of the child through use of parenting practices such as guilt induction, withdrawal of love, or shaming (Barber 1996). The questionnaire consisted of 8 items. There was a father version, "My father always tries to change my feelings and thoughts", and another for the mother, "My mother often interrupts me".

Studies conducted in Spain (Gracia et al. 2007, 2010) have analyzed the relationships between the ESPA29 dimensions and the parenting dimensions measured by the above parenting questionnaires: Authoritative Parenting Measure, S(hort)-EMBU, and Psychological Control Scale. As can be seen in Fig. 2, the relations between the parenting dimensions of these three questionnaires indicated a positive relationship between the three measures of acceptance/involvement (the common acceptance/involvement dimensions from the ESPA29 and the APM, and the Emotional Warmth dimension of S-EMBU). The behavioral/control scale of the APM is a parenting practice associated with the authoritative style (a positive relation with strictness/imposition and acceptance involvement), and does not appear to be a distinct measure of parenting strictness/imposition. The Over-protection dimension of the S-EMBU is also related to the strictness/imposition dimension of the ESPA29. Psychological control and rejection are both similar measures, both related with low levels of acceptance/involvement and high levels of strictness/imposition, which are characteristic of the authoritarian parenting style. Interestingly, psychological autonomy granting is positively related to acceptance/involvement, but negatively related to strictness/imposition, just in the opposite end of the rejection and psychological control. This is a clear difference when compared to other results reported in research conducted with American samples (see Silk et al. 2003, p. 122), and this relationship indicates that in Spain high psychological autonomy granting is clearly related to indulgent parenting.

Finally, another widely used parenting measure in cross-cultural research has been the Warmth/Affection Scale (WAS, Rohner et al. 1978). Adolescents respond to the two versions of the WAS, one assessing perceptions of their fathers (or primary male caregivers), and one assessing perceptions of their mothers (or primary female caregivers). The WAS has been used in approximately 300 studies within the United States and internationally in the past two decades (see Rohner and Khaleque 2003), including Spain (e.g., Lila et al. 2007; Lila and Gracia 2005). The WAS scale is a reliable measure of the extent to which adolescents perceive their parents as loving, responsive, and involved. Some sample items are, "Tries to help me when I am scared or upset," and "Talks to me about our plans and listens to what I have to say". Parental strictness/imposition has been measured using the Parental Control Scale
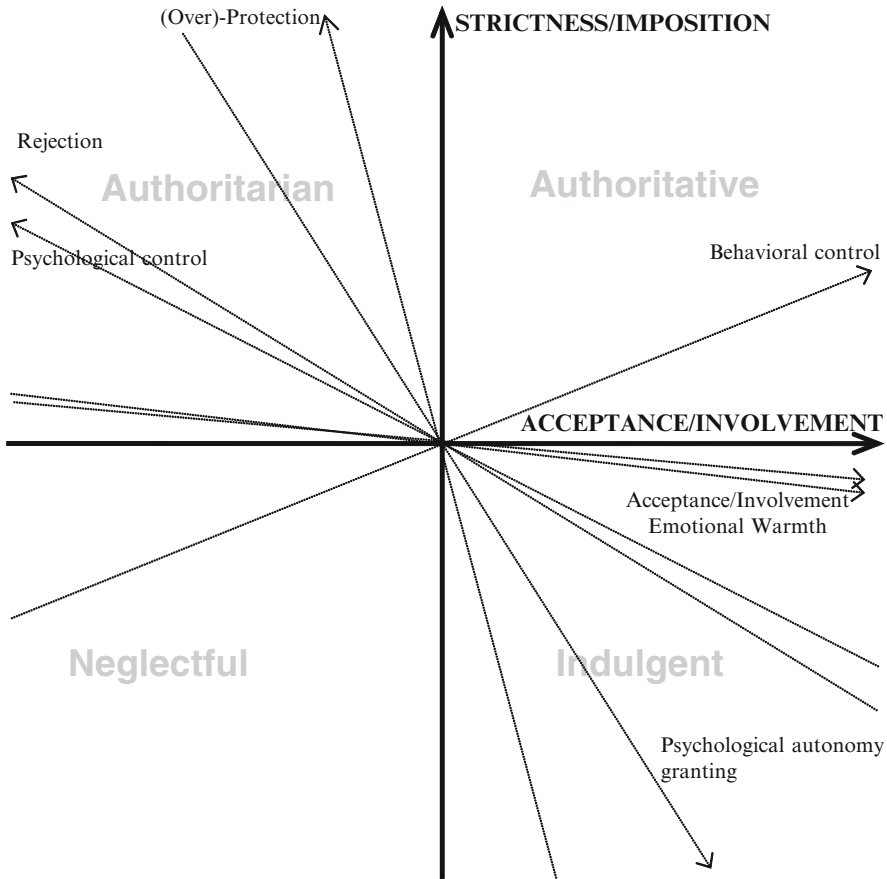
**Fig. 2** Representation in a bidimensional space of correlations between the Acceptance/ Involvement and Strictness/Imposition dimensions from the ESPA29, and parenting measures from the S(hort)-EMBU (Emotional Warmth, Rejection, and (Over)-Protection), the Psychological Control, and the Authoritative Parenting Measure (Acceptance/Involvement, Psychological Autonomy Granting, and Behavioral Control)

(PCS, Rohner 1989; Rohner and Khaleque 2003). Adolescents responded to both the mother and the father versions of the PCS. The PCS scale has been used across five culturally distinct populations (Rohner and Khaleque 2003). The PCS scale assesses the extent to which an adolescent perceives strict parental control of his/her behavior. Some sample items are, "Tells me exactly what time to be home when I go out," and "Gives me certain jobs to do and will not let me do anything else until they are done". Both parenting indexes measured family parenting behavior (Lamborn et al. 1991; Steinberg et al. 1994) so that higher scores represent a greater sense of parental warmth and parental strictness (Rohner and Khaleque 2003). Also, as can be observed in Fig. 3, empirical studies indicated that the two parenting dimensions (Warmth/Affection and Parental Control) are practically orthogonal and
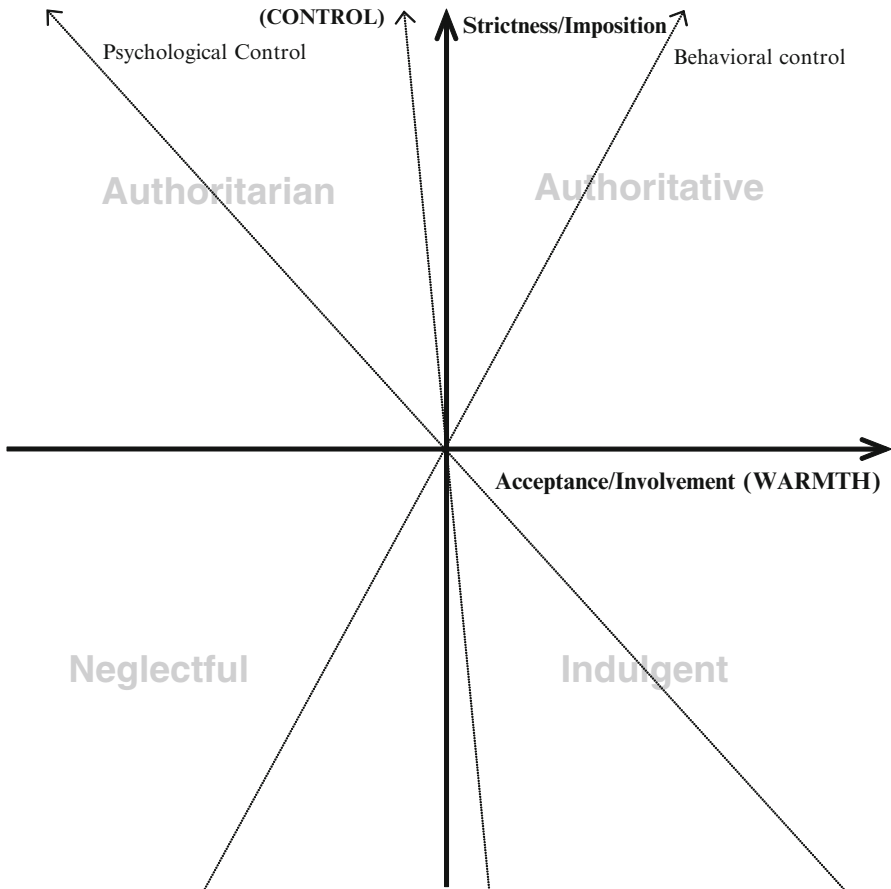
**Fig. 3** Representation in a bidimensional space of correlations between the Warmth dimension and other parenting practices (Delgado et al. 2007: Behavioral Control and Psychological Control; García and Gracia 2009: Control)

the distribution of the four parenting style practically homogeneous. The Spanish adaptation of the psychological control measure is negatively related to the acceptance/involvement dimension and positively related to the strictness/imposition, and that the Spanish adaptation of the behavioral control is positively related to acceptance/involvement and to strictness/imposition (Delgado et al. 2007).

## Parenting Styles and Demographic Variations

The main aim of parenting studies is to establish which parenting style is associated with optimum children's and adolescents' outcomes. Scholars compare, for example, mean scores on key adolescent developmental outcomes from different parenting styles; studies analyzing differences between adolescents in many outcomes such as

drug use, self-esteem, sexism prejudices, depression, education, conduct problems, religiousness, or fruit consuming.[1]

Although some empirical studies have described differences in the degree to which some parenting practices were used, varying, for example, between fathers and mothers (Kazemi et al. 2010; Martínez et al. 2011, 2012), as well as depending on children's age and sex (Aunola et al. 2000; Barton and Kirtley 2012; Gracia et al. 2012; López-Jáuregui and Oliden 2009), empirical research has demonstrated that these differences did not challenge the perceived parenting style for sons and daughters, for different ages, or for mothers and fathers (Amato and Fowler 2002; García and Gracia 2009, 2010; Steinberg et al. 1994; Turkel and Tezer 2008).

## Parenting Styles and Optimum Children's and Adolescents' Outcomes

Regarding relationships between parenting styles and children's psychosocial adjustment, since the early studies carried out by Baumrind (1967, 1971) with middle-class American families showed clearly that the authoritative parenting style was related to children's better psychosocial adjustment. Furthermore, research conducted in Anglo-Saxon contexts continues to support the idea that the authoritative style is the optimum parenting style. For example, children from authoritative families obtained better academic performance, better psychological competence, better use of adaptive strategies, and fewer behavior problems and drug use, when compared to other parenting styles (Aunola et al. 2000; Bahr and Hoffmann 2010; Cohen and Rice 1997; Montgomery et al. 2008; Spera 2005; Steinberg et al. 1989). Consistent with these results, several studies concluded that, while the authoritative was the optimal parenting style, the neglectful style was associated with poorer psychosocial adjustment of children (Aunola et al. 2000; Montgomery et al. 2008). Children from indulgent and authoritarian families were in an intermediate position, between the best adjustment from authoritative parents and the worst one from neglectful families (Lamborn et al. 1991; Radziszewska et al. 1996).

## Cultural and Ethnic Differences Challenging the Optimum Parenting Style

Empirical research has repeatedly demonstrated that cultural and ethnic differences challenge the ideal parenting style. In the scientific literature studies carried out in the US with minority ethnic groups and in different countries which questioned the

---

[1] See studies by Alonso-Geta 2012; Alsheikh et al. 2010; Bastaits et al. 2012; Benchaya et al. 2011; Cerdá et al. 2010; De la Torre et al. 2011; Espino 2013; Garaigordobil and Aliri 2012; Gracia et al. 2010; Kovacs and Piko 2010; Kremers et al. 2003; Liem et al. 2010; Puskar et al. 2010.

idea that the authoritative parenting style was always associated with the best psychosocial adjustment. They suggested that the authoritarian style (characterized by low levels of acceptance/involvement and high levels of strictness/imposition) was also an adequate parenting style (Darling and Steinberg 1993; Steinberg et al. 1992, 1994). For example, Chao (2001) found that Chinese American adolescents from authoritarian families obtained better scores in academic achievement than adolescents from authoritative families, although that is not necessarily an indication of better parenting. Dwairy and Achoui (2006) found that the authoritarian style was not associated with mental health problems in Arab societies (Dwairy and Menshar 2006; Dwairy et al. 2006a, b, c).

On the other hand, results from studies in other cultural contexts also supported the idea that the authoritative style was not always associated with the best results in children and adolescents. The parenting style characterized by high levels of acceptance/involvement and low levels of strictness/imposition, the indulgent style, was related to better psychosocial adjustment of adolescents or, at least indistinguishable from the authoritative style (Philippines: Hindin 2005; Germany: Wolfradt et al. 2003; Italy: Marchetti 1997; Mexico: Villalobos et al. 2004; Brazil: Martínez and García 2008; Martínez et al. 2007; Spain: Alonso-Geta 2012; De la Torre et al. 2011; García and Gracia 2009, 2010). These studies found that adolescents from indulgent families had the same or better scores than adolescents from authoritative families on various aspects of psychosocial adjustment. For example, research on adolescents in Brazil found that those who scored highest on self-esteem measures were those from indulgent families (Martínez and García 2008; Martínez et al. 2007). In Spain, García and Gracia (2010) found that adolescents whose parents were indulgent obtained better scores in different indicators of psychological adjustment, such as emotional stability and positive worldview, than those from authoritative families.

These discrepancies in the results seem to show the influence of culture on the relationship between parental socialization and psychosocial adjustment in adolescence, suggesting that the relationship between parenting styles and adolescent adjustment and wellbeing varies depending on the cultural context (Chao 1994; Dwairy and Achoui 2006; García and Gracia 2009, 2010; Kazemi et al. 2010). Therefore, the optimal parenting style will depend on the cultural environment in which parent-child relationships would normally develop (Berns 2011; Gavazzi 2011; Sigelman and Rider 2012; Weiten et al. 2012; White and Schnurr 2012). In studies carried on collectivist cultures like Asian and Arab societies, children perceive the individual self as part of the family self. In these societies, for parents and children the relationship between generations is expected to be vertical and hierarchical, assuming strictness and imposition as a parental responsibility. Authoritarian practices have a positive impact because in those contexts strict discipline is perceived as beneficial for the children, and its absence would be regarded as a lack of supervision and care (Dwairy et al. 2006c; Grusec et al. 1997; Martínez and García 2008). On the other hand, studies in Spain and Brazil suggest that in horizontal collectivist cultures, as South American countries or South European countries, the self is conceptualized as part of a larger group (the family), but that group is organized on an egalitarian, rather than a hierarchical basis (García and Gracia

2009, 2010; Martínez and García 2007, 2008; White and Schnurr 2012). In the horizontal collectivist cultures the egalitarian relations are emphasized and more attention is placed on the use of affection, acceptance, and involvement in children' socialization. Furthermore, in these cultures strictness and firm control in the social-ization practices, seems to be perceived in a negative way (García and Gracia 2009; Martínez and García 2008; Rudy and Grusec 2001).

## Indulgent Parenting and South European and Latin American Countries

Emergent research using the two-dimensional four-typology model of parental socialization (Maccoby and Martin 1983) with South European and Latin American adolescents, have found that the indulgent style, characterized by high levels of acceptance/involvement and low levels of strictness/imposition, was related to bet-ter psychosocial adjustment or, at the least it is indistinguishable from authoritative parenting (Alonso-Geta 2012; García and Gracia 2009, 2010; Garaigordobil and Aliri 2012; Gracia et al. 2010, 2012; Martínez and García 2007, 2008). In general the results of these studies suggest that adolescents from indulgent families scored better than those from authoritative families on the outcomes analyzed. Although a large number of studies in Anglo-Saxon contexts suggested that the authoritative style, characterized by high levels of acceptance/involvement and strictness/imposi-tion, was always associated with better psychosocial adjustment of children, results from these new studies support the idea that the indulgent style is the optimum parenting style in South European and Latin American countries (Aunola et al. 2000; Bahr and Hoffmann 2010; Lamborn et al. 1991; Montgomery et al. 2008).

These results confirm previous research in other cultural contexts in which ado-lescents from indulgent families obtained equal, or even better scores in the differ-ent indicators of psychosocial adjustment than adolescents from authoritative families (Kazemi et al. 2010; García and Gracia 2009, 2010). Hence, the results from these emergent studies add to empirical research that questioned the idea that the authoritative style is always related to the best psychosocial adjustment of ado-lescents (Lamborn et al. 1991; Maccoby and Martin 1983; Steinberg et al. 1989). Indulgent parents communicate well with their children, they often use reasoning rather than other disciplinary strategies to get their compliance, and they encourage dialogue to reach an agreement with their children. In this, indulgent parents are similar to authoritative parents. However, indulgent parents tend not to use coercion or imposition when their children misbehave. Indulgent parents also behave in a more symmetrical way with their children than authoritative parents. They act with their children as if they were mature people able to regulate their behavior for them-selves, and reason with their children about the consequences that have their nega-tive behaviors. The indulgent parent prototype is one that behaves in an affectionate manner, accepting their children's impulses, desires, and actions. They like to share the home decision making with their children, explaining the family rules. They let children regulate their activities as much as possible, helping them with

explanations and reasoning, avoiding the use of any coercive control or imposition. They do not force their children to blindly obey guidelines just because the parents are the authority figures.

The indulgent and authoritative parental socialization styles are both characterized by high levels of acceptance/involvement. However, these new results add to the research support the importance of using practices such as parental warmth and bidirectional communication (Alonso-Geta 2012; García and Gracia 2009, 2010; de la Torre et al. 2011). Nevertheless, only high levels of parental strictness characterize the authoritative style. Although the strictness dimension is considered an important component in some cultures, even more than warmth (Chao 1994, 2001), or along with warmth (Steinberg et al. 1994; Baumrind 1971), these studies found no relationship between high strictness/imposition and better psychosocial adjustment of South European and Latin American adolescents. A possible explanation may be that in the South European and Latin American cultures, considered as horizontal collectivist, even if the children are very connected with their families, the relationship among different generations is expected to be more egalitarian than in vertical collectivist cultures (such as the Asian or Arabic) or individualistic (North American). In this sense, the use of strictness, punishment, imposition and control in South European and Latin American cultures, is perceived by children as meddling and coercive, and not as a component of care and responsibility (Dwairy et al. 2006c; García and Gracia 2009, 2010; Martínez and García 2007, 2008; White and Schnurr 2012). In the South European and Latin American cultures, considering the four parental styles, adolescents from indulgent families, characterized by high acceptance/involvement and low strictness/imposition, always had better outcomes than adolescents from authoritative families. So this suggests that high levels of parental strictness are not related to better adjustment of adolescents in the South European and Latin American cultures. Moreover, adolescents from authoritarian families (characterized by low acceptance/involvement and high strictness/imposition) and those from neglectful families (characterized by low acceptance/involvement and strictness/imposition) obtained the lowest scores in outcomes. These results also confirm previous research that concluded that authoritarian and neglectful parental styles were associated with worse psychosocial adjustment in adolescents (Lamborn et al. 1991; Martínez and García 2007). The indulgent style, characterized by high acceptance/involvement and low strictness/imposition, is the optimum parental style for the South European and Latin American adolescents, and that this relationship is shaped by the cultural context where that socialization takes place.

# References

Alonso-Geta, P. M. P. (2012). Parenting style in Spanish parents with children aged 6 to 14. *Psicothema, 24*, 371–376.

Alsheikh, N., Parameswaran, G., & Elhoweris, H. (2010). Parenting style, self-esteem and student performance in the United Arab Emirates. *Current Issues in Education, 13*, 1–26.

Amato, R. P., & Fowler, F. (2002). Parenting practices, child adjustment, and family diversity. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 64*, 703–716.

Arrindell, W. A., Sanavio, E., Aguilar, G., Sica, C., Hatzichristou, C., Eisemann, M., Recinos, L. A., Gaszner, P., Peter, M., Battagliese, G., Kállai, J., & Van der Ende, J. (1999). The development of a short form of the EMBU: Its appraisal with students in Greece, Guatemala, Hungary and Italy. *Personality and Individual Differences, 27*, 613–628.

Arrindell, W. A., Akkerman, A., Bagés, N., Feldman, L., Caballo, V. E., Oei, T. P. S., Torres, B., Canalda, G., Castro, J., Montgomery, I., Davis, M., Calvo, M. G., Kenardy, J. A., Palenzuela, D. L., Richards, J. C., Leong, C. C., Simón, M. A., & Zaldívar, F. (2005). The Short-EMBU in Australia, Spain, and Venezuela: Factorial invariance and associations with sex roles, self-esteem, and Eysenckian personality dimensions. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment, 21*, 56–66.

Aunola, K., Stattin, H., & Nurmi, J. E. (2000). Parenting styles and adolescents' achievement strategies. *Journal of Adolescence, 23*, 205–222. doi:10.1006/jado.2000.0308.

Bahr, S. J., & Hoffmann, J. P. (2010). Parenting style, religiosity, peers, and adolescent heavy drinking. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, 71*, 539–543.

Baldwin, A. L. (1955). *Behavior and development in childhood*. New York: Dryden.

Barber, B. K. (1996). Parental psychological control: Revisiting a neglected construct. *Child Development, 67*, 3296–3319.

Barton, A. L., & Kirtley, M. S. (2012). Gender differences in the relationships among parenting styles and college student mental health. *Journal of American College Health, 60*, 21–26. doi: org/10.1080/07448481.2011.555933.

Bastaits, K., Ponnet, K., & Mortelmans, D. (2012). Parenting of divorced fathers and the association with children's self-esteem. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 41*(12), 1643–1656. doi:10.1007/s10964-012-9783-6.

Baumrind, D. (1967). Child cares practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behaviour. *Genetic Psychology Monographs, 75*, 43–88.

Baumrind, D. (1971). Harmonious parents and their preschool children. *Developmental Psychology, 4*, 99–102.

Baumrind, D. (1991). Parent styles and adolescent development. In J. Brooks-Gunn, R. Lerner, & A. C. Petersen (Eds.), *The encyclopedia of adolescence* (pp. 746–758). New York: Garland.

Becker, W. C. (1964). Consequences of different kinds of parental discipline. In M. L. Hoffman & L. W. Hoffman (Eds.), *Review of child development research* (Vol. 1, pp. 169–208). New York: Russell Sage.

Becoña, E., Martínez, Ú., Calafat, A., Juan, M., Fernández-Hermida, J. R., & Secades-Villa, R. (2012). Parental styles and drug use: A review. *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy, 19*, 1–10. doi:10.3109/09687637.2011.631060.

Benchaya, M. C., Bisch, N. K., Moreira, T. C., Ferigolo, M., & Barros, H. M. T. (2011). Non-authoritative parents and impact on drug use: The perception of adolescent children. *Jornal de Pediatria, 87*, 238–244.

Berns, R. M. (2011). *Child, family, school, community: Socialization and support* (9th ed.). Wadsworth: Cengage.

Cerdá, J. C. M., Rodríguez, M. A. P., Danet, A., Azarola, A. R., Toyos, N. G., & Román, P. R. (2010). Parent's positioning towards alcohol consumption in 12 to 17 years old adolescents from six urban areas in Spain. *Gaceta Sanitaria, 24*, 53–58.

Chao, R. K. (1994). Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development, 65*, 1111–1119.

Chao, R. K. (2001). Extending research on the consequences of parenting style for Chinese Americans and European Americans. *Child Development, 72*(6), 1832–1843. doi:0009-3920/2001/7206-0014.

Cohen, D. A., & Rice, J. (1997). Parenting styles, adolescent substance use, and academic achievement. *Journal of Drug Education, 27*(2), 199–211.

Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting style as context: An integrative model. *Psychological Bulletin, 113*, 487–496. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.113.3.4.

De la Torre, M. J., Casanova, P. F., García, M. C., Carpio, M. V., & Cerezo, M. T. (2011). Parenting styles and stress in students of compulsory secondary education. *Behavioral Psychology-Psicología Conductual, 19*, 577–590.

Delgado, A. O., Jiménez, Á. P., Sánchez-Queija, I., & Gaviño, F. L. (2007). Maternal and paternal parenting styles: Assessment and relationship with adolescent adjustment. *Anuario de Psicología, 23*, 49–56.

Dwairy, M., & Achoui, M. (2006). Introduction to three cross-regional research studies on parenting styles, individuation, and mental health in Arab societies. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 37*, 221–229. doi:10.1177/0022022106286921.

Dwairy, M., & Menshar, K. E. (2006). Parenting style, individuation, and mental health of Egyptian adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence, 29*, 103–117. doi:10.1016/j. adolescence.2005.03.002.

Dwairy, M., Achoui, M., Abouserfe, R., & Farah, A. (2006a). Parenting styles, individuation, and mental health of Arab adolescents: A third cross-regional research study. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 37*, 262–272. doi:10.1177/0022022106286924.

Dwairy, M., Achoui, M., Abouserie, R., & Farah, A. (2006b). Adolescent-family connectedness among Arabs: A second cross-regional research study. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 37*, 248–261. doi:10.1177/0022022106286923.

Dwairy, M., Achoui, M., Abouserie, R., Farah, A., Sakhleh, A. A., Fayad, M., & Khan, H. K. (2006c). Parenting styles in Arab societies: A first cross-regional research study. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 37*, 230–247. doi:10.1177/ 002202 210 62 86922.

Espino, J. M. G. (2013). Two sides of intensive parenting: Present and future dimensions in contemporary relations between parents and children in Spain. *Childhood: A Global Journal of Child Research, 20*, 22–36. doi:10.1177/0907568212445225.

Fontaine, A. M., Campos, B., Musitu, G., & García, F. (1994). Family functioning, educational climate and parent-child relations [Fonctions de la famille, climat éducatif et relations parents-enfants]. In P. Durning & J. P. Pourtois (Eds.), *Éducation et famille* (pp. 58–80). Bruxelles: De Boeck.

Garaigordobil, M., & Aliri, J. (2012). Parental socialization styles, parents' educational level, and sexist attitudes in adolescence. *Spanish Journal of Psychology, 15*, 592–603.

García, F., & Gracia, E. (2009). Is always authoritative the optimum parenting style? Evidence from Spanish families. *Adolescence, 44*(173), 101–131.

García, F., & Gracia, E. (2010). What is the optimum parental socialisation style in Spain? A study with children and adolescents aged 10-14 years. *Infancia y Aprendizaje, 33*, 365–384.

García, J. F., Gracia, E., Fuentes, M. C., Lila, M., & Pascual, J. (2010). Educational innovation in research methodology: Improving students' scientific skills and attitudes. *Escritos de Psicología, 3*(4), 1–10.

Gavazzi, S. M. (2011). *Families with adolescents: Bridging the gaps between theory, research, and practice*. New York: Springer.

García, F., Molpeceres, M. Á., Musitu, G., Allatt, P., Fontaine, A. M., Campos, B., & Arango, G. (1994). Assessment of family socialization. In G. Musitu & P. Allatt (Eds.), *Psychology of the family* (pp. 295–320). Valencia: Editorial Albatros.

Gracia, E., García, F., & Lila, M. (2007). *Family socialization and psychosocial adjustment: A transversal analysis through three psychological disciplines* [Socialización familiar y ajuste psicosocial: un análisis transversal desde tres disciplinas de la psicología]. Valencia: PUV.

Gracia, E., Fuentes, M. C., & García, F. (2010). Neighborhood risk, parental socialization styles, and adolescent conduct problems. *Intervención Psicosocial, 19*, 265–278.

Gracia, E., Fuentes, M. C., García, F., & Lila, M. (2012). Perceived neighborhood violence, parenting styles, and developmental outcomes among Spanish adolescents. *Journal of Community Psychology, 40*, 1004–1021.

Grusec, J. E., Rudy, D., & Martini, T. (1997). Parenting cognitions and child outcomes: An overview and implications for children's internalization of values. In J. E. Grusec & L. Kuczynski (Eds.), *Parenting and children's internalization of values: A handbook of contemporary theory* (pp. 259–282). New York: Wiley.

Hindin, M. J. (2005). Family dynamics, gender differences and educational attainment in Filipino adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence, 28*, 299–316.

Kazemi, A., Ardabili, H. E., & Solokian, S. (2010). The association between social competence in adolescents and mothers' parenting style: A cross sectional study on Iranian girls. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 27*, 395–403. doi:10.1007/s 10560-010-0213-x.

Kovacs, E., & Piko, B. F. (2010). Does religion count? Religiousness and family life among Hungarian high school students. In C. L. Goossens (Ed.), *Family life: Roles, bonds and impact* (pp. 139–155). Hauppauge: Nova.

Kremers, S. P., Brug, J., de Vries, H., & Engels, R. C. M. E. (2003). Parenting style and adolescent fruit consumption. *Appetite, 41*, 43–50.

Lamborn, S. D., Mounts, N. S., Steinberg, L., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1991). Patterns of competence and adjustment among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child Development, 62*, 1049–1065. doi:10.1111/j. 1467-8624.1991.tb01588.x.

Levine, L. E., & Munsch, J. (2010). *Child development: An active learning approach*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Liem, J. H., Cavell, E. C., & Lustig, K. (2010). The influence of authoritative parenting during adolescence on depressive symptoms in young adulthood: Examining the mediating roles of self-development and peer support. *Journal of Genetic Psychology, 171*, 73–92. doi:10.1080/00221320903300379.

Lila, M., & Gracia, E. (2005). Determinantes de la aceptacion-rechazo parental [Determinants of parental acceptance-rejection]. *Psicothema, 17*, 107–111.

Lila, M., García, F., & Gracia, E. (2007). Perceived paternal and maternal acceptance and children's outcomes in Colombia. *Social Behavior and Personality, 35*, 115–124.

López-Jáuregui, A., & Oliden, P. E. (2009). Adaptation of the ESPA29 parental socialization styles scale to the Basque language: Evidence of validity. *Spanish Journal of Psychology, 12*, 737–745.

Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, J. A. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction. In P. H. Mussen (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology* (Vol. 4, pp. 1–101). New York: Wiley.

Marchetti, B. (1997). *Self-concept and revisiting live in old age* [Concetto di se'relazioni familiari e valori]. Master's thesis, University of Bologna, Italy. Retrieved from II Ponte Vecchio.

Martínez, I., & García, J. F. (2007). Impact of parenting styles on adolescents' self-esteem and internalization of values in Spain. *Spanish Journal of Psychology, 10*, 338–348.

Martínez, I., & García, J. F. (2008). Internalization of values and self-esteem among Brazilian teenagers from authoritative, indulgent, authoritarian, and neglectful homes. *Adolescence, 43*(169), 13–29.

Martínez, I., García, J. F., & Yubero, S. (2007). Parenting styles and adolescents' self-esteem in Brazil. *Psychological Reports, 100*, 731–745. doi:10.2466/pr0.100.3.731-745.

Martínez, I., García, J. F., Camino, L., & Camino, C. P. S. (2011). Parental socialization: Brazilian adaptation of the ESPA29 scale [Socialização parental: adaptação ao Brasil da escala ESPA29]. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica, 24*, 640–647.

Martínez, I., García, F., Musitu, G., & Yubero, S. (2012). Family socialization practices: Factor confirmation of the Portuguese version of a scale for their measurement. *Revista de Psicodidáctica, 17*, 159–178.

Montgomery, C., Fisk, J. E., & Craig, L. (2008). The effects of perceived parenting style on the propensity for illicit drug use: The importance of parental warmth and control. *Drug and Alcohol Review, 27*, 640–649. doi:10.1080/09595230802392790.

Musitu, G., & García, J. F. (2001). *Escala de Socialización Parental en la Adolescencia (ESPA29)*. Madrid: TEA Ediciones.

Musitu, G., & García, J. F. (2004). Consecuencias de la socialización familiar en la cultura española [Consequences of the family socialization in the Spanish culture]. *Psicothema, 16*, 297–302.

Perris, C., Jacobsson, L., Lindström, G., von Knorring, L., & Perris, H. (1980). Development of a new inventory for assessing memories of parental rearing behaviour. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavia, 61*, 265–274.

Puskar, K. R., Bernardo, L. M., Ren, D., Haley, T. M., Tark, K. H., Switala, J., & Siemon, L. (2010). Self-esteem and optimism in rural youth: Gender differences. *Contemporary Nurse, 34*, 190–198.

Radziszewska, B., Richardson, J. L., Dent, C. W., & Flay, B. R. (1996). Parenting style and adolescent depressive symptoms, smoking, and academic achievement: Ethnic, gender, and SES differences. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 19*(3), 289–305.

Rohner, R. P. (1989). *Parental Acceptance-Rejection I Control Questionnaire (PARQI Control)*. Storrs: Rohner Research.

Rohner, R. P., & Khaleque, A. (2003). Reliability and validity of the parental control scale: A meta-analysis of cross-cultural and intracultural studies. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 34*, 643–649.

Rohner, R. P., Saavedra, J., & Granum, E. O. (1978). Development and validation of the Parental Acceptance Rejection Questionnaire: Test manual. *JSAS Catalogue of Selected Documents in Psychology, 8*, 7–8.

Rudy, D., & Grusec, J. E. (2001). Correlates of authoritarian parenting in individualist and collectivist cultures and implications for understanding the transmission of values. *Journal of Cross Cultural Psychology, 32*, 202–212.

Schaefer, E. S. (1959). A circumplex model for maternal behavior. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 59*, 226–235.

Schaefer, E. S. (1965). Children's reports of parental behavior: An inventory. *Child Development, 36*, 413–424.

Sears, R. R., Maccoby, E. E., & Levin, H. (1957). *Patterns of child rearing*. Evanston: Row, Peterson.

Sigelman, C. K., & Rider, E. A. (2012). *Life-span human development* (7th ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Silk, J. S., Morris, A. S., Kanaya, T., & Steinberg, L. (2003). Psychological control and autonomy granting: Opposite ends of a continuum or distinct constructs? *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 13*, 113–128.

Smetana, J. G. (1995). Parenting styles and conceptions of parental authority during adolescence. *Child Development, 66*, 299–316.

Spera, C. (2005). A review of the relationship among parenting practices, parenting styles, and adolescent school achievement. *Educational Psychology Review, 17*, 125–146. doi:10.1007/s10648-005-3950-1.

Steinberg, L. (2005). Psychological control: Style or substance? In J. G. Smetana (Ed.), *New directions for child and adolescent development: Changes in parental authority during adolescence* (pp. 71–78). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Steinberg, L., Elmen, J. D., & Mounts, N. S. (1989). Authoritative parenting, psychosocial maturity, and academic success among adolescents. *Child Development, 60*(6), 1424–1436.

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Dornbusch, S. M., & Darling, N. (1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent achievement: Authoritative parenting, school involvement, and encouragement to succeed. *Child Development, 63*, 1266–1281.

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Darling, N., Mounts, N. S., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1994). Over-time changes in adjustment and competence among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child Development, 65*, 754–770. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.1994.tb00781.x.

Symonds, P. M. (1939). *The psychology of parent-child relationships*. New York: Appleton.

Turkel, Y. D., & Tezer, E. (2008). Parenting styles and learned resourcefulness of Turkish adolescents. *Adolescence, 43*(169), 143–152.

Villalobos, J. A., Cruz, A. V., & Sanchez, P. R. (2004). Parental styles and psychosocial development in high school students. *Revista Mexicana de Psicologia, 21*, 119–129.

Weiten, W., Dunn, D. S., & Hammer, E. Y. (2012). *Psychology applied to modern life: Adjustment in the 21st century* (10th ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

White, J., & Schnurr, M. P. (2012). Developmental psychology. In F. T. L. Leong, W. E. Pickren, M. M. Leach, & A. J. Marsella (Eds.), *Internationalizing the psychology curriculum in the United States* (pp. 51–73). New York: Springer.

Wolfradt, U., Hempel, S., & Miles, J. N. V. (2003). Perceived parenting styles, depersonalization, anxiety and coping behaviour in adolescents. *Personality and Individual Differences, 34*, 521–532.

# Parent, Peers, and Adolescent Outcomes: Interactions and Cultural Variations

**Ioakim Boutakidis and Eli Lieber**

## Background

While parents and their parenting remain critical components in children's development (see Sroufe 2002 for a review), research conducted over the past two decades has also made it clear that the influence of other social entities become increasingly important in key outcomes, such as academic achievement, delinquency and socioemotional development (Henry et al. 2001). Nowhere is this more apparent than in the transition into adolescence, commonly identified as beginning around 8 to 9 years of age which is often marked by an increase in risky behaviors (Angold and Rutter 1992; Brody and Ge 2001). Ironically, it was research in the field of behavioral genetics and not the more traditional environmentally focused developmental schools that first identified these various 'non-shared' environmental factors through monozygotic twin studies (see Mekertichian and Bowes 1996 for a review). Among these, the most important appears to be peers (Harris 1995).

As children move from late childhood into adolescence, they spend an increasing percentage of their time interacting with their peers, and not coincidentally, less time with their parents (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 1984; Larson and Richards 1991; Laursen et al. 1996). Part of this shift is driven by normative identity development—a principal process of adolescence and one which challenges emerging adolescents with the increasing salience of impression management issues (Leary and Kowalski 1990; Tetlock and Manstead 1985). Specifically, adolescents become much more

I. Boutakidis (✉)
Department of Child and Adolescent Studies, California State University, Fullerton, USA
e-mail: iboutakidis@fullerton.edu

E. Lieber
Semel Institute, Center for Culture and Health, Co-Director of Fieldwork
and Qualitative Data Research Laboratory, University of California,
Los Angeles, USA

concerned about competence, both social and behavioral, which manifests itself as a desire to behave and think in ways congruent with their peers (Buchanan et al. 1992). This specific peer influence (as opposed to the importance of social relationships in general) begins to manifest as a major contributor to developmental outcomes sometime in middle childhood. From that point forward, the increase in autonomy-seeking behaviors coupled with maturing identity development lead to a renegotiation of family relationships (Collins and Laursen 2004). All of these trends conspire to reduce parental influence as peer influence plays an increasingly powerful role in adolescent development. It is important to point out that this is typical not only in the Western nations that this has been most studied in, but cross-culturally as well (Hill 2012; Soenens et al. 2007). Behavioral geneticists and evolutionary psychologists have argued that this is a species-wide adaptation given the importance in human life of learning to interact with one's similarly aged peers (Geary and Bjorklund 2000). Cross-cultural consistency in this phenomenon, therefore, would be expected. In point of fact, researchers have begun to assess the genetic heritability of peer group characteristics.

So where does the propensity to develop particular peer relationships come from? Research examining the genetic heritability of peer associations is still in its early stages. Jacobsen and Row (1999) conducted one of the earliest studies finding that the quality of peer associations at school was moderately heritable in a representative sample of U.S. adolescents.

A more comprehensive study among British adolescent twins found that heritability accounted for between .21 and .41 of the variance of the friendship quality, such as companionship, guidance, and intimate exchange (Pike and Atzaba-Poria 2003). Finally, in a study that combined two well-regarded twin datasets (The Nonshared Environment and Adolescent Development Project and the Colorado Adoption Project), association with college-oriented peers was found to be significantly heritable, although peer popularity and peer delinquency were mostly associated with nonshared environmental factors (Iervolino et al. 2002).

## Peer Influences on Adolescent Development

There are both universals and notable differences across cultures in regard to peer influence on child and adolescent outcomes. The influence of peers on maladaptive behaviors has long been studied and appears to be a fairly universal phenomenon across ethnic groups. Socializing with peers engaged in various delinquent behaviors, such as smoking, substance abuse (alcohol, drugs), or interpersonal aggression predisposes adolescents to subsequent similar behaviors (Griesler et al. 2002; Henry et al. 2001; Matsueda and Anderson 1998; Shader 2001; Tragesser et al. 2007). And, predictably, adolescents' associations with positive, pro-socially oriented peers tends to produce similarly beneficial outcomes. Furthermore, prosocial peer attachments serve as a protective factor against the increase in antisocial behaviors that often accompany the transition to adolescence (Lansford et al. 2003). However, the degree

of influence or conformity, and which factors may mediate these effects, does appear to vary across cultures and ethnic groups. At the most general level, there is a long history of cross-cultural psychologists broadly dividing national cultures into individualistic and collectivistic orientations. Individualistic cultures promote personal achievement, individual rights, self-esteem and autonomy, whereas, collectivistic cultures promote group needs over individual ones, social harmony or conformity, and self-effacement (Triandis 2001). Given the emphasis on conformity and social harmony, it has been assumed that peer conformity pressures would be greater in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic ones (Chen et al. 1998). However, as is typically the case with cultural comparisons, findings often defy simple categorizations. For example, in one study examining adolescents' valuing of academics and intrinsic academic motivation, Canadian adolescents were significantly more susceptible to peer influence than their Cuban and Spanish counterparts, despite the fact that Cuba and Spain are generally considered more collectivistic than Canada (Vitoroulis et al. 2011). In addition, other person-level factors often mediate broader group parameters. A study comparing Canadian and Chinese adolescents found that interdependent self-construal (a person-level attribute characteristic of those in collectivistic societies), self-esteem, and self-monitoring, all affected susceptibility to peer influence in different ways for each cultural group (Yang and Laroche 2010). For example, higher self-esteem was associated with lower susceptibility to peer influence for Canadian adolescents, whereas no significant association was found for Chinese adolescents (Yang and Laroche 2010). Chinese adolescents pose a particularly interesting case in relation to peer influence. As already noted, one would expect that the emphasis on group harmony and group cooperation would appear to predispose Chinese adolescents to greater vulnerability to peer conformity pressures. However, there is a powerful mitigating factor that may work to counter this proclivity. Confucian values related to honoring one's parents and being obedient to them even beyond the adolescent stage (Yeh 2003) are still powerful forces in Chinese culture despite the modernization of Chinese communities across the globe (Lieber et al. 2004). The greater emphasis on parental obedience in the context of a Confucian-influenced sociocultural environment may counter the greater conformity pressure from peers. This highlights the importance of examining the role of parenting in any examination of peer influence, cross-culturally or otherwise.

## Parenting Influences on the Influence of Peers

The effects of parenting practices and beliefs have often been examined in relation to peer influence (see Ladd and Pettit 2002). Two theoretical frameworks underlie much of the research on this topic. The broader of the two is Social Learning Theory, first developed by Albert Bandura (Bandura and Adams 1977). The basic premise is that social relationships of all types will reciprocally affect one another via modeling and social learning. A number of studies have confirmed these associations, although the effect sizes have generally been modest (see Parke et al. 2002 for a

review). Although this theory and its early validations were carried out primarily in the United States, subsequent work appears to support cross-cultural generalizability. For example, a longitudinal study conducted on 350 Italian adolescents found that open parental communication with parents predicted greater self-efficacy in adolescents, and as a consequence, greater resistance to negative peer pressure (Caprara et al. 2002).

The second is attachment theory, first developed to better understand the critical components of the early parent-child relationship (Bretherton 1996). John Bowlby combined evolutionary, developmental, and psychoanalytic theoretical components in order to conceptualize how the emotional needs of a child are satisfied through secure base relationships with caregivers (Bretherton 1996). Bowlby's initial formulations were prompted by his belief that psychoanalytic theories were not properly addressing the damage of inadequate parental care. However, in the coming decades, his attachment theory came to be the center of the most important research being done on parent-child attachment in general (Benson et al. 2006). Bowlby also believed that the effects of early attachment persisted throughout life (Bowlby 1988) and subsequent research has provided considerable confirmation for his prediction. For example, the quality of early attachment is found to be associated with the quality of later peer relationships (Youngblade and Belsky 1992). The underlying premise is that the early parent-child relationship creates an internal working model or schema that helps guide future relationships, including those with peers. Initially, most of the research examining the implications of the early attachment bond with later relationships focused primarily on children who had only reached the middle childhood stage and not much beyond (Schneider et al. 2001). A more recent meta-analytic review that focused exclusively on studies with adolescents found very consistent results, despite variations in methodological approaches (Benson et al. 2006). Across 53 studies, which included over 12,000 participants, the overall effect size between the quality of parent-child attachment and adolescent peer relations was found to be approximately one half a standard deviation. This finding did, however, vary somewhat depending on the specific outcomes examined. For example, the effect size was larger for predicting adolescent best-friend relationship quality and a bit smaller for social competence outcomes. However, there was strong cross-cultural consistency in the findings. For example, the average effect size (mean $d$) in predicting the quality of the best friend relationship was .59 for 24 North American studies and .58 in the 12 international studies (Benson et al. 2006).

Studies have also divided the type of influence parents exert on their child's peer choices into direct and indirect. Indirect effects generally are identified as those that arise out of the parenting style overall, as opposed to specific beliefs, routines, or behaviors that focus directly on peers or peer-related activities. The findings regarding indirect effects are not surprising given the history of research in the general effects of variation in parenting styles. Children whose parents are warm, supportive and responsive also tend to have prosocially-oriented peers. In one longitudinal study with over 12,000 participants, children in early adolescence were more likely to experience negative peer pressure when their family relationships were also poor (Sullivan 2006). Another study found that adolescents who belonged to non-delinquent

peer groups were also more likely to receive authoritative parenting (parenting that is warm, responsive, and not overly harsh in discipline), as opposed to authoritarian (overly harsh, controlling), indulgent (warm, but with no limit setting) or uninvolved (Durbin et al. 1993). Mounts (2002) also found an interaction between parenting style and peer management on antisocial behavior, such that a management style involving overt guiding by parents was positively associated with adolescent drug use in uninvolved families, but negatively associated with drug use in authoritative families. It is also worth noting that the variations in parenting style and outcomes were not related to absolute mean differences in peer management across parenting styles. Specifically, no mean differences in levels of prohibiting or guiding were found across the four parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and uninvolved) assessed in this study of 300 9th graders (Mounts 2002). Supportive parenting may, however, also have another pathway in affecting peer associations. Parenting that does not rely on psychological control is associated with improved social competence in adolescence, which in turn leads to more prosocial peer interactions. Indeed there is ample evidence that this finding is generalizable across a variety of national cultures, including those of Australia, Japan, and the United States (see Hart 2007).

The other popular focus has been on the extent to which parents can directly influence their child's choice of peer networks by attempting to manage, initiate, or prohibit particular peer associations (Tilton-Weaver and Galambos 2003). Examples of parent's direct influence comes by way of their envisioning, structuring and encouraging social situations that they believe will facilitate desirable peer interactions. Such influence can take place through parents advising their children on what to look for in peers, suggesting—and facilitating—particular activities, and by directly monitoring peer interactions with an eye for intervening if they feel it would be important to do so (see Ladd and Pettit 2002, for a review). Researchers have identified three specific peer management strategies that have guided how these particular parental behaviors are organized for study: prohibiting, guiding, and supporting (Mounts 2004; Tilton-Weaver and Galambos 2003). Of the three, a supportive management style, which encourages certain peer associations and provides a facilitating environment, appears to result in the most positive peer outcomes including less interaction with antisocial peers (Tilton-Weaver and Galambos 2003). On the other hand, studies indicate that parents that attempt to prohibit unfavorable peer associations may actually end up increasing them (Mounts 2002; Tilton-Weaver and Galambos 2003). And, again, these outcomes speak to the particular resistance adolescents exhibit in the face of explicit psychological or behavior controls.

Parents, understandably, may be concerned over this loss of influence over their adolescent's behavior as peer influence increases. However, as the research previously discussed indicates, how parents react to this rebalancing of influence on the one hand, and increase in peer conformity on the other, is important in determining how successfully this phase is negotiated for all involved. There is an understandable temptation for parents to intervene aggressively in or manage an adolescent's peer groups given the prevailing fears of negative peer pressure and the dangers inherent

in the activities adolescents are known to engage in. Studies have shown, however, that adolescents of various ethnicities typically regard their peer choices and affiliations as falling within a zone of personal autonomy, and therefore may react negatively at attempts at overt manipulation by parents (Smetana 2006; Smetana et al. 2006). However, just like the other parent-peer interactions discussed earlier, this adolescent expectation may also vary by cultural orientation. There is already evidence that adolescent perceptions may go a long way in explaining the association between the parental management strategy of prohibiting and increased association with delinquent peers (Smetana and Daddis 2002). Specifically, adolescents perceive prohibiting of peers by parents as a negative form of psychological control and overly intrusive. A study of 690 Belgian adolescents directly tested this prediction by assessing the moderating quality of psychological control (Soenens et al. 2007). The researchers found that parental peer management strategies were actually associated with positive peer outcomes if the adolescents on whom these strategies were attempted did not view them as psychologically controlling.

How these adolescent perceptions are formed is clearly a matter of socialization, which naturally prompts questions regarding cultural variations. Although no empirical work has been undertaken on the matter, a reasonable conjecture may be that in more collectivistic cultures, the greater emphasis on parental obedience and filial piety (Triandis and Suh 2002) may allow for greater parental intervention in peer choice. On the other hand, in more individualistic cultures, the greater parental emphasis on fostering personal identity and autonomy in children (Triandis and Suh 2002) may result in a lower threshold for parental involvement. However, regardless of cultural orientation, there is the necessity for parents to socialize their children so that they develop the necessary socio-emotional competencies to make friends in the first place. Social isolation and loneliness is a powerful risk factor for later internalizing and externalizing problems for adolescents, regardless of the particular national culture they are members of (Hill 2012).

As a final thought, it is important to remember that parent and peer associations continue to function as independent predictors and need not interact in affecting particular adolescent outcomes. And this too may vary by ethnic group. In one interesting study of 1,537 mother-child dyads in the United States, ineffective parenting (defined as low on closeness and monitoring) was associated with teen smoking only for White families and not for Hispanic or African American ones (Griesler et al. 2002). Clearly there is more to learn about how these factors play out under complex social, cultural, and historical circumstances.

## Summary and Concluding Remarks

The research discussed above makes a compelling case that parental strategies that emphasize supporting healthy peer relationships, as opposed to prohibiting or overtly guiding them, usually promote healthier peer interactions. Furthermore, the indirect parental effects, whether they are based upon modeling, attachment, or

generally good parenting, are also effective in promoting the wide panoply of social skills, behaviors, and perspectives that help ensure healthy peer associations.

A particular style of parenting that is effective in one context or domain may not be effective in another. There is an inherent danger in making prescriptives when the goal is to produce some specific developmental outcome, such as healthy peer relationships. However, there are parental behaviors that appear to cut across styles and particular domains, as they relate to promoting healthy peer influence. For example, regardless of the culture or ethnicity in question, establishing human relationships is important, and therefore, anything that helps promote the social competence of children and adolescents will in turn improve their peer associations (Hart 2007).

Ultimately, whatever strategies parents employ, there are limits to what parents can and, perhaps should, do in managing their adolescents' relationships. Some of these limits involve the arbitrary variations in natural human relationships and their opportunities. And, as previously noted, there are strong genetic forces that influence the parenting that children receive, the peer choices they make, and even the interaction between the two on other developmental outcomes. For example, in a study by Pike and Eley (2009) examining over 1,000 British twin pairs (328 monozygotic and 773 dyzogotic), parental discipline, friendship quality, and peer group characteristics were all moderately to substantially heritable. Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, a substantial portion of the variance in peer quality normally attributed to parenting practices, was in fact due to adolescents' genetic propensities. Put another way, it is critical to remain mindful of how the overlap between parenting and peer associations may simply be attributed to the shared variance accounted for by common genetic heritability.

Finally, and perhaps optimistically, parents and researchers alike should not create a monster out of negative peer conformity pressures. In surveys of industrialized countries, adolescent rates of key maladaptive outcomes often associated with negative peer pressure, such as teen pregnancy, general drug use, and interpersonal violence, are at decades low rates (Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice 2010; Singh and Darroch 2000; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2012). While fears associated with anything that may increase maladaptive outcomes may be particularly salient to parents, overreacting to negative peer conformity pressures, as opposed to more proactive efforts to facilitate healthy relations, may do more harm than good.

# References

Angold, A., & Rutter, M. (1992). Effects of age and pubertal status on depression in a large clinical sample. *Development and Psychopathology, 4*, 5–28.

Bandura, A., & Adams, N. E. (1977). Analysis of self-efficacy theory of behavioral change. *Cognitive Therapy and Research, 1*(4), 287–310. doi:10.1007/BF01663995.

Benson, M. J., McWey, L. M., & Ross, J. J. (2006). Parental attachment and peer relations in adolescence: A meta-analysis. *Research in Human Development, 3*(1), 33–43. doi:10.1207/s15427617rhd0301_4.

Bowlby, J. (1988). *A secure base: Parent-child attachment and healthy human development*. New York: Basic Books.

Bretherton, I. (1996). The origins of attachment theory: John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth. *Developmental Psychology, 28*, 759–775.

Brody, G. H., & Ge, X. (2001). Linking parenting processes and self-regulation to psychological functioning and alcohol use during early adolescence. *Journal of Family Psychology, 15*, 82–94.

Buchanan, C. M., Eccles, J. S., & Becker, J. B. (1992). Are adolescents the victim of raging hormones: Evidence for activational effects of hormones on moods and behavior at adolescence. *Psychological Bulletin, 111*, 62–107.

Caprara, G., Regalia, C., & Bandura, A. (2002). Longitudinal impact of perceived self-regulatory efficacy on violent conduct. *European Psychologist, 7*(1), 63–69. doi:10.1027//1016-9040.7.1.63.

Chen, C. C., Chen, X., & Meindl, J. R. (1998). How can cooperation be fostered? The cultural effects of individualism-collectivism. *The Academy of Management Review, 23*(2), 285–304.

Collins, W. A., & Laursen, B. (2004). Parent-adolescent relationships and influences. In R. M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (pp. 331–372). Hoboken: Wiley.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Larson, R. (1984). *Being adolescent*. New York: Basic Books.

Durbin, D. L., Darling, N., Steinberg, L., & Brown, B. B. (1993). Parenting style and peer group membership among European-American adolescents. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 3*, 87–100.

Geary, D. C., & Bjorklund, D. F. (2000). Evolutionary developmental psychology. *Child Development, 71*(1), 57–65.

Griesler, P. C., Kandel, D. B., & Davies, M. (2002). Ethnic differences in predictors of initiation and persistence of adolescent cigarette smoking in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research, 4*, 79–93. doi:10.1080/14622200 110103197.

Harris, J. R. (1995). Where is the child's environment? A group socialization theory of development. *Psychological Review, 102*(3), 458–489.

Hart, C. H. (2007). Why are parents important? Linking parenting to childhood social skills in Australia, China, Japan, Russia, and the United States. In A. Loveless & T. B. Holman (Eds.), *The family in the new millennium: World voices supporting the 'natural' clan* (The place of family in human society, Vol. 1, pp. 227–247). Westport: Praeger Publishers/Greenwood Publishing Group.

Henry, D. B., Tolan, P. H., & Gorman-Smith, D. (2001). Longitudinal family and peer group effects on violence and nonviolent delinquency. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 30*, 172–186.

Hill, N. E. (2012). Parent–child and child–peer close relationships: Understanding parental influences on peer relations from a cultural context. In L. Campbell & T. J. Loving (Eds.), *Interdisciplinary research on close relationships: The case for integration* (pp. 109–134). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. doi:10.1037/13486-005.

Iervolino, A. C., Pike, A., Manke, B., Reiss, D., Hetherington, E., & Plomin, R. (2002). Genetic and environmental influences in adolescent peer socialization: Evidence from two genetically sensitive designs. *Child Development, 73*(1), 162–174. doi:10.1111/1467-8624.00398.

Jacobson, K. C., & Rowe, D. C. (1999). Genetic and environmental influences on the relationships between family connectedness, school connectedness, and adolescent depressed mood: Sex differences. *Developmental Psychology, 35*, 926–939.

Ladd, G. W., & Pettit, G. S. (2002). Parenting and the development of children's peer relationships. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting* (Practical issues in parenting 2nd ed., Vol. 5, pp. 269–309). Mahwah: Erlbaum.

Lansford, J. E., Criss, M. M., Pettit, G. S., Dodge, K. A., & Bates, J. E. (2003). Friendship quality, peer group affiliation, and peer antisocial behavior as moderators of the link between negative parenting and adolescent externalizing behavior. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 13*, 161–184.

Larson, R., & Richards, M. H. (1991). Daily companionship in late childhood and early adolescence: Changing developmental contexts. *Child Development, 62*, 284–300.

Laursen, R. W., Richards, M. H., Moneta, G., Holmbeck, G., & Duckett, E. (1996). Changes in adolescents' daily interactions with their families from ages 10 to 18: Disengagement and transformation. *Developmental Psychology, 32*, 744–754.

Leary, M. R., & Kowalski, R. M. (1990). Impression management: A literature review and two-component model. *Psychological Bulletin, 107*(1), 34–47.

Lieber, E., Nihira, K., & Mink, I. T. (2004). Filial piety, modernization, and the challenges of raising children for Chinese immigrants: Quantitative and qualitative evidence. *Ethos, 32*(3), 324–347.

Matsueda, R. L., & Anderson, K. (1998). The dynamics of delinquent peers and delinquent behavior. *Criminology, 36*, 269–308.

Mekertichian, L. K., & Bowes, J. M. (1996). Does parenting matter? The challenge of the behavioural geneticists. *Journal of Family Studies, 2*(2), 131–145. doi:10.5172/jfs.2.2.131.

Mounts, N. S. (2002). Parental management of adolescent peer relationships in context: The role of parenting style. *Journal of Family Psychology, 16*(1), 58–69. doi:10.1037/0893-3200.16.1.58.

Mounts, N. S. (2004). Adolescents' perceptions of parental management of peer relationships in an ethnically diverse sample. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 19*, 446–467.

Parke, R. D., Simpkins, S. D., McDowell, D. J., Kim, M., Killian, C., Dennis, J., & Rah, Y. (2002). Relative contributions of families and peers to children's social development. In P. K. Smith & C. H. Hart (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of childhood social development* (pp. 156–177). Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Pike, A., & Atzaba-Poria, N. (2003). Do sibling and friend relationships share the same temperamental origins? A twin study. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 44*, 598–611.

Pike, A., & Eley, T. C. (2009). Links between parenting and extra-familial relationships: Nature or nurture? *Journal of Adolescence, 32*, 519–533. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2008.07.002.

Schneider, B. H., Atkinson, L., & Tardif, C. (2001). Child-parent attachment and children's peer relations: A quantitative review. *Developmental Psychology, 37*, 86–100.

Shader, M. (2001). *Risk factors for delinquency: An overview*. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Singh, S., & Darroch, J. E. (2000). Adolescent pregnancy and childbearing: Levels and trends in developed countries. *Family Planning Perspectives, 32*, 14–23.

Smetana, J. G. (2006). Social domain theory: Consistencies and variations in children's moral and social judgments. In M. Killen & J. G. Smetana (Eds.), *Handbook of moral development* (pp. 119–154). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Smetana, J. G., & Daddis, C. (2002). Domain-specific antecedents of parental psychological control and monitoring: The role of parenting beliefs and practices. *Child Development, 73*, 563–580.

Smetana, J. G., Metzger, A., Gettman, D. C., & Campione-Barr, N. (2006). Disclosure and secrecy in adolescent-parent relationships. *Child Development, 77*, 201–217.

Soenens, B., Vansteenkiste, M., Smits, I., Lowet, K., & Goossens, L. (2007). The role of intrusive parenting in the relationship between peer management strategies and peer affiliation. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 28*(3), 239–249. doi:10.1016/j.appdev.2007.02.003.

Sroufe, L. (2002). From infant attachment to promotion of adolescent autonomy: Prospective, longitudinal data on the role of parents in development. In J. G. Borkowski, S. Ramey, & M. Bristol-Power (Eds.), *Parenting and the child's world: Influences on academic, intellectual, and social-emotional development* (pp. 187–202). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Sullivan, C. J. (2006). Early adolescent delinquency: Assessing the role of childhood problems, family environment, and peer pressure. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 4*, 291–313. doi:10.1177/1541204006292656.

Tetlock, P. E., & Manstead, A. S. (1985). Impression management versus intrapsychic explanations in social psychology: A useful dichotomy? *Psychological Review, 92*(1), 59–77.

Tilton-Weaver, L. C., & Galambos, N. L. (2003). Adolescents' characteristics and parents' beliefs as predictors of parents' peer management behaviors. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 13*, 269–300.

Tragesser, S. L., Beauvais, F., Swaim, R. C., Edwards, R. W., & Oetting, E. R. (2007). Parental monitoring, peer drug involvement, and marijuana use across three ethnicities. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 38*(6), 670–694.

Triandis, H. C. (2001). Individualism-collectivism and personality. *Journal of Personality, 69*(6), 907–924.

Triandis, H. C., & Suh, E. M. (2002). Cultural influences on personality. *Annual Review of Psychology, 53*, 133–160.

Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. (2010, April). *Children, youth and crime*. Salvador: Working paper prepared by the Secretariat.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2012). *World drug report 2012*. Retrieved from http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/WDR2012/WDR_2012_web_small.pdf

Vitoroulis, I., Schneider, B. H., Vasquez, C. C., del Pilar Soteras de Toro, M., & Santana Gonzales, Y. (2011). Perceived parental and peer support in relation to Canadian, Cuban, and Spanish adolescent's valuing of academics and intrinsic academic motivation. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 43*(5), 704–722. doi:10.1177/0022022111405657.

Yang, Z., & Laroche, M. (2010). Parental responsiveness and adolescent susceptibility to peer influence: A cross-cultural investigation. *Journal of Business Research, 64*, 979–987. doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2010.11.021.

Yeh, K. (2003). The beneficial and harmful effects of filial piety: An integrative analysis. In K. Yang, K. Hwang, P. B. Pedersen, & I. Daibo (Eds.), *Progress in Asian social psychology: Conceptual and empirical contributions* (pp. 67–82). Westport: Praeger Publishers/Greenwood Publishing Group.

Youngblade, L. M., & Belsky, J. (1992). Parent-child antecedents of 5-year-olds' close friendships: A longitudinal analysis. *Developmental Psychology, 28*, 700–713.

# Parents' Aggression Toward Children and Children's Own Aggression

**Jennifer E. Lansford**

The topic of parenting and aggression can be approached from two main perspectives. The first involves understanding parents' aggression toward children. The second involves understanding how parenting is related to children's own aggression. This chapter will be organized around these two central perspectives, defining aggression as behavior that is intended to hurt someone else.

As in other domains of psychological research (Arnett 2008), research on aggression has been conducted primarily using North American and Western European samples. For example, in Archer's (2004) meta-analysis of gender differences in aggression, 73 % of studies included participants only from the United States, an additional 17 % of studies included participants from Canada or the United Kingdom, and only 10 % of studies included participants from other countries (and only 2 % of these studies included participants from developing countries). Likewise, in Card and colleagues' (2008) meta-analysis, 70 % of the studies were conducted in the United States, 15 % in Canada or the United Kingdom, and 15 % in all other countries (primarily Australia, Finland, and Germany). Therefore, much of the literature summarized in this chapter draws on samples that are not representative of the world's population (Henrich et al. 2010; Norenzayan and Heine 2005), but when studies from countries that have been underrepresented in the research literature are available, an effort has been made to include them.

J.E. Lansford (✉)
Social Science Research Institute and Center for Child
and Family Policy Duke University, Durham, NC, USA
e-mail: Lansford@duke.edu

# Parents' Aggression Toward Children

## *Definitions of Parents' Aggression*

Studies of parents' aggression toward children have focused primarily on physical aggression in the context of corporal punishment or physical abuse. Whether it is possible to distinguish between corporal punishment and physical abuse has been controversial, with some researchers arguing that all corporal punishment is physical abuse (see Whipple and Richey 1997). Researchers who have attempted to distinguish between discipline and abuse have defined corporal punishment as a behavior that is meant to cause physical pain but not injury for the purpose of correcting a child's misbehavior (Straus 1994). Some have been even more specific about what constitutes corporal punishment as opposed to abuse (e.g., swats with an open hand on a child's clothed buttocks; Roberts and Powers 1990). Physical abuse has sometimes been defined as a parenting behavior that leaves bruises or other marks for more than 24 h (Dodge et al. 1990).

Although more research has focused on parents' physical aggression toward children than other forms of aggression, studies that have examined verbal and psychological aggression suggest that these also are problems worthy of attention. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF 2009) has defined yelling and other harsh verbal discipline as psychologically aggressive toward children and has included both physical and other forms of aggression as violations of children's rights to protection from harsh treatment. It is possible that as corporal punishment becomes less accepted as a legitimate means of disciplining children that harsh verbal treatment will become more common. Indeed, the popular press has referred to shouting as the new spanking (Stout 2009). Attempts to reduce parents' aggression toward children should include all forms of aggression, not just physical forms.

## *Cultural Differences in Parents' Aggression Toward Children*

Cultures differ in the extent to which they tolerate, or even encourage, parents' aggression toward children. In a study of parents' childrearing discipline and violence in 24 developing countries (Lansford and Deater-Deckard 2012), 27–38 % of the variance in mothers' belief that it is necessary to use corporal punishment to rear their 2- to 4-year-old child properly was accounted for by the mothers' country of residence. The range of beliefs was wide. For example, only 4 % of mothers in Albania reported believing that it was necessary to use corporal punishment to rear their child properly, whereas 93 % of mothers in Syria reported holding this belief. Reported behaviors also varied widely across countries. For example, 28 % of mothers in Belize compared to 84 % of mothers in Jamaica reported that someone in their household had responded to the child with physical aggression in the last month.

Across countries, there was a disconnect between mothers' beliefs and behaviors, with a greater proportion of mothers reporting that someone in their household had responded to the child with physical aggression than reporting that they believed corporal punishment was necessary to rear the child. In addition to large variability across countries in parents' use of physical aggression toward children and belief in its necessity, there was also variability across countries in parents' use of psychological aggression toward children. For example, 7 % of mothers in Albania reported that someone in their household had yelled at the child or called the child a name such as lazy or stupid in the last month, compared to 89 % of mothers in Yemen. Country of residence accounted for 14–19 % of the variance in mothers' reports of psychological aggression toward their children.

Differences across countries in parents' aggression toward children were predictable from social-demographic features of the countries. In particular, mothers in countries that were higher on the Human Development Index (United Nations Development Programme 2007), which reflects longer life expectancy, higher school enrollment and literacy, and higher gross domestic product, were less likely to report using psychological and physical aggression toward their children than were mothers in countries that were lower on these social-demographic indicators (Lansford and Deater-Deckard 2012). One explanation for this relation is that as parents progress through formal education systems, their beliefs and attitudes change in a way that is more supportive of autonomy and reasoning rather than mere obedience from children (Davis-Kean 2005). These beliefs in turn might promote parents' use of inductive forms of discipline such as offering explanations rather than psychological and physical aggression that might gain the child's immediate compliance but also lead to unintended negative consequences.

Thus, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors vary at the level of individual families as well as at the level of entire countries. These beliefs are sometimes translated into explicit laws and policies. In 1979, Sweden became the first country to legally ban parents' use of corporal punishment of children. Attitudes supportive of the use of corporal punishment began declining even before the legal prohibition and then continued to decline thereafter (from 53 % in 1965 to 26 % in 1978 and to 11 % by 1994; Durrant 1999; Edfeldt 1985; Ziegert 1983). Since the Swedish legal prohibition, 32 additional countries have legally banned the use of corporal punishment in all settings, including at home (www.endcorporalpunishment.org). Supreme Courts in two additional countries (Italy and Nepal) have ruled that corporal punishment is unlawful, although these rulings have not been followed by legislative bans on corporal punishment.

Recent legal prohibitions of corporal punishment have in large part been motivated by the United Nations (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which has been ratified by all except three countries, Somalia, South Sudan and the United States. The CRC outlines three rights of children across the world: the right to survival and development, the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives, and, most relevant to the present discussion, the right to protection from abuse and exploitation (Jones and Welch 2010). The right to protection extends not only to

extreme forms of abuse and exploitation such as forcing children into slavery, hard labor, or serving as soldiers but to corporal punishment in the home. The CRC position is that violence against children, even if it is a spanking framed as "discipline," is never justified and is a violation of children's right to protection (Pinheiro 2006).

Countries that have ratified the CRC are obligated to examine policies and practices related to the treatment of children, and many countries' efforts to meet the standards set forth in the CRC have focused on abolishing or reducing parents' use of corporal punishment of children. In addition to passing legal bans, several countries have national parenting programs that attempt to change parents' attitudes about the appropriateness of corporal punishment and provide them with alternate discipline strategies (Lansford and Bornstein 2007). A review of 40 parenting programs in 33 countries suggested that most of these parenting programs take the form of parent education courses but also take a variety of other forms such as public awareness campaigns (Lansford and Bornstein 2007).

In contrast to legal prohibitions against parents' aggression toward children in some cultures, other cultures tolerate and even encourage it. For example, the "spare the rod, spoil the child" philosophy has been endorsed by some conservative Protestant religious groups. These beliefs might account for the higher rates of corporal punishment of children reported by parents with these religious affiliations (e.g., Baptist, Pentecostal) than other religious affiliations (e.g., Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian; Gershoff et al. 1999).

Several examples illustrate how a given parenting behavior may serve the same or different functions depending on the cultural context in which it is situated (Bornstein 1995). Likewise depending on context, different parenting behaviors may serve the same or different functions. For example, folk remedies such as coining and cupping can leave marks on children's skin that appear to be the result of physical abuse but were inflicted with the intention of healing the child (Hansen 1997; Risser and Mazur 1995). The intended function of these parenting behaviors depends on the cultural context in which they are enacted. Parenting practices sometimes become problematic in one cultural context even though they are not considered problematic in other contexts, such as when a parent immigrates to a new country and continues to engage in parenting behaviors that were acceptable in the country of origin but are considered abusive in the country of destination (Levesque 2000). For instance, in a legal case involving an immigrant mother who made small cuts on her two sons' cheeks, a judge ruled in the mother's favor after learning that the function of the cuts in her native tribe was to initiate the sons into the tribe of her ancestors (Fischer 1998). However, it is important not to take too extreme a position on cultural relativism. Just because a practice is normative and accepted within a cultural group does not automatically make the practice acceptable. There are forms of aggression against children that have been condemned by the international community, despite their prevalence in and acceptance by certain cultural groups (Coleman 1998). Parents' rights to rear their children in a manner consistent with cultural traditions must be balanced with children's rights to protection from abuse.

## *Relations Between Parents' Aggression and Children's Adjustment*

An extensive body of research now demonstrates that both corporal punishment and physical abuse contribute to a range of child behavioral, emotional, and social problems (e.g., Gershoff 2002; Stouthamer-Loeber et al. 2001). There is little disagreement that physical abuse is a risk factor for the development of a number of problems during childhood, adolescence, and into adulthood (Lansford et al. 2007; Widom et al. 2006). More controversial has been whether corporal punishment is also a risk factor for the development of such problems. Larzelere (2000) has argued that links between corporal punishment and children's behavior problems can be accounted for largely by child effects. For example, aggressive children elicit more corporal punishment from their parents than do nonaggressive children, and more of any form of discipline, including "positive" forms such as time-outs, will be related to more child behavior problems because children who misbehave elicit more of all kinds of discipline from their parents (Larzelere and Kuhn 2005). Nevertheless, in the majority of studies that have attempted to address these questions about child effects (e.g., in longitudinal studies that control for initial levels of child behavior problems), corporal punishment is still found to predict an increase in child adjustment problems over time (Berlin et al. 2009; Lansford et al. 2011). In Gershoff's (2002) meta-analysis of 88 studies, the only desirable child outcome associated with corporal punishment was immediate compliance. The other seven outcomes were negative. Parents' corporal punishment of children was associated with more child aggression; delinquent, criminal, and antisocial behaviors; mental health problems; aggressing against one's future spouse or child; and becoming a victim of physical abuse, as well as with less moral internalization and lower parent-child relationship quality (Gershoff 2002).

Given wide differences across countries and cultural groups in beliefs and behaviors related to parents' aggression toward children, it makes sense to consider whether the effects of aggression toward children depend on the cultural context in which it is used. In a study of mothers' use of corporal punishment in China, India, Italy, Kenya, the Philippines, and Thailand, more frequent use of corporal punishment was related to more child aggression and anxiety in all six countries (Lansford et al. 2005). However, normativeness of corporal punishment (operationalized as perceptions of how frequently other parents in the community used corporal punishment and the aggregate across the sample within a country of mothers' reports of how frequently they used corporal punishment) moderated the link between mothers' use of corporal punishment and child aggression and anxiety. The link was weaker in countries in which the use of corporal punishment was more normative than in countries in which the use of corporal punishment was not normative (Lansford et al. 2005). Yet, despite finding that for a given child, the link between corporal punishment and that child's aggression and anxiety is weaker if corporal punishment is culturally normative, cultures in which the use of corporal punishment is normative have higher levels of societal violence overall than do cultures in which the

use of corporal punishment is not normative (Ember and Ember 2005; Lansford and Dodge 2008). One explanation is that if children perceive that corporal punishment is widely accepted within their cultural group, then being corporally punished may not signify to children that they are being rejected by their parents or treated in an unduly harsh way. Therefore, children who are corporally punished in this context in which corporal punishment is normative may not behave more aggressively than other children in that context who are not corporally punished. However, all of the children in the society may internalize cultural norms regarding the appropriateness of corporal punishment and generalize them to the acceptability of using physical aggression to solve problems in other domains of life, resulting in higher levels of societal violence.

Parents' verbal aggression and other non-physical forms of aggression (slamming doors, throwing objects) also have been found to relate to negative child outcomes (Vissing et al. 1991). In a study of mothers and children in China, India, the Philippines, and Thailand, children's perceptions of mothers' hostility mediated the relation between mothers' verbal aggression and children's anxiety and aggression (Lansford et al. 2010). Children were more likely to perceive mothers' verbal aggression as indicating hostility toward the child in countries where the use of verbal aggression was less normative. Thus, there is evidence that parents use a variety of forms of aggression toward their children, that parents' aggression toward children is related to negative child outcomes, and that parents' aggression is situated within broader cultural contexts that vary in their acceptance of aggression.

## Children's Aggression

### *Negative and Positive Parenting and Children's Aggression*

Turning now from the first main perspective in understanding parenting and aggression from the standpoint of parents' aggression toward children, a second main perspective from which to approach the topic of parenting and aggression involves understanding how parenting is related to children's own aggression. These two perspectives are closely linked because parents' aggression toward children is highly predictive of children's own aggression. Several theoretical models of the development of aggression and a large body of empirical evidence describe the importance of parents in the developmental origins of children's aggression. For example, basic social learning models describe how behaviors are modeled and learned in the context of social interactions (Bandura 1977). Thus, parents who themselves behave aggressively teach their children that aggression is an acceptable behavior, and children thereby learn to behave aggressively through their parents' modeling.

Patterson's (1982) theory regarding the development of aggression emphasizes the importance of coercive exchanges between parents and children over time in the genesis of aggressive behavior. These coercive exchanges are bidirectional processes.

For example, a child might begin by making a request of the parent (e.g., candy at the grocery store). In a prototypical exchange, the parent refuses the child's initial request, and the child then escalates the request (whining or crying). The parent may then escalate the refusal (using a harsh tone or yelling at the child). This pattern of increasingly aversive parent and child behaviors continues until either the parent gives in (thus reinforcing the child's aversive behavior and making it more likely that the child will throw temper tantrums or behave in other undesired ways in the future) or until the child stops making requests (sometimes because the interaction has escalated to the point of aggression from the parent toward the child). Patterson has cited this type of coercive exchange as being one of the main mechanisms through which children's antisocial and aggressive behavior develops.

Psychological control is another aspect of parenting that has been implicated in the development of children's aggression (Barber et al. 2005; Kuppens et al. 2009; Mills and Rubin 1998). Psychological control has been defined in terms of manipulation and intrusion into children's emotional and cognitive world through behaviors such as invalidating children's feelings and pressuring them to think in particular ways (Barber 1996). Mills and Rubin (1998) hypothesized that parents' psychological control may lead children to feel angry, which is conducive to the enactment of aggressive behavior.

Although problematic parenting has been linked to the development of children's aggression, positive parenting can prevent or reduce children's aggression. For example, parental responsiveness, nurturance, warmth, and acceptance represent several positive aspects of parenting that are related to less child aggression. These positive aspects of parenting are captured in several theoretical perspectives. From an attachment framework, parents who are responsive to their infants engender feelings of trust and security by conveying to infants that their needs will be met (Ainsworth 1982; Bowlby 1973; De Wolff and van IJzendoorn 1997). Security in the parent-child relationship has then been found to relate to children's more socially competent and less aggressive future behavior. In Rohner's (1986) Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory, the most important predictor of children's adjustment is their perception that they are loved and accepted, rather than rejected, by their parents. Children's perception of parental warmth has been found to mediate the link between parents' corporal punishment and children's adjustment (Rohner et al. 1991), with children at less risk of adjustment problems associated with corporal punishment if they perceived that their parents were warm rather than rejecting. Even parental play-fulness has been related to less aggressive behavior in children (MacDonald and Parke 1984; Parke et al. 1994).

Many preventive interventions for children at risk for the development of aggression and treatment interventions for children who already behave aggressively hinge on the idea that changes in parenting can lead to changes in children's aggression. Therefore, some interventions attempt to effect change in children's aggression indirectly via change in parenting behavior (Beauchaine et al. 2005; Martinez and Forgatch 2001). Parenting behaviors often targeted in such interventions include reducing parents' use of corporal punishment and increasing parents' consistent use of non-punitive forms of discipline, warmth, supervision, and positive engagement

with the child. For example, Martinez and Forgatch (2001) randomly assigned recently divorced mothers of boys to either an intervention or a control group. Mothers in the intervention group were taught to use positive parenting strategies such as monitoring and to decrease negative parenting strategies such as corporal punishment by using alternate discipline strategies (time-out, privilege removal) and by encouraging prosocial behavior through contingent positive reinforcement. Over the course of 30 months, mothers in the control group increased their coercive discipline and decreased their positive parenting, whereas mothers in the intervention group did not. Sons of mothers in the control group likewise increased their externalizing behavior (including aggression) over this time period, whereas sons of mothers in the intervention group remained in a normal range of externalizing behavior. The longitudinal research design with random assignment to either an intervention or control group provides strong evidence that both coercive discipline and positive parenting contribute to children's aggression.

## *Social Information Processing Mechanisms*

Parenting styles and practices have thus been shown to relate to children's aggressive behavior. But what proximal mechanisms account for how parenting affects children's aggression? Social information processing theory provides one explanation of the possible mechanism. According to this theory (Crick and Dodge 1994), through repeated exposure to parents' aggression, especially in the case of children who are physically abused, children come to process social information in biased ways that contribute to their own future aggression (Dodge et al. 1990). First, physically abused children encode social cues in a biased way, taking in more information about threatening cues than about non-threatening cues. Second, physically abused children develop hostile attribution biases in which they become likely to perceive ambiguous social cues as involving hostile intent (e.g., a negative outcome being the result of someone's desire to hurt them or be mean rather than the result of an accident or benign cause). Third, physically abused children access aggressive responses to social situations more readily than nonaggressive responses. For example, when faced with provocation or exclusion by peers, physically abused children are more likely to generate responses that include physical or verbal retaliation than responses that involve discussion, assertiveness without aggression, or other prosocial behaviors. Fourth, compared to children who have not been physically abused, children who have been physically abused evaluate aggression more positively, believing that it is acceptable to use aggression and that it will lead to desired outcomes.

These biased ways of processing social information have been found to mediate the relation between children's experience of physical abuse and their subsequent aggressive behavior (Dodge et al. 1995). That is, physical abuse increases children's mis-encoding of social cues, making hostile attributions, accessing of aggressive responses, and evaluating aggression positively. In turn, these biases increase the likelihood that children will behave aggressively in the future. It is important to

note that within the context of a relationship with a physically abusive parent, these biased ways of processing information might be adaptive for the child, by helping the child recognize hostile cues that could indicate the parent escalating into an abusive episode and thereby enabling the child to escape if possible. However, in social interactions with peers or nonaggressive adults, these biases are maladaptive because they cause the child to perceive harm where none was intended and deprive children of a full range of nonaggressive behavioral responses to difficult social situations.

## *Forms and Functions of Children's Aggression*

Although links between parenting and children's aggression have been examined primarily in relation to children's physical aggression, the literature on children's aggression describes several different forms and functions of aggression. For example, aggression can take not only physical but also direct verbal (insulting other children or calling them names) and also indirect forms (relational aggression that inflicts harm by damaging social relationships through spreading unkind rumors or excluding another child from the peer group; Crick and Grotpeter 1995). Physical and relational aggression appear to have the same factor structure across diverse cultural contexts (Lansford et al. 2012). Furthermore, aggression can serve either proactive (obtaining a desired object) or reactive (retaliating in response to a perceived threat) functions (Dodge and Coie 1987).

Distinctions between reactive and proactive aggression are important because these two types of aggression have different developmental precursors (Vitaro et al. 2002). Reactive aggression is associated with an earlier age of onset than is proactive aggression (Dodge et al. 1997). Precursors of reactive aggression include a developmental history of physical maltreatment (Dodge et al. 1997), peer rejection (Dodge et al. 1997), more reactive temperament (Vitaro et al. 2002), and physiologic overarousal (Scarpa and Raine 1997). Researchers have suggested several mechanisms through which these precursors could affect subsequent reactive aggression. For example, Shields and Cicchetti (1998) proposed that maltreatment increases attention deficits and emotion dysregulation, which in turn increase children's reactive aggression (see also Vitaro et al. 2002). Indeed, reactive aggression is associated with making inappropriate hostile attributions in the face of ambiguous or benign social stimuli (Dodge and Coie 1987).

In contrast, precursors of proactive aggression include having aggressive role models (Bandura 1983), friendships with other proactively aggressive children (Poulin and Boivin 2000), and physiologic underarousal (Scarpa and Raine 1997). Unlike the hostile attribution biases associated with reactive aggression, proactive aggression is associated with evaluating aggression positively (Smithmyer et al. 2000) and holding instrumental (obtaining a toy) rather than relational (becoming friends) goals in social interactions (Crick and Dodge 1996). Thus, different aspects of parenting may be related to different forms and functions of aggression.

## *Culture, Parenting, and Children's Aggression*

Although research on parenting as a predictor of children's aggressive behavior has primarily used samples from the United States and Canada, a growing body of research has documented similarities and differences in how parenting is related to children's aggression in different cultural contexts. For example, Hart et al. (1998) found in a sample of Russian children ages 3–6 years that parental coercion, lack of responsiveness, and psychological control, which have been found to relate to North American children's aggression, also related to Russian children's aggression. Likewise, Barber et al. (2005) found considerable similarity in how parental support, psychological control, and behavioral oral control were related to adolescents' antisocial behavior in samples from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North and South America.

Despite these general similarities across cultures, a given parenting behavior may also have different implications for children's aggressive behavior depending on the cultural context in which the family is situated. For example, as described above, the strength of association between parents' use of corporal punishment and children's aggression in six countries was moderated by the cultural normativeness of corporal punishment (Lansford et al. 2005). Therefore, it is important to understand forms of parenting as well as their functions within specific cultural contexts (Bornstein 1995).

Just as cultures differ in the extent to which they tolerate parents' aggression toward children, cultures also differ in the extent to which they tolerate children's aggression. For example, in a comparison of behavior problems in the United States and Thailand, children in the United States were found to exhibit both under-controlled (e.g., aggression) and overcontrolled (e.g., anxiety) behavior problems, whereas children in Thailand were much more likely to exhibit overcontrolled problems (Weisz et al. 1987). In the cultural context of Thailand, a predominantly Buddhist country with cultural sanctions against physically harming any living thing and where group harmony and collectivism are emphasized to a much greater extent than in the United States (Weisz et al. 2006), undercontrolled behaviors such as aggression are more disruptive to society and less tolerated than they are in the United States, providing a socialization context for children in which such behaviors appear less likely to develop.

## Conclusions

This chapter had two main foci: parents' aggression toward children and parenting behaviors related to children's own aggression. Parents' aggression toward children takes the form of corporal punishment and physical abuse as well as verbal and other non-physical forms. There are nuances across cultural contexts in the meaning that particular parenting practices hold for parents and children and, in turn,

the implications of these practices for children's adjustment, but parents' aggression toward children is related to negative child outcomes across cultural contexts. Children's own aggression is predicted by a variety of negative parenting practices such as coercive discipline and psychological control as well as by a lack of positive parenting practices such as warmth and responsiveness. The international community, through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and country-specific laws, is increasingly focused on eliminating parents' violence toward children, and interventions designed to reduce children's aggression often hinge on altering parenting.

# References

Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1982). Attachment: Retrospect and prospect. In C. M. Parkes & J. Stevenson-Hinde (Eds.), *The place of attachment in human behavior* (pp. 3–30). New York: Basic Books.

Archer, J. (2004). Sex differences in aggression in real-world settings: A meta-analytic review. *Review of General Psychology, 8*, 291–322.

Arnett, J. J. (2008). The neglected 95%: Why American psychology needs to become less American. *American Psychologist, 63*, 602–614.

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. (1983). Psychological mechanisms of aggression. In R. Geen & E. Donnerstein (Eds.), *Aggression: Theoretical and empirical reviews* (Theoretical and methodological issues, Vol. 1, pp. 1–40). New York: Academic.

Barber, B. K. (1996). Parental psychological control: Revisiting a neglected construct. *Child Development, 67*, 3296–3319.

Barber, B. K., Stolz, H. E., & Olsen, J. A. (2005). Parental support, psychological control, and behavioral control: Assessing relevance across time, method, and culture. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 70*(4).

Beauchaine, T. P., Webster-Stratton, C., & Reid, M. J. (2005). Mediators, moderators, and predictors of 1-year outcomes among children treated for early-onset conduct problems: A latent growth curve analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 73*, 371–388.

Berlin, L. J., Ispa, J. M., Fine, M. A., Malone, P. S., Brooks-Gunn, J., Brady-Smith, C., Ayoub, C., & Bai, Y. (2009). Correlates and consequences of spanking and verbal punishment for low-income White, African American, and Mexican American toddlers. *Child Development, 80*, 1403–1420.

Bornstein, M. H. (1995). Form and function: Implications for studies of culture and human development. *Culture and Psychology, 1*, 123–137.

Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 2. Separation, anxiety and anger*. London: Penguin.

Card, N. A., Stucky, B. D., Sawalani, G. M., & Little, T. D. (2008). Direct and indirect aggression during childhood and adolescence: A meta-analytic review of gender differences, intercorrelations, and relations to maladjustment. *Child Development, 79*, 1185–1229.

Coleman, D. L. (1998). The Seattle compromise: Multicultural sensitivity and Americanization. *Duke Law Journal, 47*, 717–783.

Crick, N. R., & Dodge, K. A. (1994). A review and reformulation of social information-processing mechanisms in children's social adjustment. *Psychological Bulletin, 115*, 74–101.

Crick, N. R., & Dodge, K. A. (1996). Social information-processing mechanisms in reactive and proactive aggression. *Child Development, 67*, 993–1002.

Crick, N. R., & Grotpeter, J. K. (1995). Relational aggression, gender, and social-psychological adjustment. *Child Development, 66*, 710–722.

Davis-Kean, P. E. (2005). The influence of parent education and family income on child achievement: The indirect role of parental expectations and the home environment. *Journal of Family Psychology, 19*, 294–304.

De Wolff, M., & van IJzendoorn, M. H. (1997). Sensitivity and attachment: A meta-analysis on parental antecedents of infant attachment. *Child Development, 68*, 571–591.

Dodge, K. A., & Coie, J. D. (1987). Social information processing factors in reactive and proactive aggression in children's peer groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53*, 1146–1158.

Dodge, K. A., Bates, J. E., & Pettit, G. S. (1990). Mechanisms in the cycle of violence. *Science, 250*, 1678–1683.

Dodge, K. A., Pettit, G. S., Bates, J. E., & Valente, E. (1995). Social information-processing patterns partially mediate the effect of early physical abuse on later conduct problems. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 104*, 632–643.

Dodge, K. A., Lochman, J. E., Harnish, J. D., Bates, J. E., & Pettit, G. S. (1997). Reactive and proactive aggression in school children and psychiatrically impaired chronically assaultive youth. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 106*, 37–51.

Durrant, J. E. (1999). Evaluating the success of Sweden's corporal punishment ban. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 23*, 435–448.

Edfeldt, Å. W. (1985). *Aga – fostran till våld*. Malmö: Proprius.

Ember, C. R., & Ember, M. (2005). Explaining corporal punishment of children: A cross-cultural study. *American Anthropologist, 107*, 609–619.

Fischer, M. (1998). The human rights implications of a cultural defense. *Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal, 6*, 663–702.

Gershoff, E. T. (2002). Corporal punishment by parents and associated child behaviors and experiences: A meta-analytic and theoretical review. *Psychological Bulletin, 128*, 539–579.

Gershoff, E. T., Miller, P. C., & Holden, G. W. (1999). Parenting influences from the pulpit: Religious affiliation as a determinant of parental corporal punishment. *Journal of Family Psychology, 13*, 307–320.

Hansen, K. K. (1997). Folk remedies and child abuse: A review with emphasis on caida de mollera and its relationship to shaken baby syndrome. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 22*, 117–127.

Hart, C. H., Nelson, D. A., Robinson, C. C., Olsen, S. F., & McNeilly-Choque, M. K. (1998). Overt and relational aggression in Russian nursery-school-age children: Parenting style and marital linkages. *Developmental Psychology, 34*, 687–697.

Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world? *Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 33*, 1–75.

Jones, P., & Welch, S. (2010). *Rethinking children's rights: Attitudes in contemporary society*. London: Continuum.

Kuppens, S., Grietens, H., Onghena, P., & Michiels, D. (2009). Relations between parental psychological control and childhood relational aggression: Reciprocal in nature? *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 38*, 117–131.

Lansford, J. E., & Bornstein, M. H. (2007). *Review of parenting programs in developing countries*. New York: UNICEF.

Lansford, J. E., & Deater-Deckard, K. (2012). Childrearing discipline and violence in developing countries. *Child Development, 83*, 62–75.

Lansford, J. E., & Dodge, K. A. (2008). Cultural norms for adult corporal punishment of children and societal rates of endorsement and use of violence. *Parenting, 8*, 257–270.

Lansford, J. E., Chang, L., Dodge, K. A., Malone, P. S., Oburu, P., Palmérus, K., et al. (2005). Cultural normativeness as a moderator of the link between physical discipline and children's adjustment: A comparison of China, India, Italy, Kenya, Philippines, and Thailand. *Child Development, 76*, 1234–1246.

Lansford, J. E., Miller-Johnson, S., Berlin, L. J., Dodge, K. A., Bates, J. E., & Pettit, G. S. (2007). Early physical abuse and later violent delinquency: A prospective longitudinal study. *Child Maltreatment, 12*, 233–245.

Lansford, J. E., Malone, P. S., Dodge, K. A., Chang, L., Chaudhary, N., Tapanya, S., Oburu, P., & Deater-Deckard, K. (2010). Children's perceptions of maternal hostility as a mediator of the link between discipline and children's adjustment in four countries. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 34*, 452–461.

Lansford, J. E., Criss, M. M., Laird, R. D., Shaw, D. S., Pettit, G. S., Bates, J. E., & Dodge, K. A. (2011). Reciprocal relations between parents' physical discipline and children's externalizing behavior during middle childhood and adolescence. *Development and Psychopathology, 23*, 225–238.

Lansford, J. E., Skinner, A. T., Sorbring, E., di Giunta, L., Deater-Deckard, K., Dodge, K. A., Malone, P. S., Oburu, P., Pastorelli, C., Tapanya, S., Uribe Tirado, L. M., Zelli, A., Al-Hassan, S. M., Alampay, L. P., Bacchini, D., Bombi, A. S., Bornstein, M. H., & Chang, L. (2012). Boys' and girls' relational and physical aggression in nine countries. *Aggressive Behavior, 38*, 298–308.

Larzelere, R. E. (2000). Child outcomes of nonabusive and customary physical punishment by parents: An updated literature review. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 3*, 199–221.

Larzelere, R. E., & Kuhn, B. R. (2005). Comparing child outcomes of physical punishment and alternative disciplinary tactics: A meta-analysis. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 8*, 1–37.

Levesque, R. J. R. (2000). Cultural evidence, child maltreatment, and the law. *Child Maltreatment, 5*, 146–160.

MacDonald, K. B., & Parke, R. D. (1984). Bridging the gap: Parent-child play interactions and peer interactive competence. *Child Development, 55*, 1265–1277.

Martinez, C. R., Jr., & Forgatch, M. S. (2001). Preventing problems with boys' noncompliance: Effects of a parent training intervention for divorcing mothers. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 69*, 416–428.

Mills, R. S. L., & Rubin, K. H. (1998). Are behavioral control and psychological control both differentially associated with childhood aggression and social withdrawal? *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 30*, 132–136.

Norenzayan, A., & Heine, S. J. (2005). Psychological universals: What are they and how can we know? *Psychological Bulletin, 131*, 763–784.

Parke, R. D., Burks, V., Carson, J., Neville, B., & Boyum, L. (1994). Family-peer relationships: A tripartite model. In R. D. Parke & S. Kellam (Eds.), *Family relationships with other social systems* (pp. 115–145). Hillsdale: Erlbaum.

Patterson, G. R. (1982). *Coercive family process*. Eugene: Castalia.

Pinheiro, P. S. (2006). *World report on violence against children*. Geneva: United Nations.

Poulin, F., & Boivin, M. (2000). The role of proactive and reactive aggression in the formation and development of boys' friendships. *Developmental Psychology, 36*, 233–240.

Risser, A. L., & Mazur, L. J. (1995). Use of folk remedies in a Hispanic population. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 149*, 978–981.

Roberts, M. W., & Powers, S. W. (1990). Adjusting chair timeout enforcement procedures for oppositional children. *Behavior Therapy, 21*, 257–271.

Rohner, R. P. (1986). *The warmth dimension: Foundations of parental acceptance-rejection theory*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Rohner, R. P., Kean, K. J., & Cournoyer, D. E. (1991). Effects of corporal punishment, perceived caretaker warmth, and cultural beliefs on the psychological adjustment of children in St. Kitts, West Indies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53*, 681–693.

Scarpa, A., & Raine, A. (1997). Psychophysiology of anger and violent behavior. *Psychiatric Clinics of North America, 20*, 375–394.

Shields, A., & Cicchetti, D. (1998). Reactive aggression among maltreated children: The contributions of attention and emotion dysregulation. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 27*, 381–395.

Smithmyer, C. M., Hubbard, J. A., & Simons, R. F. (2000). Proactive and reactive aggression in delinquent adolescents: Relations to aggression outcome expectancies. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 29*, 86–93.

Stout, H. (2009, October 21). For some parents, shouting is the new spanking. *The New York Times*. Available http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/22/fashion/22yell.html

Stouthamer-Loeber, M., Loeber, R., Homish, D. L., & Wei, E. (2001). Maltreatment of boys and the development of disruptive and delinquent behavior. *Development and Psychopathology, 13*, 941–955.

Straus, M. A. (1994). *Beating the devil out of them: Corporal punishment in American families*. New York: Lexington Books.

United Nations. (1989). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Geneva*. Washington, DC: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Retrieved from www. unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2009). *Progress for children: A report card on child protection*. New York: UNICEF.

United Nations Development Programme. (2007). *Human development reports*. Retrieved July 10, 2009, from http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/indices/hdi

Vissing, Y. M., Straus, M. A., Gelles, R. J., & Harrop, J. W. (1991). Verbal aggression by parents and psychosocial problems of children. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 15*, 223–238.

Vitaro, F., Brendgen, M., & Tremblay, R. E. (2002). Reactively and proactively aggressive children: Antecedent and subsequent characteristics. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 43*, 495–505.

Weisz, J. R., Suwanlert, S., Chaiyasit, W., & Walter, B. R. (1987). Over- and undercontrolled referral problems among children and adolescents from Thailand and the United States: The wat and wai of cultural differences. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 55*, 719–726.

Weisz, J. R., Weiss, B., Suwanlert, S., & Chaiyasit, W. (2006). Testing the syndromal sensitivity model: Culture and psychopathology in Thai and American adolescents. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 74*, 1098–1107.

Whipple, E. E., & Richey, C. A. (1997). Crossing the line from physical discipline to child abuse: How much is too much? *Child Abuse & Neglect, 21*, 431–444.

Widom, C. S., Schuck, A. M., & White, H. R. (2006). An examination of pathways from childhood victimization to violence: The role of early aggression and problematic alcohol use. *Violence and Victims, 21*, 675–690.

Ziegert, K. A. (1983). The Swedish prohibition of corporal punishment: A preliminary report. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 45*, 917–926.

# Fathers, Fathering, and Fatherhood Across Cultures

**Rudy Ray Seward and Leslie Stanley-Stevens**

Studies of families and parenting began with a focus on mothers. Systematic study of fatherhood began relatively recently. The roots in Western cultures go back at least to the 1940s, when pioneers Gardner (1943) and Tasch (1952) in the United States reported on interviews of fathers concerning their attitudes and activities. Their work challenged the assumption that parenthood and parenting were limited to and synonymous with mothering. Mogey (1957) assessed the shift in fatherhood by focusing on the century of declining paternal authority. Hess and Handel's (1959, 1994) theoretical framework recognized fathers' participation as an important constituent in the family beyond being the primary economic provider. Both Nash (1965) and Benson (1968) noted the lack of explicit literature on fatherhood but noted extensive resources available in psychology, sociology, and related disciplines. Benson's *Fatherhood: A sociological perspective* was the first comprehensive treatment on fatherhood and provided a foundation for and stimulated much research on fathers. Surveys of the parenting literature published in leading journals and manuals starting in the 1950s and covering over three decades confirmed the emphasis on mothers and exceptional nature of these early works (LeMasters and DeFrain 1983).

Lamb's (1976) edited book *The Role of the Father in Child Development* was part of an explosion of academic and practical advice books and articles on and for fathers. Lamb's following four editions, like his initial one, have charted the development of the fathering literature and consistently been a comprehensive resource. In the overview of available literature in his second edition, Lamb (1981, p. 1) lauded the growing maturity of fathering scholarship. "Fathers are now accorded

R.R. Seward (✉)
Department of Sociology, University of North Texas, Denton, TX, USA
e-mail: seward@unt.edu

L. Stanley-Stevens
Department of Social Sciences, Tarleton State University, Stephenville, TX, USA

serious attention" in both academic and lay literature. By the 3rd edition, the father-ing literature was so extensive that Lamb abandoned the challenge of preparing an introductory, inclusive, encyclopedic chapter covering the primary and secondary literatures (Lamb 1997, p. 1). Instead, the focus was on major themes. Among the various emerging themes was a focus on the cultural context of fathering, which had been gaining special attention and developing a substantial body of literature. Lamb's (1987) work, *The father's role: Cross-cultural perspectives* was an initial contributor to the cultural focus. In the 4th edition of Lamb's (2004) role of the father series, he integrated and expanded the cross-cultural perspective to reflect the growing shift away from a primary focus on White, North American, middle-class fathers (Lamb and Tamis-LeMonda 2004, p. 15). Included in this expanded view were fathers in subcultures within the same society. Lamb's (2010) 5th edition continued this trend.

## Fathers in Cultural Context

Beliefs about fathers and the behavior of men as fathers are determined in large part by the cultures to which they belong. A large part of any culture is the beliefs and behaviors that are common to the members of a particular society and to the significant subgroups within the society. Knowing a father's cultural and subcul-tural memberships provides insights into the attitudes and behaviors that are part of the distinct roles attached to the social status or position of father, such as disciplinarian or caregiver.

Families have major responsibilities for teaching, interpreting, and enforcing their society's cultural expectations. Major subgroups like social class and ethnic groups often have somewhat different cultural expectations. Parents are the primary teachers, interpreters, and enforcers for young children acting as "organizers" and "providers" of culture (Whiting and Edwards 1988, p. 35). The necessity of cultural transmission to the next generation requires that families be microcosms of the larger culture or have their own cultures (Handel and Whitchurch 1994; Handel et al. 2007; Seward 1991). The roles that a father plays in a family's culture are socially constructed and thus will vary as cultures do.

Of the many books, articles, and papers that have focused on the cultural aspects of fathering, a few deserve special mention. Lamb (1987, p. xiv) increased sensitiv-ity to the impact of cultural context by presenting research on fathers from 12 soci-eties outside the previous focus on the United States and Canada. The majority of societies covered were Western industrialized nations like Great Britain and France but four exceptions were the chapters on China, Japan, West Africa, and the Aka Pygmies of central Africa. Instead of single society presentations, Hewlett (1992, 2000; Hewlett and Macfarlan 2010) provided a classification system of fathering and research on fathering across cultures in both smaller less complex societies and large industrialized societies. Gray and Anderson (2010) emphasized hunter-gath-erer societies in their cross-cultural comparisons.

The Hewlett and Macfarlan (2010) chapter is just one of several cross-cultural comparative chapters that appeared in Lamb's (2010) 5th edition. This more inclusive view beyond "White, North American, middle-class" fathers (Lamb and Tamis-LeMonda 2004, p. 15) was initiated in Lamb's (2004) 4th edition. The recent collaboration of Shwalb et al. (2013a) resulted in the most comprehensive presentation of extant research on the cultural contexts for fathers worldwide. Cultures from every continent representing over half of the world's population are presented.

Khaleque and Rohner's (2012) meta-analysis of fathering research worldwide uses validated measures to compare fathers across many cultures. A report issued in 2011 by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat focused on men in families, with special attention paid to topics including gender equality and care work, migration, and social programs and policies. The primary concern was application to social policy but international research on fathering and international demographic information about fathers and families were included. Taking a different tack, Bozett and Hanson (1991) focused only on the United States but documented cultural diversity associated with ethnic, social class, and other related social subgroups.

## Father Types or Approaches to Parenting

Typical male tasks related to fatherhood include teaching his children certain basic survival skills, modeling for them his unique means of accommodating to life, coping with a variety of real or potential family crises, and cooperating with both family and non-kin in routine survival tasks (Benson 1968, 1985; Hewlett and Macfarlan 2010). A variety of terms have been used to label fathers' approaches or behavior include being an inquisitor, a martyr, an athletic coach, a teacher counselor, everyday Santa Claus, authoritarian, buddy and pal, or some combination of these (Adams 1995).

Colman and Colman (1981) present four archetypes of approaches to fathering drawn from legends, literature, dreams, paintings, as well as personal and clinical experiences. The archetypes are not mutually exclusive or permanent, as many fathers may combine aspects of two or more of these or change their approach over time.

Men who take the traditional approach to the status by achieving success outside the family but are more distant yet powerful within the family are termed Sky fathers (Colman and Colman 1981). Hewlett and Macfarlan's (2010) overview of small-scale societies labels these fathers as "distant" with a primary concern with the roles of disciplinarian and provider. Fathers who are active in both the direction and details of child care within the family become the ongoing nurturing provider and are called Earth fathers (Colman and Colman 1981). Hewlett and Macfarlan (2010), categorized these fathers' behavior as "intimate", characterized by strong attachments and frequent care giving interactions with infants. The father who successfully combines both sky and earth father approaches may follow two different paths.

The Royal father assumes complete control of every aspect of the family and child's life with a spouse, if present, being subordinate to his supreme authority. In contrast the Dyadic father chooses to balance the two approaches by attempting a partnership with his spouse. Hewlett and Macfarlan (2010) also refer to "multiple" fathers where several men, including biological and social fathers and others, share responsibility for children.

In Western societies prior to industrialization, the parental role was central to the lives of women and only peripheral for men. Fathers cared for their children primarily by being successful providers and had little direct involvement with them. Non-Western societies vary more dramatically, with fathers in food foraging and simple horticultural societies often taking the Earth father and Dyadic approaches while fathers in advanced horticultural, agricultural and pastoral societies typically display Sky father and Royal father approaches (Hewlett 2000; Hewlett and Macfarlan 2010). Changes occurring in non-Western societies during the process of industrialization are similar to the changes that occurred for fathers in the United States (Shwalb et al. 2013a). Various factors determine the rate and extent of change.

## Determinants of Changes in Fathering and Fatherhood: Barriers and Passages

Barriers in the past prevented fathers from being considered significant in the parenting process (Seward 1991). Foremost was the view emphasizing the father's role as primary breadwinner and the mother's roles as homemaker and child care giver. Another barrier was the exclusive focus of early developmental theories on the mother-child relationship and the failure to appreciate infants' and very young children's abilities to interact in complex ways. As a result practitioners emphasized the need for a single, consistent, constant, caring, caregiver, ideally the mother. For a long time scholars incorrectly believed that only after age 3 could children successfully deal with others in the family. Because of these barriers, early studies of parenting in Western cultures often limited respondents to mothers, who typically were middle-class, White, suburban housewives (Adams 1988). Typically, no information was gathered either from or even about fathers. Benson's (1985) commentary about fathers across cultures written in the 1980s suggested these barriers were to some extent in place in most if not all Western and non-Western cultures.

In most cultures, fathers were expected to form a family by living with the mother of their children and their offspring (Gray and Anderson 2010). Despite the barriers, fathers consistently have been considered the second most frequent sources of care for children. Gray and Anderson contend that additional non-maternal childcare is necessary universally and that fathers most often are expected to provide this care. Across known cultures, fathers most often were expected to be the key providers for the family, while women tended to handle routine home duties and the daily care and nurturance of the children. But many exceptions have been documented in non-Western cultures, especially in small-scale societies.

Some have very different proscriptions including mothers as providers and fathers as child caregivers (Hewlett and Macfarlan 2010).

Many societies, especially in Africa, are matrilineal, not patrilineal. That is, descent goes through the mother's family, and the children belong to their mother's lineage, not their father's. While a mother normally takes care of her own children in all cultures, in some matrilineal cultures a father will take care of his nieces and nephews instead (Schneider 1961). In a strictly matrilineal system, especially where the family moves to the mother's village, a man will exercise guardianship rights not over the children he fathers but exclusively over his sisters' children. These children's biological father is in some sense a 'stranger' to them, even when relationships are affectionate and emotionally close.

Closer scrutiny of many societies reveals an underlying diversity often at odds with the culture's ideal and typical fathering patterns, especially in large-scale societies (Shwalb et al. 2013a). Some of the diversity relates to fathers' socio-economic status disparities. Rich fathers are more likely than poor fathers to express ideal fatherhood beliefs and exhibit typical fathering patterns. Disparities between rich and poor fathers have existed many centuries in societies like South Africa and India, while in countries like Russia the economic disparity is on the increase; in the case of Japan it may be likely to occur in the future (Shwalb et al. 2013b, p. 387).

Often employment status or lack of paid work is a crucial factor in explaining fathering disparities in large-scale societies (Seward et al. 2006; Stanley-Stevens and Seward 2007). Employment options and opportunities vary over time and between societies. Economic development in societies is associated with shifting job markets both in type and locations. Men who successfully gain and maintain employment are the most likely to become fathers and to exhibit culturally defined fathering behavior. In a prosperous and expanding economy successful involved fathering is more likely. Stable economies support continuity in fathering but economic downturns tends to undermine men's opportunities to be involved.

Other specific factors determining fathering approaches include the division of labor in employment and family settings and even living arrangements. Gray and Anderson (2010) stress that changes in education, employment, media, and urbanization contribute to shifting fatherhood views. Social and economic phenomena such as divorce, illegitimacy, immigration, and migration increasingly influence fathering. These factors can contribute to greater physical or emotional distances, or both, between fathers and children. Major demographic trends like delayed marriage and parenthood, more employed mothers, rising divorce rates, and globalization have contributed to more men's emphasizing being an intimate Earth father or Dyadic father. These trends are part of a cultural context emphasizing more individual choice and freedom, which allow men greater latitude in fathering. While tolerance of choice is expressed more than practiced, diversity in fatherhood role performances is evident.

Hewlett (2000) noted differences in the "people making" approach to child development between Western and non-Western cultures. Western cultures tend to believe in the necessity of intensive socialization to achieve good "people making"

skills and thus place more emphasis on intimate fathering. Non-western cultures tend to assume children develop autonomously, which is compatible with an emphasis on distant fathering. Factors Hewlett related to fathers being more involved with their children included the closeness of the relationship to the mother, mother's contribution to the food supply, how peaceful the society, and the involvement of the child's other male relatives.

Khaleque and Rohner's (2012) meta-analysis of 68 Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory studies unexpectedly found that acceptance of children by their fathers was more strongly correlated with measures of children's psychological adjustment than was maternal acceptance. Bozett and Hanson (1991) proposed a theory of cultural influences on fathering that considered normative paternal behavior, environmental constraints, mechanisms to reconcile discrepancies between expectations and constraints, influences of children's and fathers' ages, and historical change. Despite claims by some that globalization is reducing cultural difference, Shwalb and colleagues (2013b) concluded that fathering approaches appear to be as diverse as ever worldwide. The vast variety of social and economic forces already noted contributes to this continuing diversity (Coltrane 2004).

At the same time in many societies, pressure groups and legislatures have pushed for the passage of laws and regulations plus the implementation of programs to change approaches to fathering. Efforts have focused on one or more of the following: interventions, programs, laws, and social policies to allow more opportunities for fathering and more equality between fathering and mothering (cf., United Nations 2011). Implemented social policies and laws have had profound effects in some societies like Sweden but little impact in other countries like Brazil and India (Shwalb et al. 2013b). In the Scandinavian countries researchers have influenced policy but in Japan, Russia, and China political, ideological, or popular demand have been the major impetus for change. Recent laws and policies related to fathering tend to focus on three issues: "the promotion of increased involvement by fathers (e.g., leave policies in numerous countries), establishment of paternity (e.g., Brazil), and the responsibilities and involvement of non-resident fathers (e.g., Australia)" (p. 386). Japan illustrates "that media and non-profit organizations can stimulate changes in fathering roles more effectively than government policies, especially when the government lacks the resources to follow through on its initiatives" (p. 387). Relevant policies and laws continue to evolve in line with changes in fathering approaches and social conditions.

## Research on Fathers, Fathering, and Fatherhood in Non-Western Cultures

Shwalb and colleagues' (2013a) comprehensive worldwide review of fathering research found that the coverage between nations varied widely. In some societies like Japan the research is broad and deep, in many societies like Bangladesh and

Malaysia the coverage is nascent and narrowly focused, and many nations lack any coverage as in most of Africa. The discrepancy between the amount of research on fatherhood in Western versus non-Western societies is large. Despite the expansion of research on fatherhood internationally, the United States, Canada, and the nations of Western Europe still provide the most in-depth and inclusive coverage (p. 386).

Research on fatherhood across nations indicates the importance of history both recent and remote (Seward and Richter 2008). Much research has focused on recent dramatic transitions from traditional fatherhood to a more contemporary view. But as Shwalb et al. (2013b) note this view was repeatedly challenged by the evidence of "historical events and the evolution of cultures over generations, centuries, and even millennia" (p. 385). Culture clearly has a long reaching influence over time on fathers. Hence, fatherhood has changed a good deal worldwide but the pace has been slow and uneven across societies.

Internationally, a good deal of support exists for fathers to become more involved with their children and to take more responsibility for them (Jacobson and Seward 2011). But public support for the "rhetoric of paternal essentiality" is far from universal (Pleck 2013). What is acceptable in one culture may be frowned upon in another. This applies to behavior after birth, encouragement in early childhood, plus regulation and freedom during adolescence. Concerning the father-child relationship, differences exist in affection and distance, harshness and repression, and acceptance and criticism. Hewlett (2000) illustrates the vast variation in approaches to fatherhood by describing differences within the continent of Africa. Pygmies and Aka fathers in West Central Africa and the Congo are involved with the children beginning with infancy; Kipsigi fathers in Kenya do not hold infants during the first year. Among the Tswana people of Botswana, the child's maternal uncle provides relational involvement in the child's life while the biological father provides financially. The Fulani, spread over many countries predominantly in West Africa, do not think parental involvement becomes important until age 6 or 7.

A cross-cultural perspective results in an appreciation of diversity, which becomes a key to understanding fathers. Even in cultures once presumed to be homogeneous like Japan both involved and uninvolved fathers have been documented. Further, new immigrant populations have brought with them variations in paternal behavior from many parts of the world (Nakazawa and Shwalb 2013). In addition to immigration initiated variation, important differences often exist between social class and population groups.

Cross-cultural comparisons are difficult due to uneven coverage, but comparisons using available data can still be revealing. Again, immigration issues (such as Brazilian fathers in Japan) and migrations within societies (such as rural-to-urban migration in China), population movements (within Southern Africa) and within regions, (such as migrations between Arab countries, and Bangladeshi migration to Malaysia), "all demonstrate that trans-cultural identity has become an important part of the increasingly complex picture [diversity] of fatherhood in many cultures" (Shwalb et al. 2013a, p. 10).

A cross-cultural perspective forces confrontation with fathers' behavior and often challenges previous assumptions about features of fathers' roles. For instance, physical play as an essential hallmark of father interactive style is not found in Taiwan, India, Africa, and Thailand and few differences are found in play activities between mothers and fathers or by gender. This has led researchers to reevaluate the pathways by which fathers are considered to influence children (Parke 2007). Time spent with children varies a great deal by culture as well. A cross-national comparison for ten nations from the 1960s to the early 1980s found that in every nation mothers usually performed more child care, routine chores, and home projects than fathers but the gap between spouses varied widely. Japanese husbands did the least amount of childcare and other home work with their wives doing 8.9 times as much (Seward 2006).

## Portrayals of Fathers in Selected Regions of the Non-Western World

### East Asia: Japan, China, and Korea

Research on fathering in East Asia has increased dramatically especially in Japan, China, and Korea (Shwalb et al. 2004, 2010). Earlier research on fathers in these nations focused on Asian cultural traditions that emphasized the role of the father as hard working but emotionally distant from children. Despite a common East Asian heritage including Confucian and Buddhist beliefs, Japanese fathers seemed to have departed from the traditional "strict father, affectionate mother" ideology sooner than Chinese and Korean fathers (Nakazawa and Shwalb 2013). Traditional Japanese emphasis on emotion-focused and permissive fathering provided a base for the contemporary accounts of nurturing and friendly Japanese fathers. On the other hand, popular rhetoric encouraging fathers' involvement in childcare was not matched by parallel changes in the practice of fathering for many years. Decades of pro-fathering government policies probably have contributed to the present generation of fathers in Japan being the first where fathering has changed dramatically. Nakazawa and Shwalb (2013) also note the impact of non-profit organizations and the Internet on fathering, which are likely to influence fathers in many other societies in the near future.

China's larger and more heterogeneous population plus dramatic urban and rural differences compared to Japan and Korea make it difficult to generalize about fathers (Shwalb et al. 2010). Recent research focuses on the diversity in Chinese families and fathering. Xuan and Lamb (2013) documented diverse family structures including trends toward smaller nuclear families and the existence of a "floating population" of over 100 million men who leave their families (or never marry) to find work in major cities. The diversity of Chinese families is due to many factors including the One Child Policy, urbanization, and the rapid change to a market economy.

Less is known about Korean fathers with most of the available research focusing on men in South Korea. Kwon and Roy (2007) found that South Korean middle and working class fathers had to negotiate among three contradictory sets of cultural expectations including traditional Confucian fatherhood, paid work success as an indicator of good fathering, and the new view of fatherhood embracing caregiver roles. Fathers used different strategies to deal with the gap between conflicting cultural expectations and low levels of involvement with their children. These included delaying fatherhood, lowering expectations, and segregating roles. Korean fathering appears to have changed less than in China or Japan, with a continuing focus on the provider role and supporting mothers' activities rather than involvement in daily activities with children (Shwalb et al. 2010). The continuing focus on providing financially results from the growing economic crisis since 1997 that has threatened the "job-for-life" concept and forced many workers to devote more time to paid employment.

## *India, Bangladesh, and Other Southeast Asian Societies*

Like China, India is a very large and heterogeneous population in regard to culture and religion. This is reflected in the immense diversity among Indian fathers or what Chaudhary (2013) labeled an "incredible variety". Yet one frequent theme is that Indian fathers distance themselves and are awkward with their children, avoiding open expressions of emotion in order to maintain their authority as family patriarchs. Fatherhood roles are often shared with a wide network that may include relatives, neighbors, friends, and household helpers. Ironically, fathers that are usually aloof and unemotional toward their children typically become openly loving and affectionate as grandfathers. Increasing global interaction and movement to urban areas are pressures bringing about changes in Indian parenting beliefs (Tuli 2012).

In predominantly Muslim Bangladesh and Malaysia, fathering is as diverse as in India (Hossain 2013). Another similarity between fathering in India, Bangladesh, and Malaysia is the combined complementary influences of culture, strong extended families, patriarchy over thousands of years, and especially religion. Traditional Quranic verses and traditional customs (*adat*) call for involved fathering. Hossain (2013) claims both Islamic traditions and Westernization convey similar messages to fathers. Together they provide pressure for greater father involvement. But the impact of poverty on Malay and Bangladeshi fathers has in part countered these pressures.

Jesmin and Seward (2011) compared the impact of Bangladeshi fathers' taking employment leave on their involvement with their children to how United States fathers' taking employment leave affected their involvement with their children. Bangladeshi fathers took shorter leaves than U.S. fathers, but in both samples, fathers who took leave participated more in all child care tasks than fathers who did not take parental leave. Bangladeshi families face a similar situation to U.S. low-income families. In general, Bangladeshi fathers are in worse financial shape than

U.S. fathers, but lower income U.S. fathers often do not take any unpaid leave in conjunction with the birth of their children because they cannot afford it (Stanley-Stevens 2012). Similarly, economic struggles reduce the chances that Bangladeshi fathers will take employment leave.

The impact of fathers' migration on children has been rarely studied despite the fact that several million children currently live in trans-national families. Graham and Jordan (2011) studied the psychological wellbeing of left-behind children in the Southeast Asian countries of Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. They found that children of migrant fathers in Indonesia and Thailand were more likely to have poor psychological wellbeing, compared to children in non-migrant households. But no difference was found among children in the Philippines or Vietnam.

## Arab Societies

Ahmed's (2013) review of the literature on fathers in Arab societies found information on 22 different societies but coverage was uneven. Most of the research cited dealt with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, or Jordan. Available data suggest that Arab fathering is correlated with the same aspects of child development, such as adjustment, cognition, and behavior problems, as in Western countries. Ahmed's portrayal of Arab fathers emphasized negative social trends and the adverse effects on fathers of immigration, death and divorce. Despite this negativity, Ahmed concludes with guarded optimism that the recent uprising or 'Arab Spring' indicates that positive changes likely lie ahead for Arab fatherhood.

## African Societies

In the small-scale societies of East and Central Africa, Fouts (2013) asserts that genetics and evolution plus cultural belief systems and values must be considered to understand fatherhood. The biology and culture interplay is seldom mentioned by fatherhood scholars but Gray and Anderson (2010), Hewlett (2004), and Hewlett and Macfarlan (2010) have argued that both factors must always be considered. Fouts' (2013) theoretical focus offers informative comparisons between fathers from foraging, pastoral, farming, and other communities. The comparisons underscore the diversity that exists even within some of the world's smaller societies. Hewlett (2004) notes that low population density and less stratified societies lend themselves to higher father involvement. Males take care of children when they are young and, in turn, as the young children age, they care for other children starting at an early age. This contrasts with Western fathering where men are often not involved in childcare until they have their own children. In the less dense and stratified societies, parents share activities and women contribute significantly to

subsistence. On the other hand, in farming and pastoral cultures, characterized by polygamy and warfare, fathers are distant from their children.

Townsend's (2013) depictions of Southern African fathers emphasize diversity, separation, population migration, and historical change. Black Southern African men, in addition to the biological fathers, are often assumed, even required, to be significant figures in the lives of children. Several men share aspects of what is considered by Westerners to be the father's role. The men's magnitude of responsibilities varies by age and life stage. At the same time, these men are not considered as possible alternatives to biological fathers. Hewlett and Macfarlan (2010) referred to this pattern as "multiple" fathering. Nsamenang (2010) noted that these men's unique cultures and religious creeds contribute to the 'internal working models' that spawned and perpetuate this pattern. Townsend (2013) noted that fathers are often forced by dire economic circumstances to separate from their children. Marriage is usually not the typical path to fatherhood in Southern Africa.

## *Caribbean and South America Societies*

African Caribbean fathers' educational and work status affected their involvement and their perceptions of involvement in parenting (Roopnarine 2004). "Progressive mating" [mate shifting] is the norm, so the relationship with the children's mother often determines father involvement. The least involved fathers have only visiting relationships with the mothers. Fathers in cohabitating and common law marriages are more involved but the fathers formally married are the most involved. These variations have also been noted in other settings as well (cf., Arendell 1992).

In a more recent review Roopnarine (2013) further stressed the diversity of Indo Caribbean and African Caribbean fathers. Many fathers never marry the mother of their children. Similar to the pattern found in Africa, social fatherhood is a common practice. Typically a large number of Caribbean men act as fathers to other men's biological offspring. This practice occurs in an environment where men's lives diverge dramatically from men in middle-class, two-parent, co-residing families. Roopnarine emphasized the conceptual separation between the means to being a good father and having a committed relationship with a woman. The Caribbean history of immigration and emigration has also had a negative impact on fathers' involvement.

The Caribbean context is similar to that of Brazil, according to Bastos et al. (2013). The similarity is due to a long history of colonization and patriarchy. But in Brazil the divorce rate is low. Also, fatherhood continues to be associated with masculinity beliefs, which include a connotation of power and control over wives and children. Contemporary Brazilian fathers appear to be on a quest for a new identity including the right to fathering as an important part of one's life experience. But the patriarchy and colonial past still cast a shadow over current Brazilian fathers. Bostos and colleagues concluded that current socialization practices of boys are not supportive of the emergence of a new father identity.

## Future Research Needs

Research on fathers has not been initiated in many countries around the world. The gaps in geographical coverage need to be filled. "Pioneering researchers are needed to break further cultural and language barriers to conduct the first research on fathering in their societies" (Shwalb et al. 2013a, p. 395). Targeted comparative studies within regions are needed as well. These would enable scholars to make direct comparisons between fathers in different cultures, who share a common heritage. Additionally, within a given culture, we also need comparisons based on social class or sub-regional differences. Finally, comparisons between populations that share a condition like emigration that affects fathers would be beneficial (Matsumoto and Yoo 2006).

Explanatory research with a primary focus on fathers and culture is a necessary next step. Early research on any topic tends to be descriptive and correlational and the research on fathering has followed that same path. But the necessary foundation this research lays is an important first step. A step forward would be to measure specific contextual or cultural antecedent variables and assess their impact on fathering. "It is not sufficient to study fathers in two countries and to interpret differences in vague terms of 'something' about the cultures" (Shwalb et al. 2013a, p. 396).

Further research must not be limited to standardized and more objective type measures. Application of multi-method and multi-disciplinary approaches will bring the strength of triangulation to cross-cultural fathering studies. Indigenous measures as well as the exploration of new topics about fathers must be encouraged.

We have to fill the gap between research and practice. Many researchers and practitioners have noted the need for effective policies and interventions for fathers and the paucity of research to determine their efficacy (Haas and O'Brien 2010; United Nations 2011). Evaluations of existing and proposed government policies and interventions are necessary to determine the ones that are working and the ones that are not. The extent to which they work needs to be determined for possible fine tuning and future interventions. Policies or interventions not working will need to be revised or replaced followed by further evaluations.

While Shwalb et al. (2013a), Cabrera and Tamis-LeMonda (2013), Tamis-LeMonda and Cabrera (2002), and Yeung (2013) demonstrate the long multi-disciplinary tradition of fathering research, each academic discipline often has unique priorities and purposes. Hence, a frequent challenge is to integrate respective literatures more cohesively. The main source of these difficulties is the fact that many researchers have paid little attention to the findings of researchers in other disciplines. Some incompatibility between perspectives makes it challenging to forge a common agenda for future research. Ideally, researchers need to learn from one another while building a cross-cultural knowledge base.

## Fathering Around the World: Convergence or Diversity?

William J. Goode (1963, p. 1) in *World Revolutions and Family Patterns*, focused on changes in family patterns. Goode documented converging family changes in six major world cultures. These changes were most evident in the West but appeared to

be happening as well in Arabic Islam, Sub-Saharan Africa, India, China, and Japan. Goode argued that the influences associated with industrialization and urbanization were bringing about families with "fewer kinship ties with distant relatives and a greater emphasis upon the 'nuclear' family unit of couple and children." Besides the growing independence of the conjugal unit, families were becoming more democratic, smaller, less stable, and diverse. Most non-Western families were typically portrayed as changing from being stable, patriarchal, multigenerational, and large. Goode does not address fathering specifically but the convergence pattern suggests that fathers in non-Western families were becoming more like those in the West.

More recently, Newman (2012) and colleagues traced the impact of global competition on families. While agricultural societies typically live in patriarchal family units, industrialized societies have lived in nuclear families for generations. An exceptional worldwide trend is that adult children are now more likely to be living with their parents in industrialized societies. How parents react to this phenomenon varies by culture. Japanese parents often expressed shame in their own parenting even though they acknowledged the workplace changes that have made employment unstable, especially for young adults. Families in the U.S. tend to be tolerant of their adult children moving back home as long as parents think the children are moving forward, with graduate school or unpaid internships. Rather than returning to the patriarchal authority of agricultural extended families, these post-industrial households are egalitarian among the genders and the generations.

Focusing only on fathers over time the available evidence does suggest some, but limited, convergence (cf., Shwalb et al. 2013b, pp. 398–399). From the 1950s until around 1990, Japanese fathers demonstrated that they loved their children by being good providers. This was in lieu of direct involvement with children at home. Little distinction existed between the paid worker role and the father role. Wives and children's respect was gained via sacrifice and diligence in the paid work role. "Similar versions of the father's role were apparent in portrayals of Arab and Bengali fathers, isolated South African fathers, non-resident Australian fathers, and some in the Chinese floating population, all of whom left their children in order to provide for their children" (p. 398).

In support of convergence, almost all research on fathers across cultures since 1990 has noted at least some change in the direction of greater involvement with and responsibility for children. Forste and Fox (2012) found that policies encouraging and supporting father involvement increased family satisfaction levels consistently across 31 countries including many non-Western nations. Although in many cases the changes have been more in cultural expectations for fathers than in men's conduct (LaRossa 1988, 1997; Shwalb et al. 2013b). Many believe globalization will eventually lead fathers in all societies to change their conduct as well by spending more time with their children. As media have become ubiquitous worldwide, they have become a force to promote the convergence or homogenization of fathering. Still the importance of history, tradition, geography, and culture will result in uneven rates of change. In some societies the provider role for fathers will remain the essence of their involvement for a long time. Many observers consider the movement toward involvement positive in that cultures with more involved fathers tend to be more peaceful and have more gender equality (cf., Coltrane 2004; Sanday 1981).

# References

Adams, B. N. (1988). Fifty years of family research: What does it mean? *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 50*, 5–17.

Adams, B. N. (1995). *The family: A sociological interpretation* (5th ed.). New York: Harcourt Brace.

Adams, B. N., & Trost, J. (2005). *Handbook of world families*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Arendell, T. (1992). After divorce: Investigations into father absence. *Gender & Society, 6*(4), 562–586.

Bastos, A. C. d. S., Volkmer-Pontes, V., Brasileiro, P. G., & Serra, H. M. (2013). Fathering in Brazil: A diverse and unknown reality. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. 228–249). New York: Routledge Academic.

Benson, L. (1968). *Fatherhood: A sociological perspective*. New York: Random House.

Benson, L. (1985). Theoretical perspectives [on fatherhood]. *American Behavioral Scientist, 29*, 25–39.

Bozett, F., & Hanson, S. (Eds.). (1991). *Fatherhood and families in cultural context*. New York: Springer.

Cabrera, N. J., & Tamis-LeMonda, C. S. (Eds.). (2013). *Handbook of father involvement: Multidisciplinary perspectives* (2nd ed.). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Chaudhary, N. (2013). The father's role in the Indian family: A story that must be told. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. 68–94). London: Taylor and Francis.

Colman, A., & Colman, L. (1981). *Earth father/sky father: The changing concept of fathering*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Coltrane, S. (2004). Fathering: Paradoxes, contradictions, and dilemmas. In M. Coleman & L. Ganong (Eds.), *Handbook of contemporary families: Considering the past, contemplating the future* (pp. 224–243). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Forste, R., & Fox, K. (2012). Household labor, gender roles, and family satisfaction: A cross-national comparison. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 43*(5), 613–631.

Fouts, H. N. (2013). Fathering in Central and East Africa: Cultural and adaptationist perspectives in small-scale societies. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. 151–172). New York: Routledge Academic.

Gardner, P. (1943). A survey of the attitudes and activities of fathers. *Journal of Genetic Psychology, 63*, 15–53.

Goode, W. J. (1963). *World revolution and family patterns*. New York: Free Press.

Graham, E., & Jordan, L. P. (2011). Migrant parents and the psychological well-being of left-behind children in Southeast Asia. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 73*(4), 763–787.

Gray, P. B., & Anderson, K. G. (2010). *Evolution and human paternal behavior*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Haas, L., & O'Brien, M. (2010). New observations on how fathers work and care: Introduction to the special issue – Men, work and parenting-Part I. *Fathering: A Journal of Theory, Research, and Practice about Men as Fathers, 8*(3), 271–275. doi: 10.3149/fth.0803.271 (Part II of Haas & O'Brien' selected papers from ISA 2010 World Congress printed in *Fathering:9* (1:Winter 2011).

Handel, G., & Whitchurch, G. G. (Eds.). (1994). *The Psychosocial interior of the family* (4th ed.). New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Handel, G., Cahill, S., & Elkin, F. (2007). *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization*. Los Angeles: Roxbury.

Hess, R. D., & Handel, G. (1959). *Family worlds: A psychosocial approach to family life*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hess, R. D., & Handel, G. (1994). The family as a psychosocial organization. In G. Handel & G. G. Whitchurch (Eds.), *The psychosocial interior of the family* (4th ed., pp. 3–17). New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Hewlett, B. S. (1992). *Father-child relations: Cultural and biosocial contexts*. Chicago: Aldine.

Hewlett, B. S. (2000). Culture, history and sex: Anthropological contributions to conceptualizing father involvement. *Marriage and Family Review, 29*(2/3), 59–73.

Hewlett, B. S. (2004). Fathers in forager, farmer, and pastoral cultures. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (4th ed., pp. 182–195). New York: Wiley.

Hewlett, B. S., & Macfarlan, S. J. (2010). Fathers' roles in hunter-gatherer and other small-scale cultures. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (5th ed., pp. 413–434). Hoboken: Wiley.

Hossain, Z. (2013). Fathers in Muslim families in Bangladesh and Malaysia. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. 95–121). New York: Routledge Academic.

Jacobson, A. L., & Seward, R. R. (Eds.). (2011). Parenting: International research and education. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies; Special Issue, 42*(1), 1–130.

Jesmin, S. S., & Seward, R. R. (2011). Parental leave and fathers' involvement with children in Bangladesh: A comparison with United States. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 42*(2), 59–76.

Karraker, M. W. (2013). *Global families* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Kwon, Y. I., & Roy, K. (2007). Changing social expectations and paternal caregiving experiences for working class and middle class Korean fathers. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 38*, 285–305.

Lamb, M. E. (Ed.). (1976). *The role of the father in child development*. New York: Wiley.

Lamb, M. E. (Ed.). (1981). *The role of the father in child development* (Revth ed.). New York: Wiley.

Lamb, M. E. (Ed.). (1987). *The father's role: Cross-cultural perspectives*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Lamb, M. E. (Ed.). (1997). *The role of the father in child development* (3rd ed.). New York: Wiley.

Lamb, M. E. (Ed.). (2004). *The role of the father in child development* (4th ed.). New York: Wiley.

Lamb, M. E. (Ed.). (2010). *The role of the father in child development* (5th ed.). New York: Wiley.

Lamb, M. E., & Tamis-LeMonda, C. S. (2004). The role of the father: An introduction. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (4th ed., pp. 1–31). New York: Wiley.

LaRossa, R. (1988). Fatherhood and social change. *Family Relations, 37*, 451–457.

LaRossa, R. (1997). *The modernization of fatherhood: A social and political history*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

LeMasters, E. E., & DeFrain, J. (1983). *Parents in contemporary America: A sympathetic review* (4th ed.). Homewood: Dorsey.

Matsumoto, D., & Yoo, S. H. (2006). Toward a new generation of cross-cultural research. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 1*, 234–250.

Mogey, J. (1957). A century of declining paternal authority. *Marriage and Family Living, 19*, 234–239.

Nakazawa, J., & Shwalb, D. W. (2013). Fathering in Japan: Entering an era of involvement with children. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. 42–67). New York: Routledge Academic.

Nash, J. (1965). The father in contemporary culture and current psychological literature. *Child Development, 36*(261), 297.

Newman, K. S. (2012). *The accordion family: Boomerang kids, anxious parents, and the private toll of global competition*. Boston: Beacon.

Nsamenang, A. B. (2010). Fathers, families, and children's well-becoming in Africa. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (5th ed., pp. 388–412). New York: Wiley.

Parke, R. D. (2007). Fathers, families, and the future: A plethora of plausible predictions. In G. W. Ladd (Ed.), *Appraising the human developmental sciences. Essays in honor of Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* (pp. 211–242). Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Pleck, J. H. (2013). Foreword. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. xiv–xix). New York: Routledge Academic.

Roopnarine, J. L. (2004). African American and African Caribbean fathers: Level, quality, and meaning of involvement. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (4th ed., pp. 58–97). New York: Wiley.

Roopnarine, J. L. (2013). Fathers in Caribbean cultural communities. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. 203–227). New York: Routledge Academic.

Sanday, P. (1981). *Female power and male dominance*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Schneider, D. M. (1961). The distinctive features of matrilineal descent groups. Introduction. In D. M. Schneider & K. Gough (Eds.), *Matrilineal kinship* (pp. 1–29). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Seward, R. R. (1991). Determinants of family culture: Effects upon fatherhood. In F. W. Bozett & S. M. H. Hanson (Eds.), *Fatherhood and families in cultural context* (pp. 218–236). New York: Springer.

Seward, R. R. (2006). Housework. In J. Beckert & M. Zafirovski (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of economic sociology* (pp. 327–328). London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Seward, R. R., & Richter, R. (2008). International research on fathering: An expanding horizon. *Fathering: A Journal of Theory, Research, and Practice about Men as Fathers, 6*(2), 87–91. doi:10.3149/fth.0602.87.

Seward, R. R., Yeatts, D. E., Amin, I., & De Witt, A. (2006). Employment leave and fathers' involvement with children: According to mothers and fathers. *Men and Masculinities, 8*(2), 405–427.

Shwalb, D. W., Nakazawa, J., Yamamoto, T., & Hyun, J. (2004). Fathering in Japanese, Chinese, and Korean cultures: A review of the research literature. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (4th ed., pp. 146–181). New York: Wiley.

Shwalb, D. W., Nakazawa, J., Yamamoto, T., & Hyun, J.-H. (2010). Fathering in Japan, China, and Korea: Changing contexts images, and roles. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (5th ed., pp. 341–387). New York: Wiley.

Shwalb, D. W., Shwalb, B. J., & Lamb, M. E. (Eds.). (2013a). *Fathers in cultural context*. New York: Routledge Academic.

Shwalb, D. W., Shwalb, B. J., & Lamb, M. E. (2013b). Final thoughts, comparisons, and conclusions. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. 385–399). New York: Routledge Academic.

Stanley-Stevens, L. (2012). *What they didn't know when they were expecting: And how they became better parents*. Los Angeles: CreateSpace.

Stanley-Stevens, L., & Seward, R. R. (2007). First time expectant fathers' attitudes, actions and well-being in regard to work & family issues. *Women's Health & Urban Life: An International & Interdisciplinary Journal, 6*(2), 81–96.

Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., & Cabrera, N. (Eds.). (2002). *Handbook of father involvement: Multidisciplinary perspectives*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Tasch, R. (1952). The role of the father in the family. *Journal of Experimental Education, 20*, 319–361.

Townsend, N. W. (2013). Separation, uncertainty, and multiple responsibilities: The complications of fathering in Southern Africa. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. 173–200). New York: Routledge Academic.

Tuli, M. (2012). Beliefs on parenting and childhood in India. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies; Special Issue: The Indian Family: A Revisit, 43*(2), 81–92.

United Nations. (2011). *Men in families and family policy in a changing world*. New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Social Policy and Development. Retrieved September 30, 2012, http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/docs/men-in-families.pdf

Whiting, B. B., & Edwards, C. P. (1988). *Children of different worlds: The formation of social behavior*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Xuan, L., & Lamb, M. E. (2013). Fathers in Chinese culture: From stern disciplinarians to involved parents. In D. W. Shwalb, B. J. Shwalb, & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Fathers in cultural context* (pp. 15–41). New York: Routledge Academic.

Yeung, W. J. (Ed.). (2013). Asian fatherhood. *Journal of Family Issues.* Special Issue, 34(2), 141–290

# Mother-Child Emotional Availability Across Cultures: Findings from Western and Non-Western Countries

**Diane L. Putnick, Marc H. Bornstein, Dana A. Breakstone, and Joan T.D. Suwalsky**

## Introduction

The mother-child relationship is often considered to be the most influential in a young child's life (Bowlby 1958; Cassidy 2008; Frankel 1994). Positive mother-child relationships have been linked to better cognitive functioning (Estrada et al. 1987), socialization (Kochanska et al. 1999), emotion understanding (Steele et al. 1999), and even a reduced likelihood of obesity (Anderson and Whitaker 2011). Through their interactions with mothers and other caregivers, children learn about the world and develop internal working models of social relationships, which they then use to process new information in future relationships (Dykas and Cassidy 2011; Sroufe et al. 1999). For example, children who have been consistently supported by their mothers (or another central caregiver) may think of themselves as competent, worthy of love, and expect others to also treat them well (Laible et al. 2004). The importance of the relationship with mother and the development of internal working models are

D.L. Putnick (✉) • J.T.D. Suwalsky • M.H. Bornstein
Child and Family Research, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health, Suite 8030, 6705 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892-7971, USA
e-mail: putnickd@mail.nih.gov; suwalskj@mail.nih.gov; marc_H_bornstein@mail.nih.gov

D.A. Breakstone
Department of Psychology, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA
e-mail: dabreaks@umd.edu

believed to be culturally universal (Pierrehumbert et al. 2009), but there may be systematic, culturally specific variations in the ways mothers interact with and parent their children. Parenting does not occur in isolation, but rather in a social and cultural context. Parenting and cultures are, therefore, intertwined because a major goal of parenting is to raise children to be well-functioning members of the culture into which they were born and within which they will live (Bornstein et al. 2011). In this chapter, we explore cross-cultural variation in one central aspect of the mother-child relationship: emotional availability.

## What Is Emotional Availability and How Is It Measured?

Human experience is inherently emotional, and children's and adults' experiences of the world and others in it are permeated with emotion. Emotions are at the core of human attachments, communications, and interactions (Emde 1980), and emotions are powerful intra- and interpersonal regulators of behavior (Bornstein et al. 2012b). Emotional availability (EA) is a global, dyadic system of parent-child interaction that assesses mutual emotional responsiveness and affective attunement. A dyad high in emotional availability is one in which both partners adapt their behavior to the other, share positive affective exchanges, and interact in a constructive, synchronous manner (Biringen 2000).

The Emotional Availability Scales (EAS; Biringen 2008) were specifically designed to assess emotional availability through observations and ratings of parent-child interaction. The EAS reflect age-appropriate behaviors in parent-child interactive cycles. The EAS consist of six globally rated dimensions concerned with emotional communication and interaction. Four scales assess maternal behavior: Sensitivity, Structuring, Nonintrusiveness, and Nonhostility. Two scales capture infant/child behavior: Responsiveness and Involving of mother. Each of the six individual EAS focuses on the behavior of one partner; however, all EA dimensions are viewed as "relationship variables", because each takes the other partner's behavior into account. Thus, the EAS assess specific behaviors of individuals but at the same time constitute global ratings of dyads that capture joint interactional style. To code the Emotional Availability Scales, Biringen et al. (1998) recommend at least 20 min of natural or semi-structured interaction. Interactions are watched repeatedly, and each of the six scales is assigned a single rating for the full interaction.

*Maternal Sensitivity* assesses acceptance, warmth, flexibility, appropriate emotion regulation, and variety and creativity of behavior displayed toward the child. *Maternal Structuring* assesses appropriate facilitation, scaffolding, or organizing of the child's activity, exploration, and routine by providing rules, regulations, and a supportive framework for interaction without compromising the child's autonomy and interest in activities. *Maternal Nonintrusiveness* measures support for the child without being overdirective, overstimulating, overprotecting, and/or interfering. *Maternal Nonhostility* measures talking to or behaving with the child in a way that is patient, pleasant, and harmonious and not rejecting, abrasive, or antagonistic.

*Child Responsiveness* focuses on age- and context-appropriate exploring and responding to the mother's bids (the balance between relatedness and autonomy) as well as enjoyment of the interaction. *Child Involving* assesses the child's engagement of the mother. Taken together, the six EAS yield assessments of the dyad's level of emotional functioning. Each scale has a cut-point above which the dyad is presumed to be functioning in an adaptive manner and below which the dyad is believed to be at risk for negative sequelae.

The Emotional Availability Scales are currently in their 4th edition (Biringen 2008). In the 4th edition, all dimensions are rated on 7-point scales, with high scores indicating more optimal dyadic functioning. When evaluating research employing the Emotional Availability Scales, however, it is important to consider the edition of the scales being reported because scaling and interpretation differ depending on the edition that was used. For example, in the 3rd edition (Biringen et al. 1998, 2000a), Maternal Sensitivity was rated on a 9-point scale, Maternal Structuring, Nonintrusiveness, and Nonhostility were rated on 5-point scales, and Child Responsiveness and Involving were rated on 7-point scales. In the 2nd edition (Biringen et al. 2000b), Maternal Structuring and Intrusiveness were rated on a single dimension and the Sensitivity, Responsiveness, and Involvement scales had maladaptive upper bounds (e.g., hyper-sensitivity).

An underlying assumption of emotional availability is that the constructs being measured are rooted in cultural notions about expressing emotion. Emotional expressions and communications around emotions are embedded within cultural communities' practices and, therefore, are largely learned and practiced from birth (Harwood and Miller 1991; Howes and Obregon 2009; Rogoff 2003). As a result, the specific behavioral manifestations of the six constructs being assessed may differ across cultures, although the scaling (from lesser to greater) of EA is appropriate in all.

## Cross-Cultural Applicability of the Emotional Availability Scales

The emotional availability scales were developed within the U.S. European American culture (Biringen et al. 1998), but they are broadly applicable to other cultures. Although the EAS have been used in dyads from over 20 countries (Easterbrooks and Biringen 2009), published reports are limited to fewer countries. Being rooted in attachment theory (a construct theorized to be universal; van IJzendoorn 1990; van IJzendoorn and Sagi-Schwartz 2008), the EAS apply broadly to parent-child relationships around the globe. Because the EAS are global ratings of the overall climate of interaction, a wide variety of culturally specific behaviors could be characterized as being emotionally available. For example, in some cultures, the representation of maternal sensitivity might include physical affection, like hugging and snuggling, whereas in other cultures, physical affection with children is quite rare and a better indicator of maternal sensitivity might be giving

extra food or privileges to the child (Oburu and Palmerus 2003; Whiting and Whiting 1975). For this reason, the EAS allow for culturally specific behaviors. However, the foregoing example underscores the importance of using raters who are fluent in the culture being assessed. If a European American coder attempts to rate the sensitivity of mothers in Kenya, she might misrepresent important exchanges that have different meanings in the two cultures.

## Intra-Cultural Studies of Emotional Availability

Studies that formally compare cultures on the Emotional Availability Scales are rare. However, the EAS have been used within many different cultures and, although they cannot be directly compared, findings from intra-cultural studies inform the literature about variation throughout the world.

### *Western Cultures*

The EAS have been used in many Western cultures. As is generally true of psychological research (Arnett 2008), the largest share of studies is based on samples from the United States and Canada and Northern Europe. Because of the large number of Western studies we only briefly summarize this literature. In North American samples, the EAS have been related to a host of positive child characteristics and outcomes including compliance, behavioral adjustment, school readiness, language, play, peer relationships, empathy, and prosocial behavior (Biringen et al. 2005; Easterbrooks et al. 2012; Howes and Hong 2008; Lehman et al. 2002; Moreno et al. 2008; Pressman et al. 1999; Robinson and Little 1994). There are also active research groups using the EAS in Australia, Italy, Israel, and the Netherlands, as well as individual studies emerging from Belgium, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Spain, Sweden, and the Ukraine. The EAS have been found to discriminate clinical from nonclinical mothers in Australia (Newman et al. 2007; Trapolini et al. 2008) and Belgium (Vliegen et al. 2009), and clinical and nonclinical children in Germany (Wiefel et al. 2005) and Israel (Atzaba-Poria et al. 2010). Dyadic EA improved in response to parenting interventions in Latvia (Streitule-Pikse et al. 2010), the Netherlands (Stams et al. 2001; van Doesum et al. 2008), and Sweden (Salomonsson and Sandell 2011a, b). The EAS also have demonstrated relations with parenting stress and mind-mindedness (a mother's tendency to frame interactions with her child in terms of the child's intentions, beliefs, desires, and emotions) in Australia (Lok and McMahon 2006; McMahon and Meins 2012); attachment security (Aviezer et al. 1999, 2003; Ziv et al. 2000) and perceived primary control (Dan et al. 2011) in Israel; attachment security (Cassibba et al. 2012) and symbolic play in children with Down Syndrome (Venuti et al. 2008) in Italy; infant negative temperament (Albers et al. 2007), attachment security (van IJzendoorn et al. 2007), later child cognitive

development in internationally adopted children (Stams et al. 2002), and maternal PTSD symptoms in war trauma asylum-seekers and refugees (van Ee et al. 2012) in the Netherlands; and maternal prenatal and concurrent representations of parenthood in drug-abusing and non-abusing mothers in Finland (Flykt et al. 2012). Taken together, these findings suggest a pattern of relations that validate the EAS across multiple Western countries.

## *Non-Western Cultures*

The EAS have been used rarely in non-Western cultures. However, the little research available suggests that the EAS can be applied to non-Western cultures, and they relate in expected ways to other constructs within each culture. For example, Murray-Kolb and Beard (2009) employed the EAS in a sample of South African mother-infant dyads. Three groups of mothers were recruited 6 weeks after giving birth – mothers with iron deficiency anemia who were supplemented with iron (as well as vitamin C and folic acid; the treatment group), mothers with iron deficiency anemia who were not supplemented with iron (but were supplemented with vitamin C and folic acid; the placebo group), and mothers without iron deficiency anemia (no supplementation; the control group). At 10-weeks post-partum, dyads in the control group scored higher on Maternal Sensitivity and Child Responsiveness than mothers in the treatment and placebo groups. At 9 months post partum, the treatment group scored similarly to the control group and better than the placebo group on Maternal Sensitivity, Structuring, and Nonhostility, and Child Responsiveness. These results suggested that post-partum iron supplementation prevented a decline in mother-infant emotional availability from 10 weeks to 9 months post-partum that was observed in the placebo group.

A study in India explored relations between emotional availability, attachment security, and child adaptive behavior in 3- to 6-year-old children with intellectual disabilities (John et al. 2012). Child emotional availability (the sum of Responsiveness and Involving) was related to attachment security and child adaptive behavior. Maternal emotional availability (the sum of Sensitivity, Structuring, Nonintrusiveness, and Nonhostility) was associated with attachment security, but not with child adaptive behavior. Furthermore, child emotional availability fully mediated the relation between maternal emotional availability and attachment security as well as the relation between child adaptive functioning and attachment security. John et al. (2012) suggest that responsiveness to and involving of mothers may be particularly important indicators of attachment security in children with disabilities. Children's contributions to the emotional availability of interactions were more predictive of attachment security than were those of their mothers.

The intracultural studies reported above suggest that the EAS can be applied to Western and non-Western cultures, and they show reasonable convergent and predictive validity with relevant and expectable constructs. These intracultural studies also tend to report mean levels for the emotional availability scales in the adaptive

range for low-risk community samples, and in lower ranges for high-risk or clinical samples. Rohner et al. (2003) estimated that about 75 % of parents world-wide are warm and loving to their children and the remaining 25 % are at least mildly rejecting of their children. Perhaps the same could be said for emotional availability: when conditions are optimal (or "good enough"), mother-child dyads tend to display adaptive levels of emotional availability, but when conditions are poor (due to physical or mental illness, poverty, or inadequate social or cognitive resources) dyads are characterized by suboptimal emotional availability. Of course the severity of these conditions is culturally constructed, and measures of relevant ecological conditions will vary from one culture to another. It is also possible that there are systematic variations in emotional availability across cultures when socioeconomic and ecological conditions are held constant. For example, dyads in some cultures may not have interactional styles consistent with high emotional availability. To investigate this possibility, cross-cultural studies of emotional availability are needed.

## Cross-Cultural Studies of Emotional Availability

Contemporary research casts the ecological perspective as indispensable in developmental study (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998), and one increasingly vital ecological context of development is culture (Bornstein 1991; Rogoff 1990). Far too much of the research on parent-child relationships is based on single U.S. American or Northern European samples, and too many generalizations are made to other cultures based on patterns found in those that are studied. The cross-cultural approach is acknowledged by empiricists and theoreticians alike as requisite to a fuller understanding of developmental processes as well as for testing the limits of generalization (Bornstein 1991, 2002; Brislin 1983; Nugent et al. 1989; Piaget 1966/1974; Whiting 1981). One additional goal of cross-cultural research is to explore and explain cultural similarities and differences in parent-child relationships (Bornstein 1980; van de Vijver and Leung 1997). Insufficient research has systematically examined expressions of mutual emotional availability in parent-child dyads by country, even though there have been specific calls for investigations of both cross-country and intra-country variation in EA (Emde 2000; Bornstein et al. 2012b).

Three studies by Bornstein and colleagues (2008, 2010, 2012a, b) explored patterns of emotional availability across demographically matched mother-child dyads in Argentina, Italy, and the United States. The first study (Bornstein et al. 2012a) explored emotional availability in mothers with their 5-month-old firstborn children. Seventy dyads resided in Argentina, 70 dyads resided in Italy, and 80 dyads resided in the United States. In these three community samples, most dyads scored in the adaptive range on the EAS, underscoring the commonality among the three cultures being studied. However, Italian mothers were more sensitive and Italian infants more responsive on average than Argentine and U.S. mothers and infants. The three cultural groups did not differ on Maternal Structuring, Nonintrusiveness, or Nonhostility, or on Child Involving. However, when Sensitivity,

Structuring, Responsiveness, and Involving were submitted to a cluster analysis, three clusters emerged and Italian dyads were more likely than expected to be classified as high in emotional availability; they were less likely than expected to be classified as low in emotional availability. The authors concluded that emotional availability is a culture-common characteristic of mother-infant dyads near the beginning of life, but is moderated by culture.

The second study (Bornstein et al. 2008) used the same sample of Argentine, Italian, and U.S. dyads, but explored emotional availability when the children were 20 months old. At this later time point, Italian mothers were more sensitive and optimally structuring, and Italian children were more responsive and involving than Argentine and U.S. dyads. Like at 5 months, dyads from all countries generally scored in the adaptive range on the EAS, but Italian dyads had higher emotional availability than Argentine and U.S. dyads.

Finally, in their third study, Bornstein et al. (2010) explored the stability in relative ordering and continuity in mean level of emotional availability in the same three cultural groups from 5 to 20 months. Across all countries, emotional availability was stable (correlated) across time, and country did not moderate stability, indicating that stability was similar across the three cultural groups. Across all countries, some Emotional Availability Scales were continuous (i.e., did not differ) in mean level (Maternal Nonhostility, Child Responsiveness, and Child Involvement), and some decreased in mean level from 5 to 20 months (Maternal Sensitivity, Structuring, and Nonintrusiveness). As with stability, country did not moderate the continuity/discontinuity results, indicating that the same pattern of relations (i.e., mean level continuity in some, and decreases in other scales across time) was evident in all three cultures. The reduction in some domains of emotional availability from 5 to 20 months was explained as a (possibly transient) dyadic pattern resulting from the increasing agency of the child at 20 months. For example, being sensitive to and structuring the environment of a non-mobile, non-verbal infant may be an easier task than doing so for an active, mobile, talking toddler.

Taken together, these three studies suggest that dyads in normative samples from three Western, industrialized nations generally score in the adaptive range on the Emotional Availability Scales, and the changes in emotional availability from 5 to 20 months followed similar patterns in the three countries. However, at both 5 and (especially) 20 months, Italian dyads tended to be more emotionally available to one another than dyads in Argentina and the United States.

Why did Italian dyads score higher? Compared to Argentine and U.S. American cultures, Italian culture places a stronger emphasis on the socioemotional relationship between the mother and child. Italian mothers stress the importance of the relationship they have with the child—"a relationship that is to satisfy the affective needs of the mother and of the child" (Bimbi 1991, p. 150). Compared with U.S. American mothers, Italian mothers typically display higher levels of social/affective and handling/holding behaviors, and spend more time in synchronous dyadic social exchanges with their infants (Hsu and Lavelli 2005). Italian dyads are also more likely to openly express affection to each other than are American dyads during the first 3 months (Hsu and Lavelli 2005). Axia and Weisner (2002) suggested that

Italian mothers prefer socially active and affectively responsive "vivaci" infants, and accordingly, Italian-speaking children say more social words (i.e., names for people and social routines) than English-speaking children (Caselli et al. 1995, 1999). All of these reported characteristics of Italian mothers and children support the findings that Italian dyads were more emotionally available to one another than were the American and Argentine dyads (Bornstein et al. 2008, 2012a).

## Is Emotional Availability Culturally Universal or Culture-Specific?

For any human group, there are emotional ties between mother and child. Therefore, in one large sense, EA is a universal aspect of dyadic relationships. Whether its assessment by the EAS yields a universal picture remains to be seen. To date, however, converging data suggest a cohesive cross-cultural profile. In no individual country reviewed above were non-clinical dyads in the sample rated as consistently low in average emotional availability; when country or culture means were reported, all scores were above the mid-point of the scale, except for two samples of clinically depressed mothers (van Doesum et al. 2008; Vliegen et al. 2009). Furthermore, the advantages found for Italian dyads in the studies by Bornstein et al. (2008, 2012a, b) were small, and most dyads in all three countries had scores in the adaptive range. Of course, the emotional availability of dyads varies within and across countries, but we would expect few large systematic differences in average levels across cultures in demographically matched samples.

More support for the universal applicability of the Emotional Availability Scales comes from evidence for concurrent and predictive validity. The Emotional Availability Scales have been associated with other meaningful indicators of parenting, child development, and parent-child relationships in many countries. For example, the relations of the EAS with attachment security in the United States, Canada, India, Israel, Italy, and the Netherlands suggest that similar processes are generally at work in each country to produce healthy mother-child relationships. Bornstein et al. (2010) also found that the Emotional Availability Scales changed similarly across infancy in Argentina, Italy, and the United States, suggesting that developmental trajectories may evolve similarly across cultures. Here again, expanded study of non-Western samples will be extremely valuable.

## Summary and Conclusions

Although the literature on cross-cultural differences in emotional availability is still scant, there is preliminary evidence to suggest that the Emotional Availability Scales are broadly applicable and predictive across a wide range of cultures. It is possible that the file drawer problem (Rosenthal 1979) is at work, meaning that studies where

the Emotional Availability Scales are not predictive or significantly different across cultures are not being published. However, evidence of cross-cultural similarities are generally considered to be at least as interesting as cross-cultural differences, so it is likely that these reports would also be chosen for publication if the studies were of high quality.

Based on this review of the literature, we recommend several next steps. First, the Emotional Availability Scales should be applied to dyads in diverse non-Western countries. Particularly lacking are Asian and African cultures, where mothers may have different interactive styles with their infants and young children than Western mothers (Putnick et al. in press; Rubin and Ock Boon Chung 2006). Second, studies of dyads with different predominant family structures (e.g., extended families, village settings) and dyads in various living conditions (e.g., extreme poverty, high infant mortality) are needed to understand the full range of emotional availability across the world. Finally, more cross-cultural studies are needed to directly compare the functioning of dyads living in similar conditions across cultural groups. Only in this way will we come to understand the role that emotional availability plays as parents strive to prepare their children for productive and successful lives in diverse cultural settings. With a broader cross-cultural base, the universal and culturally specific aspects of emotional availability can be more fully understood and appreciated.

# References

Albers, E. M., Riksen-Walraven, J. M., & de Weerth, C. (2007). Infants' interactions with professional caregivers at 3 and 6 months of age: A longitudinal study. *Infant Behavior and Development, 30*, 631–640.

Anderson, S. E., & Whitaker, R. C. (2011). Attachment security and obesity in US preschool-aged children. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 165*, 235–242.

Arnett, J. J. (2008). The neglected 95%: Why American psychology needs to become less American. *American Psychologist, 63*, 602–614.

Atzaba-Poria, N., Meiri, G., Millikovsky, M., Barkai, A., Dunaevsky-Idan, M., & Yerushalmi, B. (2010). Father-child and mother-child interaction in families with a child feeding disorder: The role of paternal involvement. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 31*, 682–698.

Aviezer, O., Sagi, A., Joels, T., & Ziv, Y. (1999). Emotional availability and attachment representations in kibbutz infants and their mothers. *Developmental Psychology, 35*, 811–821.

Aviezer, O., Sagi-Schwartz, A., & Koren-Karie, N. (2003). Ecological constraints on the formation of infant-mother attachment relations: When maternal sensitivity becomes ineffective. *Infant Behavior & Development, 26*, 285–299.

Axia, V. D., & Weisner, T. S. (2002). Infant stress reactivity and home cultural ecology and Italian infants and families. *Infant Behavior and Development, 25*, 255–268.

Bimbi, F. (1991). Parenthood in Italy: Asymmetric relationships and family affection. In U. Bjornberg (Ed.), *European parents in the 1990s: Contradictions and comparisons* (pp. 141–154). New Brunswick: Transaction.

Biringen, Z. (2000). Emotional availability: Conceptualization and research findings. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 70*, 104–114.

Biringen, Z. (2008). *Emotional availability (EA) scales manual* (4th ed.). Unpublished manual. Boulder: Colorado State University.

Biringen, Z., Robinson, J. L., & Emde, R. N. (1998). *Emotional availability scales* (3rd ed.). Unpublished manual. Fort Collins: Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Colorado State University.

Biringen, Z., Robinson, J. L., & Emde, R. N. (2000a). Appendix B: The emotional availability scales (3rd ed.; an abridged infancy/early childhood version). *Attachment & Human Development, 2*, 256–270.

Biringen, Z., Robinson, J. L., & Emde, R. N. (2000b). Appendix A: The emotional availability scales (2nd ed.; an abridged infancy/early childhood version). *Attachment & Human Development, 2*, 251–255.

Biringen, Z., Skillern, S., Mone, J., & Pianta, R. (2005). Emotional availability is predictive of the emotional aspects of children's "school readiness". *Journal of Early Childhood and Infant Psychology, 1*, 81–97.

Bornstein, M. H. (1980). Cross-cultural developmental psychology. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Comparative methods in psychology* (pp. 231–281). Hillsdale: Erlbaum.

Bornstein, M. H. (1991). Approaches to parenting in culture. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Cultural approaches to parenting* (pp. 3–19). Hillsdale: Erlbaum.

Bornstein, M. H. (2002). Toward a multiculture multiage multimethod science. *Human Development, 45*, 257–263.

Bornstein, M. H., Putnick, D. L., Heslington, M., Gini, M., Suwalsky, J. T. D., Venuti, P., de Falco, S., Giusti, Z., & Zingman de Galperín, C. (2008). Mother-child emotional availability in ecological perspective: Three countries, two regions, two genders. *Developmental Psychology, 44*, 666–680.

Bornstein, M. H., Suwalsky, J. T. D., Putnick, D. L., Gini, M., Venuti, P., de Falco, S., Heslington, M., & Zingman de Galperín, C. (2010). Developmental continuity and stability of emotional availability in the family: Two ages and two genders in child-mother dyads from two regions in three countries. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 34*, 385–397.

Bornstein, M. H., Putnick, D. L., & Lansford, J. E. (2011). Parenting attributions and attitudes in cross-cultural perspective. *Parenting: Science and Practice, 11*, 214–237.

Bornstein, M. H., Putnick, D. L., Suwalsky, J. T. D., Venuti, P., de Falco, S., Zingman de Galperín, C., Gini, M., & Tichovolsky, M. H. (2012a). Emotional relationships in mothers and infants: Culture-common and community-specific characteristics of dyads from rural and metropolitan settings in Argentina, Italy, and the United States. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 43*, 171–197.

Bornstein, M. H., Suwalsky, J. T. D., & Breakstone, D. A. (2012b). Emotional relationships between mothers and infants: Knowns, unknowns, and unknown unknowns. *Development & Psychopathology, 24*, 113–123.

Bowlby, J. (1958). The nature of the child's tie to his mother. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, 39*, 350–373.

Brislin, R. W. (1983). Cross-cultural research in psychology. *Annual Review of Psychology, 34*, 363–400.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (1998). The ecology of developmental processes. In R. M. Lerner (Ed.) & W. Damon (Series Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 1. Theoretical models of human development* (5th ed., pp. 993–1028). New York: Wiley.

Caselli, M. C., Bates, E., Casadio, P., Fenson, J., Fenson, L., Sanderl, L., & Weir, J. (1995). A cross-linguistic study of early lexical development. *Cognitive Development, 10*, 159–199.

Caselli, C., Casadio, P., & Bates, E. (1999). A comparison of the transition from first words to grammar in English and Italian. *Journal of Child Language, 26*, 69–111.

Cassibba, R., van IJzendoorn, M. H., & Coppola, G. (2012). Emotional availability and attachment across generations: Variations in patterns associated with infant health risk status. *Child: Care, Health and Development, 38*, 538–544.

Cassidy, J. (2008). The nature of the child's ties. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (2nd ed., pp. 3–22). New York: Guilford.

Dan, O., Sagi-Schwartz, A., Bar-haim, Y., & Eshel, Y. (2011). Effects of early relationships on children's perceived control: A longitudinal study. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 35*, 449–456.

Dykas, M. J., & Cassidy, J. (2011). Attachment and the processing of social information across the life span: Theory and evidence. *Psychological Bulletin, 137*, 19–46.

Easterbrooks, M. A., & Biringen, Z. (2009). Emotional availability across contexts. *Parenting: Science & Practice, 9*, 179–182.

Easterbrooks, M. A., Bureau, J.-F., & Lyons-Ruth, K. (2012). Developmental correlates and predictors of emotional availability in mother-child interaction: A longitudinal study from infancy to middle childhood. *Development & Psychopathology, 24*, 65–78.

Emde, R. N. (1980). Emotional availability: A reciprocal reward system for infants and parents with implications for prevention of psychosocial disorders. In P. M. Taylor (Ed.), *Parent-infant relationships* (pp. 87–115). Orlando: Grune & Stratton.

Emde, R. N. (2000). Next steps in emotional availability research. *Attachment & Human Development, 2*, 242–248.

Estrada, P., Arsenio, W. F., Hess, R. D., & Holloway, S. D. (1987). Affective quality of the mother-child relationship: Longitudinal consequences for children's school-relevant cognitive functioning. *Developmental Psychology, 23*, 210–215.

Flykt, M., Punamäki, R.-L., Belt, R., Biringen, Z., Salo, S., Posa, T., & Pajulo, M. (2012). Maternal representations and emotional availability among drug-abusing and nonusing mothers and their infants. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 33*, 123–138.

Frankel, S. A. (1994). The exclusivity of the mother-child bond: Contributions from psychoanalytic and attachment theories and day-care research. *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child, 49*, 86–106.

Harwood, R. L., & Miller, J. G. (1991). Perceptions of attachment behavior: A comparison of Anglo and Puerto Rican mothers. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 37*, 583–599.

Howes, C., & Hong, S. S. (2008). Early emotional availability: Predictive of pre-kindergarten relationships among Mexican-heritage children? *Journal of Early Childhood and Infant Psychology, 4*, 4–25.

Howes, C., & Obregon, N. B. (2009). Emotional availability in Mexican-heritage low-income mothers and children: Infancy through preschool. *Parenting: Science and Practice, 9*, 260–276.

Hsu, H.-C., & Lavelli, M. (2005). Perceived and observed parenting behavior in American and Italian first-time mothers across the first 3 months. *Infant Behavior & Development, 28*, 503–518.

John, A., Morris, A. S., & Halliburton, A. L. (2012). Looking beyond maternal sensitivity: Mother-child correlates of attachment security among children with intellectual disabilities in urban India. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 42*, 2335–2345.

Kochanska, G., Forman, D. R., & Coy, K. C. (1999). Implications of the mother-child relationship in infancy for socialization in the second year of life. *Infant Behavior & Development, 22*, 249–265.

Laible, D. J., Carlo, G., & Roesch, S. C. (2004). Pathways to self-esteem in late adolescence: The role of parent and peer attachment, empathy, and social behaviors. *Journal of Adolescence, 27*, 703–716.

Lehman, E. B., Steier, A., Guidash, K. M., & Wanna, S. Y. (2002). Predictors of compliance in toddlers: Child temperament, maternal personality, and emotional availability. *Early Child Development and Care, 172*, 301–310.

Lok, S. M., & McMahon, C. A. (2006). Mothers' thoughts about their children: Links between mind-mindedness and emotional availability. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 24*, 477–488.

McMahon, C. A., & Meins, E. (2012). Mind-mindedness, parenting stress, and emotional availability in mothers of preschoolers. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 27*, 245–252.

Moreno, A. J., Klute, M. M., & Robinson, J. L. (2008). Relational and individual resources as predictors of empathy in early childhood. *Social Development, 17*, 613–637.

Murray-Kolb, L. E., & Beard, J. L. (2009). Iron deficiency and child and maternal health. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 89*(suppl), 946S–950S.

Newman, L. K., Stevenson, C. S., Bergman, L. R., & Boyce, P. (2007). Borderline personality disorder, mother-infant interaction and parenting perceptions: Preliminary findings. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 41*, 598–605.

Nugent, J. K., Lester, B., & Brazelton, T. B. (Eds.). (1989). *The cultural context of infancy* (Vol. 1). Norwood: Ablex.

Oburu, P. O., & Palmerus, K. (2003). Parenting stress and self reported discipline strategies of Kenyan grandmothers taking care of their orphaned grandchildren. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 27*, 505–512.

Piaget, J. (1974). Need and significance of cross-cultural studies in genetic psychology (C. Dasen, Trans.). In J. W. Berry & P. R. Dasen (Eds.), *Culture and cognition* (pp. 299–309). London: Methuen. (Original work published 1966)

Pierrehumbert, B., Santelices, M. P., Ibáñez, M., Alberdi, M., Ongari, B., Roskam, I., Stievenart, M., Spencer, R., Rodríguez, A. F., & Borghini, A. (2009). Gender and attachment representations in the preschool years: Comparisons between five countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 40*, 543–566.

Pressman, L. J., Pipp-Siegel, S., Yoshinaga-Itano, C., & Deas, A. (1999). Maternal sensitivity predicts language gain in preschool children who are deaf and hard of hearing. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education, 4*, 294–304.

Putnick, D. L., Bornstein, M. H., Lansford, J. E., Chang, L., Deater-Deckard, K., Di Giunta, L., Gurdal, S., Dodge, K. A., Malone, P. S., Oburu, P., Pastorelli, C., Skinner, A. T., Sorbring, E., Tapanya, S., Uribe Tirado, L. M., Zelli, A., Alampay, L. P., Al-Hassan, S. M., Bacchini, D., & Bombi, A. S. (2012). Agreement in mother and father acceptance-rejection, warmth, and hostility/rejection/neglect of children across nine countries. *Cross-Cultural Research, 46*, 191–223.

Robinson, J., & Little, C. (1994). Emotional availability in mother-twin dyads: Effects on the organization of relationships. *Psychiatry: Interpersonal and Biological Processes, 57*, 222–231.

Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rohner, R. P., Khaleque, A., & Cournoyer, D. E. (2003). Cross-national perspectives on parental acceptance-rejection theory. In G. W. Peterson, S. K. Steinmetz, & S. M. Wilson (Eds.), *Parent-youth relations: Cultural and cross-cultural perspectives* (pp. 79–98). New York: Haworth Press, Inc.

Rosenthal, R. (1979). The file drawer problem and tolerance for null results. *Psychological Bulletin, 86*, 638–641.

Rubin, K. H., & Ock Boon Chung, O. B. (Eds.). (2006). *Parenting beliefs, behaviors, and parent-child relations: A cross-cultural perspective*. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Salomonsson, B., & Sandell, R. (2011a). A randomized controlled trial of mother-infant psychoanalytic treatment: I. Outcomes on self-report questionnaires and external ratings. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 32*, 207–231.

Salomonsson, B., & Sandell, R. (2011b). A randomized controlled trial of mother-infant psychoanalytic treatment: II. Predictive and moderating influences of qualitative patient factors. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 32*, 377–404.

Sroufe, L. A., Carlson, E. A., Levy, A. K., & Egeland, B. (1999). Implications of attachment theory for developmental psychopathology. *Development & Psychopathology, 11*, 1–13.

Stams, G.-J. J. M., Juffer, F., van IJzendoorn, M. H., & Hoksbergen, R. A. C. (2001). Attachment-based intervention in adoptive families in infancy and children's development at age 7: Two follow-up studies. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 19*, 159–180.

Stams, G.-J. J. M., Juffer, F., & van IJzendoorn, M. H. (2002). Maternal sensitivity, infant attachment, and temperament in early childhood predict adjustment in middle childhood: The case of adopted children and their biologically unrelated parents. *Developmental Psychology, 38*, 806–821.

Steele, H., Steele, M., Croft, C., & Fonagy, P. (1999). Infant-mother attachment at one year predicts children's understanding of mixed emotions at six years. *Social Development, 8*, 161–178.

Streitule-Pikse, I., Sebre, S., & Lubenko, J. (2010). Child behavior and mother-child emotional availability in response to parent training program: Moderators of outcome. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 5*, 1418–1424.

Trapolini, T., Ungerer, J. A., & McMahon, C. A. (2008). Maternal depression: Relations with maternal caregiving representations and emotional availability during the preschool years. *Attachment & Human Development, 10*, 73–90.

van de Vijver, F. J. R., & Leung, K. (1997). *Methods and data analysis for cross-cultural research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

van Doesum, K. T. M., Riksen-Walraven, J. M., Hosman, C. M. H., & Hoefnagels, C. (2008). A randomized controlled trial of a home-visiting intervention aimed at preventing relationship problems in depressed mothers and their infants. *Child Development, 79*, 547–561.

van Ee, E., Kleber, R. J., & Mooren, T. T. M. (2012). War trauma lingers on: Associations between maternal posttraumatic stress disorder, parent-child interaction, and child development. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 33*, 459–468.

van IJzendoorn, M. H. (1990). Developments in cross-cultural research on attachment: Some methodological notes. *Human Development, 33*, 3–9.

van IJzendoorn, M. H., & Sagi-Schwartz, A. (2008). Cross-cultural patterns of attachment. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (2nd ed., pp. 880–905). New York: Guilford.

van IJzendoorn, M. H., Rutgers, A. H., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M. J., Swinkels, S. H. N., van Daalen, E., Dietz, C., Naber, F. B. A., Buitelaar, J. K., & van Engeland, H. (2007). Parental sensitivity and attachment in children with autism spectrum disorder: Comparison with children with mental retardation, with language delays, and with typical development. *Child Development, 78*, 597–608.

Venuti, P., de Falco, S., Giusti, Z., & Bornstein, M. H. (2008). Play and emotional availability in young children with Down Syndrome. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 29*, 133–152.

Vliegen, N., Luyten, P., & Biringen, Z. (2009). A multimethod perspective on emotional availability in the postpartum period. *Parenting: Science and Practice, 9*, 228–243.

Whiting, J. W. (1981). Environmental constraints on infant care practices. In R. H. Munroe, R. L. Munroe, & B. B. Whiting (Eds.), *Handbook of cross-cultural human development* (pp. 155–179). New York: Garland STPM Press.

Whiting, B. B., & Whiting, J. W. (1975). *Children of six cultures: A psycho-cultural analysis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wiefel, A., Wollenweber, S., Oepen, G., Lenz, K., Lehmkuhl, U., & Biringen, Z. (2005). Emotional availability in infant psychiatry. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 26*, 392–403.

Ziv, Y., Aviezer, O., Gini, M., Sagi, A., & Koren-Karie, N. (2000). Emotional availability in the mother-infant dyad as related to the quality of infant-mother attachment relationship. *Attachment & Human Development, 2*, 149–169.

# Index