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**MANIFESTATIONS OF AUTONOMY AND RELATEDNESS
IN MOTHERS' ACCOUNTS OF THEIR ETHNOTHEORIES
REGARDING CHILD CARE ACROSS FIVE
CULTURAL COMMUNITIES**

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This study analyzes how autonomy and relatedness manifest in mothers' accounts of their ethnotheories regarding child care. Mothers came from two independent samples from urban middle-class in Germany and California, two autonomous-relational samples from urban middle-class in India and Cameroon, and one interdependent sample from rural Cameroon. Transcriptions of picture-based interviews are coded for discourse elements indicative of both orientations. Mothers from independent and autonomous-relational samples use more *I* statements and direct references to themselves. Mothers from interdependent and autonomous-relational samples contextualize and refer to authorities more often. Generally, differences between the urban and rural samples in terms of discourse elements related to autonomy are less pronounced than differences in associated socialization goals. This indicates that consciously held beliefs are more sensitive to changes in the families' sociocultural environment than their discourse.

Keywords: discourse content; autonomy; relatedness; cross-cultural differences

Parents all over the world have ideas and hold beliefs about child care. These ideas and beliefs can be regarded as representational frameworks for the development of competence in particular sociocultural environments (Keller, 2003). Furthermore, these ideas and beliefs constitute ethnotheories that are publicly patterned and historically reproduced symbolic practices used by members of a cultural community to make sense of their environment (Geertz, 1973; Gone, Miller, & Rappaport, 1999).

Accordingly, parental ethnotheories have been demonstrated to differ with respect to those developmental domains that are particularly emphasized in different sociocultural environments. For instance, Harwood et al. (Harwood, Miller, & Lucca Irizarry, 1995; Harwood, Schoelmerich, & Schulze, 2000) have shown that Puerto Rican mothers find proper demeanor more important than Euro-American mothers, who in turn emphasize self-maximization. Harkness and Super (1992) found that parents in a rural Kipsigis community in Kenya focused on teaching obedience and on the development of responsibility

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and socially situated intelligence, whereas middle-class Bostonians in the United States focused on the development of independence and school-related skills.

Socialization goals determine which developmental domains are emphasized by members of a particular culture. Cultures especially differ in terms of how much emphasis they place on autonomy and relatedness (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1996, 2005). Within an autonomous orientation, the self is described primarily in terms of internal attributes such as personal goals, desires, needs, personality traits, and abilities (Kitayama & Uchida, 2004). Furthermore, a person's experiences and actions tend to be *I* centered. Relatedness implies that the self is defined primarily in terms of an individual's relationships with others. These relationships are hierarchical in nature and are based on moral commitment and stringent role obligations. Autonomy and relatedness are considered to be independent dimensions (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005; Keller, 2006).

Autonomy and relatedness are not only represented in the content of ethnotheories but also in the discourses used to talk about these theories. In this sense, language is not only a representational system that reflects meaning but also a code system used in contextualized discourse practices to construct meaning (Miller, 1996). Language can therefore be regarded as a cultural code itself (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). In recent years, different studies conducted within the field of psychology have looked at samples of discourse, including mother-child interactions, as well as maternal reports about child care, to gain insight into aspects of cultural socialization models. In a linguistic discourse analysis, Keller, Hentschel et al. (2004) found that a Berlin and a Los Angeles mother used a discourse style that could best be characterized by a focus on own experiences and on the child's needs, desires, and preferences. An urban and, even more pronounced, a rural Nso mother focused on the social context of their own and others' experiences and actions and stressed the hierarchical relation between mother and child.

In studies about the narrative style used in verbal interactions of caregivers and small children, two narrative styles have been identified. First, the elaborative (Fivush & Fromhoff, 1988), also referred to as the high elaborative (Hudson, 1990; Reese, Haden, & Fivush, 1993), reminiscent (Engel, 1995), or conversation eliciting (Tulviste, 2003) style, is characterized by frequent questions, elaborations, and the tendency to integrate the child's input so that a conversational pattern based on an assumed equality of participants emerges. The narrations are rich, embellished, and detailed, with a focus on personal attributes, preferences, and judgments. Emotions are often regarded as a direct expression of the self and an affirmation of the importance of the individual (Markus & Kitayama, 1994). The elaborated style has been identified as characteristic of a sociocultural orientation emphasizing autonomy (Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998; Markus & Kitayama, 1994) that is prevalent among the educated middle-class of Western, postindustrial, information-based societies (Keller, Hentschel et al., 2004; Wang, 2001). On the other hand, the repetitive (Fivush & Fromhoff, 1988; McCabe & Peterson, 1991), also referred to as the low elaborative (Hudson, 1990; Reese et al., 1993), practical (Engel, 1995), or directive (Chao, 1995) style, is characterized by commands and instructions and the mother taking a leading role in conversations. A high value is placed on the social context, moral rectitude, and behavioral consequences (Miller, Jung, & Mintz, 1996; Mullen & Yi, 1995; Wang, Leichtman, & Davies, 2000). Emotions tend to be viewed as disruptive and are expected to be controlled (Wang, 2001; Wang et al., 2000; cf. also Bond, 1991; Chao, 1995). The repetitive style has been identified as characteristic of a sociocultural orientation focusing on relatedness (Fiske et al., 1998; Markus & Kitayama, 1994) that is prevalent among rural villagers with a basic formal education (Keller, Hentschel et al., 2004) as well as among

the urban educated middle-class of traditionally interdependent societies, for example, in China (Wang et al., 2000; Wang & Leichtman, 2000) and in Korea (Choi, 1992; Han, Leichtman, & Wang, 1998; Mullen & Yi, 1995).

We also propose analyzing samples of discourse, as sociocultural products of meaning-making processes, to develop an understanding of cultural socialization models within a quantitative paradigm. However, whereas most studies focus on an analysis of interactions between mothers and their children, this study is concerned with mothers' verbal reactions to pictures depicting mother-child interactions. Consequently, not all categories used in the studies cited above for the analyses of mother-child interactions apply equally well in analyses of mothers' responses about child care. Particularly, context-specific discourse functions (e.g., commands and instructions), which are typical for interactions between mothers and children, are not relevant for the purposes of this study. On the other hand, the following discourse content categories have been taken from previous studies: Content categories for autonomy were defined as mothers' references reflecting an *I* centeredness of experiences and actions and as references to a child as having mental states such as emotions, cognitions, needs, and preferences. Relational content categories were defined as mothers' contextualization of their own or others' experiences and behavior reflected in references to the social context as well as those instances where mothers referred to moral correctness, social regulations, and concern with authority. Furthermore, we looked at the volume of maternal talk, measured as the number of words spoken.

The definition of culture applied in this study views culture as shared meanings and practices embedded in everyday life within particular communities (Greenfield, Keller, Maynard, & Suzuki, 2004). Autonomy and relatedness, focused on in this study, are aspects of culture that have been shown to vary across socioeconomic and sociodemographic contexts. Ecological factors, for instance ecology and natural resources, determine a particular culture's way of living, particularly with regard to the economic system, the educational system, and the structure of the broader social life and the family (Whiting, 1963). These patterns of life, in turn, bear on the conception of the individual and thus on socialization goals and parenting ethnotheories, embodying the attitudes toward autonomy and relatedness. These circumscribed socialization goals and beliefs, then, inform the behavior of individuals living in a specific sociocultural context (Keller, 2006). This conception implies that societies host different cultures, even if these share a common language and history.

In the literature on narrative styles, variation within societies related to differences in social class and education has been reported. Well-educated, middle-class mothers have been described as highly elaborative, whereas poorly educated mothers have been found to use a low elaborative narrative style (Han et al., 1998; Nelson, 2000; Tessler & Nelson, 1994). When compared to less educated parents, parents who have received more formal schooling have been shown to have a more elaborated, agentic verbal style (Laosa, 1983; Richman, Miller, & LeVine, 1992). Against the background of our understanding of culture, we would reconceptualize these "intracultural" variations as cultural differences within a society, as differences in formal education and social class are indicative of different sociocultural orientations found within society.

The present study aims to compare the discourse content of mothers of 3-month-old babies talking about their parenting ethnotheories. Based on our conception of culture outlined above, we selected samples within and across countries that represent different orientations toward autonomy and relatedness. Our sampling strategy was to recruit homogeneous groups with respect to the sociodemographic marker variables that can be regarded as prototypical for the respective sociocultural contexts. Because these differences in sociodemographic variables

are constitutive of culture, we do not control for them statistically. The exposure to formal education and the families' economic resources are inextricably interwoven with the shared systems of meaning and actions and thus with the practices of everyday life within the family. As a further consequence, this approach does not allow generalizations about countries or societies as a whole.

Following Kağıtçıbaşı's (1996, 2005) approach, there are two prototypically independent samples defined as high on autonomy and low on relatedness. Both represent urban, highly educated middle- to upper middle-class families: a Euro-American sample from Los Angeles (United States) and a sample from Berlin (Germany) (Keller, 2006; Keller, Hentschel et al., 2004; Wang et al., 2000). Furthermore, there are two samples that can be characterized as representing the autonomous-relational orientation defined as high on both autonomy and relatedness. Both are urban, well to highly educated, middle- to upper middle-class families from so-called traditional societies: one sample of Indian Hindu families from Delhi (Chaudhary, 2004; Wang & Chaudhary, 2006) and one sample of Nso mothers living in various bigger cities in Cameroon (Keller, Voelker, & Yovsi, 2005; Nsamenang, 1992; Nsamenang & Lamb, 1994). Finally, we included a rural Nso sample from Cameroon, consisting of mothers who received only basic formal education, with a prototypical interdependent sociocultural orientation defined as low on autonomy and high on relatedness. The families live in small villages scattered on the hills around Kumbo, in houses mainly built of mud bricks. Their livelihood primarily depends on farming on a subsidiary basis (Keller, Lohaus et al., 2004).

In this article, we tested the following hypotheses: First, we expected differences in the autonomous and relational socialization goals between the samples, and second, we expected differences in the relative frequency of discourse elements indicative of an autonomous or relational orientation. More specifically, regarding the autonomous socialization goals, we expected the mothers with an independent cultural model (i.e., the mothers from Berlin and Los Angeles) and the mothers with an autonomous-relational cultural model (i.e., the Delhi and the urban Nso mothers) to be similar not only in terms of valuing autonomous socialization goals higher than the interdependent rural Nso mothers but also in terms of the extent to which they value autonomous socialization goals. This orientation should be reflected in the mothers' discourse in that the accounts of mothers from the former samples should contain more autonomous discourse elements than the accounts of mothers' with an interdependent cultural model. We expected a different pattern for the relational socialization goals and discourse elements. We expected the rural Nso mothers, representing an interdependent orientation, to be similar to the autonomous-relational samples, and we expected samples from both orientations to value relational socialization goals higher than the independent samples. Similarly, we expected that the relative frequency of relational discourse elements is higher for mothers of the interdependent and the autonomous-relational sample than for mothers of the independent samples.

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

One hundred and sixty-five mothers of 3-month-old babies from five cultural communities volunteered to participate in this study. The recruitment of participants depended on the local customs of the respective cultural community. In Delhi and Berlin, local research

assistants collected the data in cooperation with pediatricians and local hospitals. In Los Angeles, local and bilingual German assistants collected the data in cooperation with the University of California, Los Angeles. In the rural Nso community, mothers were informed during prenatal and welfare classes after the lineage heads approved participation. Interested mothers participated if their family heads consented. The urban Nso sample was recruited through local research assistants who announced the study at the monthly cultural meetings of the Nso in various cities in Cameroon (Yaoundé, Kumbo, Bamenda, Buea, and Douala). To guarantee the middle-class status of the urban Nso families, we only recruited families that had access to professional medical care and of which the parents had typical middle-class occupations (e.g., teacher, nurse, secretary).

Gender distribution was held equal in all samples. On average, 56% of the babies were girls. Other parameters varied across the samples as a consequence of the respective sociodemographic contexts. The fertility rate in Germany (1.39), the United States (2.08), and India (2.78) is lower than the fertility rate in Cameroon (4.55),¹ leading to more first-borns than later-borns in the former samples (percentage of firstborns: Berlin 71%, Los Angeles 64%, Delhi 44%, urban Nso 32%, rural Nso 35%; $\chi^2 = 16.67, p < .01$). The mothers' degree of formal education was higher in the Berlin, Los Angeles, and Delhi samples than in the urban Nso sample, which showed a further difference in the level of education compared to the rural Nso sample. Eighty-one percent of the Berlin, 100% of the Los Angeles, 97% of the Delhi, 50% of the urban Nso, and none of the rural Nso mothers held a high school degree or higher ($\chi^2 = 96.70, p < .01$). Looking at the modal values, 55% of the Berlin, 96% of the Los Angeles, and 92% of the Delhi mothers held a university degree; 71% of the urban Nso mothers either completed secondary or high school, and 90% of the rural Nso sample completed primary school, consisting of 7 years of schooling. Furthermore, mothers from Berlin ($M = 33.98, SD = 3.90$) and Los Angeles ($M = 34.88, SD = 3.24$) were significantly older than mothers from Delhi ($M = 28.90, SD = 3.23$) or mothers in the urban ($M = 29.79, SD = 6.14$) and the rural ($M = 29.21, SD = 8.40$) Nso sample, $F(4, 158) = 9.61, p < .001$.

PROCEDURE

When the youngest child in the family was 3 months old, a local research assistant visited the families at home. Part of the assessment was a picture-based interview with the mother. In this semistructured interview, mothers were confronted with a set of five photographs showing universally occurring systems of mother–infant interactions derived from the component model of parenting (Keller, 2003; Keller, Lohaus et al., 2004). The photographs depicted a mother breastfeeding her child, a mother engaging in close body contact with her child, a mother stimulating her child's body in a way that is typical for the particular culture (e.g., lifting the child above her head [Nso] or moving the child's legs [Berlin]), a mother engaging in face-to-face contact, and finally a mother using an object (e.g., toy) to stimulate the baby. For each sample, we used photographs showing mothers and infants of the cultural community studied. Previous studies have shown that these picture cards elicit responses about a wide variety of mother–infant interactions (Keller & Demuth, 2004; Keller, Hentschel et al., 2004). Participants were asked to select the picture they liked best and were probed to give reasons for their choice. This procedure was repeated until all pictures were commented on. The order in which the cards were selected is dispensable here because the images depicted on the pictures have no direct relation to the coding categories.

Additionally, participants completed a questionnaire assessing background information. Participants filled in the questionnaires during the home visits, except in Cameroon, where the researchers read the questionnaires aloud and marked the appropriate option. Finally, we applied a questionnaire assessing the mothers' socialization goals (Keller et al., 2006). This questionnaire consisted of 12 items constructed to assess the importance attached to autonomy as a socialization goal for the first 3 years of a baby's life (e.g., "during the first 3 years of life, children should become assertive") and the orientation toward relatedness (e.g., "during the first 3 years of life, children should learn to obey the parents"). Participants rated each item on a 6-point Likert-type scale. In the Delhi sample, we only got data from 23 of the 40 mothers. However, there were no significant differences regarding the sociodemographic data between mothers for whom we do have information and mothers for whom we do not have information on the socialization goals. Data analysis revealed culture-specific response styles. Both Nso samples favored the extremes of the scale. Therefore, we decided to combine adjacent scale points resulting in a 3-point scale.² The autonomous and relational socialization goals scores were defined as the sum score of the respective six items for each dimension. The reliability of the relatedness scale was assessed using Cronbach's α , and the scores ranged between .64 and .82 per cultural group,³ with an overall reliability of .83. For the autonomy scale, the scores ranged between .62 and .90, with an overall reliability score of .89. However, the mean scores of the scales should be interpreted cautiously. To avoid fallacies based on culture-specific response styles, we decided to divide the autonomy score by the relatedness score and to use this ratio score as a further score for the final analyses.

TRANSCRIPTION

All interviews were conducted in the mothers' native language and audiotaped. The interviews with the Berlin and Los Angeles mothers were transcribed verbatim. The interviews with the urban and rural Nso mothers, which were conducted in Lamnso, the spoken language of the Nso, were translated into natural-sounding English by bilingual Lamnso-English speakers with attention to both literal and sense meaning. We proceeded likewise with the interviews with the Delhi mothers that were carried out in Hindi and English.

The coding was conducted on the German (Berlin sample) or English (all other samples) transcriptions, ensuring that the linguistic differences between the four original languages had minimal effect on between-culture differences uncovered in the variables examined. We chose to use English and German transcripts for two reasons. First, because even if coding was done in the original language, implicit translation would be unavoidable in conducting comparative analyses, and second, some variables cannot be coded when different languages are used (e.g., the number of words to compare volume of discourse produced).

CODING

A coding scheme was developed based on past work on family discourse styles in different sociocultural environments (Fivush, 1994; Mullen & Yi, 1995; Reese et al., 1993; Wang, 2001; Wang et al., 2000). Two composite variables were constructed. Each composite variable comprised several component variables. Each component variable was coded by counting the number of occurrences in each transcription. Because the coding

categories were based on the occurrences of specific aspects, they were not mutually exclusive but overlapped among utterances.

Autonomy. For this composite variable, two major component variables with various subcomponents were coded: (1) Autonomy mother: This variable indexes the mother's *I* centeredness and her tendency to refer to the autonomous functioning of herself. (a) *I* statement: The mother explicitly refers to herself as the speaking person, for example, "I think, it's really important in the beginning." (b) Self-referral: The mother refers to herself and her own child or her own experiences, for example, "I have seen in case of both my children, they have responded to me in [the] 2nd or 3rd month." (2) Mental state baby: This variable indexes the mother's tendency to refer to the autonomous functioning of her child. The mother refers to the baby as having or developing (a) needs, volitions, and preferences (e.g., "she likes to talk to and being held"); (b) cognitions (e.g., "he understands that these are the toys with which I will play"); and (c) emotions (e.g., "the child is happy").

Relatedness. This variable indexes the mother's tendency to contextualize her own and others' behavior. Two components were coded as follows: (1) Social context: The mother talks about the social context or other persons, for example, "when she [the baby] looks at us then she also recognizes that this is my father, this is my mother, these are my siblings and she is able to recognize her own people," and (2) Reference to authorities: The mother refers to moral correctness, social regulations, and concern with authority, for example, "so this should be done. One should talk to the baby."

Furthermore, the volume of discourse produced was measured as the number of words spoken. All coding categories were weighted by the length of the transcription in words. The resulting scores for all component and composite variables were relative frequencies per thousand words.

INTERRATER AGREEMENTS

Two trained coders independently coded the transcriptions of 30 randomly selected mothers (6 of each culture). Interrater reliability ranged from 71% to 96% for all categories described above. The coders' ratings were scored as the number of agreements divided by the number of agreements plus the number of disagreements.

RESULTS

PLAN OF ANALYSES

Two major sets of analyses were conducted. First, we tested the hypothesized differences in the socialization goals between the cultural samples using analysis of variance (ANOVA) techniques. Second, we looked at differences in the responses of the mothers from the different samples by analyzing the composite variables and each component variable separately using either multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) or ANOVA techniques. In a third step, we entered the child's birth rank (firstborn vs. later-born) and the mothers' socioeconomic status (SES), age, and degree of formal education (all three z standardized within cultures) as covariates in the multivariate analysis of covariance or analysis of covariance, respectively. Because none of these covariates reached the level of significance, we only report the results of the MANOVAs and ANOVAs here.

SOCIALIZATION GOALS

We postulated that the theory-guided selection of samples followed in this study should be affirmed by differences in the emphasis put on the socialization goals oriented toward autonomy and relatedness. As hypothesized, Berlin, Los Angeles, Delhi, and urban Nso mothers valued autonomous socialization goals significantly higher than rural Nso mothers (see Table 1). There were no significant differences between the former samples. With regard to relatedness, Nso mothers in general attached a higher importance to relational socialization goals than Los Angeles and Berlin mothers did. Unexpectedly, Delhi mothers valued relational socialization goals significantly less than did Nso mothers and did not differ significantly from Los Angeles mothers. Looking at the ratio scores, we got a very clear picture with Berlin and Los Angeles mothers having values greater than 1, indicating a prevalence of autonomous goals; Delhi and urban Nso mothers with values around 0.90, indicating a slight prevalence of relational socialization goals; and rural Nso mothers with a value around 0.40, indicating a clear preference for relational socialization goals. The three theoretical orientations, namely independent, autonomous-relational, and interdependent, differed significantly from each other, and η^2 s for all scores just mentioned indicate large effects.⁴ These results clearly support our assumptions concerning the selection of samples.

DISCOURSE CONTENT

Looking at the composite score "autonomy," we found, on the descriptive level, that mothers of all four urban samples used more autonomous discourse elements than mothers of the rural sample, with Berlin and Los Angeles mothers emphasizing autonomy the most (see Table 2). However, not all expected group differences reached the level of significance (the Berlin sample did not differ from the Delhi one, and the urban Nso sample did not differ from the rural Nso sample).

The pattern was consistent for the component variable "autonomy mother" and its subcomponents *I* statements and self-referral. Berlin and Los Angeles mothers used these discourse elements the most, followed by Delhi, urban Nso, and then rural Nso mothers. In line with our hypothesis, mothers from the independent and autonomous-relational samples scored higher on "autonomy mother" than mothers from the interdependent sample. Contrary to our hypothesis, mothers from the independent samples scored significantly higher on "autonomy mother" than mothers from the autonomous-relational samples, and Delhi mothers, in turn, scored significantly higher than urban Nso mothers, who again did not differ significantly from mothers in the rural Nso sample.

The picture was less clear for the component variable "mental state baby." With respect to the subcomponent preference, our hypothesis was partly confirmed. Los Angeles mothers referred significantly more often to a child's needs, preferences, and volitions than mothers from the urban or rural Nso samples. Concerning preferences, Berlin and Delhi mothers were somewhere in between. With regard to the subcomponents cognition and emotion, we found, contrary to our assumption, that Nso mothers, rural and urban alike, talked about babies as having cognitions and emotions significantly more often than mothers from all other samples. There were no significant differences between the latter samples.

For the composite score "relatedness" and its component variables "reference to authority" and "social context," we found a very consistent pattern (see Table 3). Taken together, discourse elements indicative of this sociocultural orientation were found most frequently in the talk of rural Nso mothers, followed by urban Nso, Delhi, Los Angeles, and finally

TABLE 1
Descriptives and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results for Autonomous and Relational Socialization Goals and the Ratio Score

	<i>Berlin</i> (n = 41)		<i>Los Angeles</i> (n = 25)		<i>Delhi</i> (n = 23)		<i>Urban Nso</i> (n = 28)		<i>Rural Nso</i> (n = 29)		F(4, 141)	η^2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Autonomous	14.73 _a	2.60	15.64 _a	1.73	13.83 _a	2.62	15.04 _a	3.91	6.83 _b	1.91	29.47***	.60
Relational	13.17 _{a/b}	2.71	14.28 _{b/c}	2.94	15.04 _c	2.06	17.71 _d	.85	17.72 _d	1.16	53.35***	.46
Ratio A/R	1.14 _a	.22	1.13 _a	.22	.92 _b	.15	.85 _b	.21	.39 _c	.12	78.65***	.69

NOTE: Five-level (culture) analysis of variance. Indexed letters indicate results of simple main effects testing (with Bonferroni adjustment). η^2 = partial eta-square.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 2
Results for the Composite and Component Variables of Autonomy

	<i>Berlin</i> (n = 40)		<i>Los Angeles</i> (n = 24)		<i>Delhi</i> (n = 36)		<i>Urban Nso</i> (n = 28)		<i>Rural Nso</i> (n = 22)		F(4, 145)	η^2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Autonomy total	44.52 _{a/b}	20.11	54.35 _a	18.91	34.39 _{b/c}	15.53	27.87 _{c/d}	9.83	19.49 _d	12.32	17.83***	.33
Autonomy mother	38.51 _a	18.87	42.02 _a	17.68	26.04 _b	16.92	11.42 _c	11.45	7.44 _c	8.47	26.01***	.42
I Statements	24.58 _{a/b}	8.86	27.78 _a	11.43	19.54 _b	13.87	5.18 _c	5.19	3.05 _c	3.96	35.36***	.49
Self-referral	13.93 _a	14.95	14.24 _a	13.17	6.50	8.76	6.24	9.30	4.39 _b	7.79	4.81**	.12
Mental state baby	6.01 _a	4.64	12.32 _{b/c}	7.53	8.35 _{a/b}	6.96	16.45 _c	6.56	12.06 _{b/c}	7.39	12.37***	.25
Preference	3.42	4.25	6.46 _a	6.47	3.54	4.31	1.92 _b	2.40	.72 _b	1.22	6.40***	.15
Emotion	0.42 _a	1.01	1.64 _{a/b}	2.76	2.23 _{a/b}	4.06	6.45 _c	6.45	5.60 _{b/c}	3.85	13.23***	.27
Cognition	2.16 _a	2.61	4.21 _a	4.78	2.58 _a	3.86	8.07 _b	5.53	5.74 _b	4.43	10.39***	.22

NOTE: Five-level (culture) multivariate analysis of variance with significant multivariate main effect for culture on narrative style (subcomponent variables only: I statements, self-referral, emotion, cognition, preference), Wilk's $\lambda = .29$, $F(20, 468.6) = 10.47$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .26$, followed by univariate analyses. Indexed letters indicate results of simple main effects testing (with Bonferroni adjustment). η^2 = partial eta-square. All mean scores indicate relative frequency per 1,000 words.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Berlin mothers. As expected, mothers from the interdependent and the autonomous-relational samples used these discourse elements equally often, and Berlin mothers made use of these discourse elements significantly less often than the former samples. However, mothers from the Los Angeles sample, though they scored lower than the autonomous-relational samples on the descriptive level, did only differ significantly from the rural Nso sample. If one looks at the content categories separately, the same pattern arises; however, we found that Delhi mothers did use, on average, references to authority more often than social context, whereas it is the other way around in both Nso samples.

Finally, we had a look at the proportion of autonomy-to-relatedness codings. As hypothesized, more than 90% of all discourse codings for the Los Angeles and Berlin mothers were related to autonomy (Los Angeles: $M = .96$, $SD = .06$; Berlin: $M = .92$, $SD = .07$), followed by the Delhi mothers ($M = .82$, $SD = .17$) and the urban Nso ($M = .79$, $SD = .16$) mothers with approximately 80%, and last, the rural Nso mothers with about 60% ($M = .59$, $SD = .23$), $F(4, 145) = 26.59$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .42$. Simple main effect testing with

TABLE 3
Results for the Composite and Component Categories of Relatedness

	<i>Berlin</i> (n = 40)		<i>Los Angeles</i> (n = 24)		<i>Delhi</i> (n = 36)		<i>Urban Nso</i> (n = 28)		<i>Rural Nso</i> (n = 22)		F(4, 145)	η^2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Relatedness	1.87 _a	3.48	4.42 _{ab}	4.33	7.33 _{b/c}	6.94	8.26 _{b/c}	7.32	11.69 _c	6.19	12.36***	.25
Reference to authority	0.68 _a	1.65	1.44 _a	2.68	4.55 _b	5.22	3.15	4.10	4.86 _b	4.37	7.50***	.17
Social context	1.19 _a	2.33	2.98 _{ab}	2.71	2.78 _{ab}	3.83	5.11 _{b/c}	5.47	6.82 _{c/d}	4.21	9.66***	.21

NOTE: Five-level (culture) multivariate analysis of variance with significant multivariate main effect for culture on narrative style (component variables only: reference to authority and social context), Wilk's $\lambda = .68$, $F(8, 288) = 7.54$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .17$, followed by univariate analyses. Indexed letters indicate results of simple main effects testing (with Bonferroni adjustment). η^2 = partial eta-square. All mean scores indicate relative frequency per 1,000 words.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Bonferroni adjustment revealed that from the expected differences, only the one between the Los Angeles and the Delhi sample did not reach the level of significance.

Looking at the number of words as an indicator for the volume of discourse, we found, in contrast to our assumption, that Delhi mothers spoke significantly less ($M = 362.31$, $SD = 183.59$) than mothers from all other samples (Berlin: $M = 552.30$, $SD = 187.57$; Los Angeles: $M = 650.10$, $SD = 248.26$; urban Nso: $M = 531.86$, $SD = 154.93$; rural Nso: $M = 483.70$, $SD = 207.55$), $F(4, 146) = 8.90$, $p < .001$.

In sum, we found supportive evidence for the hypothesized patterns concerning the responses of mothers from different sociocultural orientations with regard to the component variable "autonomy mother," and the respective component and subcomponent variables. We found mixed results for the component variable "mental state baby."

DISCUSSION

The present study was aimed at gaining insight into aspects of socialization models related to child care by analyzing verbal responses produced in a context other than mother-child interaction. We approached the analysis of parental ethnotheories through analyses of mothers' accounts of their ethnotheories regarding child care. The way in which mothers talked about what is supposed to be proper or improper child care revealed to what extent they see themselves, the developing child, and others in general as autonomous and related.

With regard to the socialization goals, we found a distinct pattern that supports the idea of culture as being dependent on broader socioeconomic variables. Mothers from all samples with predominantly highly educated middle-class families evaluated autonomous socialization goals as more important than the rural Nso mothers did. With regard to relational socialization goals, the interdependent and autonomous-relational samples valued these goals higher than the independent samples did. Of special interest here is the comparison between the two Nso samples. Belonging to the same ethnic group, these two samples differed significantly regarding the importance attached to autonomy. Although they share a common language and have a common historical background, they differ regarding their sociocultural orientation, as their *lebenswelten* (life worlds) (Schütz & Luckmann, 1984) differ in many respects concerning their everyday life experiences. These differences can most probably be attributed to differences in the broader social and

ecological environment. Autonomy seems to be essential to function effectively and to develop competence within the urban, well-educated middle-class, which is another indication for the mediating role beliefs and socialization goals play in explaining the way culture works. The urban Nso mothers scored higher on relatedness than the Delhi mothers, although both cultural communities are considered to represent the autonomous-relational orientation. This result may reflect the special situation of Indian middle-class families that have been described as individualists in a collectivist society (Sinha & Tripathi, 1994). These families living in urban centers with highly developed technological facilities often live in fairly traditional domestic arrangements. Thus, workplace, school, and the street may be replete with the latest electronic gadgets, competitive spirit, and market forces, whereas relationships continue to be close-knit and strong (Kumar, 1993; Raman, 2003; Verma & Saraswathi, 2002). If one looks at the relative importance attached to autonomy versus relatedness, autonomy dominates in the independent samples, the ratio is slightly in favor of relatedness in the autonomous-relational samples, and relatedness clearly dominates in the interdependent sample.

These differences in orientation toward autonomy and relatedness should manifest in the way mothers talk about proper and improper child care. The overall pattern of results substantiated this idea. Discourse elements indicative of autonomy were found most often in the independent samples, less often in the autonomous-relational samples, and least often in the interdependent sample. We found this pattern to be consistent for the mothers' autonomy in both the component score and its subcomponents. In sum, the differences in the *I* centeredness and self-reference of mothers are not as accentuated as the differences in the socialization goals. Even if the mothers of the urban Nso sample and the urban Delhi mothers valued autonomous socialization goals as importantly as the mothers of the two independent samples did, these attitudes did not make their way into their discourse as clearly for the former as for the latter.

To explain these findings, we drew on the theory of cultural lag. Originally, it was defined by Ogburn (1922) as the phenomenon that changes in the "adaptive nonmaterial culture" tend to lag behind changes in the "material conditions." By this, he means that changes in attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors lag behind changes in social structure. In line with our argumentation, he assumed that objective factors determine the symbolic content of subjective experience. Our results indicate that on the level of socialization goals, the adaptive change processes took place. However, on the level of discourse, changes lagged behind. What we would like to argue is that differentiating Ogburn's ideas on cultural lag, not all facets of the "adaptive nonmaterial culture" are equally sensitive to change. Furthermore, some features of culture might even be resilient and resist change. We would like to propose that consciously held opinions in which values are explicated adapt faster to material conditions than implicitly used content categories in individuals' responses about cultural behavior.

For autonomy conceded to the child, the pattern of results is less consistent with regard to the constitutive subcomponents. Whereas the results were as expected for preference, a typical content category for autonomy, they were less so for cognitions and emotions. Rather, Nso mothers referred to emotions significantly more often than all other mothers. The hypothesis that mothers from independent cultures should refer to a child's emotional state more often than mothers from interdependent cultures was derived from studies comparing Euro-Americans (representing an independent stance) and East Asians (representing an interdependent stance). Thus, these data might even represent an Asian idiosyncrasy rather than a central feature of interdependence. Keller, Hentschel et al. (2004), who used

the same type of picture-based interview, found that mothers from all samples referred to emotional states in the baby. All mothers referred to this issue but within different contexts and with different implications. The Berlin and the Los Angeles mothers spoke about emotions as independent, internal entities that have to be accepted and taken into account while interacting with a child, whereas the urban and the rural Nso mothers preferred to speak about sharing emotions as an important part of the mother–child bond. To develop further insight into these issues, one would have to have a closer look at the situations in which the mothers refer to the child's emotional state and at the way in which mothers do so. Furthermore, mothers of both Nso samples referred to a child as having cognitions more often than mothers in all other samples did. Whether these findings can be ascribed to a cultural idiosyncrasy or a systematic pattern cannot be decided here. Moreover, we had the impression that the way in which mothers referred to cognitive states in the baby (most often in terms of “thinking,” “knowing,” and “learning”) often seemed to be related to a sensory, somatic, or precognitive awareness of the world, rather than to a genuine cognitive state attributable to a specific child. The belief is held that the words referring to babies' cognition and emotional states acted as a makeshift for something that is not that easy to label precisely.

The results for the relational content categories clearly supported our hypothesis. Mothers of both autonomous-relational and the interdependent sample used discourse elements indicative of relatedness significantly more often than did mothers of the independent samples. What seemed particularly noteworthy to us is that relatedness manifested differently in the Delhi and the Nso samples. Whereas in the Nso samples mothers used social context more often than reference to authority, it is the other way around in the Delhi sample.

In sum, the differences in the relative frequencies of content categories supported our hypotheses. These differences were even more pronounced in the proportion of autonomy codings to all discourse codes given. Support, however, is confined to those categories that revealed to what extent mothers think of themselves and others as autonomous and related in general but not, as we assumed earlier, to what extent mothers think of the developing child as autonomous and related.

Our study has several limitations. Generally, one might ask how common it is at all to talk about child rearing practices in the specific cultural communities with which we worked. Unlike other topics (e.g., sexual practices), proper and improper child care is not a sensitive topic or a taboo. Rather, it is a topic that is important in all communities. From our experience, we know that there are cultural differences in terms of who mothers go to for advice (e.g., to their own mothers, to friends, to same-aged mothers, or to experts) and whether mothers are willing to discover their own opinions about child care through open discussions.

Concerning the content categories we looked at, one has to say that autonomous discourse elements are overrepresented in the coding scheme. It seems advisable that future research should aim at completing and refining the discourse elements indicative of autonomy and relatedness.

Furthermore, from a methodological point of view, the instrument used to assess the socialization goals was susceptible to culture-specific response styles. Some argue that these differences have to be taken as a result in itself (Bachman & O'Malley, 1984; Lamm & Keller, 2007), whereas others criticize that these are empirical problems that need to be resolved before drawing conclusions (van Herk, Poortinga, & Verhallen, 2004). By using the ratio scores as an additional measure, we hope to have provided convincing evidence for both groups.

Another limitation of this study is that our approach was indebted to the common procedure of contrasting different prototypical cultural communities. This approach has particular

strengths and weaknesses. The sampling strategy chosen follows directly from our definition of culture. The homogeneous groups are representative of the respective sociocultural orientations. However, in doing so, we have to refrain from analyzing the relation between sociodemographic marker variables and psychological outcomes within cultural communities. An indication that does provide evidence that relations between sociodemographic marker variables and psychological outcomes hold within cultures or nations is the focused comparison between the mothers of the urban and rural Nso sample. There, we have seen that both socialization goals and the content of mothers' discourses, measured as the proportion of autonomous to related discourse elements, differed.

Future research should try to reach beyond this broad categorization of cultural communities and attempt to explore the dynamic organization and linkages between the dimensions we looked at, especially in the domain of parenting.

NOTES

1. Information taken from the world fact book at <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/> on October 11, 2005.

2. Using the original 6-point scales led to identical patterns of significant mean differences with even larger effect sizes for autonomy, relatedness, and the ratio score. However, out of 12 items, on average 11.0 ($SD = 2.3$) and 10.4 ($SD = 2.8$) were answered using an extreme value (1 or 6) in the rural and urban Nso sample as compared to 4.5 ($SD = 2.9$) in the Berlin or 5.1 ($SD = 3.6$) in the Los Angeles sample. Looking at less extreme values (2 or 5), the picture reverses. Only 0.5 ($SD = 0.9$) and 0.7 ($SD = 1.6$) of these 12 items were answered using a less extreme score by the rural and urban Nso mothers as compared to 3.6 ($SD = 2.6$) items in the Berlin sample or 3.3 ($SD = 2.4$) in the Los Angeles sample. Therefore, we think that the recoded items are more appropriate here.

3. For the rural Nso sample, the reliability for the relatedness scale could not be computed separately, because, except for one item, all participants fully agreed.

4. Eta-square (η^2) was used as an index of the strength of association between an independent variable and a dependent variable; η^2 's of .01, .06, and .14 can be interpreted as small, medium, and large effect size, respectively (see Cohen, 1988).

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