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Brazilian Mothers' Cultural Models: Socialization for Autonomy and Relatedness

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1. Introduction

Brazil is the largest South American country, with a population of 190,732,694 inhabitants living in 8,514,877 km², with very distinct regions. There had been a population growth of 12.3% in a decade. Most of the population lives in urban centers (84%) (Brazil, 2012); in the decade of 1960 Brazil had an urbanization index of 44.7% of its population. Two decades later, 67.6% of the population was living in cities (see table 1).

Census Year	Urbanization index	Population growth	Urban growth
1900	-	-	-
1920	16.55 %	43.08 %	-
1940	26.35 %	33.46 %	37.19 %
1950	36.16 %	25.70 %	72.46 %
1960	45.52 %	35.13 %	70.13 %
1970	56.80 %	32.69 %	65.55 %
1980	68.86 %	27.87 %	55.02 %
1991	73.80 %	26.28 %	35.33 %
2000	81.00 %	12.90 %	31.36 %
2010	84.10 %	12.33 %	13.74 %

Table 1. Data about urbanization in the country

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The country has high human development (longevity, knowledge and life quality), ranking 84th among all countries in the world. Brazilian HDI (.718) has been growing equally in the three dimensions: health, education and income (PNUD, 2013). Life expectancy at birth is 73.5 years, and average number of years at school is 7.2. Life satisfaction is generally good, with an index of 6.8 (in a scale from 0 to 10), considering the highest score observed is 7.4 (in Norway). However, although Federal social programs from the last 10 years have been responsible for recent diminishing inequality, the country still has to deal with this problem. When HDI is adjusted to inequality, the score lowers to .519 (PNUD, 2013).

The country hosts diverse historical and cultural backgrounds. Despite having been colonized by Portugal, Brazil shares with the Latin American countries colonized by Spain (such as Costa Rica, Mexico and Argentina) the religious influence, mostly Catholicism, but not the language (Brazilian people speak Portuguese, not Spanish). Three main influences constituted Brazilian people: Portuguese colonizers, native people, from different ethnic groups, and Africans from different origins brought as slaves until the end of the 19th century (Ribeiro, 1997, Torres & Dessen, 2006). Later, Brazil received several groups of immigrants from all continents, who ended up interacting with each other forming a much diversified society. The influences from these groups are differentially expressed across the country. Brazil has five geographic regions (North, Northeast, Central-West, Southeast and South), which have diverse ecological characteristics and a variety of social, economic and cultural profiles. The North region, located mainly in the Amazon basin, is home of many native Brazilian tribes. Although diverse in many ways, they represent traditional life styles and collectivistic contexts. Urban centers in the North region, such as Belém, are influenced by these life styles. In contrast, in the South region the higher influence is from European immigrants, mainly Italians and Germans. The Southeast region, which includes the two largest cities of the country, the state capitals of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, has received many waves of diverse Brazilian and foreign immigrants because of its historical and economic influence. Finally, in one of the states in the Northeast region, Bahia, where we studied two contexts, we still have strong African influence.

Social differences can be identified between regional realities (urban and rural populations), as well as among different social classes. Since the end of last century, due mainly to urbanization and other influences, some authors believe there is some homogeneity in life styles, with the predominance of an urban and 'modern' symbolic system, which tends to minimize the differences in living conditions.

Since most of the population lives in urban centers, the predominant form of family organization is that of the nuclear family (Biasoli-Alves, 1997). Mothers are usually the main caretaker, gaining progressively more autonomy because of the increasing participation of women in the job market (51.4% in 2004). As a consequence, families have tended to search for alternatives to mothers' exclusive care for children, resorting to the support of grandmothers, nannies (in middle and high classes), and day-care centers.

For Georgas (2006), the family is a critical and specific group in what concerns its role played in psychological differentiation. Moreover, the family is the mediator between the individual and society, and a privileged setting in the social construction of reality. Reviewing the literature, Vieira, Lacerda, Vieira and Seidl-de-Moura (2011) have indicated changes in

Brazilian families' organization and values over the last decades of the 20th century. In the 1930's there was a predominance of a traditional family model, with emphasis on moral values and behavior control. In the following two decades there was greater influence of formal education and an educational model that attributed importance to stimulation and the meeting of children's needs. In the1970's and 1980's, mothers' discourse revealed worries about giving affection and understanding their children. Socialization goals of recent years – not much different for boys and girls – are guided towards the development of an independent, autonomous and competitive adult, who is able to succeed professionally. The preoccupation with children's subjective well-being is observed. Mothers allow their children to have initiative and maintain a flexible structure in family daily life. Child rearing rules become less rigid, although children have now less free time to play. Planned activities are valued and considered a sign of good child care. Families gradually changed and patriarchal models have been substituted for more equalitarian ones. Dessen and Torres (2002) argue that some macro-social and historical factors, such as globalization and modernization, new patterns of consumption and flexibility at work, have probably modified Brazilian families' dynamics and ideas about child development. Aizpurúa, Jablonski and Féres-Carneiro (2007) studied Brazilian and Argentinean family transformations and identified new family organizations influenced by divorce acceptance and women's increasing insertion in the job market.

We believe that it is important to study parenting in Brazil and that the country may be a good setting to investigate socialization trajectories. One of the important aspects to consider is how those trajectories value separation or autonomy and the relation to others. Psychology has dealt with those characteristics in diverse ways along the decades. Until the first half of last century, separation and individualization were considered by developmental theories as the natural and desired trajectory in human social-emotional development. It was proposed that (1) children are born without a sense of self and not able to distinguish themselves from their mothers' bodies and that (2) they develop from this initial state of no differentiation towards becoming separated and autonomous. The first idea has some of its origins in authors from the 19th century, such as William James (1890), who thought babies were born experiencing a state of confusion, unable to differentiate stimulation towards their own body from other kind of stimulation. The literature on infant development (i.e. Rochat, 2001; Seidl-de-Moura & Ribas, 2004) has brought evidence against this assumption. We now know that human babies are born with a capacity to perceive their own body and others', and, thus, have a basic sense of self. They present capacities for perception and actions that enable them to have a sense of their own bodies as separate from others' and from the environment, as well as to be responsive to social events since birth.

The idea that healthy development should proceed towards separation and autonomy, reflects an ethnocentric tendency in Developmental Psychology. Studies have privileged a specific trajectory, namely the urban Western one. It is the trajectory of a minority of human beings. Why is this? According to Tomlinson and Swartz (2004) approximately 135 million babies were born each year worldwide, 90% of them not in European, North-American, Australian or New Zealand contexts. They are part of what Kağitçibaşi (1996, 2007) calls "the Majority World". However, in the period from 1996 to 2004, 95% of research on infancy is by authors from those

countries and about people from their respective contexts. The same tendency is discussed by Henrich, Heine and Norenzayan (2010). They affirm that studies in behavioral science concentrate in a very specific group they name WEIRD (*Western, educated, industrialized, rich and democratic groups*), mostly psychology students. In a review of studies from 2003-2007, 96% of the samples of psychological studies were from countries with only 12% of the world's population. They have reviewed mostly studies with adults, but, one of the commentators of the central article (Lancy, 2010) criticizes specifically developmental studies, which discuss play, parent-child interactions, parental styles and attachment evidences, as well as generalizations made by the authors of these studies.

Considering that human development is based on evolved characteristics of our species, occurring in social-cultural contexts, through epigenetic processes, we can assume that it can follow diverse pathways. Thus, we can ask whether the movement towards separation and autonomy is a universal natural developmental trajectory. We are members of a species with a complex social organization, and the relation to our co-specifics is essential to our survival, both physical and psychological (Kline, 2008). Thus, autonomy and relatedness are fundamental aspects of human development, hardwired in our adapted mind (Kağitçibaşi, 2007, 2012, Kline, 2008).

This is the proposal made by Kağitçibaşi (1996, 2007, 2012) in her Theory of Family Change. This theory argues that autonomy and interdependency are not extreme poles in a *continuum*. She hypothesizes two basic dimensions: agency (varying from autonomy to heteronomy poles) and personal distance (varying from separation to connection). The dynamics of the two dimensions lead to the possible development of four kinds of selves: autonomous separated; autonomous related; heteronomous separated, and heteronomous related. Using samples of mothers from prototypical contexts, such as those from Berlin, Germany, from a rural community from Cameroon, and from San Jose, Costa Rica, among others, cross-cultural studies have been conducted aiming to compare development of self trajectories (e.g. Keller et al., 2006, Keller, 2007).

In this chapter, we review some studies conducted in Brazil by a national network of researchers. We aim to contribute to the literature on the dynamics of autonomy and relatedness in developmental contexts. We believe that the investigation of intra-cultural variety in valuing the dimensions of autonomy and relatedness in a large country such as Brazil is relevant. Not only it can be a contribution to understanding characteristics of developmental contexts in the country, but also to the enrichment of the international literature, testing hypotheses derived from Kağitçibaşi's (2007) model.

Considering the importance of studying contexts from the Majority World under-represented in the literature, this chapter aims to offer a contribution to this book on culture and parenting, presenting data on Brazilian mothers' cultural models. Our assumption is that the country may function as a good laboratory for testing the Theory of Family Change. On one side, Brazil has a Latin Catholic influence that may favor a culture of relatedness. On the other side it has a high urbanization trajectory, which may promote changes towards sharing values of other Western urban societies, such as the importance of autonomy. We are aware that mothers are

just one of the actors in parenting, which involves mothers and fathers. Another chapter in this book will deal with fathering in Brazil (Vieira et al.) and complements this one.

We will present evidence from studies conducted in several Brazilian contexts, using different methodologies. Their results indicate the dynamic trajectories of development of related autonomy, and will be discussed in terms of Kağitçibaşi´s theory.

The studies conducted have focused on 16 different Brazilian contexts. Table 2 presents social-demographic data about them. As can be seen, they are distributed in the country's five geographic regions, and include state capitals, as well as smaller cities of different population sizes.

State	City	Population		
		Total	Urban (%)	Rural (%)
ES	Boa Esperança	14,199	74.60	25.40
ES	Vitória	327,801	100	Zero
BA	W. Guimarães	22,189	33.85	64.15
BA	Salvador	2,675,656	99.94	.06
MS	Campo Grande	786,797	98.65	1.35
PA	Santa Bárbara do Pará	17,141	33.05	66.95
PA	Belém	1,393,399	98.82	1.18
PB	João Pessoa	723,515	99.53	.47
RJ	Distrito de Amparo	1,283	70.10	29.90
RJ	Rio de Janeiro	6,320,446	100	Zero
RS	Porto Alegre	1,409,351	100	Zero
SC	Corupá	13,852	72,00	28,00
SC	Itajaí	183,373	94.34	5.66
SC	Florianópolis	421,240	96.26	3.74
SP	Taiúva	5,447	82.83	17.17
SP	São Paulo	11,253,503	99.10	.90

Table 2. Contexts studied, total population and urban and rural distribution (cities underlined are state capitals)

The studies have focused on several developmental aspects, mainly related to mothers' beliefs and values. One study focused on toddlers' development, with the assumption that it reflects the prevalent socialization trajectory in that specific context.

We will describe data on what mothers desire for their children in the future; how they want their children to turn out in the future (socialization goals); what they think is important in caring for them (beliefs about practices); what they highlight in their description of them (ideas

about their children); and the way they talk to them (narrative envelope). Finally, some results on children's social-emotional development will be presented. Our assumption is that data on mothers reflect somewhat the trajectory they favor in the orientation of their children's development. Results on young children's self recognition and self-regulation tasks show congruency with the trajectory of related autonomy evidenced in mothers' answers to belief scales.

2. Socialization goals: What do Brazilian mothers value in the education of their children?

The characteristics parents want to foster on their children or their socialization goals reflect their cultural models and are important parts of the social-cultural context of children's development. Three studies have focused on mothers' socialization goals (Seidl-de-Moura et al., 2008, 2009; Vieira, Seidl-de-Moura, Macarini et al., 2010). They studied, respectively, mothers from seven cities and five geographic regions (N=349); from Rio de Janeiro (N=200), and from 12 localities, state capitals and small cities (N=600).

Mothers' Socialization goals were studied using two different kinds of instruments. One was the Socialization Goals Interview (SGI), developed by Harwood (1992), which consists of open questions asked to mothers about the qualities they expect their children to have in the future. It was used in Seidl-de-Moura et al. (2008, 2009) study. The open ended question made to all participants was: "What qualities would you like your child to possess as an adult?". Mothers' answers were coded in terms of individual word and phrase descriptors according to different categories described in the published papers: Self-maximization; Self-control; Lovingness; (4) Proper demeanour; and Decency. The categorizations were submitted to independent judges and presented adequate consistency scores. The first two categories (Self-maximization and Self-control) have been considered as characteristic of goals of autonomy and individual development, whereas Proper Demeanour and Decency reflect sociocentric goals of interde-pendency (Harwood, 1992). The score in each category was determined by dividing the number of descriptors for each category by the total number of descriptors (Leyendecker et al., 2002). The scores' distributions in the Self-control's category presented several wild outliers. For this reason, this variable was not included in the next analyses.

The Scale of Socialization Goals (Keller et al., 2006), adapted for Brazilian use, was the instrument employed in Vieira, Seidl-de-Moura, Macarini et al. (2010). It includes a list of ten items indicating opinions about parents' goals to their children's future during their first three years of life. For each item the mothers marks in a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Not important" to "Very important". In the original instrument (Keller et al., 2006), a Principal Components Factor Analysis produced two dimensions: autonomy (with five items) and relational goals (with five items). One example of the first dimension is "to develop competi-tiveness", whereas one example of the relational dimension is "to learn to obey elderly persons". The authors report good Cronbach's Alphas (α) for both dimensions (autonomy =. 93, and relational =.88).

Two studies have indicated that mothers studied have goals for their children oriented to both the development of autonomy and towards relatedness. Seidl-de-Moura et al. (2008) observed that mothers from state capitals presented an autonomous-related profile. Considering their socialization goals, they want their children to be happy, healthy, self-confident, successful, self-sufficient, and adaptable, to make good decisions, to be assertive, have a good education, and to stand up for themselves (Self-maximization). They value equally qualities of appropriate behavior in the context of being part of or getting along with a larger group, both in terms of being respectful and well brought up and of fulfilling role obligations within the family (Proper demeanor). Mothers from this study showed different perspectives, either more oriented towards goals of interdependency or autonomy, depending if they live in medium, large or very large cities. Mothers' educational level was a significant factor in their socialization goals. Mothers with higher levels of education tended to give more importance to goals of autonomy than mothers with lower levels of education.

The study of mothers from Rio de Janeiro (Seidl-de-Moura et al., 2009) confirmed some tendencies of the study mentioned above. Answers to the SGI were coded in five categories and their subcategories: Self-maximization (SM), Self-control (SC), Lovingness (L), Proper demeanor (PD) and Decency (D), and scores in each of them were calculated. Mothers in this study indicated the valuing of autonomy as an end-product of their socialization efforts. Scores on Self-maximization were indeed the highest. Autonomy, however, is not valued in this group without references to sociocentric preoccupations. The second highest mean score was Decency, which refers to personal standards of behavior, concerns that the child behaves respectfully, gets along well with others, and fulfills reciprocal obligations. The analyses did not indicate a significant difference between Self-maximization and Decency mean scores. However, the variation in scores may indicate that mothers from this city present diverse profiles regarding what they expect their children to become.

After further investigation of the subcategories used, specific patterns of beliefs were identified. The highest mean in the Self maximization category is in the subcategory related to the development of the child's talents and potential (including economic). In this sample, the three aspects of autonomy (emotional and physical well-being, psychological independence, and economic success) did not correlate, indicating the complexity of a parenting cultural model oriented towards autonomy. This complexity is complemented by the results in the subcategories of Decency. The highest mean observed was in Personal integrity and religious values, which relate to basic societal standards, such as being hardworking and honest. Mothers want their children to achieve success and fulfill their potential, but through hard work and with honesty. The study's results related to the importance of the "development of the child's personal and economic potential" show an interesting pattern that could be related to this increase of educational opportunities in the country's recent history. Mothers with the highest educational level gave fewer responses in this subcategory than mothers with less than high school education. Maybe mothers who have a higher level of education take for granted the fulfillment of their children's potential more than mothers who had fewer opportunities to study. This result is complemented by the observation that mothers who had higher level of

education give more answers related to self well-being as a socialization goal for their children than mothers with less years of formal education.

3. Beliefs about practices: How do Brazilian mothers think they should care for their children?

Goals for the future are somewhat translated into practices. Hence, we have focused also on mothers' beliefs about appropriate care practices. They were investigated in two studies: Vieira, Seidl-de-Moura, Macarini et al., 2010; Vieira, Seidl-de-Moura, Lordelo et al. 2010). Data were collected using two instruments: The Inventory of Beliefs about Practices (adapted from Suizzo, 2002) and the Scale of Practices of Care (Keller, 2007). Both were adapted for use in Brazil.

Suizzo's (2002) inventory of "Beliefs and Ideas about Infants and Young Children" was employed in the study by Vieira, Seidl-de-Moura, Lordelo et al. (2010). The original version of the instrument has 50 items, 25 of them related to babies less than one year-old, and 25 related to infants between one and three years-old. For each item, the mother is asked to rate the level of importance attributed to the practice using a 6-point Likert scale (0 = disagree, 1 = without importance, 2 = of little importance, 3 = of average importance, 4 = very important, and 5 = extremely important). The mother is asked to answer according to what she thinks, and not according to what she does with her child. In the Brazilian version, three factors were identified and a total of 27 items were used. The first factor named "Exposing the child to diverse stimulation" ("Stimulation") is composed by 12 items (α =.70).One example of item is: "Giving toys to one's baby to waken his/her senses". The second factor, named "Ensuring the proper presentation of the child" ("Proper presentation"), is composed by 10 items (α =.70), one of which is "Teaching one's child to be quiet (tranquil) in public". The last factor was named "Responsiveness and bonding", which is constituted by 5 items (α =.60). The first factor is associated with a trajectory valuing the development of autonomy, and the second valuing interdependence. We have not used the score in the third factor.

Keller's (2007) scale of Beliefs about Practices has ten items that indicate mothers' opinions about the proper way to care for children during the first three years of age. The scale comprises two dimensions, relational practices and autonomous practices, each with five items. The dimension of relational practices (α =.78) includes items that emphasize body contact and the immediate satisfaction of babies' needs; and the second, autonomous practices, includes items dealing with the promotion of early child self-regulation, object stimulation, and face-to-face interaction relational practices (α =.86). They are presented as affirmatives to be evaluated in a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Not important" to "Very important".

Vieira, Seidl-de-Moura, Lordelo et al. (2010) used a national sample. Mothers from seven cities answered an inventory on their beliefs about care practices of young children. The dimensions of practices most valued were "Proper Presentation" (oriented by socially accepted daily rules), followed by "Stimulation" (aimed to stimulate their children's development). However, these characteristics were modulated by the parents' educational level and cultural conditions.

For example, "Proper Presentation" was influenced by city of origin. Mothers living in Belém attributed greater value to this dimension than mothers living in Porto Alegre. The former city is located in North of Brazil, with strong influence of the indigenous culture. The latter city is located in South of Brazil, with greater influence of the European colonization. In addition, the importance of stimulation is related to mothers' educational level. Mothers with a higher educational level show more stress on the stimulation of their children.

In Vieira, Seidl-de-Moura, Macarini et al. (2010), using Keller's scales and a sample of 606 mothers from state capitals and small cities, it was observed that mothers from capitals report more practices of stimulation and value more these practices than the ones from small cities. In small cities, mothers with a higher educational level reported having more stimulation practices with their children. It was observed the inclusion of autonomy values and practices in a context traditionally more interdependent, which can be interpreted to be the result of social-economic changes in small cities. However, in small cities there was a greater appreci‐ ation of relatedness. In capitals, both relatedness and autonomy are valued. The conclusion is that there is a dynamic relationship between autonomy and relatedness depending on the place of the mothers' residence (capital or small city). Although differences were observed, charac‐ teristics of autonomy and relatedness were present in mothers' beliefs in both contexts.

4. Mothers' ideas about their children: What are the characteristics of Brazilian children according to their mothers?

Complementing data presented on mothers' goals for their children's development and their related practices of care, mothers' ideas about their children were the focus in Seidl-de-Moura et al. (in press) study. Considering mothers' answers to the request to describe their children, we could infer the most valued characteristics, and thus the predominant cultural model indicated in these descriptions.

A group of 94 mothers from two Brazilian cities (Rio de Janeiro and Itajaí) participated. An open question was used, based on studies by Harkness and Super (2005). As part of a larger study, mothers were interviewed individually and asked to talk about their target child, describing him/her. The instruction was: "Tell me about your son/daughter. How would you describe him/her?" Mothers could talk freely about their children and were not limited in the number of descriptors they could use. All the adjectives and expressions reported in the description were listed and constituted the *corpus* for analyses. For data reduction, we followed two kinds of procedures: a) the same from the studies that use the SGI (Seidl-de-Moura et al., 2008, 2009); b) the ones from Harkness and Super (2005). Similar to the procedures adopted by the latter researchers, we analyzed the adjectives and expressions used, the ones most frequently used, and the patterns that could be inferred. The analyses in the first case were conducted in a similar way as the ones related to socialization goals, although the categories were not previously defined, as in the SGI studies. Rather, the categories emerged from data. The steps in data reduction in this case were the following: first, through repeated readings of mothers' descriptions of their children, common patterns or categories were identified;

descriptors were then classified based on these categories; the frequency of use of each category for each participant was computed; finally, a score for each category was obtained for all participants, dividing the frequency of descriptors used in each category by all the descriptors.

It was observed that the adjectives most frequently used were "*intelligent*" and "*active*", as well as "*loving*" and "*caring*". Children were described with more positive than negative temperament characteristics, and with more externalization than introversion characteristics. The adjectives were further categorized as relating to autonomy and relatedness. Analyses have indicated no significant difference between the proportions of descriptors in the two categories, indicating a tendency for valuing both aspects equally.

5. The narrative envelope: How do Brazilian mothers talk to their children indicate their values?

Another aspect of mothers' language, namely their "narrative envelope" or the symbolic context they surround their children, was followed longitudinally by observation and video recording at dyads' homes during early development in six mother-infant dyads (Two from birth to six months - Mendes & Seidl-de-Moura, *in press*; four from 13 to 24 months - Pessôa & Seidl-de-Moura, 2011).

Mothers' "narrative envelope" or language used with their child is a concept developed by Keller (2007), and one of the parental systems in the component model proposed by the author. It consists of the social discourse that involves the child through mother's conversations, presenting different styles and contents according to cultural models.

Mendes & Seidl-de-Moura (in press) and Pessôa and Seidl-de-Moura (2011) verified that along the periods studied (birth to six months; and 13 to 24 months) mothers' speech was marked by expressions of agency and mental states (intentions, desires, cognitions, preferences, emotions and decisions) attributed to the baby, and statement of needs, categories which are associated to an autonomous self. It was also observed the significant presence of categories of social rules and co-agency, associated to a trajectory aimed at relatedness. This indicates the presence of tendencies to foster both autonomy and relatedness.

In synthesis, we believe that this set of results indicate, in different ways, that mothers' beliefs about outcomes for their children's development, the kind of practices they value, how they talk about them and to them reflect or indicate what Kağitçibaşi (2012) considers a trajectory towards the development of autonomous-related selves.

6. Final considerations

Based on Kağitçibaşi's theory, we have focused on demonstrating that autonomy and relatedness are not opposite dimensions, being present in specific dynamics in different contexts, aiming to contribute to the discussion on basic dimensions of human development. Brazil is a

large and diverse country of the "majority world", and it has undergone important social-demographic and economic changes in the last 10 years. Thus, we consider it especially appropriate to study this dynamics.

The studies reviewed in this chapter have the advantage of being developed by a cooperative network of researchers from different parts of the country and from different institutions. They have focused on a variety of aspects both from mothers' ideas, beliefs, values, language and practices, using a variety of instruments, such as inventories, interviews and behavioral observation. In addition, they had participants from urban centers of different population sizes in all the country's regions, in a total of 16 contexts, which we believe to be unusual in the literature.

Based on the evidence of the studies reviewed, we can argue that developmental trajectory of autonomous-related selves is somewhat privileged in Brazil. Our results indicate that, in general, both autonomy and relatedness are valued by Brazilian mothers in their conception of their children, their narrative styles, their socialization goals, and their practices. However, this model shows variations depending on social-demographic and cultural variables and cannot be considered as presenting a fixed or unique form.

Parental educational level is one important example of these variables. As observed in the studies, women with higher educational levels tend to value their children's autonomy. They have self-maximization goals for their children, and they want them to succeed and be happy. At the same time, it seems that this increase in educational level does not decrease some of the relatedness tendencies that may have cultural origins and be associated to our African and Indigenous heritage.

Education is associated to another important variable: urbanization. Although the country has a vast territory, most of its population lives in urban centers. We have verified that population size of mothers' cities is another factor that can modulate the importance attributed to autonomy and relatedness. Larger cities present typical conditions of post-industrial complex societies that lead to goals of autonomy: increase in the number of potential in-groups and of competition, decrease of loyalty among individuals of any of these in-groups, less social support from extended family, more isolation, etc. (Velho, 1987, Simmel, 1973, Triandis, 1989). In these contexts individuals have the opportunity to focus on their own personal goals rather than on the goals of any group they might belong (Triandis, 1989).

Finally, we have the cultural mixture that constitutes Brazilian people. Our three basic origins – Portuguese, Indigenous and African people – have been mixed with people from different immigration waves across the centuries. First, second and third generation immigrants married Brazilians and are well integrated to society. Thus, the influence from these different cultures, many of them oriented towards autonomy and independence (i.e., Germans), have been tempered by the relatedness tendency of our ancestors, in varying degrees and forms.

Differences in the products of the relationship between autonomy and relatedness can be observed in the results of our studies, according to varied levels of urbanization (size of population), diverse predominant cultural influences, and educational levels.

We believe that the findings reviewed in this chapter not only present evidence supporting Kağitçibaşi's theoretical model, and contribute to the understanding of aspects of Brazilian developmental contexts. They can also contribute to developmental science and the relation between universal characteristics and the cultural forms they present. We also think that Brazilian childrearing beliefs and practices including autonomy and relatedness, can aid putting into practice Kağitçibaşi's (2012) integrative synthesis proposal. This author has discussed how the development of related-autonomy and social-cognitive development can be universal and desired healthy developmental goals. Although understanding cultural orientation towards interdependency in rural or traditional groups, and aware of tendencies for autonomy goals in urban educated contexts, we can aim at developing persons who have the best of both tendencies. They would have the benefits of formal education, the opportunities for self-maximization, and, at the same time, would be able to relate and to be close to others, to cooperate. Thus, as shown, we support the hypothesis that autonomy and relatedness are not mutually exclusive and they seem to be two faces of the parenting models from all over this large country.

Acknowledgements

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