11

INTEGRATING THE DEVELOPMENTAL NICHE

Relations among Socialization
Goals, Parental Ethnotheories,
Daily Activities, and Parental
Responses to Temperament

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In this chapter, we integrate findings regarding the developmental niche by exploring relations of parental socialization goals (SG) and ethnotheories (PE) with daily activities involving the child, and parental reactions to child temperament displays (see Figure 11.1). SG (parents' beliefs regarding desired outcomes for children) and PE (desired parental behaviors to
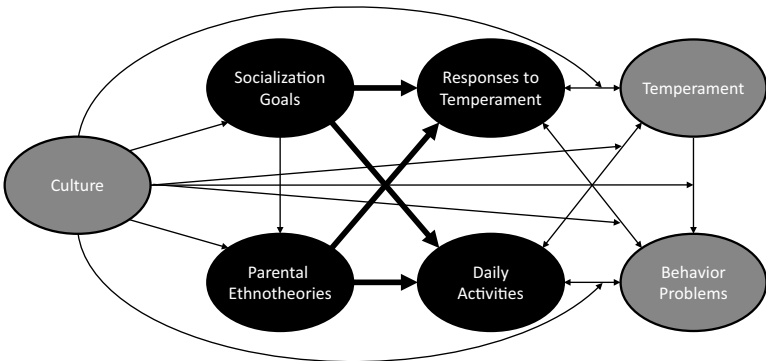

FIGURE 11.1 Niche element associations in the JETTC Conceptual Model

achieve these outcomes) are expected to influence a wide array of daily routines, including play, preparation for sleep/soothing, and discipline strategies; as well as how parents appraise and respond to their child's behavior. Specifically, temperament displays that are consistent with desired child outcomes are expected to be encouraged and displays considered undesirable are likely to be discouraged. Cultural norms pertaining to "proper parenting" are also likely to affect the way caregivers respond to expressions of Negative Affectivity (NEG) and Surgency (SUR), and displays of Effortful Control (EFF).

Cultures favoring relational SG and PE emphasize helping others, obedience, controlling emotions, and prompt responses to child distress. Cultures that value acceptance of norms and hierarchies as contributors to the harmonic functioning of the social unit are characterized by a proximal parenting style: seeking synchrony in mother–child exchanges (Carra, Lavelli, Keller, & Kärtner, 2013), more frequent references to the social context, moral correctness (Kärtner et al., 2006), a focus on obedience and responsibility for the group (Harkness & Super, 1992), and encouragement of proper demeanor (Leyendecker, Lamb, Harwood, & Schölmerich, 2002). Play in such cultures is more often connected to a purpose such as academic enrichment (Parmar, Harkness, & Super, 2008). Less parental encouragement of independence and bedtime routines such as rocking or nursing are also more likely in this relational cultural context and have been linked to shorter and more fragmented child sleep (Sadeh, Mindell, Luedtke, & Wiegand, 2009). Regarding discipline, corporal punishment is more often used in cultures that emphasize power hierarchy (Ember & Ember, 2005).

Cultures favoring autonomous SG and PE emphasize self-confidence, competitiveness, and autonomy. Such cultures are characterized by a distal parenting style, preferring face-to-face interactions, play with objects, and high responsivity to positive affect (Carra et al., 2013; Keller et al., 2006). Rough-and-tumble play is more prevalent in individualistic cultures (Roopnarine & Davidson, 2015), where play is primarily used for entertainment (Parmar et al., 2008). Encouraging independence in falling asleep and reliance on greater self-soothing is consistent with autonomous values and predicts longer and more consolidated sleep (Sadeh et al., 2009). Findings on discipline suggest corporal punishment is seldom applied in cultures low in power hierarchy (Ember & Ember, 2005).

According to the literature relevant to parental responses to temperament displays, discussed in Chapter 10, positive and negative

emotional expressions tend to be discouraged in countries high in relatedness (Chen et al., 1998; Porter et al., 2005), whereas EFF is valued (Cole, Tamang, & Shrestha, 2006; Yun & Park, 2013). Delay of gratification, an expression of EFF, was described as higher, and emotional expressiveness as lower, in interdependent cultures (Lamm et al., 2018). In contrast, emotional expression, and particularly SUR, is often encouraged in countries valuing autonomy (Rothbaum, Nagaoka, & Ponte, 2006), with expressions of EFF valued less.

Countries high on Relational SG emphasize obedience, caring for others and emotional control, and were expected to score high on Play with a Purpose and low on Play for Entertainment (Parmar et al., 2008). The finding that children in collectivist countries watch more television (Singer, Singer, Agostino, & Delong, 2009), suggest that children in countries high on relational goals will engage more in this activity. The emphasis on obedience in relational goals is expected to translate into positive links with the use of power-assertive discipline techniques, consistent with theories relating values emphasizing conformity with the use of corporal punishment (Ember & Ember, 2005). Relational SG may also predict parents' discouragement of negative and positive emotional expressions (Chen et al., 1998; Porter et al., 2005). Parental promotion of EFF in countries valuing relatedness was expected, given the emphasis on obedience and emotional control (Cole et al., 2006; Lamm et al., 2018).

Autonomous socialization goals, valuing self-confidence and independence, are conceptually linked to individualism. Chapter 8 revealed positive links between Individualism and gentle sleep-aiding techniques, and between Indulgence and leaving the child alone to cry, suggesting that countries high on autonomous goals score higher on these sleep routines. Chapter 9 results indicating that corporal punishment is lower in individualistic countries suggests that countries high in autonomous goals use less hitting/spanking and other power-assertive discipline strategies. The positive correlation between Indulgence and asking the child to repair the damage (Chapter 9) suggests greater use of this disciplining technique in countries endorsing autonomous goals. Because emphasis on independence has been linked with more expressed emotions (Rothbaum et al., 2006), countries high in autonomous goals are predicted to encourage NEG and SUR in their toddlers. Because of an emphasis on comforting the child, countries high on Relational PE are expected to use more sleep-aiding techniques, to stay with their child during bedtime, and not leave the child alone to cry. Autonomous PE reflect ideals of training children to sleep and play alone and show positive links

TABLE 11.1 Between-country correlations between countries' marginal means of socialization goals/parental ethnotheories and family context variables

	Socialization goals		Parental ethnotheories	
	Relational	Autonomous	Relational	Autonomous
Daily activities				
Low–Intensity Toy Play	0.18	0.18	0.31	−0.10
High–Intensity Toy Play	0.49#	0.26	−0.03	0.33
Play with Purpose	0.03	0.14	−0.26	0.13
Play for Entertainment	−0.64*	−0.31	0.08	−0.26
Activities with Parent	0.08	0.44	0.36	0.05
Watching Television	0.65*	0.27	−0.41	0.32
Computer/Electronics	0.27	0.55*	0.24	0.14
Parenting regarding child sleep				
Active Techniques	0.31	0.14	0.27	−0.09
Gentle Techniques	−0.19	0.20	0.49#	−0.16
Stay with Child	0.17	−0.39	0.02	−0.40
Cry it Out	0.43	0.29	−0.52#	0.39
Children's sleep patterns				
Bed time	0.07	−0.34	−0.20	−0.09
Waking time	0.25	0.04	−0.26	0.38
Nighttime sleep	0.12	0.54*	0.08	0.46#
Naps	−0.26	−0.12	−0.20	−0.30
Discipline				
Talk about issue	−0.31	0.00	0.04	−0.24
Repair damage	0.22	0.15	0.21	0.05
Think about misbehavior	0.23	−0.38	−0.16	0.05
Shout or swear	−0.10	−0.80**	0.09	−0.33
Hit or spank	0.43	−0.42	−0.43	−0.19
Remove child from others	0.38	0.24	−0.25	0.29
Take away privileges	0.29	−0.02	−0.01	0.14
Responses to temperament				
Encouraging NEG	0.00	−0.22	0.14	−0.13
Encouraging SUR	0.28	0.39	0.37	0.10
Punish low EFF	0.41	−0.27	−0.15	0.06
Reward high EFF	0.07	−0.15	−0.10	0.12

Note: $N = 14$, $**p < 0.01$, $*p < 0.05$, $\#p < 0.10$

to Indulgence (Chapter 6). Therefore, predictions resemble those for Autonomous SG. The ideal of training the child to sleep alone predicts higher use of "cry it out", lower frequency of staying with child, less use of sleep-aiding techniques, and longer child nighttime sleep (Sadeh et al., 2009).

Results

Relational SG were associated with more time watching television and low endorsement of play for entertainment; and marginally associated with more high-intensity toy play. Autonomous goals were linked to frequent use of computers and other electronics, more nighttime sleep, and less reliance on shouting/swearing as a discipline technique.

No correlations between PE and parenting behavior were significant, but countries with higher Relational PE were marginally more likely to use gentle bedtime techniques and not have their children cry it out at bedtime; and countries high on Autonomous PE reported marginally more sleep. There were no significant correlations between mothers' SG/PE and their responses to their child's temperament displays.

Discussion

The aim of this chapter was to integrate the developmental niche by exploring how parental SG and PE translate into child-related daily routines and responses to temperament displays. Few significant associations between parental psychology and family context variables emerged. Relational SG were expected to translate into more play with a purpose, yet mothers in countries high in these goals engaged children less in play for entertainment. Thus, cultures holding relational values regard play less as a purely entertaining activity, consistent with an emphasis on obedience and following rules. Children in countries endorsing relational goals spent more time watching television, in line with previous findings (Singer et al., 2009), and with the marginal positive association between Collectivism and television exposure (Chapter 7). Watching television is often a group activity, and the idea of shared time together is consistent with relational values.

Children in countries that value autonomous goals spent more time on computers and other electronic devices. Playing with devices such as tablets and computers entails a solo activity, which is consistent with prioritizing autonomy and independence. Autonomously oriented cultures

may regard playing with electronic devices as an appropriate means for children to spend leisure time. Children in these countries slept more during the night, in line with previous links between encouragement of independence and extended sleep in children (Sadeh et al., 2009). A substantial correlation was found between higher endorsement of autonomous goals and less shouting and swearing as a discipline technique. Shouting/swearing likely conveys a negative message about the child and may lower self-confidence—an outcome antithetical to the autonomous socialization agenda.

The developmental niche has been conceptualized as a framework that confers cultural influences onto the next generation. Research has demonstrated coherent culture-specific pathways adaptive in different environmental contexts (Keller, 2015). Yet, such coherence between systems was largely absent in the present investigation. Yet, several strong correlations between elements of the developmental niche indicate important influences of cultural values on child rearing relevant to temperament development.

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