LINKING PARENTAL VALUES AND INFANT-MOTHER ATTACHMENT PATTERNS

D . Č e k u o l i e n ė

The context of the idea

The question of the relationship between child socialization and parenting could be approached from the various perspectives. Many empirical and theoretical studies had been conducted on this topic during the last three decades in different fields of social science – anthropology (Whiting, 1963; Harington and Whiting, 1972; Whiting and Whiting, 1975; La Fontaine, 1986; Whiting and Edwards, 1988; LeVine, 1988 etc.) sociology (Kohn, 1969), family theory (Minuchin, 1974; Dunn, 1986). It is clear that every perspective gives us a unique angle of viewing the same things and consequently results may be different and complementary. Goals and tasks that researchers raise at some particular moment also depend on the general situation in the field of science and on the questions that had already been answered. Lately the tendency to analyze processes of socialization in childhood in the crossway of various social sciences is more and more noticeable (Goodnow, 1988; Landesman, Jaccard, Gunderson, 1991). That is understandable because, on the one hand, we are not able to solve many problems relying only on dyadic child-caregiver studies, on the other hand, we can not infer about many things just from the natural observations of anthropology or sociological questioning. Speaking in the general terms, we can differentiate several units of analysis of human socialization: cultural, family, dyadic (traditionally mostly mother-child) and individual. All they represent different levels and must be preserved and appreciated in any accurate account of a child's growth as a person. We have to take them all into account without reducing them one into another. In this case every of knowledge can illustrate a different level of the analysis and interdiscipli-

nary approach is a logical way of solving new problems. However usually it is not very simple task for the researcher.

Attachment theory and studies of parental values

In the light of this short and very general introduction I would like to get more specifically into a problem of the present paper. Question refers to one of the most important phenomena of human social development in infancy and early childhood – attachment. In the context of what was said above it should be noted that attachment theory itself developed on a basis of ethology (individual level) and observations of mother-child interactions (dyadic level) (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth, 1978). A fundamental element and finding of attachment theory and research is that different systems of interactions in early mother-child relationships contribute to different types of attachment in child's later development. Longitudinal studies of attachment in human life showed that this is an important matter in persons further social adaptation, (Sroufe, 1979; Sroufe, Fleeson, 1986). Among developmental psychologists attachment formation is recognized as one of the most important moments of persons emotional and social growth. This circumstance also allows us to think of attachment as the one of the key processes of early socialization. It should be admitted that empirical research and theoretical analysis of attachment gave answers to many questions unanswered before. But it also stimulated appearance of the new problems especially when the studies expanded into a broader cross-cultural context.

Cross-cultural research often raise new questions because one has a chance to evaluate his/her findings in the light of the different culture, and environmental setting, but it also „provides unique opportunities to test specific social-scientific hypotheses or predictions, to evaluate the generalizibility or constrains on phenomena of interest, and to generate new hypotheses" (Bornstein, 1991, p. 5).

One the most complicated outcomes for interpretation of the cross-cultural research of attachment was that different distributions of A, B, C attachment patterns were found in various cultures and countries and (Grossman, Grossman, 1981; Myiake, 1985; Sagi, Lewkowicz, 1985; etc.). These facts and inconsisten s (as it was

understood) were and still are actively discussed in the context of cross-cultural investigations of attachment.

Most of these discussions however were confined within the boundaries of attachment theory. Efforts to decide whether the attachment theory or method of Strange Situation is valid or not in cross-cultural research were made. Certainly many other scholars not only those interested in attachment dealt with different outcomes of raising children in the different setting, but I would like to return the point of attachment later.

Now I'd like the mention another area of research and theory that also deals with the very close and similar problem of human development, socialization and social adaptation just from a little different and more distant in a sense of actual human behavior perspective. Attempts to explain various aspects of child's development and formation of his/her personality by peculiarities of different cultures and countries had been made by social sciencists. Sociologists emphasized the impact of a social class that parents belong to on the values that they hold for their children, (Kohn, 1969). Anthropologists were interested in the differences of parental care in different cultures and how cultural values and traditions influence differences in caregiving practices, some of them also stressed the relationship between parental care socioeconomic and demographic conditions of agrarian and urban-industrial societies and further differentiated by local cultural traditions (LeVine, 1974, 1988). Common point in these investigations is that all they dealt in one sense or another with the differences of parental behavior relating them with the broader sociocultural and value context as one of the most important determinants of those differences. Anthropological and sociological studies however did not intend to analyze things on an interactional level. In some earlier studies conducted by developmental psychologists different caregiving practices were also taken into account. But at the beginning studies were directed more into the childrearing patterns themselves as already given (Sears, Moccoby, Levin, 1957). Parental value systems that can formate or have an impact on these practices were not taken into account. This matter started to appear in later studies of developmental psychology. Various aspects of that how pa-

rental attitudes, values can affect their children's development were investigated. Many studies were devoted to the relationship between parental values and attitudes and child's cognitive development (McGilucidyy-DeLisi, 1985; Sigel, 1985; Godnoow, 1990a). Others attempted to define socially competent mothering in the light of sociocultural diversity of society (Laosa, 1981), connected SES of the family with childrearing beliefs (Skinner, 1985 etc.), or clarified the concepts of parental beliefs and ideas about their children's development (Sigel, 1985; Goodnow and Collins 1990). But, I would remark, that although it was admitted that parental ideas have consequences in child's cognition and social adjustment in various cultures, but in the area of child social and emotional development we can still feel the lack of attention to the problem of how parental values are related to certain aspects of child's personality development.

At the same time in the scene of cross-cultural research of attachment we still can see many problems and ongoing discussions. In most of these studies undertaken in different countries attention had been paid to the mode of interaction between mother and infant. The type of attachment is an outcome of that interaction style and subsequently it results into the different distributions of A, B, C types of attachment in different countries and cultures. Cultural peculiarities were utilized for explaining unusual or different from Ainsworth's (1978) original study outcomes (Grossmann, Grossmann et al. 1981, 1990; Sagi et al. 1985; Sagi, 1990; Miyakee et al. 1985). Certainly, it was recognized that there is still the lack of information in the area, but interpretations were however made. Cultural specificity and impact of it on the parent-child relationship has been taken for granted and has not been analyzed separately as one of the possible antecedents of different results of the studies. The researcher accordingly was seen as an expert of his own culture who could successfully decode data. In the case of some contradictions thus is very hard to decide either the theory is not valid for different cultures or the culture brings in these corrections.

At this point I would argue that cultural peculiarities and their possible impact on the distribution of attachment patterns must be considered as a research hypothesis and not as an outcome that needs to be explained and leads us to some misunderstandings again.

Thus, the important inference can be drawn out of what was said above – that the cultural setting of attachment should be appreciated as one of important antecedents of formation of certain types of attachment in the certain sociocultural environment. And certainly many scholars in the field agree with that (Grossmann, Grossman, 1990; Takahasi, 1991; Myiake, 1990; Sagi, 1990 etc.). Nevertheless these questions still remain untouched and unspecified in the new studies.

So, here we have two big areas of knowledge that both contribute to our ideas about child social development. One approach is about infant-caregiver attachment as a universal context constraining a variation in parental behavior and the other about the values that parents of different cultures bring to infant and child care and how those values influence their observable behavior and what outcomes it can have in child's growth. Both they so far exist as the separate ones although as it was mentioned above, more and more students emphasize the possibilities and need to relate them in some ways because theories and evidence of these perspectives are not necessarily in contradiction (LeVine, 1988). „That parents are influenced by phylogenetic and cultural factors is disputable, but these influences can only affect children in a given environmental setting" (LeVine, 1988, p. 8). Of course the integration of these approaches is not an easy task. Especially speaking about the actual process of child-parent interaction and designing a specific empirical project based on that process.

Nonetheless it seems that the attempt to combine these two perspectives in the investigation of child social development and socialization could suggest on the one hand, the productive way for solving some problems and difficulties that cross-cultural studies of attachment face today (Human Development, 1990; VanIjzendoorn, Kroonenberg, 1988) and on the other hand, to add a little knowledge to our understanding about the predictions and broader context in which child's social and emotional development takes place and maybe inlight some deep levels of culture that in a very subtle manner attend an actual situation of parent-child interaction and can influence through that their relationship and the whole process of child socialization.

Do parental values influence attachment patterns?

In present paper I do not intend to get into deep discussions about the concept of parental values and its relationships with some other similar concepts as attitudes, beliefs, parental ideas and how they can be related to an actual parents' behavior etc. Although I do consider these questions as very important ones but the purpose of the article is different. Also it should be remembered that all these problems received a lot of attention in well known studies by Sigel (1985), Goodnow and Collins(1990).

Still several major comments should be made in these circumstances. First of all, that parental values should be thought as something inportant parents want FOR their children, which is related to that what they want FROM their children (Le Vine, 1988). Secondly, that in the case of present analysis emphasis is made on maternal values considering them as a part of parental values in general. It should be admitted that these values must not be consistent with those of the father or more extended family. And finaly, that parents certainly hold many different values for their children and not all of them are of the same significance when we have child's attachment to his/her caregivers in mind. The idea is that in this case stress should be made on parents' value of their children's independence and autonomy. The issue of how parents value their children independence and ability to do things on their own deserve in the context more explicit explanation.

One important reason of considering parents' value for child's independence as one of the central constructs of the research is related with the broader issue of child's becoming a member of a family and successively society, that is socialization problems. In all cultures the family imprints its members with selfhood. Human experience of identity has two essential elements: a sense of belonging and sense of being separate. The laboratory in which these ingredients are mixed and dispensed is the family, the matrix of identity (Minuchin, 1974).

Thus, on the one hand, attachment relationships are very important for child's sense of belonging. On the other hand, the degree in which family takes into account the importance of child's sense of being separate and being able to do things on his/her own may have a

notable influence on his/her relationships with his/her caregivers. Moreover, family is very important in child's early psychosocial development and at the same time it must also accomodate to some particular society at some particular time and ensure certain continuity to its culture. So, if independence and individuality or, on the contrary, being a member of a group is especially valued in the particular culture, perhaps that might reflect on parent-infant early interactions and consequently on the attachment relationships between them.

An attentive look to the previous research of attachment and current state of most cross-cultural studies also suggest us an idea that one should consider parents' value of independence as something important in the light of attachment relationship. This circumstance did not receive enough attention in previous analyses, especially in the sense of antecedents of attachment. Traditionally the central construct of the research consistent with antecedents was the concept of maternal sensitivity and responsiveness (Sagi, Lewkowicz, 1987). Early maternal sensitivity and responsiveness to infant's signals assure the secure attachment relationships between them later on, (Ainsworth, 1978). As it was mentioned, independence is not a completely new concept in the field. First time it appeared in the context of cross-cultural studies of attachment after Grossmanns had conducted their study in Bielefeld (Northern Germany) in 1981. The results of the study showed different distribution of attachment types in that population from what has been found in the original Ainsworth's study. The percent of A (insecure-avoidant) type of attachment among German infants was higher than in U. S.– 49% compare to 10% according.j. Grossmann et al. suggested that culturally prescribed emphasis on independence training may be an appropriate explanation for this fact. In their attempts to account for a large number of A's in their sample, Grossmann and associates had to take a wider perspective of maternal sensitivity in order to avoid the conclusion that there exists a „phenomenon" of insecurity in Germany. Maybe German mothers really tend to place a high value on independence, but so far this explanation is still speculative. It also brings up one more important question related to this context. Supposedly we do find the link between morther's value of independence and cer-

tain type of attachement. What is the direction of that link? Does it really mean that maternal views on autonomy issues influence certain outcomes? So, it could be seen, that more systematic data on the notion of independence is need to be obtained. Sagi and Lewkowicz (1987) also note on this issue that if this argument about the role of independence is true, future research must show that mothers of A(avoidant) infants differ from mothers of B(secure) infants in their strategi s for encouraging independence but not in their sensitivity to infants signals.

One more reason for that brings us into a more specific in a sense of time and place context of a mentioned problem – current state of Lithuanian society and its value systems that undergo the dramatic transition from a situation of the totalitarian macrostructure, in which the possibilities for true self-expression were strictly limited towards the liberation process. The empirical data of the survey conducted by the Sociological Laboratory of Vilnius University in 1990 show that the common tendency among Lithuanians of all age groups today is to stress the individuality, privacy, freedom of personality against the interests of society, collectiveness, equality and like. All these things in the present situation of transition and changes of society might be acquired through the different sources of mass consiousness (mass media and like) rather than reflect deep basic value structures. Also it could be reaction to a long term oppression.

Family and parental values in this case could reflect deeper levels of culturally determined situation. Family life is always more private and less vulnerable to all kinds of outside influence. Most Lithuanian parents (94%) in the same survey emphasis the hard work as an important feature for their children to learn in the family. 81% noted the importance of independence and autonomy for their children. This is the second place in order of importance. Certainly, the sociological survey can give us just a very general and superficial orientation in the matter. But the high value of child's independence among Lithuania: parents and high value of individuality an freedom of personality in our society now in general look intriguing and promising for the future research on child-parent relationships and attachment specifically.

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28

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TĖVŲ VERTYBIŲ IR KŪDIKIO PRIERAIŠUMO PRIE MOTINOS SĄSAJŲ PROBLEMA

D . Čekuolienė

Re ziume

Daugelyje užsienio šalių bei įvairių kultūrų mokslininkų atliktuose prieraišumo tyrimuose mažai dėmesio buvo skirta tėvų vertybėms kaip prieraišumo formavimosi prielaidai. Kita vertus, psichologų darbuose, orientuotuose į tėvų vertybių ir vaikų vystymosi santykio problemas, pirmenybė teikiama vaikų kognityvinės raidos aspektams, mažiau pabrėžiama emocinė ir socialinė raida. Straipsnyje akcentuojami emocinių ryšių kaitos ir socializacijos aspektai. Remiantis apžvelgiama literatūra, keliama ir analizuojama motinos vertybių, kurios laikomos tėvų vertybių dalimi, ryšio su besiformuojančiu kūdikysteje prieraišumo tipu problema. Daroma prielaida, kad tam tikram prieraišumo tipui formuotis ypatingos įtakos turi tai, kaip motina vertina vaiko savarankiškumą.