We are IntechOpen,
the world's leading publisher of
Open Access books
Built by scientists, for scientists

6,900
Open access books available

186,000
International authors and editors

200M
Downloads

Our authors are among the

154
Countries delivered to

TOP 1%
most cited scientists

12.2%
Contributors from top 500 universities

CLARIVATE ANALYTICS
BOOK CITATION INDEX
INDEXED

WEB OF SCIENCE™

Selection of our books indexed in the Book Citation Index
in Web of Science™ Core Collection (BKCI)

Interested in publishing with us?
Contact book.department@intechopen.com

Numbers displayed above are based on latest data collected.
For more information visit www.intechopen.com

Child-Rearing Practices of Brazilian Mothers and Fathers: Predictors and Impact on Child Development

Cesar Augusto Piccinini, Patricia Alvarenga and
Angela Helena Marin

Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/57242

1. Introduction

The chapter is divided into three parts, which highlight various issues related to child-rearing practices that were investigated by the Brazilian Center for Children and Families/NUDIF (www.ufrgs.br/nudif), to which the authors belong. The first issue we discuss is the predictors of child-rearing practices related to cultural differences, parental values, socialization goals, and social class. The second issue refers to the predictors related to the individual characteristics of the parents (their experiences with their own caregivers and the parents' gender) and the children (age, temperament, illness and birth order). Finally, the third issue concerns the impact of parental child-rearing practices on children's social competence and behavior problems of the children.

2. Child-rearing practices related to cultural and social contexts

In the first part of the chapter we present and discuss some of the studies carried out in our group that show that child-rearing practices are closely linked to the cultural and social context in which families are included.

Variations in cultural contexts can coexist even within the same country, such as in Brazil, with a recent history, a large territory, much social inequality, and a strong presence of immigrants. In developed countries, which have much more consolidated histories, it is sometimes easier to establish the prevailing cultural patterns and their relation to specific child-rearing practices. In contrast, in a developing country such as Brazil, this is more difficult to grasp, in part due

to its complexity and cultural diversity. Brazil is the fifth largest country and occupied the seventh position among the world's economies in 2012 (IMF, 2012). Its population of approximately 194 million inhabitants (IBGE, 2012) has been formed by groups of people and cultures, including indigenous people who inhabited the American continent when it was discovered, by people who immigrated from Europe (Portuguese, Italians, Germans, Polish), and Asia (Japanese, Chinese), or slaves who were bought from Africa, among others groups. Over the years the blending of these people has occurred to a greater or lesser degree depending on the ethnic groups involved, and there have been important cultural exchanges. Conversely, some immigrant groups still preserve important cultural traits, especially in the south, with a strong presence of descendants of European immigrants. Added to this is a great religious diversity, from traditional religions, such as Catholic, Protestant and Jewish, those of African origin and a set of new sects and religions called Evangelical. Several of these religions have in their indoctrination clear messages about the socialization of children and how to make them obedient and respectful to God and their own parents.

Considering the extent and diversity of Brazil, it is difficult to characterize the child-rearing practices most commonly used by mothers and fathers. For example, in the southern region of the country, where our research has been developed, cities can be found with large Italian, German, or Japanese colonization. Furthermore, in addition to cultural variation within the same city, we find huge socioeconomic differences, with neighborhoods of wealthy families situated next to slums. It should be noted that in the ranking of the 2012 Global Human Development Index (HDI) Brazil occupied the 85th position (HDI = 0.73) among the 187 countries assessed (UNDP, 2013), with huge variations between Brazilian cities, ranging from an HDI of 0.92 (the city of São Caetano do Sul, SP, similar to the HDI of 0.94 in Norway, which ranks first in the global ranking) to an HDI of 0.47 (the city of Manari, EP) identical to the HDI of 0.47 in Tanzania, Africa, which ranks 152nd in the overall ranking (UNDP, 2013). This might be reflected in the socialization goals of mothers and fathers of these different cities, which also impact on child-rearing practices. For instance, in one of the studies in which we took part (Seidl-de-Moura et al., 2008) we investigated the socialization goals of 349 primiparous Brazilian mothers., from seven different cities representing each of the five geographical regions of the country. The results revealed that overall the mothers tended to present a pattern that fosters the development of children's autonomous-relational selves, based on Kağitçiba-şi's (2007) self development model. According to this author, autonomy and relatedness both tend to be encouraged by families that value emotional closeness, proximity and, at the same time, children's autonomy to make decisions and act by themselves. This model is prevalent in families that live in traditionally interdependent contexts that have been undergoing modernization processes, including urbanization, economic development and educational opportunities. However, intracultural variation was also revealed in mothers' socialization goals, which was related to the different cities studied and mothers' educational levels.

In a previous study (Piccinini, Maggi, & Carro, 1993) we investigated mothers' child-rearing practices, from two cities of the south of the country, with different cultural backgrounds (40 mothers were of German descent and 38 mothers were of Italian descent). The mothers had either a child of two to three years of age or a child of five to six years of age. In an interview the mother was presented with six hypothetical situations related to the child's behavior and,

among other questions, was asked how she would behave with her child in a similar situation. Half of the situations involved conventional issues (e.g. mealtime refusal, school refusal, refusal to go to sleep) while the others involved moral issues (e.g. hitting another child, stealing a toy from another child, damaging something at home), based on Kolberg's (1984) conceptualization. Differences in the use of child-rearing practices were found which were related to the mother's cultural background and type of situation. In relation to conventional situations, the mothers of Italian descent mentioned more permissive strategies for younger children than did the mothers of German descent. As far as the moral situations were concerned, few differences were found between the groups.

Even within a single city, variations in child-rearing practices tend to be expressed and have been associated with differences in the social class of the families. For instance, in one of our studies (Tudge, Lopes et al., 2013) we examined the social class differences in child-rearing values and the extent to which parents are influenced by their children. Twenty-five middle-class and working-class families living in a city of the south of the country participated in interviews, observations, and completed Kohn's Q-sort measure when their children were 3, 36, and 72 months of age. We found that the parental child-rearing values significantly differed by social class: middle-class parents were more likely to value self-direction and autonomy in their children, whereas working-class parents were more likely to value conformity. In addition, the strength and direction of the parental values significantly changed as their children developed.

The studies carried out in the NUDIF support the literature and show the importance of different cultural and social factors, which often coexist within the same country or even within the same city and are associated with parental child-rearing practices. Obviously this is not a deterministic and unilateral relationship, with the child-reading practices also being influenced by many other factors, related, for example, to the characteristics of the parents and the child and to the specific contexts of childhood development, which will be presented in the next section.

It is important to emphasize that human values are mutually influenced by the social world and by individual characteristics (Tudge, Piccinini et al., 2013), and although it is possible to distinguish, analytically, between these factor, they are closely related within a whole that cannot be reduced to the sum of its elements (Tudge, 2008). A cultural–ecological approach to values can help to view developmental phenomena in more complex ways that stem from the intersection of multiple facets (Tudge et al., 2013). For instance, as pointed out by these authors, parents' child-rearing values are more than just the product of culture or class, they involve a dynamic interplay between aspects of the context (e.g. social class) and aspects of the individuals, just as any contextualist theory specifies.

3. Parents' and children's characteristics as predictors of child-rearing practices

Seeking to investigate the attitudes and behaviors of parents regarding the socialization of their children, studies have highlighted some factors associated with parental child-rearing

practices, which can be classified into three broad categories (Belsky, 1984): social context, personal characteristics of the parents, and characteristics of the child. In this sense, studies conducted in the NUDIF have concentrated on investigating some of these factors, such as, differences in mothers' and fathers' child-rearing practices according to age, health conditions of the child, birth order, and evidence of intergenerational transmission of parental child-rearing practices.

A series of four studies (Alvarenga, Piccinini, Frizzo, Lopes, & Tudge, 2009; Marin, Piccinini, & Tudge, 2011a, 2011b; Piccinini, Frizzo, Alvarenga, Lopes, & Tudge, 2007) investigated mothers' and fathers' child-rearing practices in the child's early years, examining the stability and change in child-rearing practices during the child's preschool years. In the study by Piccinini et al. (2007) we investigated differences in child-rearing practices of mothers and fathers of children aged 18 months. Thirty-four families took part in the study, with both parents interviewed in relation to six day-to-day situations that commonly involve inappropriate behavior or disobedience by the child, namely: a) mealtimes; b) being cared for by someone else; c) dressing; d) bedtime; e) bath time; and f) when the parents said 'no'. Content analysis and statistical analysis revealed the predominance of inductive practices reported by both the mothers and fathers. The absence of differences in child-rearing practices between the parents indicates a low relevance of parental gender in determining the practices in the developmental phase that was investigated. Therefore, it is plausible that other characteristics of parents, the child and the context may be more influential in the child-rearing practices than parental gender itself. Actually, some of these factors have already been highlighted in the literature such as parent's beliefs and values, level of education, experience with their own caregivers, quality of the marital relationship and child characteristics. These may be more influential in the child-rearing practices than gender itself (Bentley, & Fox, 1991; Weber, Prado, Viezzer, & Brandenburg, 2004). Such aspects may be particularly relevant in the first two years of life because eventual disagreements between the mother and father in the way they conceive of the socialization of the baby may not yet be expressed in different attitudes and behaviors.

In a follow-up study (Alvarenga et al., 2009) we investigated the stability and changes in child-rearing practices of mothers and fathers in the period between 18 and 24 months after the birth of their child, using a sample of 18 families, where the mothers and fathers responded separately to the same interview described in the study above. The initial hypothesis was that at 24 months fathers and mothers would report more inductive practices than at 18 months, due to the increasing dominance of language by the child (Mussen, Conger, Kagan, & Huston, 1990), the development of assertiveness (Crockenberg & Litman, 1990) and greater allocation of competence and responsibility to the child (Dix, Ruble, & Zambarano, 1989). This hypothesis was partially supported by the results, as only the mothers reported significantly more inductive practices at 24 months. This difference between fathers and mothers can be explained by the fact that, as the mothers deal with daily tasks that generate conflict, such as those that have been investigated, more often than the fathers (Booth, Spieker, Barnard, & Morisset, 1992) they eventually develop a broader repertoire of inductive strategies, such as the use of explanations, to deal with such situations (Schaffer, 1996).

A second hypothesis was that there would be no differences in the maternal and paternal child-rearing practices at 24 months, considering the findings of the study by Piccinini et al. (2007), which included a sample of families from the same study. However, the mothers mentioned a significantly higher frequency of practices involving explanation and organization of the environment than the fathers. In addition, they also reported more coercive practices than the fathers. These findings strengthen the case that mothers are more involved in child care, even when verbalizations and actions aimed at restricting certain behaviors are necessary.

The study by Marin et al. (2011a) followed the same families when the child was 24, 36 and 72 months. When the children reached 24 and 72 months, the mothers and fathers responded to the same interview used in the study above; however, when they were aged 36 months, the families were also observed during their lunch and parental practices were investigated. Statistical analysis revealed differences between the maternal inductive practices at 24 and 36 months, and between the practices of non-interference at 24 and 36 months, and at 36 and 72 months. In relation to the fathers, differences were found between the inductive practices at 24 and 72 months and between the practices of non-interference at 24 and 36 months, and at 36 and 72 months. These results suggest that the use of inductive practices may be related to the allocation of greater competence and responsibility to the children, associated with the age or maturity attributed to them. The practices of non-interference, in turn, also became more frequent as the child grew and are possibly related to the emergence of assertiveness (Crockenberg, & Littman, 1990). In contrast to the inductive and non-interference practices, coercive practices tended to maintain some stability throughout the development of the child. Peisner (1989) emphasized that, in the childhood socialization process, some practices tend to remain stable while others do not. Perhaps this is the case for the coercive practices, which appeared to be used more in situations of greater conflict with the child or as a last resort to achieve the desired disciplinary goal, especially after using inductive practices and even non-interference practices. The results suggest that both stability and change are present in the parental practices throughout the development of the child. It is noteworthy that some practices tend to change due to the development of the child, although the way parents deal with their children often tends to remain more stable (McNally, Eisenberg, & Harris, 1991). What appears to occur, according to McNally et al. (1991), is that the parental values remain relatively stable, while some specific practices that favor these tend to change with the age of the child, due to the acquisition of new skills and greater autonomy.

Similarly, Marin et al. (2011b) used the same sample, considering only the data from the interview about parental child-rearing practices applied at 24 and 72 months; and revealed that the mothers were significantly more inductive than the fathers at 24 months, however, at 72 months there were no significant differences. The mothers also presented higher mean scores in the reported practices, which can be explained by the predominant role they still play in the socialization of the children (Wagner, 2003), although the fathers started participating more in the education of their children. Compared with the fathers, the mothers tended to talk more with their children, to express feelings, opinions, set limits, and praise appropriate behaviors (Braz, Dessen, & Silva, 2005; Silveira, Pacheco, Cross, & Schneider, 2005).

Still related to specific contexts which may have an impact child-rearing, we carried out other two studies, with the first investigating the role of the health condition of the child in the child-

rearing practices of the mother, while in the other study we compared the child-rearing practices of parents with one only child with those of parents with a second child. In relation to the first study (Piccinini, Castro, Alvarenga, Vargas, & Oliveira, 2003) it was reported that the presence of a chronic disease in childhood may constitute an important predictor for the quality of mother-child interaction, especially regarding the child-rearing practices. We interviewed 40 mothers of five-year-old children, half having a child with a chronic illness and the other half having children without health problems. Statistical analysis revealed that the first group of mothers tended to use less physical punishment and punishment/chastisement, which indicates that the infrequent use of these practices may be related to physical fragility and the health condition of their children, who are constantly undergoing painful procedures and rigorous medical treatment. In this sense, the less frequent use of coercive practices could be linked to the need to protect the child from further suffering. It is also possible that, due to the disease characteristics of the child, the mothers are afraid that practices involving the use of force can cause harmful effects on the health of the child. Furthermore, the pain of seeing the sick child (Espíndula, & Valle, 2002) and the extreme concern and even overprotection associated with more serious health situations (Bradford, 1997), can impact on the maternal behavior of protecting the child from physical and psychological stress, which represents the use of coercive practices.

With regard to birth order, Freitas and Piccinini (2010) interviewed 12 families with one child and 10 with two children, matched for socioeconomic level, age and gender of the children. Statistical analysis revealed differences in maternal and paternal practices only within the one-child group, revealing a tendency toward the predominant use of inductive practices by the mothers and coercive practices by the fathers, which could be associated with the idea that care is still more linked to the maternal figure, while authority is more related to the paternal figure (Tudge et al., 2000). It is also plausible to think that the fathers seek to compensate for the inductive practices of the mothers in order to impose stricter limits on the single child. In addition, the mothers and fathers with one child tended to primarily use inductive practices, going over to coercive practices when the disciplinary goal was not achieved. This finding corroborates the notion that the child is not a mere receiver of the child-rearing practices, these being substantially determined by the nature of the situation and by the child's needs (Grusec & Kuczynski, 1980). Therefore, the fact of having a sibling does not necessarily imply the predominant use of coercive practices, representing just one more of the factors that can determine different responses of the parents in relation to each child.

Finally, one of our studies (Marin et al., 2013) focused on the intergenerational transmission of parental practices in 30 mothers and 22 fathers, who had only one child of three years of age. We performed three sets of analysis. The first considered the group of mothers and fathers as a whole, comparing the proportions of practices received and used among the participating mothers and fathers and found that there was a tendency to maintain coercive practices between the generations. The second set, considered the intergenerational transmission case by case, aiming to examine whether the mothers and fathers who predominantly received a certain type of child-rearing practice in their childhood tended to repeat the same model with their own children. It was found that the results were not homogeneous, i.e., the transmission of the practices was only detected in some cases, but not in the majority of them. Finally, a qualita-

tive analysis was performed for the descriptions of the child-rearing practices and for other parental reports that referred to their relationship with their own parents and to the intergenerational transmission of the practices, seeking to broaden the comprehension of other aspects that could be related to the transmission. Many parents reported the reproduction of coercive patterns, even though they mentioned attempts to avoid this as they were related to the idea of the experience of suffering. Taken together, the results indicate both the maintenance of the practices received, whether inductive, coercive or non-interference, as well as changes in the type of practice used due to the characteristics of the couple and of the child.

The results of this study support the literature that suggests that a continuity of aggressive behaviors and inconsistent child-rearing practices is associated with memories of inadequate parenting styles as children (Bailey, Hill, Oesterle, & Hawkins, 2009; Hennig, 2008). However, although the coercive practices were maintained as a socialization strategy, the fathers also used a combination of inductive and coercive practices with greater frequency, which may suggest a historical change between generations in the concepts of how to properly raise children (Biasoli-Alves, 1997; Weber, Selig, Bernardi, & Salvador, 2006).

These findings support the idea that child-rearing practices, as well as parent-child interaction, constitute a dynamic and reciprocal processes involving characteristics of the child and the parents (Belsky, 1984; Biasoli-Alves, 1997). In this sense, their intergenerational transmission does not only involve the reproduction for the children of the patterns received in childhood, but also leads to the construction of models of what should be followed or avoided in the subsequent relationships (Ângelo, 1995). Furthermore, how the mothers and fathers evaluate the way in which they were raised possibly has an influence on the continuity or discontinuity of the child-rearing practices (Shaffer, Burt, Obradovic, Herbers, & Masten, 2009), with their experience during the their own upbringing not being inevitably repeated (Belsky, Conger, & Capaldi, 2009), giving space to the pursuit of the replication or the correction of previous experiences in the relationship with their children (Byng-Hall, 1990).

In short, although the studies presented highlight the complexity and multiplicity of factors that have been shown to be relevant in the use and adequacy of parental child-rearing practices, they also indicate important features particularly in relation to the context in which they occur. The lack of more consistent and empirically validated knowledge regarding the practices of mothers and fathers with children of different ages means that sometimes parents may relate to their children with some uncertainty, taking into account the numerous options, all valid in certain contexts and, simultaneously, potentially questionable, regarding the use of one or another child-rearing practice in the day-to-day engagement with their child.

4. The role of parental child-rearing practices in the socio-emotional development of the child

In this part of the chapter we present and discuss some of the studies carried out by our group that revealed the role of the parents' child-rearing practices as a predictor for the child's socio-emotional development.

The hypotheses found in the literature regarding the impact of the interaction between parents and children and the parental child-rearing practices on the socio-emotional development of children, especially in early childhood, have received support from numerous recently published studies. Research in this area primarily focuses on issues such as social competence (Fraley, Roisman, & Haltigan, 2013), emotional self-regulation (Braungart-Rieker, Hill-Soderlund, & Karrass, 2010), behavior problems, especially in relation to antisocial behavior and externalizing (Alvarenga & Palma, 2012), and internalizing problems (Bayer, Sanson, & Hemphill, 2009).

Although there are still controversies and gaps in this field, certain types of child-rearing behavior and practices that tend to contribute to the full emotional development of the child have been consistently identified, and the deleterious effects of some disciplinary strategies and family interaction patterns have been highlighted (Grusec & Davidov, 2010). Furthermore, the role of moderator variables, among them that of the culture, has become clearer (Grusec, 2011).

Some studies conducted by the NUDIF investigated the relationship between child-rearing practices and social-emotional development, in particular, externalizing problems and the social competence of children between the third and sixth years of age. Among these, four studies investigated, through interviews and observations, maternal child-rearing practices and externalizing problems.

The study by Alvarenga and Piccinini (2001) compared a group of mother-child dyads with children with clinical profiles of externalizing problems, with another group of dyads composed of children without behavior problems. All the children were between five and six years of age. The maternal child-rearing practices were evaluated through a structured interview consisting of six hypothetical situations, as described above (Piccinini et al., 2007), involving conflicts in the everyday life of the mothers and children, as well as situations spontaneously reported by the mothers as being difficult to manage. The children's behavior problems were evaluated using the Child Behavior Checklist - CBCL (Achenbach, 1991). The results revealed that the mothers of children who presented externalizing problems reported using coercive child-rearing practices more often than the mothers of the group of children without problems. Concerning the child-rearing practices reported by the mothers in the situations spontaneously highlighted by them as difficult to manage, there was a significant difference between the two groups in the physical punishment category, with reports of more frequent use among the mothers in the group of children with externalizing profiles. In another study Marin, Piccinini, Gonçalves and Tudge (2012) investigated the maternal and paternal child-rearing practices in 48 families with six-year-old children, and their relationships with childhood internalizing and externalizing problems. The parental child-rearing practices were evaluated using the same interview and category structure for the content analysis that was used by Alvarenga and Piccinini (2001), and the externalizing problems were examined using the Social Skills Rating System (Gresham & Elliott, 1990). A positive correlation was found between the maternal coercive practices and the total score for externalizing problems, although the same trend was not revealed for paternal child-rearing practices. Conversely, the paternal coercive practices were positively correlated with the internalizing problems of the children.

In an attempt to examine these relationships in an observational context, Alvarenga and Piccinini (2009) analyzed the child-rearing practices and their relationships with externalizing problems during a family meal, which usually involves sporadic or even frequent conflicts between the parents and children. This study involved 23 mother-child dyads, when the child was three years old. Both the child-rearing practices and indicators of externalizing problems of the children were analyzed in the observed interactive episode. In this study, two broad categories of child-rearing practices were used, practices that *facilitate childhood social development* (guidance, sensitivity, positive involvement and assertive control), and practices that *do not facilitate childhood social development* (ambiguous control, coercive control, intrusiveness, and permissiveness). The indicators for externalizing problems were analyzed in three distinct categories: *inadequacy, passive disobedience,* and *negativism.* In addition to the numerous correlations between the specific categories of practices and externalizing problems that were analyzed, the results revealed positive correlations between the total of non-facilitating practices and the indicators of externalizing problems. Finally, the multiple regression model including the non-facilitating practices explained 56% of the total variance of the children's externalizing problems. Alvarenga and Piccinini (2007) study should also be highlighted, which was performed with the same sample of dyads, and confirmed the predictive power of the maternal non-facilitating child-rearing practices in relation to the externalizing problems of children. This study was based on a model that assumed an interaction between the childhood temperament variables, maternal responsiveness, and maternal child-rearing practices for the explanation of the externalizing problems. Regression analysis showed that, although the temperament of the child and the maternal responsiveness did not show predictive value, each further occurrence of non-facilitating practices, increased the total frequency of indicators of externalizing problems of the child by 0.73, explaining 44% of total variance.

Three of the five studies described above also investigated the relationships between parental child-rearing practices and the child's social competence. Alvarenga and Piccinini (2009) found significant positive correlations between the total of facilitating practices and the total of indicators of social competence of the children, as well as several other positive correlations between specific indicators of social competence and maternal facilitating practices. Finally, the multiple regression model including the facilitating practices explained 36% of the total variance of the children's social competence. The study by Alvarenga and Piccinini (2007) confirmed the relevance of the maternal child-rearing practices as predictors of childhood social competence, as when childhood temperament and maternal responsiveness factors, evaluated in child's third month, were also considered in the explanatory model, only the maternal child-rearing practices that facilitate social development explained the variance in the social competence of the children (36%).

The study by Marin et al. (2012) also revealed the impact of the paternal child-rearing practices on the child's social competence. In this study, the inductive practices used by the fathers were positively correlated with the children's total cooperation score, and the non-interference of the fathers in day-to-day conflict situations with the child was negatively correlated with the total assertiveness scores of the children.

The findings of the five studies by the NUDIF, with samples from southern Brazil, largely corroborate the results of the literature published in other countries. The relationships found

between the use of coercion and the development of externalizing problems in children is initially highlighted. Several recent studies confirm this relationship (Alvarenga & Palma, 2012; Bayer et al., 2012; Grusec, 2011), and different theoretical hypotheses have been developed to explain it. One of these assumes that a harsh and coercive disciplinary style generates deficits in the child's emotional self-regulation and behavioral capacity, which would explain, at least in part, externalizing symptoms, such as impulsivity and aggression (Burnette, Oshri, Lax, Richards, & Ragbeer, 2012). Paternal coercive practices were also positively correlated with internalizing problems in one of the studies examined (Marin et al., 2012). It is assumed that such practices contribute to the configuration of an unpredictable and threatening domestic environment, which constitutes a "fertile ground" for the development of symptoms of anxiety and depression (Laskey & Cartwright-Hatton, 2009).

Some authors argue that the relationship between coercive practices and externalizing problems are a characteristic of individualistic societies, because in collectivist societies, such as in some Eastern countries, coercive practices are not associated with anger and rejection from the parents, but with the care and common well-being of the social group (Grusec, 2011; Rothbaum & Trommsdorff, 2008), possibly producing a positive impact regarding childhood development. However, there are studies that have found relationships between coercive practices and aggressivity, even in Eastern cultures (Xu, Farver, & Zhang, 2009). The studies reviewed here suggest that the cultural values prevailing in southern Brazil, in relation to the childhood socialization process in the family context, align with those of more individualistic societies. Thus, coercive child-rearing practices should be considered as risk factors for childhood socio-emotional development, and constitute an important target for prevention and intervention programs.

Also corroborating the literature, social competence was correlated with different types of practices considered to be facilitators of social development. Unlike coercive practices, inductive practices (e.g. reasoning with the child) and lower levels of coercion are generally associated with the internalization of social and moral norms, as well as better results in the childhood socialization process (Grusec & Davidov, 2010). In Marin et al.'s (2012) study, attention is drawn to the positive correlations found between the paternal inductive practices and the total cooperation score of the children, which indicates the relevance of the investigation of paternal styles of socialization.

In summary, the findings of the studies conducted by the NUDIF reported here converge with the same trends identified in the general literature. This indicates that the theoretical models, mainly constructed based on studies carried out with European and North American samples, are useful for helping to understand the mechanisms implicated in the childhood socialization process, in the context in which these families live in southern Brazil.

5. Final considerations

In this chapter we highlighted several factors related to parental child-rearing practices, among which are the cultural and social context and the personal characteristics of the parents and

children, some of which have been studied in the NUDIF. Results of this group's studies, which demonstrate the impact of parental child-rearing practices on the socio-emotional develop-ment of the children, were also presented.

It was emphasized that the mother still plays a predominant role in the socialization of the child, although the father has participated more in this process. Compared to fathers, the mother more often deals with daily tasks that generate conflict, such as those investigated in our studies, and they develop a wider repertoire of both inductive and coercive strategies to cope with such situations.

The results of our studies have corroborated the Brazilian and international literature, pointing out to the relevance of the child's age and development in understanding child-rearing practices employed by the parents. These two factors are associated with the allocation of greater competence and responsibility to the children. Furthermore, in the childhood sociali-zation process both stability and change are present in the parental practices throughout the development of the child. It is noteworthy that some practices tend to change due to the development of the child, whereas parents' style of dealing with their children tends to remain more stable. The results regarding the impact of the age of the child on the practices reinforce the reciprocal nature of the child's socialization process and the parent-child relationship, showing that the child-rearing practices are largely affected by the specific child's develop-mental needs and characteristics.

Likewise, studies that investigated the child-rearing practices and their relationship with the child's health condition and birth order, also highlighted its bidirectional characteristic, the child affecting the disciplinary conduct of parents, and interfering with the choice and use of child-rearing practices. These findings are also supported by our study about the intergen-erational transmission of child-rearing practices, noting that it is not possible to understand this process as a mere reproduction of a model learned in childhood. It is necessary to consider that models undergo changes over time according to the relations established between parents and children.

The studies carried out in our group also show the role of parental child-rearing practices as a predictor for the child's socio-emotional development. Relationships found between the use of coercion and the development of externalizing problems are particularly prominent. Thus, a high frequency of coercive child-rearing practices should be considered a risk factor for the socio-emotional development of the child, and deserves special attention from those involved with the child's development, in order to implement prevention and intervention programs.

Also corroborating the literature, social competence was correlated with different types of practices that are considered facilitators of social development. In this sense, the studies of the NUDIF support the notion that the use of inductive practices and lower levels of coercion are usually related to the internalization of social and moral norms, and better results in the socialization process of the child.

Thus, regarding the relations between child-rearing practices and children´s socio-emotional development, the studies carried out by NUDIF confirm the trends pointed out in studies conducted internationally. Those studies provided empirical basis for the theoretical hypoth-

eses that relate the frequent use of coercion to externalizing and internalizing behavior problems, as well as the use of non-coercive strategies to the development of social competence. The results of the studies presented on this chapter provide additional support to these hypotheses, showing that socio-emotional development of children from a distinct culture such as the one found at Southern Brazil, can also be explained by typical characteristics from child-rearing practices that have already been described in the international literature.

Due to the number and complexity of factors related to child-rearing practices we think there is still a need for a theoretical model that portrays their dynamic interaction, where each factor can enhance the role of the other. Furthermore, such a model should take into account both the child-rearing practice predictors, and their role in childhood development, particularly with regard to their socio-emotional components. This is certainly a complex task, where not only objective factors may be significant, but also the parents' subjective experiences with their own parents and how they re-signified their early experiences when using child-rearing practices with their own children. In contrast to most studies on child-rearing practices that focus on unidirectional influences, there is a need to consider the dynamic interplay of several factors. The parental child-rearing values are a function of the intersection of the context and the individual, played out in everyday interactions between parents and their developing children (Tudge et al., 2013). These values cannot simply be attributed either to the social group of which they are a part or to the children's characteristics, but require the intersection of social and individual to be considered. For all these reasons, child-rearing practices remain a major field of study, specially in modern societies that are in constant transformation, in which parents are anxious to have a better understanding about how to socialize their children and in which child-rearing practices can better contribute to raising a happy, autonomous and social compentent child.

Author details

Cesar Augusto Piccinini[1], Patricia Alvarenga[2] and Angela Helena Marin[3]

1 Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul – UFRGS, Brazil

2 Universidade Federal da Bahia – UFBA, Brazil

3 Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos – UNISINOS, Brazil

References

[1] Achenbach, T. M. (1991). *Manual for the Child Behavior Checklist/4-18 and 1991 profile*. Department of Psychiatry. University of Vermont.

[2] Alvarenga, P., & Piccinini, C. (2001). Práticas Educativas Maternas e Problemas de Comportamento em Pré-Escolares. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica*,14, 449-460.

[3] Alvarenga, P., & Piccinini, C.A. (2009). Práticas educativas maternas e indicadores do desenvolvimento social no terceiro ano de vida. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica*, 22, 191-199.

[4] Alvarenga, P., & Palma, E. (2012). Parentalidade e comportamento antissocial infantil. Em C. A. Piccinini & P. Alvarenga (Eds.). *Maternidade e Paternidade. A parentalidade em dieferentes contextos* (pp. 227-251). São Paulo: Casa do Psicólogo.

[5] Alvarenga, P., & Piccinini, C. A. (2007). O impacto do temperamento, da responsividade e das práticas educativas maternas no desenvolvimento dos problemas de externalização e da competência social. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica, 20*, 314-323.

[6] Alvarenga, P., Piccinini, C. A., Frizzo, G., Lopes, R S., & Tudge, J. R. H. (2009). Estabilidade e mudanças nas práticas educativas de mães e pais dos 18 para os 24 meses. *Interação, 13*, 253-262.

[7] Ângelo, C. (1995). A escolha do parceiro. Em M. Andolfi, C. Ângelo & C. Saccu (Orgs.), *A crise do casal* (pp. 47-57). São Paulo Summus

[8] Bailey, J. A., Hill, K. G., Oesterle, S., & Hawkins, J. D. (2009). Parenting practices and problem behaviors across three generations: monitoring, harsh discipline, and drug use in the intergenerational transmission of externalizing behavior. *Developmental Psychology, 45*, 1214-1226.

[9] Bayer, J. K., Sanson, A. V., & Hemphill, S. A. (2009). Early childhood etiology of internalising difficulties: a longitudinal community study. *International Journal of Mental Health Promotion, 11*(1), 22-32. doi: 10.1080/14623730.2009.9721777.

[10] Bayer, J. K., Ukoumunne, O. C., Mathers, M., Wake, M., Abdi, N., & Hiscock, H. (2012). Development of children's internalising and externalising problems from infancy to five years of age. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 46*(7), 659-668. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0004867412450076.

[11] Belsky, J. (1984). The determinants of parenting: a process model. *Child Development, 55*, 83-54.

[12] Belsky, J., Conger, R., & Capaldi, D. M. (2009). The intergenerational transmission of parenting: introduction to special section. *Developmental Psychology, 45*, 1201-1204.

[13] Bentley, K. S., & Fox, R. A. (1991). Mothers and fathers of young children: Comparison of parenting styles. *Psychological Reports, 69*, 320-322.

[14] Biasoli-Alves, Z. M. (1997). Famílias brasileiras do século XX: Os valores e as práticas de educação da criança. *Temas em Psicologia, 3*, 33-49.

[15] Booth, C. L., Spieker, S. J., Barnard, K. E., & Morisset, C. E. (1992). Infants at risk: The role of preventive intervention in deflecting a maladaptative developmental trajecto-

ry. Em J. McCord, & R. E. Tremblay (Orgs.), *Preventing antisocial behavior: Interventions from birth through adolescence* (pp. 21-42). New York/London: Guilford Press.

[16]   Bradford, R. (1997). *Children, families and chronic disease*. Londres: Routdlege.

[17]   Braungart-Rieker, J., Hill-Soderlund, A., & Karrass, J. (2010). Fear and anger reactivity trajectories from 4 to 16 months: The roles of temperament, regulation, and maternal sensitivity. *Developmental Psychology, 46*(4), 791-804. doi: 10.1037/a0019673.

[18]   Braz, M. P., Dessen, M. A., & Silva, N. L. P. (2005). Relações conjugais e parentais: Uma comparação entre famílias de classes sociais baixa e média. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica, 18*(2), 151-161.

[19]   Burnette, M. L., Oshri, A., Lax, R., Richards, D., & Ragbeer, S. N. (2012). Pathways from harsh parenting to adolescent antisocial behavior: A multidomain test of gender moderation. *Development and Psychopathology, 24*(3), 857-870. doi: 10.1017/S0954579412000417.

[20]   Byng-Hall, J. (1990). Attachment theory and family therapy: a clinical view. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 11,* 228–236.

[21]   Crockenberg, S. B., & Litman, C. (1990). Autonomy as competence in 2-year-olds: Maternal correlates of child defiance, compliance and self-assertion. *Developmental Psychology, 26*(6), 961-971.

[22]   Dix, T., Ruble, D. N., & Zambarano, R. J. (1989). Mother´s implicit theories of discipline: Child effects, parent effects, and the attribution process. *Child Development, 60,* 1373-1391.

[23]   Espíndula, J. A., & Valle, E. R. M. (2002). Experiência materna diante da iminência de morte do filho com recidiva de câncer. *Pediatria Moderna, 38*(5), 188-194.

[24]   Fraley, R. C. Roisman, G. I., & Haltigan, J. D. (2012). The legacy of early experiences in development: formalizing alternative models of how early experiences are carried forward over time. Developmental Psychology, 49(1):109-126. doi: 10.1037/a0027852

[25]   Freitas, A.P., & Piccinini, C. A. (2010). Práticas educativas parentais em relação ao filho único e ao primogênito, submetido novembro. *Estudos de Psicologia, 27*(4) 515-528.

[26]   Gresham, F. M., & Elliott, S. N. (1990). *Social skills rating system: Manual*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.

[27]   Grusec, J. E. (2011). Socialization processes in the family: social and emotional development. *Annual review of psychology, 62,* 243-69. doi: 10.1146/annurev.psych.121208.131650

[28]   Grusec, J. E., & Kuczynski, L. (1980). Direction of effect in socialization: a comparison of the parent's *versus* the child's behavior as determinants of disciplinary techniques. *Developmental Psychology, 16*(1), 1-9.

[29] Grusec, J., & Davidov, M. (2010). Integrating different perspectives on socialization theory and research: a domain-specific approach. *Child Development, 81*(3), 687-709. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01426.x

[30] Hennig, F. (2008). *Relação entre práticas educativas parentais e memórias de cuidado na infância*. (Dissertação de mestrado não publicada). Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis.

[31] International Monetary Fund (2013). Report for Selected Countries and subjets". World Economic Outlook Database. Retrieved Octobr 8, 2013

[32] Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística – IBGE (2012). Retrieved in 04/06/2013

[33] from http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/.

[34] Kagitcibasi, C. (2007). *Family, self, and human development across cultures: Theory and applications*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

[35] Kolberg, L. (1984). Essays on moral development: Vol. 2. The psychology of moral development. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

[36] Laskey, B. J., & Cartwright-Hatton, S. (2009). Parental discipline behaviours and beliefs about their child: Associations with child internalizing and mediation relationships. *Child: Care, Health and Development, 35*, 717–727. doi: 10.1111/j. 1365-2214.2009.00977.x

[37] Marin, A. H., Martins, G. D. F; Freitas, A. P. C. O.; Silva, I. M.; Lopes, R. C. S.; Piccinini, C. A. (2013). Transmissão intergeracional de práticas educativas parentais: evidências empíricas. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa*, 29(2), 123-132

[38] Marin, A. H., Piccinini, C. A., & Tudge, J. (2011a). Estabilidade e mudança nas práticas educativas maternas e paternas ao longo dos anos pré-escolares da criança. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica*, 24, 71-79.

[39] Marin, A. H., Piccinini, C. A., & Tudge, J. (2011b). Práticas educativas maternas e paternas aos 24 e aos 72 meses de vida da criança. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa, 27*, 419-427.

[40] Marin, A. H., Piccinini, C. A., Goncalves, T. R., & Tudge, J. R. H. (2012). Práticas educativas parentais, problemas de comportamento e competência social de crianças em idade pré-escolar. *Estudos de Psicologia, 17*(1), 05-13.

[41] McNally, S., Eisenberg, N., & Harris, J. D. (1991). Consistency and change in maternal child-rearing practices and values: A longitudinal study. *Child Development, 62*, 190-198.

[42] Mussen, P. H., Conger, J. J., Kagan, J., & Huston, A. C. (1990). *Child development & personality*. New York: Harper & Row.

[43] Peisner, E. S. (1989). To spare or not spare the rod: A culturalhistorical view of child discipline. In J. Valsiner (Ed.), *Child development in cultural context* (pp. 111-141). Toronto, Canada: Hogrefe and Huber.

[44] Piccinini, C. A., Castro, E. K., Alvarenga, P., Vargas, S., & Oliveira, V. Z. (2003). A doença crônica orgânica na infância e as práticas educativas maternas. *Estudos de Psicologia, 8,* 75-83.

[45] Piccinini, C. A., Frizzo, G. B., Alvarenga, P., Lopes, R. S., & Tudge, J. (2007). Práticas educativas de pais e mães de crianças aos 18 meses de idade. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa, 23,* 369-378.

[46] Piccinini, C.A., Maggi, A., Carro, J.W. (1993). Strategies used by mother of german and italian descent for regulating their children´s behaviour. In: XXII Biennial Meetings of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development (pp. 157). Recife, Brasil.

[47] United Nations Developmental Programme (UNDP, 2013). Atlas do Desenvolvimento Humano no Brasil. Retrieved in 22/09/2013 from http://www.pnud.org.br/IDH/Atlas2013.aspx?indiceAccordion=1&li=li_Atlas2013

[48] Rothbaum, F., & Trommsdorff, G. (2007). Do roots and wings complement or oppose one another? The socialization of relatedness and authonomy in cultural context. In: J. E. Grusec & P. D. Hastings (Eds). *Handbook of socialization. Theory and research.*(pp. 461-489). New York: The Guilford Press.

[49] Schaffer, H. R. (1996). *Social development.* Oxford: Blackwell.

[50] Seidl-de-Moura, M. L., Lordelo, E., Vieira, M.L., Piccinini, C.A., Oliveira, S.J., Colino, M.C.M., Ramos, P.F.A., Salomao, N.M., Rimoli, A. (2008). Brazilian mothers' socialization goals: Intracultural differences in seven Brazilian cities. *International Journal of Behavioural Development, 32,* 465-472.

[51] Shaffer, A., Burt, K. B., Obradovic, J., Herbers, J. E., & Masten, A. S. (2009). Intergenerational continuity in parenting quality: the mediating role of social competence. *Developmental Psychology, 45,* 1227-1240.

[52] Silveira, L. M. O. B., Pacheco, J., Cruz, T., & Schneider, A. A. (2005). Estratégias educativas desejáveis e indesejáveis: Uma comparação entre a percepção de pais e mães de adolescentes. *Aletheia, 21,* 31-42.

[53] Tudge, J., Hayes, S., Doucet, F., Odero, D., Kulakova, N., & Tammeveski, P. (2000). Parents' participation in cultural practices with their preschoolers. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa, 16*(1), 1-11.

[54] Tudge, J. R. H., Lopes, R. S. C., Piccinini, C.A., Sperb, T. M., Chipenda-Dansokho, S., Marin, A. H., Vivian, A. G., De Oliveira, D. S., Frizzo, G. B., Freitas, L. B. L. Child-Rearing Values in Southern Brazil: Mutual Influences of Social Class and Parents'

Perceptions of Their Children's Development. *Journal of Family Issues, v. 34*, p. 1379-1400, 2013.

[55] Tudge, J. R. H., Piccinini, C.A., Sperb, T. M., Odero-Wanga, D., Lopes, R. C. S., Freitas, L. (2013). Vulnerable children? The heterogeneity of young children s experiences in Kenya and Brazil. In: D.J. Johnson et al.. (Eds.). *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education*, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights. (pp.121-137). 1ed.New York: New York: Springer.

[56] Wagner, A. (2003). A família e a tarefa de educar: algumas reflexões a respeito das famílias tradicionais frente a demandas modernas. Em T. Féres-Carneiro (Org.), *Família e Casal: Arranjos e demandas contemporâneas* (pp. 27-33). Rio de Janeiro: Editora Loyola.

[57] Weber, L. N. D., Prado, P. M., Viezzer, A. P., & Brandenburg, A. J. (2004). Identificação de estilos parentais: O ponto de vista dos pais e dos filhos. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica, 17*(3), 323-331.

[58] Weber, L. N. D., Selig, G. A., Bernardi, M. G., & Salvador, A. P. V. (2006). Continuidade dos estilos parentais através das gerações: transmissão intergeracional dos estilos parentais. *Paidéia, 16*(35), 407-414.

[59] Xu, Y., Farver, J. A. M., & Zhang, Z. (2009). Temperament, harsh and indulgent parenting, and chinese children's proactive and reactive aggression *Child Development, 80*, 244–258. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2008.01257.x.

[60] Tudge, J. R. H. (2008). *The everyday lives of young children: Culture, class, and child rearing in diverse societies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.