



A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF PARENTAL EMOTIONAL SOCIALIZATION BEHAVIORS WITH AN ILLUSTRATIVE CONTEXT¹

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this study is to provide an illustrative framework for synthesizing derived from a growing body of crucial studies on parental emotional socialization behaviors and processes with regard to children's emotional competence. This explanatory perspective has also been tried to be established with other relevant parental characteristics. Explaining the parental emotional socialization behaviors are firstly established upon the parental styles which is one of the basic concepts that affecting the relation between parent and child and the developmental output of the child. On the other hand, when acting of the reality that parental emotional socialization refers to more specific emotion-related behaviors rather than general parenting styles, it is obvious that parental emotional socialization is required more detailed explanations. Within this framework, emotional socialization processes have been defined based upon the hypotheses in the literature such as modeling, coaching, contingency and meta-emotion philosophy. In this study, Le Vine's parental model has also been considered for explaining how parental socialization goals and practices affect the emotional socialization behaviors and emotional competence. This study ends with discussing the other factors (e.g., culture, gender, complementary behaviors of the family members, socioeconomic status) that affected or contributed the emotion socialization behaviors.

Keywords: Parental emotional socialization behaviors, emotional socialization processes/mechanisms, emotional competence.

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı, ebeveyn duygu sosyalleşme davranışları ve süreçlerine çocukların duygusal yeterlikleri kapsamında sayısı giderek artan önemli çalışmaları sentez haline getirerek konuya açıklayıcı bir çerçeve sağlamaktır. Bu açıklayıcı bakış açısı aynı zamanda diğer ebeveyn nitelikleri ile birlikte oluşturulmaya çalışılmıştır. Ebeveyn duygu sosyalleşme davranışlarının açıklanması, ilk olarak ebeveyn ve çocuk arasındaki ilişkiyi ve çocuğun gelişimsel çıktılarını etkileyen temel kavramlardan biri olan ebeveynlik stilleri üzerine kurulmuştur. Diğer yandan, ebeveyn duygu sosyalleşme davranışlarının ebeveynlik stillerinden daha çok duygu ile ilişkili davranışlara atıfta bulunduğu gerçeğinden hareket edildiğinde, ebeveyn duygu sosyalleşme davranışlarının daha ayrıntılı bir açıklamayı gerektirdiği açıktır. Bu çerçevede duygu sosyalleşme süreçleri alan yazınında yer alan model olma, rehberlik etme, çocuğun duygusuna tepki verme/durumsallık ve üstduygu felsefesi hipotezlerine göre açıklanmıştır. Bu çalışmada aynı zamanda ebeveyn sosyalleşme hedef ve uygulamalarının sosyalleşme davranışlarını ve duygusal yeterliği nasıl etkilediğini açıklamak için LeVine'nin ebeveynlik modeli de dikkate alınmıştır. Çalışma, duygu sosyalleşme davranışlarını etkileyen veya katkıda bulunan diğer etmenleri de (örn., kültür, cinsiyet, aile üyelerinin tamamlayıcı davranışları, sosyoekonomik düzey) tartışarak sonuçlandırılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ebeveyn duygu sosyalleşme davranışları, duygu sosyalleşme süreçleri/mekanizmaları, duygusal yeterlik.

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INTRODUCTION

Denham, Mitchell-Copeland, Stranderberg, Auerbeck & Blair (1997) define that parental behaviors are predictors of emotional and social competences of children, and they state that parents have a significant role for the socialization of children, as well. Characteristics of parents and the quality of their parent-child relationship are among the most substantial resources that effect the developmental outcomes of children (Grolnick, Bridges & Connell, 1998). In the Western literature, Baumrind (1970) described the global parenting characteristics with respect to warmth/responsiveness and control of parents as: authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting. Parenting behaviors including high levels of warmth and control like stressing social constraints, setting sensible and realistic standards for the child, explaining reasoning for rules, and supporting the independent self-will of the child are referred under authoritative parenting style. Parents forming, controlling and evaluating the behaviors and attitudes of the child with a set of standards of conduct, authoritarian parents, respect obedience. Instead, they try forceful procedures where the child's behaviors conflict with the parents' right behavior concepts. These parents can be understood as being low in warmth/responsiveness dimension whereas they are high in the control dimension of this kind of parenting style. According to Baumrind (1970), the permissive parents prefer acting as a resource to be used by the child rather than being an active agent, by permitting the child to regulate his own activities as much as possible and exercising limited control and by discouraging the child to obey externally standard rules. This means they are low in both warmth/responsiveness and control dimension of parenting styles.

In order to understand the processes through which the parenting style influences child development, three aspects of parenting: the goals toward which socialization is directed; the parenting practices are used by parents to help children reach those goals; and the parenting style, or emotional climate within which socialization occurs, were put forward by Darling and Steinberg (1993). They stated that parenting style is most usefully conceptualized as a characteristic of the parent that changes the efficacy of the parent's socialization efforts by moderating the effectiveness of particular practices and by altering the child's openness to socialization. Therefore, the influence of parenting styles varies depending on the social environment in which the family is embedded. So the global parenting styles define parental characteristics rather than relationship with the children. In Baumrind's study (1970), high control and low warmth in family environment was found to have been related to authoritarianism whereas, in an earlier study by Kagıtcıbası (1970), in Turkish culture, authoritarianism was found to have been associated with higher control but not lower affection. In addition to this, in Chinese culture, authoritarian parents could be identified as warm and caring (Chen & Luster, 2002). These findings can be interpreted as the parenting style does not apply to all cultures. Hence, as proved earlier by some researchers (Paterson & Sanson, 1999) investigating parents' socialization behavior in emotional and social

fields was shown to be very important in explicating the effects of parents than studying styles of parents on child development.

Parental Socialization Behaviors

The socialization process begins during the early stages of development and continues throughout one's life time. In this process children are socialized by parents' verbal and nonverbal behaviors. With regard to children's socialization of emotion, the specific parental behaviors that are directed toward children's emotions are named emotion-related socialization behaviors (Eisenberg, Cumberland & Spinrad, 1998). According to Gottman, Katz & Hooven (1996,1997) parental emotional socialization behaviors indicate to parent's maladaptive and adaptive ideas, emotions and approaches to children's emotions. According to Denham, Mitchell-Copeland, Strandberg, Auerbach, & Blair (1997) parental responses are effective predictors for children's emotional and social competence. Therefore, parents assume an important role in socialization of children.

Processes of Parental Emotion Socialization

In broad terms, parental socialization of emotion includes beliefs, goals and values of parents concerning children's experience, expression, and modulation of emotion (Eisenberg, et al., 1998). Specially, parental emotion socialization refers to the parental awareness of child's emotions, parents' admittance of the child's emotions, and the degree to which parents procure instruction to the child on managing his/her emotions (Gottman et al., 1996). Therefore, it includes parental behaviors like modeling (how parents show their own emotions to their children), coaching (how parents teach their children about emotions) and contingency (how parents response to the emotions of their children) (Denham,1998; Halberstadt, 1991), and expression encouragement (how parents teach their children to express a large range of emotions within the family context) (Eisenberg et al., 1998). As evident in this description, parental emotion socialization refers to more specific emotion-related behaviors of parents rather than general disciplining styles.

One process of emotion socialization occurs through modeling. Children learn about emotions, when and where to display them, by watching others' emotional displays (Denham & Grout,1993). Adults' emotional expressions, responses to their own and others, emotions and their emotional coping styles provide models of emotional behavior for the child to imitate (Rhee, 2007). By modeling parents contribute to children's understanding of emotion and modeling also promotes children's problem solving and learning process (Fredrickson, 1998).

A second emotion socialization process is coaching. Based on coaching hypothesis, parents encourage to understand child's explorations and emotions directly. According to Gottman, et al., (1996) views parent's emotion considered to facilitate emotional expression, is characterized by parents who attend to emotions in themselves and in their children, consider their children's negative emotion as an occasion for strengthening the parent-child relationship, as an opportunity to establish sincerity with children, validate their children's emotion and problem

solve with their children by discussing strategies for managing the situation that caused the negative feelings. Denham (1989) draws a parallel between parents' emotion coaching strategies and Vygotsky's scaffolding as a way of shaping children's emotional competence. Vygotsky (1978) gave place a great emphasis on the role of language development in his sociocultural theory. Vygotsky highlighted that parents' language, specially questions, when teaching or interacting with children are so crucial as a component of the scaffolding (as cited in, Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976). In another words, parents can use questions as a tool to evaluate children's understanding of emotion and to modify their responses as soon as possible (Bailey, Denham & Curby, 2013).

According to contingency hypothesis, as a third mechanism, children learn a great deal about emotions from how others' response both verbally and nonverbally to their own emotional displays (Fabes, Poulin, Eisenberg & Madden-Derdich, 2002) and parents' behavioral and emotional responses to their children's emotions also help the children in differentiating among emotions (Denham, 1998). Tomkins' (1991, as cited in Denham, 1997) theory regarding the socialization of emotions suggests that there are rewarding and punitive contingencies that contribute to emotion socialization in children. Rewarding socialization of emotion is related with the most positive child outcomes and is supported when caregivers assist the child in maintaining positive affect and help him or her decrease negative affect. Thus, precise parental emotions based on child emotions (e.g., happiness following child happiness or "cheering up" after child anger). Punitive contingency mentions parental reactions that ignores the children's emotion and gives children punishment and it occurs when parents minimize or maximize the negative affect experienced the child. For example, parents may not achieve to help the child cope with his or her suffering, such as behaving angrily when their child is sad (Denham, Zoller & Couchoud, 1994). Parental responses were conceptualized via parental control and permission in previous studies (e.g., Saarni, 1989). Based on parental control and permission, Saarni (1989) defined four parental reactions (moderate permission of emotional expression, moderate control of emotional expression and extreme control). In a similar way, Robert & Strayer (1996) proposed five classification of parental reactions: encouraging emotional expression, comforting, ignoring, teaching, emotional regulation, and suppressing negative emotions.

Although parental control and permission has discussed a substantial part of parental behaviors, Eisenberg & Fabes (1994) proposed that parental responses to children negative emotions have been overlooked. Specially, studying parents' reactions to children's negative emotions is significant because children firstly express their needs and desires in the family and children's socialization firstly takes place in the family, as well (Eisenberg et al., 1998; Fabes, Leonard, Kupanoff, and Martin, 2001). Furthermore, children of all ages experience negative emotions in daily life. How parents respond to children's negative emotions is an important pathway to socialize children's emotion understanding, regulation and expression (Eisenberg, et al., 1998). For example, Malatesta & Haviland (1982) refer the relation between parenting socialization behaviors and emotion understanding of

children between 36-72 months. Another importance focusing on parents' reactions to children's negative emotions is that socialization of negative emotions are more difficult than positive emotions (Ramsden ve Hubbard, 2002). Eisenberg & Fabes (1994) identified two aggregations of parental socialization responses to children's negative emotions (PRCNE): a) supportive PRCNE, which include emotion-focused responses, problem-focused responses, and encouraging emotion expression, b) unsupportive PRCNE, which include punitive and minimizing reactions. Supportive PRNCE involve parents' responses reflect to guide and to teach children about emotions (coaching). Problem-focused responses are the most active responses that parents used to coping with children's negative emotions and represent the degree to which parents help the child solve the problem that caused the child's distress. On the other hand, emotion-focused responses reflect parents' relaxing and calming responses to feel child better because of unrest experienced by the child. Expressive encouragement expressions reflect the degree to which parents are accepting of children's negative emotional exhibits or responses to encourage children's emotional expression (Fabes et al., 2002). Evidence suggest that parents who cope with children's negative emotions in supportive ways contribute positively to the development of children's social and emotional competence (emotion understanding, regulation and expressiveness) (Eisenberg, Fabes, Schaller, Carlo, & Miller, 1991). By contrast, nonsupportive responses are those that discourage the child from experiencing and expressing emotions, and thus are unhelpful in teaching the child to cope with and manage emotions (Kitzmann & Howard, 2011). Non supportive coping responses comprise minimization reactions and punitive reactions. Minimization reactions reflect to discount the importance of children emotional reactions and punitive reactions indicate parents responds to the child's emotional expressions with verbal or psychical punishment. Some researchers, (e.g., Gottman, et al., 1997), have added a fourth factor that may be an iclusive effect on the three emotion socialization processes described so far. Specifically, Gottman and colleagues (1997) demonstrated the importance of the adult's "meta-emotion philosophy", specifically named as the adult's "emotions about emotions" as an influence on emotion socialization practices. Adults' beliefs about admissible ways to express and cope with emotions, comfort with their own and others' emotions, and their goals for guiding their children to be emotionally compotent are all through to contribute to emotion socialization.

Parenting Goals and Practices

Similarly parental global characteristics, parental responses, parental goals and parental practices have been considered as a way of assessing parental socialization comprehensively.

Protecting the child, providing for the child and preparing the child to be an adult member of the society were mentioned as the prevalent parenting goals among different cultures. However, to reach these goals different cultures engage in different parenting practices. These practices are shaped by the instant cultural conditions. Momentously, practices that are useful in one culture may make no

sense in another culture (LeVine, 1988). Firstly, LeVine notes that the general goals of parenting are similar across cultures, and we would expect it to be the same valid for the emotion socialization goals. These universal goals would help the child to acquire general skills in emotion competence (emotion expression, emotion knowledge, and emotion regulation). Secondly, in LeVine's model, parenting practices change by culture similarly, emotion socialization practices reflect culturally based emotion-related values and beliefs (Eisenberg et al., 1998)

The psychological literature manifest an additional emotion socialization and culture perspective focusing on the processes by which adults' goals and practices shape the competence of the child. This perspective includes adults' responses to emotion, modeling, teaching, and also includes the influence of meta-emotion philosophies. These would be argued to have been universal emotion socialization processes that influence children's emotional competence. Childrens' emotional competence is shaped by how adults respond to children's emotions, model emotion-related behaviors, teach children emotion-related skills, and express their own attitudes about emotion (Kitzmann & Howard, 2011). When integrating LeVine's model with the additional perspective, considering the effect processes as a mediator between universal goals and culture specific practices, is one of the ways (Kitzmann and Howard, 2011). This means, while the goal of emotional competence and the processes shaping it are universal, these processes are activated by culture specific socialization practices. As a universal process, modeling mechanism may influence to a universal goal of emotional competence and culturally specific practices as emotional expressiveness is modeled.

DISCUSSION

Specifically, emotion socialization is comprehended to be the process by which children develop emotion competence, with emotion competence in turn affecting social competence (Eisenberg, et al., 1998). Although parents' responses to their child's emotional behavior are considered a central mechanism of socialization, it is stated that when the socialization styles, goals and practices of parents are taken into consideration as whole, children's emotional and social competence skills are developed by this way (Coplan, Hastings, Lagace-Seguin & Moulton, 2002). The parents' child socialization beliefs, goals, attitudes, practices and strategies are entitled as a whole, as "mother and father qualifications", and it is stated that within the framework of social rules, these qualifications are thought to be utilized as a contribution to the children's developmental process (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Collins & Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington & Bornstein, 2000). Therefore, as a way of understanding children's social and emotional competence and its effect on child adjustment in terms of parental emotional socialization, parenting responses, global parenting dimensions, practices and goals might be evaluated together in every different culture. Socialization depends on culture (Brody & Hall, 2000) and passes on by the members of cultural community (Edwards, Knoche & Kumru, 2003) and is one of the key contextual factor that

affects parenting patterns (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007). Every person is embedded within various sociocultural contexts and each of these play a role in shaping person's identity, according to psychocultural approach. Each cultural context contains a framework or scheme that is associated with a set of good ideas and practices about how to be a "good person" and how to interact with others (Maccoby, 1998, as cited in Bosacki & Moore, 2004). In the cultural context, regulative norms related with emotions provide the child with a cognitive toolkit that mediates social experience and organizes behavior toward others (Saarni, 1999). Consequently, culture influences developmental process of children with the interaction of child, parent and society (Edwards, Kumru, Knoche & Kim, 2003). However, findings about parental socialization proves mostly came from Western samples and it is unclear whether these findings can be generalized to other cultures (Tao, Zhou & Wang, 2010; Yağmurlu, Dost, Çıtlak & Leyendecker, 2009). Parke and Buriel (1998) note families are best viewed as social systems. According to family system theory which is trying to understand how the nascance of feelings (White & Klein, 2002) family members inform children about the nativity of emotions. If messages about emotions clear, parents have a powerful affect on children (Saarni & Buckley, 2002). Furthermore, to understand behavior of one member of the family, the complementary behaviors of other members also need to be evaluated. When viewing emotion socialization from a family system perspective maternal responses to children's emotions should be analyzed in complementary behaviors of other caregivers. For instance, one parent's supportive response to his/her child's distress may have different inferences for the child's emotional understanding depending on whether the other parent shows a similar or dissimilar response (White & Klein, 2002; McElwain, Halberstadt & Volling, 2007). Of course, the socialization of emotion is influenced by other factors, including gender of children. Theories also state that parents socialize girls' and boys' emotional competence based on cultural gender roles and stereotypes (Parke & Buriel, 1998; Eisenberg et al., 1998). For instance, fathers may respond punitively to their sons' emotional outbursts, but not to their daughters', or young girls and boys are encouraged to express their emotions based on their gender. Cultural gender roles and stereotypes also influence child adjustment (e.g., behavioral problems and social competence) (Tao, Zhou & Wang, 2010) and children's coping strategies (Brody & Hall, 2000). Another important consideration in research on emotion socialization, emotion competence is the role of socioeconomic status of the family. Therefore, parental emotional socialization behavior and children's gender and emotion competence need to comprehend in collectivist and individualist cultures deeply (Perez-Riviera, 2008).

Another important consideration in research on emotion socialization, emotion competence is the role of socioeconomic status of the family. Based on family stress model parents living in poverty face with crucial and continuous economic and social stressors (Conger & Dogan, 2007) and they have been found to indicate less responsive and more punitive parenting styles (Bradley, Cowyn, McDoo, & Garcia, 2002). Because of increased stress, parents have been found to indicate less warmth, responsive and more punitive parenting styles than middle-

class parents (Bradley et al., 2002). On the other hand, Mayer (1997) remarked that there is no relationship between family income, parental profession and socialization behaviors and underline parental health, personality characteristic (e.g., honesty, solidity) and social skills of parents. It is significant to note, also, that there is variability in parenting quality and emotion socialization among families living in metropol cities. Magee & Roy (2008) denote that parents encounter more stress and they have to manage with more psychological and pshysical health problems in 21st century.

Parents have played a significant role on children's emotional competence. Much of the literature concerning the parental socialization of emotion is need in different cultures with regard to processes of parental emotion socialization. However, other significant adults in children's emotional socialization are important. Some researches have underline the role of teachers recently. For instance, teachers are acknowledged as key socializers as a way of demonstrating new skills, providing interesting materials, and developing emotional bonds with children in classrooms (Denham, 1998). Therefore, emotion competence can thus be seen as an crucial educational goal and teachers socialization of emotion can be examined in different cultures.

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