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CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON OF MATERNAL BELIEFS ABOUT
COMPETENT CHILDREN'S EMOTIONS AND BEHAVIORS

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ABSTRACT

This study examined an aspect of cultural socialization—mothers’ beliefs about the responses of competent children to emotion-eliciting situations. Specifically, the study investigated mothers’ beliefs about the emotions and actions of competent first-graders in different situational contexts: two commonly associated with anger, one with empathy, and one happiness, all of which occur in the participating nations. The investigation of maternal beliefs is a method of conducting variations in cultural expectations of children’s developmentally appropriate behavior (Joshi & Maclean, 1997). Understanding mothers’ beliefs may shed light on cultural variations in parenting practices and in children’s emotional behavior (Cole & Tan, 2006; Tromsdorff, Cole, & Heikamp, 2011).

The study compared the responses of mothers from two Individualistic nations (U.S. and Germany) and two Collectivist nations (India and Nepal). In each nation, 100 mothers were interviewed about how a competent first-grader (one of each gender) whom they knew would feel and act in the following situations: having a toy snatched by another child, having a tower of blocks knocked down by another child, seeing another child fall down, and getting good marks in school. Based on a literature review, five hypotheses were tested: (a) more mothers from Individualistic countries (Germany and United States) would describe competent first-graders’ emotions in ways that focus on the children’s self-interests (e.g. angry a toy was snatched) whereas more mothers from Collectivist societies (India and Nepal) would describe competent first-graders emotions in ways that reflect a sense of self in relation to others (e.g. glad to share the toy); (b) more mothers from Individualistic countries would describe competent first-graders as acting to achieve their own self-interests (e.g. snatch the toy back) whereas more mothers from Collectivist countries would describe competent first-graders as acting to achieve the interests of themselves and others (e.g. share the toy); (c) more mothers from Individualistic countries would

state that competent first-graders act autonomously, whereas more mothers from Collectivist countries would state that competent first-graders seek support; (d) across cultures, mothers will state that girls feel and act in ways that take into account others whereas boys feel and act in a more self-interested manner; and (e) gender differences will be greater in Collectivist than Individualistic countries.

In general, mothers' responses were found to be more similar than different across countries of two Cultural Orientations. However, significant differences emerged in some vignettes. The findings were consistent with predictions in Knocked Blocks (Gender difference), Fallen Child (Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions; Gender difference) and Good Marks vignettes (Self- versus Other-focused Actions). Significant differences that contradicted the predictions were found in Snatched Toy (overall; Gender difference), Knocked Blocks (Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions), and Good Marks vignettes (Gender difference). Furthermore, no significant interaction between Cultural Orientation and Gender emerged. The predominant similarity in maternal responses may indicate that cultural differences in emotion and behavior have not yet emerged at age 6-7. More nuanced differentiation is needed to find cultural effects.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

People from across the world have the capacity to be emotional. Emotion is defined by two component processes: appraisal (the meaning of a perceived situation relative to goals for well-being) and action (readiness to act to regain or maintain well-being; Frijda, 1986). As a basic human capacity, it is reasonable to expect cultural similarities in how persons respond to situations that threaten or promote their sense of well-being. Yet, how persons appear to feel and how they ultimately act is a product of socialization and therefore can be influenced by cultural standards. A deeper understanding of those similarities and differences has significant implications for mental health, because emotion distress is at the heart of many psychological disorders (Tsai, Knutson, & Fung, 2006).

Much of the cross-cultural work on culture and emotion has been conducted with adults. Cultural variations in emotion-related behavior, however, likely develop across the lifespan (Cole & Tan, 2008). They develop as an outcome of socialization pressures by the community in which the child belongs, e.g. observing how others behave in emotional situations, experiencing positive and negative consequences for one's own behavior. Therefore, it is important to understand the socialization processes by which similarities and differences develop. For this we look to the socialization of children's emotions for answers. Similarities and differences in cultural socialization of emotion have been reported, yet there is a dearth of research on the cultural socialization of children's emotions (Cole & Tan, 2008). One method of developing a broader understanding of developmental outcomes in emotional behavior is to understand the socialization goals of those who contribute to emotion socialization. For example, in a study of ethnic group differences in emotion socialization in Nepal, interviews with elders offered insight into why parents of young children in the different communities responded differently to child

anger and shame (Cole, Bruschi, & Tamang, 2002). That study employed a procedure that was designed to be culturally sensitive. Specifically, elders were interviewed about two children in their community, a boy and a girl, whom they regarded as doing well, a procedure developed by an anthropologist and psychologist: the Criteria of Child Competence interview (CCC; Durbrow, Pen, Masten, Sesma, & Williamson, 2001). The open-ended format was used to identify criteria they spontaneously mentioned in describing competent children, an approach designed to avoid imposing biases or directing respondents toward particular criteria.

Data for the present study was drawn from a larger cross-national study of cultural beliefs and practices associated with different cultural orientations. That study included the CCC and followed the open-ended format with four sets of focused questions about how the two competent children respond—how they feel and how they act—in common emotion-eliciting situations. The present study used the follow-up questions to address predictions that mothers from different cultural orientations would believe competent children feel and act differently as a function of the type of values of the nation in which they lived. Mothers from India and Nepal were thought to share a tradition of collectivist values and to construe the self in terms of the interdependence of individual selves, and mothers from the U.S. and Germany were thought to share a tradition of individualistic values and to construe the self as independent, self-reliant, and unique (Hofstede, 1983; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988). Individualism (IND) has been defined as a characteristic of nations that emphasize the uniqueness, separateness and independence of individuals (Hofstede, 1983; Triandis et al., 1988). An individual in this cultural orientation values personal rights above duty, is concerned about his/her self and immediate family, is autonomous and independent from his/her in-group, emphasizes his/her own uniqueness, and values himself/herself in terms of personal accomplishment. In contrast, collectivism (COL) is defined by an emphasis on the good of the group being a priority over individual goals. A person in collectivist culture values duty according to his/her group

status, pursues the goals of the in-group, and derives satisfaction from carrying out social obligations and expectations (Hofstede, 1983; Triandis, 2001). Although there has been ample criticism of the simplicity of the individualism-collectivism (IND-COL) dichotomy (Kagitcibasi, 2007), it has been valuable in highlighting differences that then set the stage for further research (Oyserman, Kemmelmeier, & Coon, 2002; Triandis, 2001). After reviewing 83 different studies, Oyserman and colleagues concluded that the cultural differences along this dimension are stable and significant. Moreover, relative to the nations participating in the current study, they found that participants from India and Nepal had significantly lower individualism scores than participants from North America had. Germany did not differ significantly from North America on individualism. In terms of collectivism, there was no significant difference between North America and Germany. However, they found that India and Nepal were significantly higher in collectivism than North America. This meta-analytic view of the distinction between IND and COL provides support for categorizing India and Nepal as traditionally collectivist countries and the United States and Germany as traditionally individualistic countries.

Previous work from the larger study using the CCC, the open-ended interview assessing mothers' conceptions of child competence, revealed that emotional competence was not a salient aspect of mothers' descriptions of competent first-graders; rather mothers emphasized social competence (Wood, 2012). Therefore, the follow-up questions about competent children's reactions to emotion-eliciting situations were of interest, directing mothers toward how a competent child would feel and behave in common situations across the nations. The investigative team of developmental psychologists from each nation generated vignettes that were culturally relevant in each nation (Trommsdorff, Cole, & Heikamp, 2012).

In this introduction, theories and empirical work on emotions and behaviors were reviewed from the cultural perspective. First of all, components of emotion are discussed. Research with adult participants was used to illustrate cultural differences, whereas studies conducted with child

participants point to the presence of different socialization processes across cultures. The actions following emotion-eliciting events were summarized in the same manner. Finally, the importance of considering gender as an additional factor that influences socialization pressures is discussed and integrated with predictions about the effects of cultural orientations (IND versus COL) on mothers' beliefs about child emotion and behavior.

Emotion and culture

Building on the work of Arnold (1960), Frijda (1986) proposed that emotion is jointly defined by appraisal and action readiness. Emotion appraisal is the cognitive evaluation of an eliciting event regarding its relevance, significance, and meaning. The appraisal of a situation is accompanied by a specific action readiness, defined as the individual's readiness to engage in a specific pattern of interaction with the environment. When the action readiness enters one's awareness, it becomes an emotional experience or feeling. Dimensions of appraisal include perceived degree of control over the stressor, threat (expected harm or loss), challenge (emphasizing probable gains), intention (of the person who resulted in the situation), consistency with goals (of the subject) (Lazarus & Launier, 1978, as cited in Hunter, Boyle, & Warden, 2004; Root & Jenkins, 2005). Theoretically, events should be unconsciously appraised as relevant if they appear to be threatening, challenging, or beneficial to an individual's major goals or sensitivities. Scherer (1999) maintained that there is a growing consensus in the field of emotion psychology that the differentiation of emotional experience is a result of unique appraisal patterns an individual has for the situations.

Mesquita & Frijda (1992) suggested that different cultural groups may have varied propensities to appraise events in certain ways. For example, when faced with unpleasant situations, certain groups may avoid or suppress attribution of blame to others, whereas other groups may endorse blame to others, thus eliciting anger readiness. Cole et al. (2002) found that

when presented with the same difficult situations (e.g., hand slapped for snatching an eraser that is not in use), Nepali Brahman children, who may be socialized to be proud of their social status, endorsed anger, explaining the injustice of the situation. Nepali Tamang children, who are non-Hindus and therefore regarded in their nation as lower in social status, and who may be influenced by Tibetan Buddhism beliefs that they should be selfless and free of emotions, were more likely to appraise situations without anger; they mainly reported feeling shame. They justified this emotional reaction by indicating responsibility for another's action, e.g. "I snatched his eraser." This response is consistent with a highly COL orientation; the child's emotion is focused on the child in relation to others and not focused on the child's individual rights or needs. Mothers from collectivist countries may be more likely to describe competent children as having emotions that reflect the self in relation to others, whereas mothers from individualistic countries may believe competent children react emotionally on behalf of their self-interests.

In another study, Chinese and American second-graders were presented with stories that may elicit anger, sadness, happiness, fear, or ambiguous responses, and they were asked how the hypothetical child in each situation would feel (Borke & Su, 1972). American second-graders gave significantly more sad responses to the sad stories than their Chinese counterparts, whereas the Chinese second-graders gave significantly more angry responses to stories involving frustration by adults. For the ambiguous stories, 59% of the American children gave sad responses, whereas 38% of the Chinese children gave sad responses. The pattern reversed for anger—37% of the American children and 57% of the Chinese children mentioned anger.

The authors explained the cultural variations in children's responses in terms of different child rearing practices in America and in China. They suggested that American parents start socializing their children's emotions at an early age—as early as one to two years of age, fostering guilt for feeling and expressing anger. On the other hand, Chinese parents are indulgent of children prior to age three years, after which they use social control to restrain their children's

behavior. They concluded that young Chinese children were therefore freer to feel and express anger than American children. Their conclusion was limited, however, because they did not establish a relation between social control practices and child freedom to express anger. However, their suggestion that Chinese parents' indulgence of young children is a rational hypothesis for why their children were more likely to refer to anger. The findings of this study, combined with the study by Cole et al. (2002), are evidence suggesting children's emotional responses, or at least what they believe those responses should be, differ across culture and at any early age.

The present study focuses on situations that are likely to elicit anger or sadness, empathy or anxiety, and happiness or pride. In traditionally collectivist cultures, the expression of anger, which reflects motivation to attain a personal goal that has been withheld or blocked, may be affected by rules that dictate against anger-related action (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Therefore, mothers from individualistic nations, in which individual needs, ambitions, and rights are valued (U.S. and Germany) should be more likely to describe a competent first-grader as feeling angry in blocked goal situations whereas mothers from collectivist nations, in which interpersonal harmony and social sensitivity are valued (Nepal and India), should be less likely to describe a competent first-grader as angry and more likely to describe the child as willing to relinquish a goal (e.g. glad to share). However, in a situation in which a child's goal (academic success) is met, mothers should expect competent children in all nations to feel happy.

A positive emotion that is often neglected in studies that examine discrete emotions is empathy or concern for others, an emotion that always involves the self in relation to the other and which motivates helping behavior (Bischof-Kohler, 2012). Empathy involves concern, a modestly negative feeling, but is generally regarded as a positive emotion because it is associated with prosocial behavior. Eisenberg and Miller (1987) distinguishes empathy from personal distress and has shown that these different emotional reactions lead to different actions—empathy leading to action on behalf of the other whereas personal distress leads to action on behalf of self.

That is, if one is personally upset or distressed by the misfortune of another (e.g. afraid that one will also suffer the misfortune) the emotion is *personal distress* and should lead to action to protect self (e.g. leave the threatening situation). That is especially true for young children who may have limited helping skills. However, if the person feels empathic, i.e. concerned on *behalf of the other*, the action should be helping or help-seeking. The current study included examination of cultural orientation on personal distress and empathy in a vignette in which the competent child witnesses another child's distress.

Borke (1973) compared empathy responses in Chinese and American children. Both groups of children, as early as age three years, differentiated between social situations that elicit happy or unhappy emotions in others, which was interpreted as an indication of the early development of empathy across cultures. However, Trommsdorff, Friedlmeier, and Mayer (2007) found that the extent to which preschool children feel sympathy or personal distress differed between two individualistic nations, Germany and Israel, and two collectivist nations, Indonesia and Malaysia. Their method was based on observations and not interviewing of children. Children were playing with an adult research assistant when she covertly popped her balloon and pretended to be sad. Child facial expressions were recorded and later classified in one of three categories: sympathy, self-focused distress, and other-focused distress. No cultural difference was found for sympathy or other-focused distress, but a difference emerged for self-focused distress. Children from the two collectivist nations displayed more self-focused distress than children from the two individualistic nations. The heightened self-focused distress of the Southeast Asian children was interpreted as reflecting greater shyness with adults. In the present study, using an interview method with mother, we examined their description of a competent first-grader's response when the child witnesses another child fall down, eliminates the influence of shyness with adults.

An explanation for differences between collectivist and individualistic nations in regard to emotional responses is differences in self-construal. Markus & Kitayama (1991) proposed two

cultural variations in how the self can be construed. They argued that in Western culture individuals construe themselves as independent, separate, and unique from others and focused on self-reliance, autonomy, and the discovery and pursuit of one's unique attributes. In other words, an individual's behavior is organized and valued by reference to his or her own feelings, thinking, and attributions more so than in reference to those of others or the group. On the other hand, many non-Western cultures emphasize the inherent mutuality and connectedness among people, which they termed interdependent self-construal. An interdependent individual sees himself or herself as a part of a group and of social relationships, and recognizes that his or her action is determined and evaluated by, and determines, the thinking, feelings and behaviors of others. Consequently, people from Western cultures may appraise situations in terms of their meaning for personal well-being whereas individuals in non-Western cultures may appraise situations in terms of their meaning for the collective, including themselves and others. If this is so then, for example, Westerners should endorse anger, which is focused on self, whereas non-Westerners should be less likely to endorse anger. The contradiction between the findings by Borke and Su (1972) and the postulation by Markus and Kitayama (1991) indicate that cultural differences may emerge over the lifespan and it may be that cultural differences in parental conceptions of child competence and how a competent child should behave exist. These different conceptions then might influence cultural socialization of emotion practices (Cole & Tan, 2008).

Does self-construal differ as predicted across cultures? Among many studies that have lent support to this dichotomy in forms of self-construal, Norasakkunkit and Kalick (2002) provided evidence. They used self-report questionnaires to compare European Americans and Asians in terms of self-construal, self-enhancing tendencies (the inclination to view self as approximating cultural ideals more than actually happens), and emotional distress (depression, social anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation). As expected, they found that Asians endorsed higher levels of interdependent self-construal than European Americans, and European Americans endorsed

higher levels of independent self-construal than Asians. Also, Asians endorsed lower levels of self-enhancement than European Americans. Finally, among the three distress measures, only social anxiety differentiated the groups. However, when self-construal and self-enhancing tendencies were controlled, the relation was no longer found. When ethnicity was controlled, all three distress measures were related to self-construal. In conclusion, this study provided support for the Markus and Kitayama (1991) framework and for association between self-construal and emotions. In the present study, mothers from IND nations were thought to expect competent children to have self-focused emotions, because these are associated with an independent self-construal, and mothers from COL nations to less often describe self-focused emotions because these are inconsistent with a sense of self as interdependent.

Zeman, Cassano, Perry-Parrish, and Stegall (2006) suggested that it is best to examine child emotion socialization to understand cultural differences in emotion. They proposed that a child's emotional regulation is influenced by previous interactions with caregivers and peers. They note that emotion socialization begins as early as seven months of age as the infant-caregiver attachment is established. At this age, parents start responding to emotional displays differentially based on gender. Infants also start using social referencing, where they imitated their primary caregivers' emotional responses to new situations. Therefore, parents and their intuitive theories are the most immediate enforcers of cultural beliefs about emotion appraisal. In fact, Barrett and Campos (1987) hypothesized that parents' emotion appraisal is the first step to socializing their children's emotion regulation. Parents emphasize the emotional significance of an event through their reactions, and the children learn their appraisal by social referencing (as cited in Zeman et al., 2006). To some degree, socialization in emotion appraisals reinforces socialization in self-construal and external standards, and vice versa.

Despite the importance of parental beliefs about children's emotions, there are very few studies that examine this in a culturally sensitive manner. That is, most studies administer

questionnaires or hypothetical situations that were developed from one cultural perspective (almost exclusively a Western perspective) and translate these for parents in other cultural contexts. Based on the literature reviewed, the present study hypothesized that more mothers from individualistic countries (German and American) would describe the competent children to feel more emotions focused on self as an individual (such as sadness that the object is lost, or anger towards the other child) than mothers from collectivist countries (India and Nepal), who would be more likely to mention emotions focused on self in relation to others (such as sadness that the other child does not have the toy).

Emotional behavior and culture

Even if young children of different cultural backgrounds experience feel similarly in situations that children across cultures commonly experience, they may not behave similarly. As discussed, appraisal and action readiness define emotion (Barrett & Campos, 1987; Frijda, 1986) but regulatory processes influence whether an individual executes and action readiness. Emotion behavior has been found to be different across culture. Safdar et al. (2009) found that Americans and Canadians accept the expression of both powerful negative emotions (anger, contempt, and disgust) as well as positive emotions (happiness, surprise) more than Japanese individuals do. In regard to positive emotions, Tsai et al. (2006) found that high-arousal positive affect (e.g., excitement) is valued more by European Americans and Asian Americans than by Hong Kong Chinese. Conversely, low-arousal positive affect (e.g. calm) is valued more by Asian Americans and Hong Kong Chinese than by European Americans. Even within collectivist countries, preferences for emotions are different, which may lead to different actions. Mexican participants preferred high- arousal positive affect over low-arousal positive affect, whereas East Asians participants showed the opposite preference (Ruby, Falk, Heine, Villa, & Silberstein, 2012).

Why does emotion-related action differ across cultures? It may be that people actually feel (actual affect) different from how they believe they should feel (ideal affect) (Tsai et al., 2006), which is linked to how they would like others to perceive their emotions. Although temperament accounts for greater variance in pure actual affect, cultural orientation accounts for greater variance in pure ideal affect (Tsai et al., 2006). A related concept, *emotion display rules*, may also explain universal and culturally-specific emotion-related behavior (Ekman & Friesen, 1969). Display rules are socially learned and dictate different management styles of emotion displays (when, how, and to whom) in varied social situations. The existence of such display rules was demonstrated by a study by Friesen (1972). In this study, the Japanese participants were more likely than American participants to mask negative emotion in the presence of a higher status person but not when they were alone (as cited in Koopmann-Holm & Matsumoto, 2011).

Koopmann-Holm and Matsumoto (2011) suggested that different values across culture are correlated to emotion display rules. In their study, they compared American and German values and display rules. Based on a previous study, in which Americans endorsed *mastery, hierarchy, and embeddedness* and Western Europeans endorsed *egalitarianism, intellectual autonomy, and harmony* (Schwartz & Ros, 1995), Koopmann-Holm and Matsumoto hypothesized that Americans would endorse *conservation* and *self-enhancement* more than Germans, leading to more endorsement of contempt and disgust. On the other hand, they proposed that Germans would endorse *openness* and *self-transcendence* more than Americans, thus endorsing the expression of anger and sadness more than Americans. The participants answered quantitative questionnaires regarding the values and display rules. Indeed, Americans were found to endorse the expression of contempt and disgust more than Germans, whereas Germans were found to endorse the expression of anger and sadness more than Americans. The researchers explained that finding in terms of the emphasis on self-concern in the American society, and a relatively greater emphasis on the well-being of the others among Germans. Further, they indicated that the

expression of anger and sadness might solicit support, at least in a German context, and therefore expression of these emotions may be more effective than in American culture. In addition, showing anger reveals what bothers an individual personally, and the expression of sadness indicates weakness, responses that are inconsistent with American values of mastery and self-enhancement. Furthermore, communication of anger may threaten social order. Because Americans are more conservative than Germans, it is logical that they control anger expression more than Germans do. Therefore, it is reasonable to postulate that German mothers may be more likely to endorse acting on negative self-focused emotions than American mothers.

The present study examined mothers' descriptions of children's behavior in situations that elicit anger, sadness, empathy, anxiety and pride or happiness. Anger should motivate increased effort to overcome obstacles to personal goals for well-being. Frijda (1989) found that anger is significantly correlated with the tendency to move against (antagonistic tendencies such as assault or opposition). Therefore, it is reasonable to select effort to regain a blocked goal (e.g. regain a desired object such as a toy or retaliate for an act of aggression as with one's tower of blocks being knocked down) as a child behavior associated with an angry reaction. Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggested that children reared in individualistic countries, which emphasize personal ambition and individual rights, are more likely to act on one's own behalf, even aggressively, than children reared by collectivist values that prioritize group harmony, interpersonal relationships, and sacrifice of personal well-being for the good of the group. A study comparing American (categorized as individualistic) and Japanese (categorized as collectivist) conflict resolution styles found support for this theory (Ohbuchi, Fukushima, & Tedeschi, 1999). In that study, American participants indicated a preference for assertive tactics, whereas Japanese participants showed a preference for avoiding tactics. It was also found that the Americans were more strongly motivated by a justice goal than the Japanese, whereas the Japanese more strongly valued a goal orientation towards maintaining relationships.

Guerra, Hammons, and Clutter (2011) reviewed literature on aggression in relation to cultural and familial influences among Jamaicans, Japanese, and American Latinos. They used the stark outcome measure of homicide rates among three countries as an approximation of aggression. Jamaica has 10 times the overall homicide rate of Latinos in the U.S., and 100 times that of Japan. They suggested that Jamaican poverty, norms about the appropriateness of aggression, and harsh physical discipline may contribute to the higher homicide rate. Although all three groups endorsed the use of physical punishment, it was hypothesized that the frequency and severity of corporal punishment would predict aggression. Interestingly, in addition to harsh discipline, lack of support and encouragement for prosocial and cooperative behavior has also been linked to juvenile delinquency (Bowlby, 1944, as cited in Guerra et al. 2011). Prosocial behavior is highly valued among Japanese and American Latinos although less was known about Jamaican values regarding prosocial behavior. In summary, it is reasonable to assume that culture has a strong influence on socialization practices, which affects developmental outcome in prosocial and aggressive behavior.

Acting on one's own behalf without considering the feelings of the other is not always expressed as physical aggression. Kawabata, Crick, and Hamaguchi (2010) ascertained that physical aggression and relational aggression (social exclusion and ignoring) are distinct behaviors, citing evidence of greater use of relational aggression by Japanese elementary and middle school children. It is possible that an interdependent orientation leads to relational aggression because it addresses selves in relationships and may be more effective in influencing peers' behavior. Therefore, although Japan has the lowest homicide rate in Guerra et al. study, Japanese children and U.S. Latino children may be more likely to engage in relational than physical aggressions. In terms of the groups participating in the current study, behavior that is oriented toward meeting self-interests, both physical and relational (e.g. telling on the child who snatched the toy), were considered.

An alternative to any form of aggression is prosocial behavior, even if a situation affords an angry reaction. Prosocial motivations are often regarded as counteracting aggressive motivations (Trommsdorff, 1995). Empathy, experiencing how the other person feels, should foster altruism and prosocial behavior. In this context, prosocial behavior is action aimed at addressing the needs of the interactional partner. In theory, empathy and the consequent prosocial behaviors depend on the quality of the relationship between the individual and the partner. Because empathy and prosocial behavior are essentially relational, Trommsdorff (1995) predicted that children from individualistic nations are less likely to act on others' distress than children from collectivist nations.

The evidence for these cultural differences in prosocial behavior is mixed. Triandis and colleagues (1988) found that allocentric persons report receiving more social support and better quality of it, whereas idiocentric persons report higher level of loneliness. Allocentrism is a personality trait that indicates the tendency to join social groups, and idiocentrism is defined by the tendency to avoid these groups. More allocentric persons have been found in collectivist societies, whereas more idiocentric persons have been found in individualistic societies (Triandis, 2001). Therefore, persons from collectivist countries may be more likely to offer and receive social support than persons from individualistic countries. Similar results have been found in a research comparing German youth (seen as more Individualistic) and Japanese youth (seen as more collective; Japanese Youth Affairs Administration, 1989). When asked for help, German youth were less likely to intend to help than Japanese youth (as cited in Trommsdorff, 1995). Similarly, Whiting and Whiting (1975) found evidence that children from collectivist countries had higher rates of prosocial behavior (as cited in Trommsdorff et al., 2007). In another study, children from individualistic nations (Germany and Israel) displayed more prosocial behaviors than children from collectivist nations (Indonesia and Malaysia; Trommsdorff et al., 2007). The discrepancy from prediction was interpreted as reflecting differences among the nations in the

perceived interpersonal distance between children and the adult who played the victim. In the present study, this problem was avoided by asking mothers about child prosocial behavior towards a peer. Thus, competent children from collectivist nations may be perceived by mothers as more likely to help a fallen child than children from individualistic countries.

How is prosocial behavior socialized? Trommsdorff (1995) proposed a combination approach: warm and responsive parenting may be learned and internalized by the child, and a secure attachment may also contribute to the child's empathy and altruistic actions. Compared to mothers from individualistic countries, mothers from collectivist countries preferred prosocial values and showed more understanding for their children. Differences in socialization goals and values have been found in research that compares Japan to Western societies.

In addition to the cultural distinction between self-focused and prosocial behavior, the present study considered the distinction between acting autonomously and seeking support. The ability to take actions oneself is closely related to the concept of autonomy and competence. Helwig (2006) described autonomy as a sense of agency which enables an individual to make important decisions in life, to take actions that are inherently related to one's own needs, and to exercise control over one's own actions. Across culture, autonomy and competence are related to personal happiness and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001). However, child autonomy may develop on a different time scale or in different ways in each culture. As children develop skills for achieving the psychological needs of competence and self-expression, they will become more autonomous at the level and time that their culture allows them to (Helwig, 2006). For example, Cherney and Perry (2003) interviewed 11 to 13 year-old children from Malaysia, Switzerland, and United States regarding the degree to which they can make their own decisions. They found that children from the two individualistic countries (Switzerland and United States) advocated such rights more than children from a collectivist country (Malaysia). They also found that American children advocated for self-determination at an earlier age than Malaysian children.

In support of this different pattern of autonomy development across culture, Demuth, Chaudhary, and Keller (2011) compared German and Indian participants and their mothers' narratives of their childhood. They found that the German participants often told stories about their achievement of self-reliance and autonomy whereas Indian participants often remembered childhood in terms of their joy and psychological relatedness. Therefore, the present study predicted that mothers from individualistic countries were more likely to describe competent first-graders as acting autonomously and mothers from collectivist countries as more likely to describe support seeking.

How does emotion-related behavior, such as aggression, prosocial behavior, autonomy and support seeking become influenced by cultural values, even when the felt emotion is the same? Zeman and colleagues (Zeman et al., 2006) argued that emotional behavior is socialized similarly across cultures in that children imitate and internalize caregivers' emotional behavior when children encounter new situations. Farrant, Devine, Mayberry, and Fletcher (2012) investigated relations among maternal empathy, parenting that encourages perspective taking, child empathy, and child prosocial behavior using Theory of Mind and emotional perspective taking tasks and questionnaires completed by mothers and teachers. The study found that mothers' empathy was related to their tendency to report using parenting that encouraged children to take others' perspectives. In turn, this parenting was associated with reports of greater child empathy, which was related to reports of child prosocial behavior. If parenting leads to these different behaviors in this way, then it was expected that maternal beliefs about competent children's emotions and behavior reflect not only their beliefs about children but also implicitly tap their beliefs about how children should be socialized.

As Koopmann-Holm and Matsumoto (2011) noted, most cross-cultural studies compare Western and Asian cultures. However, Schwartz and Ros (1995), among others, noted considerable variation among cultures (as cited in Koopmann-Holm & Matsumoto, 2011). For

the present study, within cultural orientation differences were considered. First, it was hypothesized that more mothers from individualistic countries believe competent first-graders act in ways that achieve their own self-interests (e.g. snatch the toy back, walk away from the hurt child) and would act autonomously than mothers from collectivist countries, who believe competent first-graders act in ways that include a focus on their relationships to others (e.g. share the toy, help the hurt child), and would seek support more. However, follow-up analyses were planned to assess whether the two nations chosen to represent individualism and collectivism differed from each other.

Emotion shaped by gender and culture

Within culture, a person's gender may also evoke gender-specific social norms that influence the valuation and regulation strategies of emotions. For example, in the U.S., women report to, and are expected to experience and express, more sadness, anxiety, and tender feelings than men. On the other hand, men report to, and are expected to experience and express more anger (Peplau & Gordon, 1985, as cited in Cancian & Gordon, 1988). Young and Zeman (2003) reported similar evidence among American Caucasians, with males inhibiting displays of sadness and females suppressing displays of anger. Each gender expected less positive reactions of others to the emotions they inhibited. Interestingly, girls tend to be more skillful at substituting an emotional expression for another, whereas boys tend to be better at neutralizing their emotional displays (as cited in Zeman et al., 2006).

Gender-specific patterns of emotion display may be attributed, in part, to variations in parental socialization of boys' and girls' emotions. One longitudinal study investigated White middle-class parents' conversations about past events with their children aged 40 and 70 months (Adams, Kuebli, Boyle, & Fivush, 1995). They reported that parents' use of terms labeling emotions depended on child gender. Parents used emotion words more frequently and with more

variations with girls than with boys. Furthermore, there were no differences at 40 months of age but by 70 months of age, girls referred to more unique emotion terms than boys did. Another study (Cervantes & Callanan, 1998) found that 2-year-old girls used more emotion terms than boys of the same age. The gender differences not only exist in the frequency of emotion terms, but also in which emotions are discussed. Fivush (1989) found that parents talk about anger with boys more than with girls, and discuss sadness with girls more than with boys. In conclusion, these studies proposed that parents socialize boys' and girls' emotions differently.

Culture may moderate gender differences. Hofstede (1983) proposed a Masculinity-Femininity dimension along which nations vary. "Masculine" societies have greater sex role division of labor, that is, women take more service-oriented roles and men more assertive and leadership roles. "Feminine" societies were defined as those with smaller gender role division. Hofstede proposed that in more Masculine societies, performance, achievement, and display would be dominant values whereas in more Feminine societies, quality of life, helping behaviors, and relationships would be valued. Employees from 50 nations in a multi-national corporation answered a Masculinity-Femininity questionnaire. Three of the nations in the current thesis were included in this survey study. Germany was found to be highly masculine, whereas India and the U.S. were found to be moderately masculine. Nepal, as speculated by Gurung and Lama (2004), have a greater gender role division. Indeed, India and Nepal have been described as strongly patriarchal countries (Dalal, Lee, & Gifford, 2012; Khan, 2002). Furthermore, Hinduism is the major religion in both countries (CIA, 2013). In Hindu societies, a woman has four distinct roles in the life-cycle: daughter and sister; wife and daughter-in-law; mother; mother-in-law (Preston & Simpson-Housley, 1994). The role of women in these societies is defined by their relationship to others, and sometimes can be limiting. In Nepal, women have limited access to education and health care, and are expected to carry out the majority of work around and in the household. In a survey, 56% of women from Kathmandu, Nepal who participated reported that they were

housewives (Shrestha, 2008). Furthermore, in Nepal and India, strong preferences for boys exist because boys are expected to contribute the most to the family financially and physically, and to perpetuate the family name (Jayaraman, Mishra, & Arnold, 2009).

Based on the limited work available, it was predicted that mothers from individualistic and collectivist nations would be more likely to describe girls as feeling and acting in ways that take into consideration their relationship with the other and boys as feeling and acting in ways that highlight their own achievement or interest. However, it was also considered whether the gender difference would be greater for collectivist versus individualistic nations.

In the 30 years since Hofstede's classification work do Masculinity-Femininity differences still exist among nations? In the U.S., there has been a 20th century trend toward individualism, emotional expression, and androgyny (Cancian & Gordon, 1988). Have there been similar trends in other cultures? This interactive effect of gender and culture on emotion has rarely been tested empirically (Davis et al., 2012). Davis and colleagues (Davis et al., 2012) conducted one of the first cross-cultural studies examining a culture by gender interaction on self-reported emotional intensity and emotional regulation strategies for negative emotions. They found that Chinese men reported the lowest intensity of emotion, whereas American women reported the highest. Furthermore, Chinese men reported using disengagement as a focus in emotion-regulation strategies more often than all other groups, whereas American women used it the least. In another study, more boys than girls from Thailand reported using covert coping methods, whereas no difference emerged between boys and girls from the U.S. (McCarty et al., 1999). In the limited empirical research on the joint effect of gender and culture on emotion, even less can be said in terms of a focus on children. The present study addresses this gap by testing the hypotheses that across cultures, mothers will believe girls to feel and act in more interdependent ways than boys, and that the gender difference will be larger in collectivist than individualistic countries.

Chapter 2

Method

Participants

Mothers (N = 502) of children who were in or had just finished first grade were interviewed as a part of the Intuitive Theories Study, a larger cross-national study initiated by Professor Gisela Trommsdorff of University of Konstanz, Konstanz Germany. Four international investigators contributed to the study design, data collection, and interpretations (Dr. Ramesh Mishra of Varanasi University, India, Dr. Shanta Niraula of Tribhuvan University, Nepal, Dr. Park, Ewha University, South Korea, and Dr. Pamela Cole of the Pennsylvania State University, United States of America. For this study, the South Korean sample was excluded to achieve equal sample sizes in Cultural Orientations. That is, German mothers (N = 104), American mothers (N = 98), Nepali mothers (N = 100) and Indian mothers (N = 100) have been included.

Participants were recruited for the Mother's Intuitive Theory Study through different channels in different countries. In India and Nepal, mothers were recruited through word of mouth. In Germany, mothers were recruited via advertisement in community settings serving children. In the U.S., mothers were recruited from a University database of families that wished to be contacted if their children were eligible for research studies. Two inclusionary criteria were that the mother had to have a child who was or had been in first grade, and whose age fell between 6 and 7, and the mother had to speak the national language of the country in which she was interviewed.

Several demographic variables were assessed (see Table 1), including Maternal Age (in years), Maternal Education (in years), Economic Status (ranking from 1 as lowest to 5 as highest), and Number of Children. Across countries, participants were an average of 35.48 years old, had 13.97 years of education, were middle class (3.06), and had two children.

Significant differences emerged for all of the demographic variables. Mothers from Germany were found to be significantly older than mothers from the U.S., $t(196) = -2.99, p = .0015$, Nepal, $t(203) = -14.89, p < .001$, and India, $t(203) = -12.71, p < .001$. Mothers from U.S. were significantly older than mothers from India, $t(191) = -7.85, p < .001$, and Nepal, $t(191) = -9.70, p < .001$. Finally, mothers from India were significantly older than mothers from Nepal, $t(198) = 2.20, p = .0145$.

In terms of Maternal Education, mothers from the U.S. had significantly more years of education than mothers from Germany, $t(196) = 14.71, p < .001$, Nepal, $t(180.90) = -9.112, p < .001$, and India, $t(113.40) = -14.05, p < .001$. Mothers from Germany did not differ significantly from mothers from Nepal, $t(123.65) = .71, p = .2445$, and India, $t(187.00) = 1.47, p = .2445$. The year of education is similar in mothers from Indian and Nepal too, $t(110.94) = -.07, p = .474$.

Next, the Economic Status of the German mothers was not found to differ from that of the American mothers, $t(195) = -1.60, p = .0555$, but it was found to be significantly higher than that of the Nepali mothers, $t(201.15) = -2.23, p = .0135$, and that of the Indian mothers, $t(151.07) = -1.84, p = .034$. The Economic Status of the American mothers did not differ significantly from that of the Nepali mothers, $t(169.31) = -.32, p = .375$, or that of the Indian mothers, $t(120.18) = .35, p = .365$. Lastly, Nepali and Indian mothers were not found to differ significantly, $t(154.68) = .92, p = .1785$.

In regard to Number of Children, mothers from the U.S. were found to have significantly more children than mothers from Germany, $t(148.45) = 2.38, p = .0095$, Nepal, $t(109.50) = -5.38, p < .001$, and India, $t(120.98) = -4.64, p < .001$. Mothers from Germany were found to have significantly more children than mothers from Nepal, $t(160.62) = -4.34, p < .001$, and India, $t(184.68) = -3.17, p = .001$. Finally, the Number of Children was not found to be significantly different between Nepali and Indian mothers, $t(198) = 1.21, p = .113$.

Table 1. *Demographic Data of Participants*

		Germany	U.S.	Nepal	India	All
Maternal Age (years)	M	40.08 ^a	37.94 ^b	31.16 ^c	32.43 ^d	35.48
	SD	4.49	5.57	4.07	4.11	5.48
Maternal Education (years of schooling)	M	12.40 ^b	16.61 ^a	12.65 ^b	12.63 ^b	13.97
	SD	1.31	2.58	3.38	.92	2.90
Economic Status	M	3.17 ^a	3.01 ^{ab}	2.98 ^b	3.04 ^b	3.06
	SD	.66	.75	.57	.31	.63
Number of Children	M	2.32 ^b	2.80 ^a	1.82 ^c	1.93 ^c	2.15
	SD	1.04	1.67	.56	.71	1.04

Note. In the same row, identical subscript letter indicates that no significant difference emerged between those countries; different subscript letters indicate that two countries differ significantly in that variable. Alphabetical order indicates ranking: (a) is the highest, and (c) is the lowest.

Procedures

For the larger Mothers' Intuitive Theories study, mothers were interviewed with several qualitative and quantitative procedures. Among them, the CCC interview was conducted either by co-investigators or their graduate level research assistants and conducted at home, over the phone, or in a laboratory research room at the investigator's university. All interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim in the native language and translated into English by bilingual transcribers. When translation was unclear, questions were sent to co-investigators who were unaware of the hypotheses to clarify maternal responses.

A number was assigned to each interview to de-identify the data. A U.S. team of undergraduate research assistants developed a coding system (Appendix A) for the questions under investigation.

After coding was conducted for all cases, the inter-rater reliability was calculated using 50 cases (10% of the total cases). Two coders independently coded each of these cases. Percent agreement was 95.2% for emotion codes and 93.3% for behavior codes (see descriptions of codes below). In weekly meetings, coders discussed questions about codes without identifying the case numbers to maintain reliability throughout the four months of coding.

Measures

Independent variables. The nation in which the mother was raising her first grade child was one independent variable and the gender of the competent child the mother described was the other independent variable. The nations were categorized based on their cultural orientation: Individualistic (Germany, U.S.) versus Collectivist (India, Nepal).

Dependent variables.

Vignettes in Criteria of Child Competence Questionnaire (CCC). The qualitative Criteria of Child Competence (CCC) questionnaire (Durbrow & Masten, 2001) was adapted for the present study focused on how competent children feel and act in emotion-eliciting situations (Appendix A). Prior to administration of the vignettes, mothers were asked to think of a child between the ages of 6 and 7 years, who they thought was doing well. The child did not have to be their own and only the child's exact age and gender were queried, such that the child's identity and relation to the mother was not known. After describing both a boy and a girl in the open-ended format (Wood, 2012), mothers were administered the four vignettes for each child. The vignettes were as follows:

1. "If the child was just given a lovely toy, and that was snatched away by a playmate..."
2. "If the child built a house and another child came and knocked it down..."
3. "If the child saw another child fall down on the school yard and was hurt..."

4. “If the teacher wrote very good marks on this child’s homework...”

Following each vignette, mothers were asked how the first competent child would feel, why the child would feel this way, and what the child would do. The procedure was then repeated for the child of the other gender.

In the U.S. a team of undergraduate Honors students were trained as coders. They classified children’s emotions and actions on the basis of the transcribed and translated verbatim transcripts.

Emotional responses were classified into one of three categories based on mothers’ responses to questions how would the child feel and why the child would that way (Appendix B). Their answers were then classified as: (1) emotion focused on self as an independent individual (e.g., angry that the child snatched the toy), (2) emotion focused on self in relation to others (e.g. sad that the other child fell down), or (3) focus unclear (e.g. calm).

Behavioral responses were classified into one of eight categories based on mothers’ responses to the question of what the child would do. Four categories were used to test hypotheses of the present study: (1) action taken by child on his/her own behalf (e.g. snatch back the toy); (2) action taken by child to get support from someone to act on child’s own behalf (e.g. asking mother to get toy back); (3) action taken by child taking other child’s needs into account (e.g. offering to share snatched toy); (4) action taken by child to get support from someone to act on other’s behalf (e.g. seeking help for fallen child). To test hypotheses, these categories were grouped into two sets of codes: (a) Self- (Codes 1 & 2) versus Other-Focused (Codes 3 & 4), and (b) Autonomous (Codes 1 & 3) versus Support Seeking (Codes 2 & 4).

Chapter 3

Results

Overview of Data Analyses

The four main hypotheses of the study were addressed in the following ways. The main statistical approach was to test predicted differences in the number of mothers who described specific types of emotions and actions of competent children using χ^2 analyses. First, these analyses tested the prediction that, compared to mothers from countries with a Collectivist orientation (COL), more mothers from countries with an Individualistic orientation (IND) will describe competent children's emotions in ways that reflect emotional reactions focused on the child's self-interest (Self-focused), and not emotional reactions that considered the self in relation to others (Other-focused). This hypothesis was tested separately for each vignette, given the possibility of situational specificity. The hypothesis was tested with a two-way model of Country Cultural Orientation (COL versus IND) and Emotion code (Self-focused versus Other-focused).

Second, χ^2 analyses were used to test the hypotheses that more mothers IND countries, compared to mothers from COL countries, would describe competent children as acting on behalf of their own interests (Self-Focused) and doing so themselves (Autonomous Actions). In contrast, more mothers from COL countries would describe competent children as acting with the interest of the other (Other-Focused Action) and as seeking support of another (Support Seeking). As with the first hypothesis, the predictions were analyzed with separate two way χ^2 tests, one for Cultural Orientation (IND versus COL) by Behavior (Self-focused versus Other-focused Action) and one for Cultural Orientation (IND versus COL) by Behavior code (Autonomous Action versus Support Seeking).

Third, X^2 analyses were used to test the prediction that, across cultures, mothers would describe competent girls, relative to competent boys, as reacting with emotions and behaviors that considered the self in relation to others (Other-focused) and as more likely to seek help (Support Seeking) rather than act autonomously. Boys, on the contrary, would be described as reacting with Self-focused emotions and behaviors and their actions would more likely be autonomous. These hypotheses were tested in a series of two-way X^2 analyses with 1) Gender (Male versus Female) and Emotion code (Self- versus Other-focused Emotions); 2) Gender (Male versus Female) and Behavior code (Self- versus Other-focused Actions); 3) Gender (Male versus Female) and Behavior code (Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions).

Fourth, X^2 analysis was used to test the hypothesis that gender effects are moderated by Cultural Orientation, such that mothers' descriptions of competent girls and boys would show larger differences in COL than IND countries. The number of mothers describing competent children in the following three ways was contrasted as a function of Cultural Orientation: Self-focused Emotions, Self-focused Actions, and Autonomous Actions. Two-way X^2 analyses were conducted for these three variables respectively with Cultural Orientation and Gender. The counterparts of these responses (i.e., Other-focused Emotions, Other-focused Actions, and Support Seeking Actions) and answers that did not fit into any of the categories (e.g., Inaction) were excluded from the analysis. Because the response categories were mutually exclusive, we assumed that significant difference in one variable implied that in another.

Fifth and finally, two-way X^2 analyses were conducted to examine whether countries known to have similar cultural orientations were in fact similar in terms of mothers' descriptions of the emotions and behavior of competent children. Specifically, the analyses compared the proportions of German versus American mothers, and Indian versus Nepali mothers, in the four

variables that were found to have significant and meaningful differences based on Cultural Orientation.

Differences in Emotion Type as a Function of Cultural Orientation

A two-way X^2 analysis of Cultural Orientation and Emotion code was used to compare the responses of mothers from Individualistic and Collectivist countries describing competent children's emotions in each vignette. Emotions that were neither Self- nor Other-focused were included in the analyses, along with Self-focused Emotions and Other-focused Emotions. The frequencies of these three categories sum to the total number of mother responses.

Contrary to the prediction, no Cultural Orientation difference in maternal descriptions of competent children's emotions emerged for two vignettes, Snatched Toy, $X^2(2) = .07, p = .484$, and Fallen Child vignettes, $X^2(4) = 6.062, p = .10$. As shown in Table 2, across Cultural Orientations, the most mothers described competent children as reacting with Self-focused Emotions in the Snatched Toy situation (IND: 98.0%; COL: 97.8%) and Other-focused Emotions in the Fallen Child situation (IND: 90.7%; COL: 90.2%).

Cultural Orientation was significantly related to mothers' descriptions of child emotions in the Knocked Blocks vignette, $X^2(1) = 11.52, p < .001$. First, the large majority of mothers in each group described competent children as reacting with Self-focused emotions. However, contrary to prediction, mothers from countries with Individualistic orientations were *less* likely to describe competent children as having Self-focused Emotions (96.5% versus 99.8%) and more likely to describe children reacting with emotions that could not be classified as Self- or Other-focused than mothers from countries with a Collectivist orientation (3.3% versus 0.3%). It should be noted, however, that six of 13 mothers from Individualistic countries also provided a second response in which they referred to Self-focused Emotion. No mothers from Collectivist countries

gave a second response. Therefore, the difference in this variable may be merely an indication of a few mothers' divergent ways of answering questions rather than meaningful cultural variation.

Table 2. *Percentage (%) of Mothers from Each Cultural Orientation Describing Boys' and Girls' Child Emotion as Self- or Other-focused*

	Culture							
	Individualistic			Collectivist			Total	
	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl
Emotion								
Snatched Toy								
Self	97.0	99.0	98.0	97.0	98.7	97.8	97.0	98.7
Other	-	0.5	0.3	-	0.5	0.3	-	0.5
Nr	3.0	0.5	1.8	3.0	1.0	2.0	3.0	0.8
Knocked Blocks								
Self	96.0	97.0	96.5	99.5	100.0	99.8	97.7	98.5
Other	0.5	-	0.3	-	-	-	0.3	-
Nr	3.5	3.0	3.3	0.5	-	0.2	2.0	1.5
Fallen Child								
Self	4.0	1.0	2.5	6.5	4.0	5.3	5.3	2.5
Other	87.4	93.9	90.7	88.4	92.0	90.2	87.9	93.0
Nr	8.5	5.1	6.8	5.0	4.0	4.5	6.8	4.5
Good Marks								
Self	92.5	96.5	94.5	95.5	99.5	97.5	94.0	98.0
Other	3.5	1.5	2.5	1.5	0.5	1.0	2.5	1.0
Nr	4.0	2.0	3.0	97.5	1.0	1.5	3.5	1.0

Note. Self = Self-focused Emotions; Other = Other-focused Emotions; Nr. = Emotions that are neither Self-focused nor Other-focused.

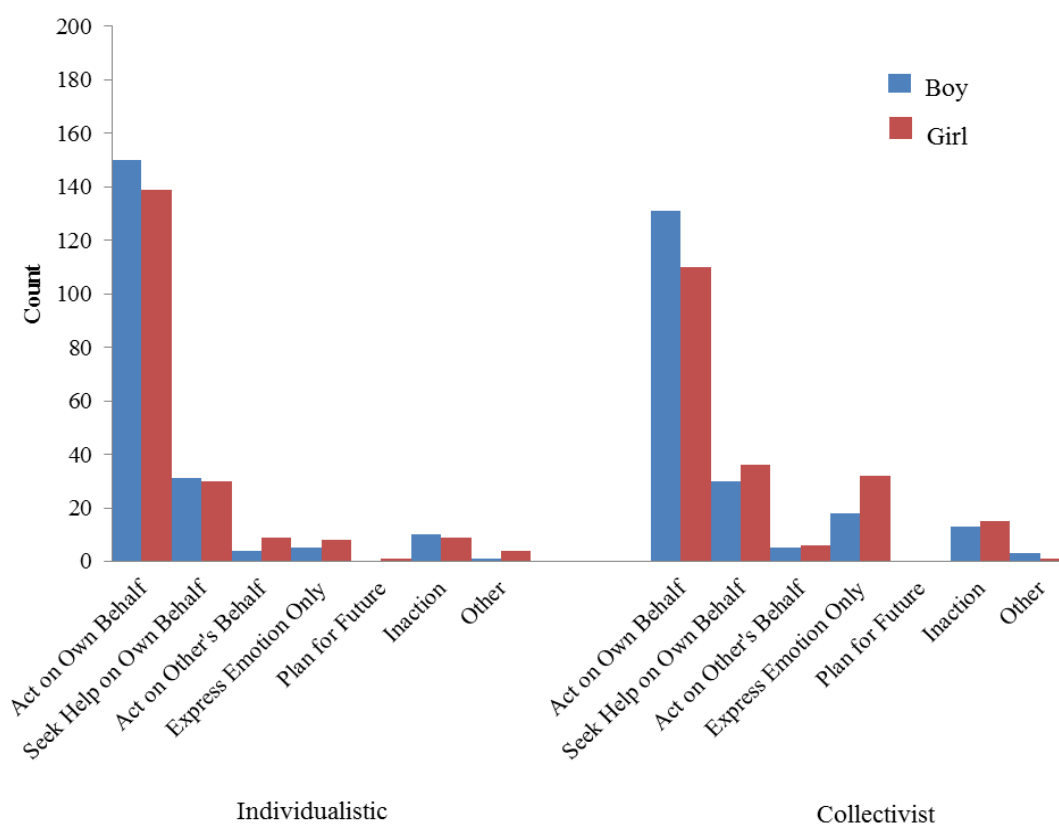
Finally, a significant effect of Cultural Orientation emerged for the Good Marks vignette, $\chi^2(2) = 4.791, p = .0455$. Most mothers endorsed Self-focused Emotions in this vignette (IND: 94.5%; COL: 97.5%). However, contrary to prediction, compared with mothers from Collectivist countries, slightly more mothers from Individualistic countries described Other-focused Emotions (2.5% versus 1.0%) and emotions that were neither Self- nor Other-focused (3.0% versus 1.5%). Only six mothers from Individualistic countries and three mothers from Collectivist countries gave a second response, but no consistent pattern could be found in these second responses.

Differences in Behavior as a Function of Cultural Orientation

Two-way χ^2 analyses with Cultural Orientation and Behavior code first tested the hypothesis that mothers from Individualistic countries are more likely to endorse Self-focused Actions than mothers from Collectivist countries, who are more likely to endorse Other-focused Actions. The second χ^2 tested the prediction that more mothers from Individualistic countries would endorse Autonomous Actions, whereas more of their counterparts from Collectivist countries would endorse Support Seeking. In both tests, choices that did not indicate any action taken by the child (e.g., express emotions only, inaction) were excluded. When no significant difference between Cultural Orientations emerged in these comparisons, but an overall χ^2 test revealed significant differences, non-action responses were considered in post-hoc analyses.

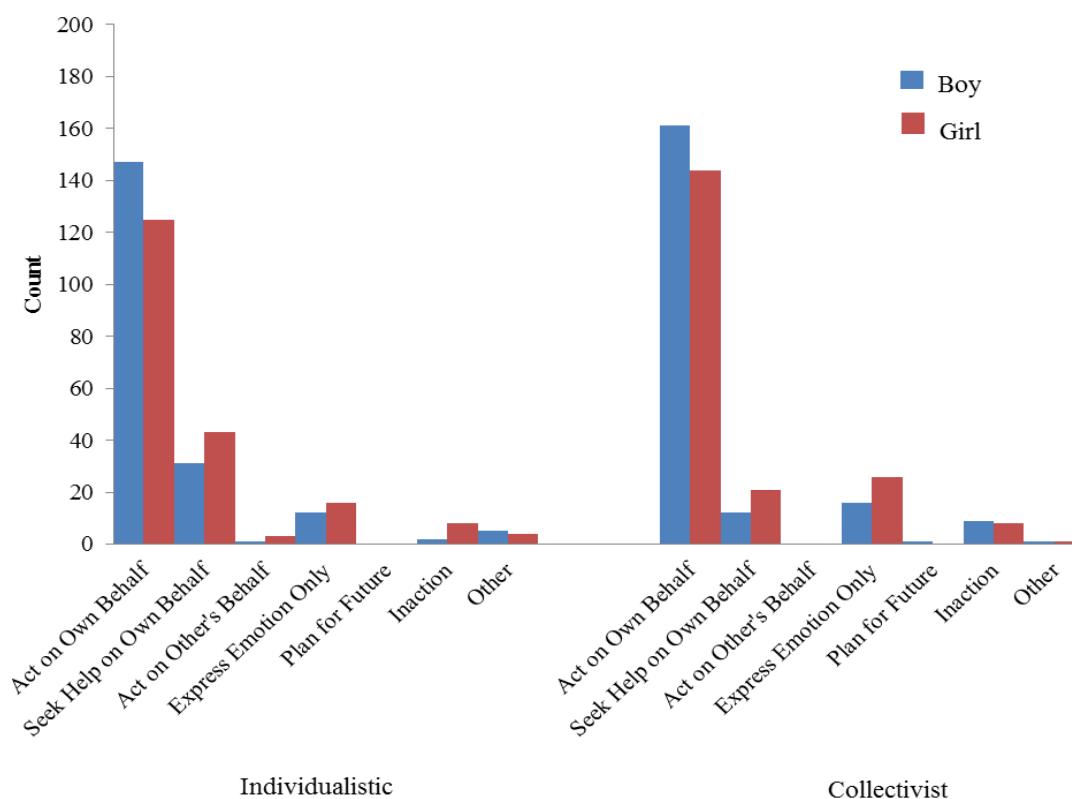
Self- versus Other-focused Action. Contrary to the prediction, in the Snatched Toy vignette, no significant difference between Individualistic and Collectivist Orientations emerged in regard to Self- versus Other-focused Actions, $X^2(1) = .007, p = .4655$. The majority of mothers described Self-focused Actions (IND: 96.4%; COL: 96.5%).

Figure 1. Number of Mothers who Endorsed each Behavior Type in Snatched Toy Vignette



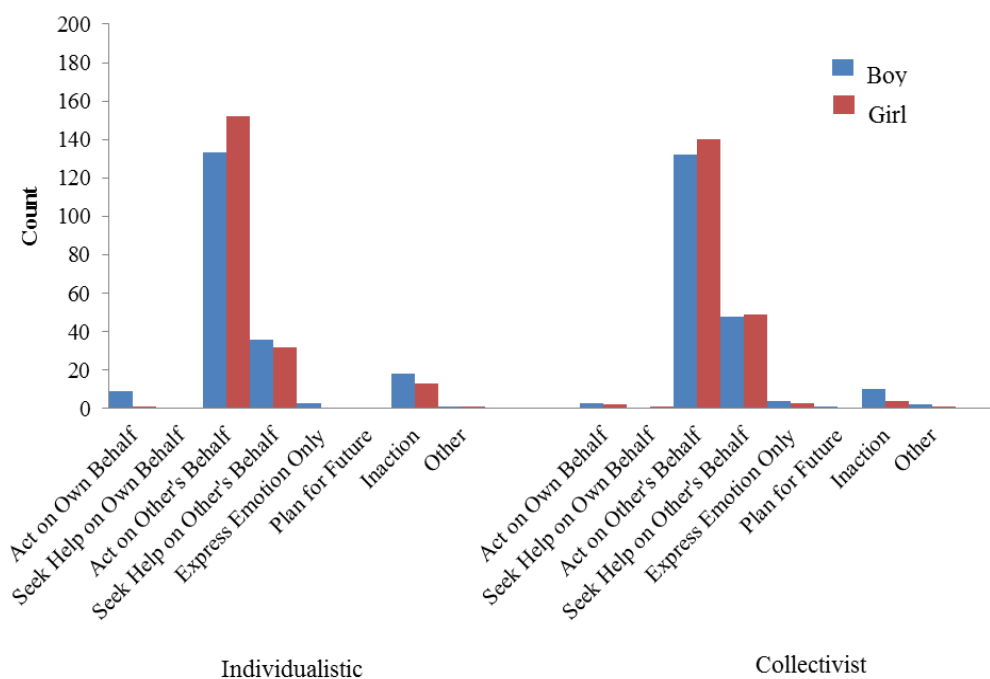
In the Knocked Blocks vignettes, a significant cultural difference emerged in the Self- versus Other-focused Action code, $X^2(1) = 3.89, p = .0245$. However, as can be seen in Figure 2, the real difference between the two orientations was small. The majority of mothers endorsed Self-focused Actions (IND: 98.9%; COL: 100.0%). Among the four mothers who endorsed Other-focused Actions, three of them mentioned a second response that had a Self-focused component to it (e.g. “be angry and walk away”; “fight back”). Therefore, the difference between two Cultural Orientations was not considered meaningful.

Figure 2. Number of Mothers who Endorsed each Behavior Type in Knocked Blocks Vignette



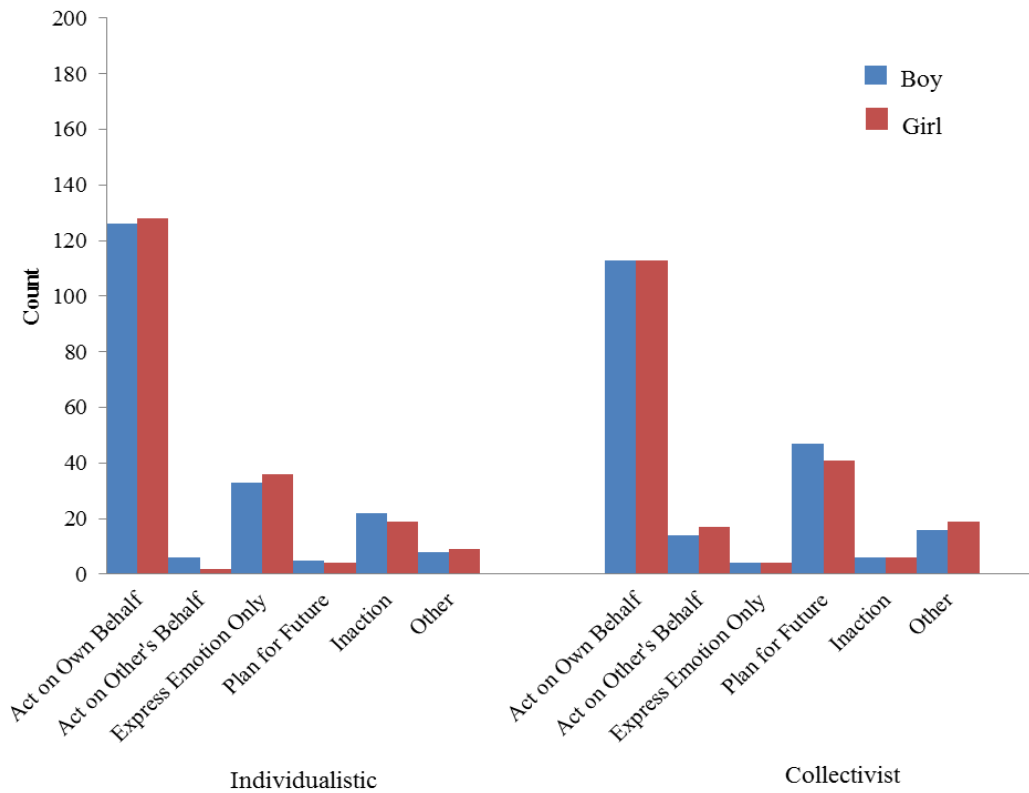
Next, in the Fallen Child vignette, contrary to the hypothesis, no significant difference was found in association with Cultural Orientation, $\chi^2(1) = 1.16, p = .141$. Most mothers endorsed Other-focused Actions (IND: 97.2%; COL: 98.4%).

Figure 3. Number of Mothers who Endorsed each Behavior Type in Fallen Child Vignette



Finally, in the Good Marks vignette significant Cultural Orientation effect emerged, $\chi^2(1) = 15.15, p < .001$. More mothers from Individualistic countries endorsed Self-focused Actions (96.9% versus 87.9%), whereas more mothers from Collectivist countries endorsed Other-focused Actions (12.1% versus 3.1%). This was consistent with the prediction that more mothers from Collectivist countries would describe the competent child as acting with his/her relationship with others in mind.

Figure 4. Number of Mothers who Endorsed each Behavior Type in Good Marks Vignette



Autonomous Action versus Support Seeking. In the Snatched Toy vignette, no significant difference was found between Cultural Orientations although there was a trend toward an effect, $X^2(1) = 1.744, p = .0935$. Most mothers indicated that the competent child would act autonomously (IND: 83.2%; COL: 79.2%). The cultural difference was significant, however, for the Knocked Blocks story. For this story, the finding was contrary to prediction. More mothers from Collectivist countries described the child as engaging in Autonomous Action (90.2% versus 78.9%), whereas more mothers from Individualistic countries described the child as Support Seeking (21.1% versus 9.8%).

In the Fallen Child vignette, a significant difference emerged that was consistent with prediction, $X^2(1) = 5.80, p = 0.008$. More mothers from Individualistic countries described the competent child as acting autonomously (81.3% versus 73.9%), whereas more mothers from Collectivist Orientation indicated that the competent child would seek support (26.1% versus 18.7%). However, this story elicited more than one response for a child from many mothers (226 cases). Comparing the second responses across cultures, significantly more mothers from Individualistic countries endorsed Support Seeking Actions (79.2% versus 68.9%) and significantly more mothers from Collectivist countries described Autonomous Actions (30.1% versus 20.8%), $X^2(1) = 3.13, p = 0.0385$. Thus, the differences are only in the order of mothers' spontaneous responses and not in a cultural orientation effect for Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions.

Finally, in the Good Marks story, no significant difference was found. Indeed, no mothers from either cultural orientation endorsed Support Seeking, reflecting the nature of the context. When a child gets good mark, it is unlikely that he or she will need to seek help.

Post-hoc Analyses of Other Responses and Description of General Pattern. The only vignette in which no significant difference emerged in either of the above comparisons was the Snatched Toy story. When an additional X^2 analysis included all other responses that mothers provided that could not be classified as any of the action categories, a significant effect of Cultural Orientation was found, $X^2(2) = 19.11, p < .001$. Notably, some mothers from Collectivist countries described the competent child as only expressing emotion and not taking any action (12.5%) or as doing nothing (7.0%) when the toy was snatched. In comparison, a smaller percentage of mothers from Individualistic countries described these behaviors (3.2% and 4.7%).

In the other three vignettes, a significant difference emerged in one or both comparisons and likely accounted for overall differences because the majority of mothers gave a response that could be categorized as one of the four actions. Therefore, no post-hoc analyses on non-action responses were performed.

The general pattern of finding is discussed here. In the Knocked Blocks vignette, the majority of mothers from countries of both orientations endorsed Autonomous Actions focused on the child's own interest (IND: 68.5%; COL: 76.2%). Similarly low proportions of mothers in countries with the two Cultural Orientations endorsed Emotional Expression (IND: 7.1%; COL: 10.5%), Inaction (IND: 2.5%; COL: 4.3%), or other behaviors which did not fit into any categories (IND: 2.3%; COL: 0.5%). In the Fallen Child vignette, the majority of mothers endorsed Autonomous Actions that are focused on the fallen child's interest (IND: 71.4%; COL: 68.0%), followed by seeking help for the fallen child (IND: 17.0%; COL: 24.3%). A small percentage of mothers also indicated Inaction (IND: 7.8%; COL: 3.5%).

In the final vignette, Good Marks, the majority of mothers described that the competent child would act on their own behalf (e.g. showing their good marks to the parents) (IND: 63.8%; COL: 56.5%). Interestingly, more mothers from Individualistic countries indicated that the child

would express emotion only (e.g. smile) (17.3% versus 2.0%), whereas more mothers from Collectivist countries indicated that the competent child would plan to study harder in the future (22.0% versus 2.3%).

Differences in Emotion and Behavior as a Function of Gender

Emotion. Two-way X^2 analyses with Gender and Emotion were next performed. In the Snatched Toy vignette, a significant gender difference emerged, $X^2(1) = 2.927, p = .0435$.

Contrary to prediction, mothers slightly more often described girls than boys as reacting with Self-focused Emotions (98.7% versus 97.0%). However, instead of having more Other-focused Emotions, a small percentage (3%) of boys was described in ways that could not be classified as Self- or Other-Focused (e.g. calm).

For the Knocked Blocks story, contrary to predictions, no significant gender difference was found, $X^2(1) = .62, p = .2155$. The majority of mothers described children of both genders as having Self-focused Emotions (Male: 97.2%; Female: 98.5%).

For the Fallen Child vignette, as expected, a significant gender difference was found, $X^2(1) = 4.35, p = .0185$. More mothers described boys versus girls as having Self-focused Emotions (5.3% versus 2.5%), but the majority of mothers described children of both genders as having Other-focused Emotions (Male: 88%; Female: 92%).

Finally, in the Good Marks vignette, gender was found to have a significant effect, $X^2(2) = 8.34, p = .0075$. Contrary to predictions, more mothers described girls than boys to have Self-focused Emotions (98.0% versus 94.0%), whereas they described more boys than girls to have Other-focused Emotions or emotions that could not be classified as Self- or Other-focused.

Behavior. Two 2-way X^2 analyses were performed with 1) Gender and Behavior code (Self- versus Other-focused Actions); 2) Gender and Behavior (Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions).

Self- versus Other-focused Actions. This X^2 analysis only included mothers whose responses were categorized as Self- or Other-focused Actions. Therefore, the denominator of proportions presented here is the sum of these mothers. For the Snatched Toy vignette, the gender difference in the expected direction approached, but did not reach, the standard level of significance, $X^2(1) = 1.96, p = .0805$. More endorsed Other-focused Behaviors for girls than for boys (4.5% versus 2.6%), and less endorsed Self-focused Actions for girls than for boys (95.5% versus 97.4%).

In the Knocked Blocks story, contrary to predictions, no significant gender effect emerged, $X^2(1) = 1.10, p = .15$. Mothers predominantly described both boys and girls as having Self-focused Actions (Male: 99.7%; Female: 99.1%).

In the Fallen Child vignette, a significant gender difference emerged, $X^2(1) = 4.45, p = .0175$. As expected, more mothers described girls versus boys to have Other-focused behaviors (98.9% versus 96.7%).

Finally, in the Good Marks vignette, contrary to predictions, no significant gender difference was found in Self- versus Other-focused behavior, $X^2(1) = .03, p = .429$. The majority of mothers described both boys and girls as taking Self-focused Actions (Male: 92.3%; Female: 92.7%).

Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions. Only mothers whose responses were categorized as Autonomous or Support Seeking Actions were included in this analysis. Therefore, the denominator of proportions presented here is the sum these mothers. In the Snatched Toy vignette, no gender difference was found, $X^2(1) = .77, p = .19$. The majority of mothers

described girls and boys as acting autonomously (Male: 82.6%; Female: 80.0%). This contradicted with the hypothesis that more mothers would describe girls than boys as seeking support. In contrast, in the Knocked Blocks story, a significant difference emerged, $X^2(1) = 6.11$, $p = .0065$. More mothers described boys versus girls as acting autonomously (87.8% versus 81.0%), and more described girls versus boys as seeking help (19.0% versus 12.2). This was consistent with our prediction.

In the Fallen Child vignette, no significant gender effect was found, $X^2(1) = .24$, $p = .311$. Most mothers described both boys and girls as taking Autonomous Actions (Male: 76.7%; Female: 78.2%). This was contradictory to our hypothesis. In the Good Marks vignette, because no mothers indicated that the competent child would seek help, the comparison of Autonomous Actions versus Support Seeking was not carried out.

Interaction between Gender and Cultural Orientation

To test the hypothesis that Cultural Orientation moderates gender differences, such that a gender difference would be stronger among mothers from Collectivist countries compared to mothers from Individualistic countries, two-way X^2 analyses were conducted with Gender and Cultural Orientation in each vignette. These tests were carried out in three sub-groups respectively to test the predicted interaction: mothers whose descriptions were categorized as 1) Self-focused Emotions; 2) Self-focused Actions or 3) Autonomous Actions. The counterparts of these answers (i.e., Other-focused Emotions, Other-focused Actions, and Support Seeking Actions) were not tested to reduce the number of tests. Responses that were not in any of these categories were not included in the analysis either.

Self-focused Emotions. Contrary to predictions, no significant Gender by Cultural Orientation interaction on mothers' descriptions of competent children's emotions emerged in any of the four vignettes. Specifically, in the Toy Snatched vignette, $X^2(1) = .00$, $p = .50$; in the

Knocked Blocks vignette, $X^2(1) = .01, p = .4705$; in the Fallen Child vignette, $X^2(1) = 1.02, p = .157$; in the Good Marks vignette, $X^2(1) = .01, p = .46$.

Self-focused Actions. No significant Gender by Cultural Orientation interaction emerged for mothers' descriptions of competent children's Self-Focused Action for the Snatched Toy, $X^2(1) = .04, p = .426$, Knocked Blocks, $X^2(1) = .01, p = .4725$, or Good Marks vignette, $X^2(1) = .01, p = .4655$. For the Fallen Child story, a significant interaction emerged, $X^2(1) = 3.20, p = .037$. However, because only a small proportion of mothers' responses were categorized as Self-focused Actions in this vignette (see Table 2), three of the four cells had expected count less than five, which violated an assumption of X^2 test. Therefore, the finding in Self-focused Actions is inconsistent with our prediction that there may be an interaction between Gender and Cultural Orientation.

Autonomous Actions. Contrary to predictions, no significant Gender by Cultural Orientation interaction emerged for mothers' descriptions of competent children's Autonomous Action for any vignette (Snatched Toy, $X^2(1) = .49, p = .2425$; Knocked Blocks, $X^2(1) = .041, p = .42$; Fallen Child, $X^2(1) = .021, p = .443$; Good Marks, $X^2(1) = .05, p = .413$).

Country Level Comparisons

The final analyses investigated whether countries purported to share the same Cultural Orientations were indeed similar. Only variables that have produced significant and meaningful differences between Individualistic and Collectivist Orientations were examined. The difference in Emotion and one of the Behavior (Self- versus Other-focused) for the Knocked Blocks vignette was contradicted by a comparison of the second response, so it was not considered meaningful. Specifically, the variables that produced significant and meaningful cultural differences are: Good Marks Emotion, Snatched Toy Behavior (mothers' responses from all categories), Knocked

Blocks Behavior (Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions), Fallen Child Behavior (Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions) and Good Marks Behavior (Self- versus Other-focused Actions). Germany was contrasted with U.S., and India with Nepal, in each case.

There was no significant difference between Germany and U.S. in Good Marks Emotion, $X^2(2) = 1.58, p = .454$, Snatched Toy Behavior (overall), $X^2(6) = 2.71, p = .844$, or in Good Marks Behavior (Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions), $X^2(1) = .67, p = .415$.

However, two significant differences emerged. For Knocked Blocks Behavior (Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions), more German than American mothers described Autonomous Actions (75.1% versus 63.5%), whereas more American than German mothers endorsed Support Seeking Actions (24.5% versus 13.2%), $X^2(1) = 8.71, p = .003$. In the second behavior response that some mothers gave for this vignette, no significant country difference was found, $X^2(5) = 3.68, p = .597$. Even in the second response, the trend was similar. More German than American mothers mentioned Autonomous Actions (28.6% versus 23.3%), and more American mothers described Support Seeking Actions (55.0% versus 40.5%).

Lastly, for Good Marks Behavior (Self- versus Other-focused Actions), a significant difference emerged, $X^2(1) = 6.66, p = .01$. German mothers were more likely than American mothers to endorse Self-focused Actions (100.0% versus 94.5%), whereas American mothers were more likely to describe Other-focused Actions (5.5% versus 0.0%). In total, only 10 mothers gave a second response, so the second response was not considered in this vignette. In sum, although the country differences between the two groups of mothers from Individualistic countries were small, German mothers endorsed significantly more Self-focused Actions in one vignette, and more Autonomous behavior in another.

Comparing India and Nepal, no significant difference was found for two dependent variables: Good Marks Emotion, $X^2(2) = 2.7, p = .258$; Knocked Blocks Behavior (Autonomous

versus Support Seeking Actions), $X^2(1) = 1.00, p = .318$; Good Marks Behavior (Self- versus Other-focused Actions), $X^2(1) = 2.16, p = .141$. However, a significant difference emerged in Snatched Toy Behavior (overall), $X^2(5) = 11.41, p = .044$. Nepali mothers were more likely than Indian mothers to endorse Self-focused Actions (82.5% versus 71.5%) and Support Seeking (20.0% versus 13.0%), but Indian mothers were more likely than Nepali mothers to describe competent children as only expressing emotion without any action (17.5% versus 7.5%).

In addition, a significant difference emerged for Fallen Child Behavior (Autonomous versus Support Seeking Actions), $X^2(1) = 42.02, p < .001$. More Indian than Nepali mothers described competent children as acting autonomously (89% versus 59.6%) and more Nepali mothers described Support Seeking Actions (40.4% versus 11.0%). Furthermore, 21 Indian mothers, and 90 Nepali mothers gave a second response. The proportions of mothers who mentioned Support Seeking Actions were similar (India: 61.9%; Nepal: 66.7%), whereas the proportion of those who mentioned Autonomous Actions was higher in Nepal than in India (31.1% versus 23.8%). However, because of the large difference in sample size for the second response, no conclusion could be drawn. Therefore, the significant country difference in the first response was still considered valid.

In conclusion, comparisons between countries purported to share the same Cultural Orientations yielded a few significant differences. For two of five possible outcomes, significant differences emerged.

Chapter 4

Discussion

Overview

This study compared mothers' conceptions of how competent first-grade age children feel and act in common emotion-eliciting situations. Overall, the descriptions of mothers from two nations known to value individualistic values (Germany and the United States) and from two nations known to value collectivistic values (India and Nepal) were found to be more similar than different. Most mothers from all four countries believed that competent children would feel angry or sad when their possessions were taken and would act to restore their rightful possession. The majority of mothers also indicated that competent children would be happy when their teachers gave them good marks, and would share their good news with others. The majority of mothers believed that competent children would feel sympathetic for a fallen child, and would try to help the child. In addition, the majority of mothers expected that competent children would act autonomously in these situations.

However, small but significant differences due to gender or cultural orientation emerged in some contexts. The following findings were consistent with the hypotheses of the thesis:

1. In the Knocked Blocks vignette, more mothers described boys, compared to girls, as acting autonomously.
2. In the Fallen Child vignette, more mothers from collectivist countries described competent children as seeking support from an adult to help the hurt child. In addition, more mothers described girls, more than boys, as experiencing emotions and acting in ways that took the other into consideration.

3. In the Good Marks vignette, more mothers from Individualistic countries described competent children as acting on their own behalf, whereas more mothers from collectivist countries described children as acting in ways that considered their own and others' interests.

In addition, in the following instances, several significant differences emerged that were in the opposite direction of what was hypothesized:

1. In the Snatched Toy vignette, more mothers described girls versus boys to experience self-focused emotions, and similarly, there was a trend in the direction of their describing girls acting on their own behalf. Within collectivist countries, Nepali mothers were more likely than Indian mothers to describe competent children as acting in their own interest as well as engaging in support seeking, but Indian mothers were more likely than Nepali mothers to describe the competent child as expressing emotion without taking any actions.
2. In the Knocked Blocks vignette, more mothers from Individualistic versus collectivist countries described competent children as seeking support. Within individualistic countries, more German than American mothers described competent children as acting autonomously.
3. In the Fallen Child vignette, more Indian versus Nepali mothers described competent children as acting autonomously.
4. In the Good Marks vignette, more mothers from individualistic countries described children as have more other-oriented emotions. In addition, more mothers described competent girls versus boys as having self-focused emotional reactions. There were also unexpected differences between the mothers from the two individualistic nations. German mothers were more likely than American mothers to describe competent children as engaging in self-focused actions.

In this section, three themes are discussed. First, the finding that across situations, mothers described competent children more similarly than differently. Second, the variations across types of situations are discussed. Third, the unexpected differences between mothers from nations that putatively represented similar individualistic or collectivistic values are discussed. Finally, limitations and suggestions for future research are mentioned.

Similarities in Mothers' Descriptions of Competent Children's Responses

There are several possible explanations for the predominant similarities in mothers' responses. First of all, culture-specific expectations may arise later in children's development. A previous study found that mothers expected children to become competent at different tasks at varied age (Joshi & MacLean, 1997). It was found that mothers from England, Japan and India expected children to become competent in emotional control, and social skills (i.e. peer interaction, and communication) at a later age than other competencies such as self-care and education. Specifically, mothers expected competent peer interaction and communication skills around 6-8 years old, and they expected competent emotional control at a later stage within the 6-8 years old span. Within emotional control, mothers expected children to master display rules (e.g. not showing disappointment with a gift) later than they master the control of frustration (e.g. not crying easily). Interestingly, they found that Indian mothers expected children to be competent in all these domains at a later age than British and Japanese mothers did. Indian mothers expected children to be competent in emotion display rules at age 8-10, compared to 6-8 for Japanese and British mothers.

Although Joshi & MacLean (1997)'s study did not investigate contrasts between self- and other-oriented emotions and actions, their focus on children's emotional control and social skills are relevant to the findings of this thesis. For example, in the Snatched Toy story, a child with good emotional control and social skills may calm down quickly and share the toy with the other

child, whereas a child without such skills may behave more aggressively towards the other child. In addition, cultural differences in expressive control are also culturally specific in ways that are relevant to the present study (Koopmann-Holm & Matsumoto, 2011). Children from individualistic countries are expected to be more emotionally expressive in contrast to children from collectivist countries who are thought to be socialized to inhibit negative emotions that have the potential to disturb interpersonal relationships. In considering these various findings, one might conclude that mothers expect competent children to master culturally sensitive rules of behavior but they may master them at later ages such that mothers' conceptions of competent children's emotion-related actions fail to tap the cultural variations. Another study found that in both the U.S. and India, fourth-grade children were more likely than first-grade children to have internalized social norms and prosocial reasoning, so they control anger better (Wilson, Raval, Salvina, Raval, & Panchal, 2012). Older children were found to anticipate greater socialization pressures to control their emotion. Therefore, the age range of children in this study (6-7 years old) may not have captured the cultural differences that may emerge later. Future research should vary the ages of the competent children whom mothers are considering when they reply.

Similarly, across cultures, mothers may have low expectation for first-graders in terms of emotional competence. In another project in the larger study from which the thesis data were drawn, mothers from these four nations mentioned the domain of emotional development less often than they did other domains, such as social and cognitive development (Wood, 2012). That study found that, on average, mothers' references to emotional development ranked fourth of five domains of competence (social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and self). However, significantly more mothers from the U.S. and Germany versus India and Nepal mentioned emotional competency. The finding was explained by the preference for positive and negative emotional expressions in nations in which selves are construed as independent. In the present study, this pattern emerged only for the Good Marks vignette. More mothers from individualistic versus

collectivist countries referred to child behavior that was self-focused (e.g. boasting about success) or involved emotional expression without action (e.g. smiling). It was not clear why the pattern did not emerge in other vignettes, but one possibility is that there are more nuanced differences that the coding system did not capture.

Contrary to predictions and previous finding (Joshi & Maclean, 1994; McCarty et al., 1999), the orientation of the culture of nations did not appear to affect the gender effect. In addition, as mentioned above, mothers reported boys and girls as feeling and acting more similarly than different despite the stark contrast of gender roles in India and Nepal. One possible explanation for the failure to confirm the hypothesized interaction of gender and cultural orientation may be the situations selected. In Joshi and MacLean's study (1994), two age groups (4-year-olds and 6-year-olds) of both genders answered questions about 12 stories. Each story was designed to provoke one emotion, but required the display of a different emotion (e.g. the child's uncle brings a book as a gift, and the child does not want a book). The children were asked to identify the real and apparent emotions (those that are displayed to conceal real emotions). The authors found that 4-year-old Indian girls behaved like 6-year-old boys and girls in Britain, and differed from 4-year-old Indian boys. Hence, a gender difference emerged only in a collectivist nation. However, the younger Indian girls' superiority only emerged in stories in which the hypothetical child interacted with an adult, and did not emerge in stories in which the child interacted with another child. They explained the results in terms of different socialization practices in two cultures. In India, girls are more likely than boys to be restricted to the home setting, so they have more opportunities to interact with adults. Besides, they are socialized to be more deferent and more alert about their behaviors. As three of our vignettes dealt with child-child encounter, and did not include situations which explicitly call for concealment of emotion, gender and culture interaction was not likely to be salient.

At the same time, it is notable that there could be a narrowing of gender differences in collectivistic nations that are modernizing. In Varanasi, India, the community from which the Indian mothers came, nearly two-thirds (65%) of families are now nuclear families, and a new generation has been described as up to pace with modernization and Western Cultures (Mishra & Singh, 2006). Urbanization and industrialization may change traditional conceptions of gender roles because people are able to find employment and earn income regardless of their position in the family. Furthermore, women and men are equally likely to provide support to their parents in urban societies, compared to in traditional agrarian societies where women are no longer a part of the household when she gets married. Indeed, the rapid modernization of South Korea, another traditionally collectivist nation, has reported a recent decline in son preference (Chung & Gupta, 2007).

An alternative framework to view cultural differences may be more appropriate for countries like India and Nepal, which are traditionally collectivist, but have undergone modernization. Kagitcibasi (2005) proposed an alternative to individualistic and collectivistic classification of nations. She indicated that some nations are better described as Autonomous Relational, reflecting the fact that autonomy (agency) and relatedness (interpersonal closeness) are two panhuman needs. She proposed that traditionally rural agrarian societies encourage material and psychological interdependence to optimize survival, whereas in modern and urban societies, the increased affluence and social benefits make inter-generational dependence unnecessary and undesirable. However, in traditionally collectivist countries in the process of modernization and urbanization, psychological interdependence continues even though material interdependence no longer prevails. Psychological interdependence is not in conflict with economic independence. Future research that investigates maternal socialization goals based on individual variation in autonomy and relatedness needs may produce more fruitful findings.

Mothers' higher levels of education have also been associated with less salient gender role division (Chung & Gupta, 2007). In our Indian and Nepali samples, the average mother's education is relatively high for those nations (India: 12.63; Nepal: 12.65). Completing 12 grades was similar to the education of the German mothers, and notably higher than the national averages in India and Nepal. In India, only 21.5% of the population has completed secondary or above secondary education, whereas in Nepal, the average years of schooling for women is 3.08 years (Kingdon, 2007; Thapa, 2010). Therefore, our Indian and Nepali samples were not representative in terms of educational level. Higher level of education may indicate that the mothers have more access to employment opportunities, which may lead to a change in their conception of women's role in the society. Furthermore, the mothers from all four countries on average ranked themselves as in, or close to the middle class in terms of economic status. Particularly, the Nepali participants were all in the Brahman caste, which has the advantage of being regarded as the highest caste. The similarity in mothers' education level and socioeconomic status may have contributed to the similarities in their descriptions of competent children's feelings and behavior. However, it must be noted that although mothers across four nations were on average in or close to the middle class, a middle class family in Nepal and India has less wealth than a middle class family in the U.S. and Germany.

Other than the above explanations for the similarity in maternal responses, limitations in our coding procedure should be considered. Our coding system did not differentiate among negative and positive emotions. Although most mothers described negative self-focused emotions in the two negative stories, it is possible that mothers from individualistic countries may have described angry emotions, that reflect a person's desire to act to regain a blocked goal, and mothers from collectivistic nations may have been more inclined to describe sadness, an emotion that poses less danger to interpersonal harmony and a value of putting the relationship above

personal interests (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In the current study, anger and sadness were not differentiated.

Another limitation may have been the design of our vignettes. In a previous study that compared Nepali Brahman, Nepali Tamang, and American children's emotional response to difficult interpersonal situations, Tamang children described more shame than Brahman and American children, who were more likely to endorse anger (Cole et al., 2002). That study was able to find cultural differences because it included several types of situations, some that provoked shame, some that provoked anger, and some ambiguous enough to provoke either emotion. In our study, both the Snatched Toy and Knocked Blocks vignettes were much more likely to evoke anger or sadness than shame, because the child's rights were clearly violated without any antecedents. They indeed found more cultural differences than our current study by using varied and ambiguous vignettes. The use of vague stories led to findings in significant cultural difference in another study as well (Borke & Su, 1972).

Vignette Level Interpretation

Snatched Toy Vignette. In this vignette, although hypotheses regarding relations between cultural orientation and (a) self- versus other-focused emotions and (b) autonomous versus support seeking behavior were not supported, significant differences emerged in two other response categories. Mothers from collectivist orientation were more likely to endorse inaction or expression of emotion only. This lends support to previous findings that people from collectivist countries may have the tendency to inhibit actions and to choose avoidant coping strategies in an anger-provoking situation in order to maintain social harmony, whereas people from individualistic countries may be more assertive because they value justice (Guerra, Hammons & Clutter, 2011; McCarty et al., 1999; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

In addition, the direction of gender difference contradicts our prediction. More mothers expected competent girls versus boys to have self-focused emotions. Despite this finding, the differentiation between anger and sadness is more relevant for previous finding that boys are socialized to suppress sadness more, whereas girls are socialized to suppress anger more (Zeman et al., 2006).

Knocked Blocks Vignette. In this story, more mothers from individualistic versus collectivist countries referred to support seeking actions. The association of interdependent self-construal with collectivist countries (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) may intuitively predict that individuals from collectivist countries are more likely to seek help when they are in distress, but research evidence suggested otherwise. It has been found that Asians and Asian Americans value goals of the relationship over personal goals (Taylor et al., 2006). Therefore, seeking help may be seen as adding burden to others. In collectivist countries, the expression of personal distress can also potentially draw attention to the distinctiveness of an individual (Mortenson, 2006). Many cross-cultural studies confirmed these statements. Asians and Asian Americans in the U.S. were found to directly seek social support less than European Americans (Taylor et al., 2006). Compared with American children, Thai children indicated more that they would cope with stress covertly (McCarty et al., 1999). When facing academic failures, Chinese students were more inclined than American students to use avoidant coping, whereas American students indicated that they would seek emotional support more (Mortenson, 2006). The finding in this study confirms that such cultural differentiation may occur at as young as 6-7 years old.

As expected, more mothers described girls versus boys to seek support in this vignette. Compared with the above vignette, the Knocked Blocks situation was more aggressive, and the motivation and justification of the “instigator” were unclear. Mothers may expect girls to avoid direct and aggressive confrontation more than boys. This finding is consistent with previous finding that girls tend to employ indirect means of aggression, whereas boys tend to employ

direct means (Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, & Peltonen, 1988). Most mothers who mentioned support seeking action referred to telling on the other child, which is a form of indirect confrontation.

Fallen Child Vignette. Consistent with our prediction, in this vignette, more mothers from collectivist versus individualistic countries referred to support seeking actions. This corresponds with the previous finding that children from collectivist countries initiated less helping behavior when they saw a stranger in distress (Trommsdoff et al., 2007). They may be hesitant to help because of the concern that the victim may lose face. Moreover, another previous study found that mothers from Germany and the U.S. emphasized social initiative more as a criteria of child competence, whereas mothers from India and Nepal endorsed obedience and social sensitivity more (Wood, 2012). Therefore, it is probable that more mothers from collectivist countries expected the competent child to seek help because he/she was not told what to do in such situations, whereas more mothers from individualistic countries expected the competent child to initiate prosocial behaviors.

Also consistent with our prediction, more mothers described girls than boys to be sympathetic when they saw another child fall down. This heightened expectation of sympathy in girls may reflect mothers' anticipation that girls will take on the social role of care-giver in the future. It confirms previous finding that all four nations in this study are societies with high masculinity, thus a clear gender role division can be found (Hofstede, 1983; Gurung & Lama, 2004).

Good Marks Vignette. Contrary to predictions, more mothers from individualistic countries referred to other-focused or emotions which had unclear focuses. The specific answers each mother gave were considered in an attempt to find the reason for this unexpected finding. Interestingly, more mothers from individualistic countries than collectivist countries mentioned that the child would not be affected by the good marks, because he/she is not very concerned about exceeding in school. A previous study found that mothers from collectivist countries were

more likely than mothers from individualistic countries to mention cognitive development as a criterion for competence in first-grade children (Wood, 2012). At this age, therefore, academic success may not be as important for German and American mothers as it is to Indian and Nepali mothers.

Furthermore, significantly more mothers from individualistic versus collectivist countries mentioned self-focused actions in the Good Marks vignette. That is consistent with our prediction. Specifically, most mothers said that the competent child would show off or tell family and friends about their good marks. However, slightly more mothers from collectivist versus individualistic countries indicated that the child would act in ways that consider his/her relationship with others. Some examples were thanking the teacher, touching the teacher's feet, or distributing chocolates to friends. This finding is consistent with the proposition that children from collectivist countries may consider their success as interconnected with people around them, whereas children from individualistic countries may be more likely to frame their success as personal achievement. This result is also consistent with the previous finding that Americans and Canadians (representing Individualistic countries) endorsed the expression of positive emotions more than Japanese (representing moderately collectivist countries) (Safdar et al., 2009; Hofstede, 1983). In addition, self-enhancement has been previously found to be valued more by European Americans than Asians (Norasakkunkit & Kalick, 2002), so the expression of pride may be more acceptable in Individualistic countries than in Collectivist countries. Our finding suggested that such differentiation may have emerged at an early age.

Interestingly, more mothers from collectivist countries expected the competent child to plan to study harder in the future. Since all mothers in our Nepali sample were of the Brahman caste, the scholar caste, this may reflect the strong emphasis Brahmins place on education.

Finally, more mothers described girls than boys to have emotions focused on their own interests. In this case, mothers predominantly mentioned that the child would be happy or proud

for himself/herself. This vignette, unlike the others, is not particularly relevant to the assumption on which the gender difference hypothesis was based – that girls are socialized to fulfill the role of providing care. Therefore, it is important in future research to distinguish between situations when proposing gender differences.

Country Level Differences

The countries that were purported to share the same cultural orientations, for the most part, have been found to be indeed similar. However, significant differences emerged in two dependent variables for each country pair.

We found that more German versus American mothers described autonomous actions in the Knocked Blocks vignette. Although the U.S. scored higher than Germany in Hofstede's Individualism index (1983), German mothers' emphasis on independence as a socialization goal was found to have increased from late seventies to recent years (Keller & Lamm, 2005). Moreover, Germany, compared to the U.S., has been found in previous studies to value autonomy and independence more (Schwartz & Ros, 1995, as cited in Koopmann-Holm & Matsumoto, 2011; Wood, 2012). This distinction may explain our finding. Furthermore, Germans were found to have more self-face concerns (i.e. concern about self-image) than Americans (Oetzel et al., 2003), which may explain our finding that in the Good Marks vignette, more German mothers described Self-focused Actions than American mothers. Another interesting dimension of the difference between Germany and America is Uncertainty Avoidance. Countries high in this dimension may use different strategies to prevent ambiguous outcomes, including relying on expertise, acting in advance, planning carefully, etc. Germany was found to be strong in Uncertainty Avoidance, whereas the U.S. was found to be weak in this dimension (Hofstede, 1983). German mothers' inclination to endorse autonomous actions and self-focused actions in two vignettes may reflect their preference for the child to take actions before anything unexpected happens.

India and Nepal were found to differ in the Snatched Toy vignette. Specifically, more Nepali versus Indian mothers reported having self-focused actions and support seeking actions, whereas Indian mothers were more likely to refer to expression of emotion. In addition, more Indian mothers mentioned autonomous actions in the Fallen Child vignette. Are there any social and cultural differences between India and Nepal that could explain the tendency to describe actions by Nepali mothers and the tendency to endorse expression of emotion by Indian mothers? Despite the economic and political differences between these two countries (Srinivasan, 2011), variations that may have led to our findings are unclear. There are few psychological studies that compare India and Nepal directly, because they have been considered very similar culturally. The larger study on which this thesis is based may be one of the first to do so. Future research is needed to address these intra-cultural orientation discrepancies.

Limitations and Direction for Future Research

Several limitations exist in this study. First of all, our coding system was only able to differentiate mothers' responses on a crude level, leaving out interesting and culturally relevant differentiations such as the difference between sadness and anger, and the difference between aggressive behavior and peaceful negotiation. Futures studies can focus on more nuanced levels of differentiation to probe deeper cultural differences. Furthermore, an inevitable issue that many large-scale cross-cultural studies may encounter is the difficulty to translate responses precisely. Many translations were hard to comprehend, and were sent back to the international collaborators for clarifications.

Another limitation regarding the research procedure was that the questions were not asked in a standardized way across nations. For example, in Nepal, the age of the competent child that mothers thought of was very diverse, ranging from 3 years old to 13 years old, perhaps because the interviewer did not remind mothers of the age range of the study. In addition,

interviewers from some countries asked follow-up questions, whereas those from some other countries did not. It is partly because no specific hypotheses were formulated for each smaller part of the questionnaire before the larger study was administered. In future studies, the same questionnaires can be used with specific goals in mind, and probing questions should be asked to clarify certain responses. For example, when a mother simply answers “upset”, interviewers can clarify which specific negative emotion she means.

Besides the content of the vignettes, the order in which they were presented may also influence mothers’ response. In this study, we did not randomize the order in which the stories were presented. The Snatched Toy and Knocked Blocks vignettes were similarly anger-provoking, but yielded different findings. That difference could be due to the order of their occurrence instead of the nature of the vignettes.

Although the above limitations exist, this study still provides important implications. In the increasingly globalized world, it is essential to understand cultural similarities and differences in order to communicate and cooperate better with people from diverse cultures. The key to the understanding of cultural differences lies in parents’ socialization practices, which are ultimately directed by their parenting beliefs and their criteria of competence. However, there is a dearth of research on mothers’ criteria of child competence across cultures. Therefore, our study contributed to the understanding of parenting beliefs in different cultures. We found more similarities than differences in mothers’ expectations of competent children’s emotions and behaviors, challenging the individualism-collectivism dichotomy. Our study also further suggested that cultural variations may emerge at a nuanced level, and may differ depending on the context. Future research should investigate whether there are differences on a subtle level, and whether cultural differences occur at a later developmental stage.

Appendix A**Child Competence Interview-Four Vignettes**

Now we would like to get your impressions about how this child would deal with problems in different situations.

A. If the child was just given a lovely toy, and that was snatched away by a playmate:

1. How would the child feel from inside?
2. Why would s/he feel this way?
3. What would s/he do in that situation?

B. If the child built a house and another child came and knocked it down:

4. How would the child feel from inside?
5. Why would s/he feel this way?
6. What would s/he do in that situation?

C. If the child sees another child falling down on the school yard and getting hurt:

7. How would the child feel from inside?
8. Why would s/he feel this way?
9. What would s/he do in that situation?

D. If the teacher writes very good marks on this child's homework:

10. How would the child feel from inside?
11. Why would s/he feel this way?
12. What would s/he do in that situation?

Appendix B

Coding Manual

Mothers from 5 nations (Nepal, India, South Korea, Germany and the United States) were interviewed using the Criteria of Child Competence (CCC) interview, in which mothers describe one boy and one girl whom they regarded as doing well (i.e. competent). They were then asked a set of follow-up questions about how each child described would behave if the child felt each of 3 different emotions (happy, angry, and sad) and how the child would feel and what the child would do in each of 4 different situations (see below). The target children were supposed to be 6 or 7 years old, one boy and one girl.

This manual focuses on coding the follow-up regarding how each target child would feel (and why) and what the child would do in each of the 4 following specific situations:

1. Another child snatched the target child's toy
2. Another child knocked down something the target child was building
3. Target child witnesses another child hurt
4. Target child does good work at school

CODING INSTRUCTIONS

Coders should bring any responses that were difficult to code to the next coding meeting.

Coders should try to capture the essence of the mother's open-ended response in a single code. If the mother gave more than 1 answer for a behavior, and the answers cannot be aggregated into a single code, code her 1st response in column SxB1 and her 2nd response in column SxB2. If the mother gave more than 2 answers, put all additional answers in 'additional' column.

Coders should always strive to understand the emphasis or central aspect of the mother's response. Because mothers were participating in an open-ended format interview (versus a forced-choice format), some mothers may have thought aloud, developing a response as they thought. Be sure to focus on the central theme of the mother's response.

EMOTION CODES (justifications below should be used to guide emotion coding)

Focus on self as individual: Codes 1 & 2 emphasize emotions the child has on behalf of herself/himself

1. **Focus on self as individual—positive**, such as pride in own accomplishment,
2. **Focus on self as individual—negative**, such as anger, sadness for self, upset for self

Focus on self in relation to others: Codes 3 & 4 emphasize emotions the child has on behalf of other(s)

3. **Focus on self in relation to others—positive**, such as happy that parents are happy, curious/interested in the hurt child
4. **Focus on self in relation to others—negative**, such as shame, concern, empathy, compassion

Note: If child is distressed for self because other child is hurt, code as focus on self as individual—negative

Focus unclear: When self as individual or in relation to others cannot be detected (including in considering justification), code 5 or 6

5. **Other:** Use this for emotion that does not fit in above categories, e.g. happy (which may not be clearly for self or others)
6. **Additional:** Use this for additional emotion(s) that mother mentions in addition to a codable emotion

JUSTIFICATIONS (use justification to help you determine what emotion code to use)

Focus on self as individual involves an emphasis on how child feels relative to the child's rights, needs, wants, accomplishments for sake of self

Focus on self in relation to others involves an emphasis on how child feels relative to the child's duties, responsibilities, sense of relationships (with parents, teachers, friends)

BEHAVIOR CODES

1. **Action taken by the child on his/her own behalf**, e.g. snatching toy back, showing the homework to parents, boasting, ask the parents to buy him/her a new toy, just pass by/keep walking/keep playing
2. **Action taken by the child to get someone else to act on child's behalf**, e.g. asking mother to get toy back, asking mother to take target child home when other child was hurt
3. **Action taken by the child on someone else's behalf or taking other's needs into account as well**, e.g. offering to share snatched toy, trying to help the hurt child, go over and watch the fallen child, thanking the teacher/praising the teacher (in the praise scenario)
4. **Action taken by the child to get someone else to act on other's behalf**, e.g. asking someone to help the two children share snatched toy or to help the hurt child

When the response cannot be categorized by the above 4 codes, then code 1 of the following 4.

5. **Expression of emotion**, e.g., cried, yelled (but if there is action included code with action, e.g., yelled at child to give back toy); waits irritatingly.

6. **Inaction—future orientation**, child did nothing but it is implied will do differently in the future, e.g., will try to do better next time, studies more (in the praise scenario)
7. **Inaction—no information**, no evidence of any action, present or future, or of expressed emotion, e. g. does nothing, seems to not know what to do , ignores the fallen child, put the paper away, just watch (in the hurt child scenario), refuse to do something (without saying anything)
8. **Other**, use for any behavior that does not fit above categories. E.g. communicate to others the news that they are praised (It is too neutral to be coded)

Mothers may give 2 answers. Distinguish a 2-part answer (he cried and hit the child) from 2 distinct answers in which the child might choose one or the other behavior (he might cry *or* he might hit the child; *if* he knew the child he would hit him, but if he did not know the child he would tell me). If the mother has clearly given 2 separate responses, you can code both. Enter them in the data file in the order in which the mother said them (not in numerical order of the codes).

If the mother gives 2 parts to what is basically a single response (he cried and hit the child), then follow these rules:

- a. Action of any sort takes precedence over emotion expression (he cried and hit the child = 1)
- b. Emotion expression without action takes precedence over inaction (he did nothing but cry = 5)
- c. Future action (child will try to do better next time, child will tell mother when he gets home) without immediate action = 6
- d. Internal processes (*hopes* the child will give the toy back) are not actions, if there is no expressed emotion or action, then code as inaction

In some instances, the interviewer veers off of the standardized questions and probes. In that case, ignore any additional response.

For ambiguous responses, you may ask a generic question of the group via email or in a group meeting. If it is too arduous to generate a generic question, please just email me and ask your question. I will either reply to you or I will create the generic question for the group.

Remember also to ask translation clarifications when there is ambiguity as the investigators can return to the original language transcriptions and often eliminate the ambiguity.

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ACADEMIC VITA

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Education

The Pennsylvania State University

University Park

B.S., Psychology (Neuroscience Option)

Expected Graduation: May 2013

Schreyer Honors College

Columbia University

New York City

Visiting Undergraduate Student

Spring 2012

Schreyer Honors College

Honors thesis, "Cross-Cultural Comparison of Maternal Beliefs of Competent Children's

Emotions and Behaviors"

Thesis Supervisor: Pamela M. Cole, Ph.D.

Honors and Awards

- Paterno Fellow

Fall 2009—Present

College of Liberal Arts

- Schreyer Academic Excellence Scholarship

Fall 2009—Present

Schreyer Honors College

- Dean's List

Fall 2009—Fall 2011; Fall 2012

College of Liberal Arts

- Schreyer Summer Research Grant and Travel Grant (\$1,500) Summer 2010
Schreyer Honors College
- Honorable Mention in Empirical Poster Contest April 2013
Psi Chi Research Conference
The Pennsylvania State University University Park, PA

Professional Experience

- ***Development of Emotion Regulation Lab*** The Pennsylvania State University
Honors Thesis (Advisor: Pamela M. Cole, Ph.D.) Fall 2011—Spring 2013
Thesis Title: Cross-cultural comparison of maternal beliefs of competent children's emotions and behaviors
 - Developed coding scheme & code open-ended responses of mothers from 5 nations (U.S., Germany, Nepal, India, & Korea)
 - Designed honors thesis, analyze data for cross-cultural comparison, write thesis in APA style
 - Managed Excel files for 500 interviews, calculate inter-rater reliabilities
- ***Mental Health Practicum with Children*** The Pennsylvania State University
Coach (Supervisor: Janet A. Welsh, Ph.D.) Fall 2012—Spring 2013
 - Worked in team of 4 students to plan and implement social skills training for 6 1st-grade children
 - Learned and applied current research on prevention of childhood psychopathology
 - Used applied behavior management with child with ADHD to improve time on-task & appropriate interaction
 - Communicated and cooperated with children's families through parent conference, phone calls, and progress report

• *Cana School for Children with Autism*

Guangzhou, China

Intern (Supervisor: Dan Huang)

May—June 2011

- Assisted teachers effectively in coaching children with social and language skills through classroom activities
- Implemented two research projects on facial information processing and theory of mind
- Translated academic articles between English and Chinese accurately

• *Family and Child Development Lab*

The Pennsylvania State University

Research Assistant (Supervisor: Alysia Y. Blandon, Ph.D.)

Fall 2010—Spring 2011

- Interacted with family participants; video-recorded lab sessions; input quantitative data into SPSS files
- Selected article relevant to research study & led team discussion of article

• *Penn State Learning Center*

The Pennsylvania State University

Statistics Tutor (Supervisor: Lisa Broniszewski)

Fall 2010—Spring 2011

- Planned creative study sessions twice a week that helped students strengthen their statistical skills
- Communicated statistical concepts, techniques, and software use (Minitab and SPSS) to students

Publications and Papers

Chen, S., Cheng, A., & Mehta, K. (in press). A Review of Telemedicine Business Models.

Telemedicine and E-Health.