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Emotion Socialization in the Indian Cultural Context

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Emotion Socialization in the Indian Cultural Context

Abstract

The social cultural norms that guide parental practices regarding emotion socialization are determined by cultural meanings ascribed to emotion, emotion expression, regulation, and larger socialization goals. The majority of the empirical research on emotion socialization has been carried out in the US and in Western European countries. The current article aims at understanding emotion socialization in the Indian context interweaving broader views on parenting and socialization, socialization goals, and ancient and modern emotion concepts that shape emotion socialization in India. The heterogeneity of the Indian culture as well as modernization processes that influence these practices suggest heterogeneity of emotion socialization across contexts (e.g., rural-urban; multiple caregiver models).

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यथो हस्त तथो दृष्टि, यथो दृष्टि तथो मनः
यथो मनः तथो भाव, यथो भाव तथो रस
- नाट्य शास्त्र

* Natayshastra

Wherever your hands go, your eyes will follow. Wherever your eyes go, your mind will follow. Wherever your mind goes, there will be expression of inner feeling. Where there is expression shown, there will be sentiment evoked.

Natayshastra (Science of dramatics) is an ancient Sanskrit text composed by Bharat (see pp. 8-9) for more information).

Introduction

Emotions are culturally constructed and derived based on cultural values, beliefs, and norms (Menon, 2000). In contrast to Western cultures and the strongly endorsed individualistic orientation with focus on independence, Asian and other non-Western cultures have a more collectivistic orientation favoring an interdependence as cultural value. The self is defined in relation to others and interpersonal relationships form the basis of self. Emphasis is on group cohesion and group goals are prioritized over individual goals reflecting an encompassing sense of self embedded in the relationship in which one is responsible for the other (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Mascolo et al., 2004). The goal of emotion socialization in cultures that value independence is to allow and accept expression of 'ego focused' emotions such as anger and pride (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In contrast, in cultures that value interdependence, the goal of emotion socialization is to promote expression of 'other focused' emotions such as sympathy (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) and 'ego focused' emotions are considered uncivilized (Menon, 2000).

Taking a closer look, Sinha and Tripathi (1994) contended that the Indian society represents a coexistence of collectivist and individualist orientation because of its "highly complex" social structure (p. 124). In the Indian culture, group association as well as individual position are complex phenomena and depend greatly on who is interacting with whom and in what context (Chaudhary & Sriram, 2020). Thereby, more than one model can co-exist in the heterogeneous context of India. Given the modernization and fast pace socioeconomic development particularly in Asian countries, Kagitcibasi's (1996, 2007) conception of the autonomous-relational self may be relevant in the contemporary Indian society. The model constitutes a combination of interpersonal relatedness and autonomous self. It further emphasizes emotional interdependence with material independence. Kagitcibasi (2007) proposed a dialectic synthesis of 'emotional interdependence,' wherein both individual and groups loyalties can co-exist, and both can be endorsed to different degrees. Given this emphasis on emotion interdependence, parental socialization goals in

Indian families focus on teaching the child to maintain harmonious relationships while acknowledging the child's autonomous agency (Tuli & Chaudhary, 2010). At the same time, the economic and educational differences of people in urban and rural areas also shape the caregiving practices differently in urban and rural families (e.g., Abels et al., 2005), thereby highlighting the contextual influences.

Emotion socialization practices are directly oriented towards the child's expression and experience of emotions. A caregiver may display supportive responses like physical warmth (e.g., taking the child in his/her arms) or positive control (e.g., reassuring the child that his/her response is acceptable) or non-supportive response like minimizing the child's emotion (e.g., invalidating the child's emotion). These concrete practices are embedded within the larger context of socialization goals as well as within the broader parenting practices of warmth and control. As various socio-cultural contexts value different socialization goals, such strategies depend on culture-specific parenting ethnotheories regarding appropriate emotion expression and experience. This also affects the caregiver-child interactions (Keller & Otto, 2009). From a developmental perspective it is central to understand that the child's emotion development is affected by co-regulation as parents regulate their children's emotional states. Through this, parents and other important caregivers transmit these cultural expectations and shared ethnotheories in this process.

The goal of the present article is to review the current knowledge about emotion socialization practices in Indian culture by taking the larger context of socialization goals and parenting into account. Our own study about emotion socialization (Kathuria, 2018) with mothers and secondary caregivers (e.g., grandparents, uncles, aunts) of toddlers in Vadodara, Gujarat, will exemplify some aspects of this topic in more details.

Socialization and Parenting in the Indian Context

Interdependence and Independence

In the Indian context, the socialization process is shaped along characteristics such as the desire to be a part of the group and family (Panda & Gupta, 2004). The goal is to socialize children to function interdependently (Saraswathi & Dutta, 2010), recognize the needs of others and please significant adults (Paiva, 2008). The family is central to all levels of social interactions and serves as the primary model of social interactions for children who are taught deference, obedience and are generally not encouraged to assert themselves (Srinivasan & Karlan, 2006). Roland (1988) proposed this deep-rooted group-oriented feature of Indians as the 'familial self.' Thus, most studies on Indian socialization and parenting are centered on the dimensions of interdependence and familism (Keller et al., 2006). The complexities of Indian society are augmented by the flux of social change, particularly with reference to socialization and parenting. Socialization and parenting in contemporary India are changing under the influence of modernization and Western values. For example, traditional multiple caregiving, which is largely a women's' forte is expanding as fathers are becoming active and taking more responsibilities in child rearing particularly in urban areas. There is a growing sense of change reflected in the co-existence of tradition and modernity (Kapadia, 2019).

This coexistence of tradition and modernity is reflected in an ethnographic account of urban Indian mothers. Mothers strive to balance interdependence and independence by

adopting a domain specific approach to endorse independence in selected domains (e.g., choosing what to wear). For example, although urban Indian mothers reported that their children can eat or bath themselves, but they preferred to feed or bath the children themselves since it saved them time and can be done efficiently. The researchers consider this to be an “elective interdependence” which means that mothers choose to be independent or interdependent in their socialization goals and practices, manifested differently in the different domains. Hence the researchers emphasized that it would be inappropriate to label the mothers as independent-minded in their childcare choices since they ensure the involvement of others in their children's lives. It would also be inappropriate to label them as interdependent because they make many choices that depart from traditional ways.

Parenting is seen as a sacred duty (dharma) of parents. The dharma of parents is to inculcate good sanskaras (values) in their child such as social harmony and respect for interpersonal relationships. Studies about parental ethnotheories have noted that the parental conception of a sankari child (good child) is one who possesses sanskars (values) such as being respectful to parents and adults, being truthful, compassionate, tolerant, and valuing others (Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002). Children from an early age are taught to be polite, greet elders, and share their toys and resources with other children in the social network reflecting the goal to foster interdependence. Such traditional view is complimented nowadays by fostering the child's autonomy in certain domains, e.g., placing more emphasis on child's choice in education and extra-curricular activities.

Multiple Caregiving and Power Distance

Parenting is a shared experience and multiple caregiving is a key component of Indian society; although the primary responsibility remains with the mother, other female and male caregivers are involved in early socialization practices (Roopnarine & Suppal, 2000). The joint family is a traditional ideal and desired family structure in Indian society. Hence, children are raised not only by their parents but also by other adults of the family such as grandparents, uncles, and aunts. Even when the family lives outside the traditional joint system, family members still maintain strong social ties with relatives and frequently discuss with each other any important life decisions (Kakar, 1981).

Typically, children are primarily within the care of mothers and grandmothers during the first two years and the caregiving extends toward other family members from the third year onwards when the child becomes more mobile, verbal, and interpersonal (Kakar, 1981; Sharma, 2003). For example, not so active grandmothers may supervise the child, while mothers are majorly responsible for taking care of physical needs of the child. Similarly, older siblings, uncles and aunts may take care of feeding and taking the child out. This shared caregiving, involving varied inputs from varied caregivers, contributes to the child's learning such as coping with differences, ambiguity, and conflict (Chaudhary & Sriram, 2020). Though the responsibility of childcare flows among the caregivers, the role of mother is believed to be primary by the mothers, fathers, and grandmothers. Mothers in an

ethnographic study expressed their dependence on their mothers-in-law and appreciated their role in the care of the children (Tuli & Chaudhary, 2010). Immigrant South Asian mothers acknowledges the absence of extended family members, especially grandparent as a significant loss (Paiva, 2008). It is important to note that this shared caregiving can differ in rural and urban settings. In rural settings, the other persons are within the reach of an infant and may receive more touch and kisses from other significant caregivers in the family compared to urban settings wherein caregivers are involved in passive touching and have specific tasks such as massaging the child (Abels et al., 2005).

The hierarchical lines and traditional orientation towards obedience and compliance regarding socialization practices are embedded in the cultural dimension of power distance. According to Hofstede's analysis, India is qualified high in power distance (77 out of 100; Hofstede: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/india/>). Vertical societies accept inequality in status relationships and emphasize the values of obedience, respect for authority, and rule-following (Hofstede, 2001; Matsumoto, 1996). In an ethnographic study on parenting, Saraswati and Ganpathy (2010) reported that Hindu Gujarati parents notion of ideal child (sanskari child) is one who is obedient, respectful for elders and socially confirming. The obedience and respect in their hierarchical relationships is also evident in the literature on emotion socialization wherein children can express the negative emotion of anger in the presence of peers and mothers but not in presence of fathers. Emphasis is placed on respect for the elders, and men are authority figures, and children feel greater pressure to obey their fathers than their mothers (Raval & Martini, 2009).

These hierarchical lines within the family are in order of age and sex. Within the family, obedience, and compliance with the wishes of the elder women of the family, particularly of mother-in-law, are expected in traditional families. A son or a daughter are expected less deference to the mother than to the father; an elder brother may have more authority over a younger sister than an elder sister over a younger brother (Kakar, 1981). However, there can be discrepancy between the traditional expectations of social relations within the extended family given the changes in the family structure and more women entering the work outside home.

Role of Fathers

In recent years, a body of literature has emerged on fathering and fatherhood in the Indian context. There is an ideological shift in father's involvement regarding beliefs, responsibilities, and roles of childcare (Roopnarine & Suppal, 2000; Sriram, 2011). In a study on continuity and change in fathering in the Indian context, Sriram (2011) found that in the present scenario besides playing a traditional role of provider, disciplinarian and transmitter of cultural values, fathers are also involved in childcare and nurturance. Fathers in the study reported themselves to be more involved and spending considerable time with their children compared to their own fathers who did not have time to spend with children and hence their emotional needs were not fulfilled. Urban Indian mothers shared a sense of pride when the husband shared the responsibility of child rearing and do not act as a typical man. A typical

man is explained by a mother as the one, "who makes you feel that you are a mother and it is all your responsibility" (Kathuria, 2018, p. 73).

With the advent of global economic change and immigration, family structures especially in urban areas are undergoing rapid changes (Bhatia, 2006; Sharma, 2003) giving rise to nuclear families. However, despite the changes in family structures and increasing nuclear families, caregiving does not follow a dyadic parent-child caregiving model. Periodic inclusion of significant caregivers even in nuclear families is socially valued. Multiplicity and pluralism are rather a norm than an exception in child caregiving (Chaudhary & Sriram, 2020). These social and structural changes are also reflected in the sources of socialization to which parents turn to get information regarding their socialization goals and practices.

Sources of Socialization and Parenting

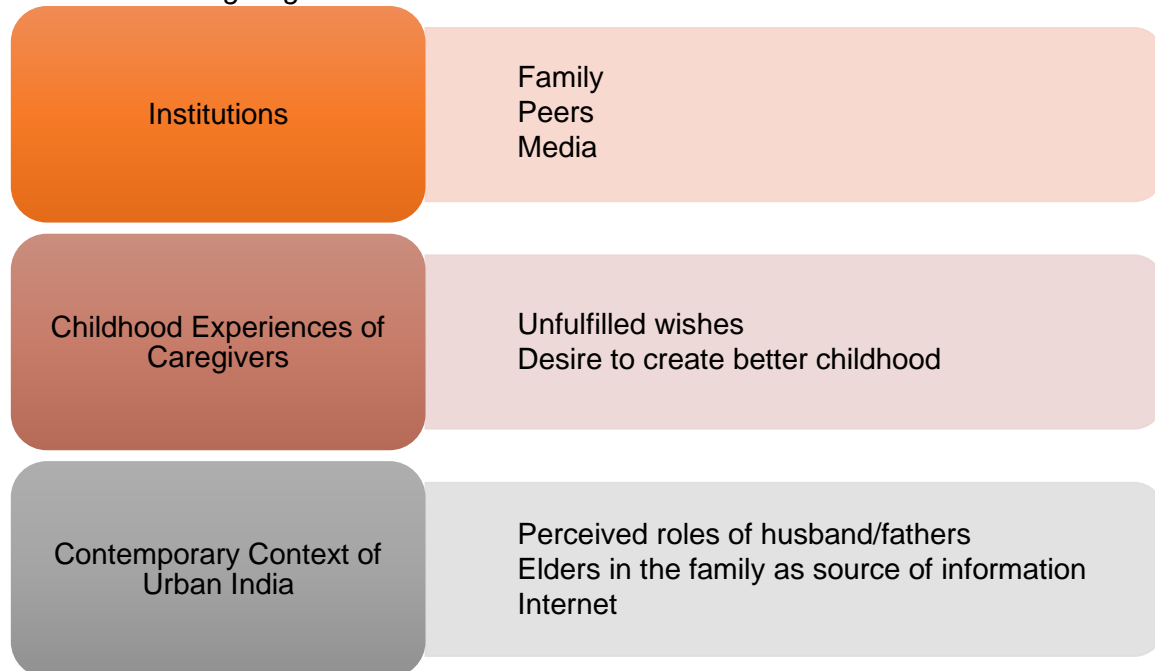
Traditionally, the joint family structure is the norm and extended family members as a unit contribute to childcare. In an ethnographic study on parenting beliefs in Delhi, North India, Tuli (2012) pointed out that parental beliefs came from a variety of sources, such as personal, family, and cultural sources. In the study with mothers in Delhi, doctors were most frequently cited as a source of belief on early childcare, which may be due to the urban milieu of the families. The author contends that considering doctors as an important source however did not exclude the traditional sources like knowledge provided by family members. Participants in the study often made references to traditional practices during pregnancy and childbirth. Similar orientations occurred in our own study based on an open question about caregivers' sources of learning childrearing. The report by the Indian caregivers reflected continuity as well as change in socialization sources of parenting in the urban Indian context. More specifically, the mothers and secondary caregivers (N = 61) mentioned three key sources that guide caregivers' socialization practices (Kathuria, 2018) (see Figure 1): First, caregivers referred to various institutions such as family, media, and health. Family emerged as the most important source of parental socialization followed by peers, media, and health experts. Second, caregivers also reported that their own childhood experience serves as a guiding force for parental socialization. However, while caregivers adopt what they appreciate from their childhood, they also put calculated efforts to create a better childhood for their children. Finally, caregivers mentioned contemporary context of urban India as a relevant source. Although for most of the mothers, family (own mother or mother-in-law) was the primary source of learning about parenting, several mothers reported that the knowledge from traditional sources of family is out of date and does not fit with the changing demands and times. Hence, they seek information from relatively younger mothers and/or other formal sources (e.g., books and Internet).

These various sources of socialization and parenting not only influence caregivers' socialization goals and practices in general but also the emotion socialization goals. Before we connect the general socialization perspective with the specific emotion socialization goals and practices, we will review the current state of art regarding emotion in the Indian context.

Perspectives on Emotion

The tradition and modernity conflict mentioned above is also obvious regarding the concept of emotion itself. On the one hand there is a very elaborated ancient Indian perspective on emotion that was developed in ancient times and that still serves as a guidance within Hindu religion. On the other hand, there is the modern, Western-based scientific view of emotion. It seems that the modern perspective of emotions is overwriting the ancient teachings for the Indian caregivers themselves. We will present the ancient Indian perspective of emotion to highlight some distinctive features and common points with modern views without going into details regarding such a comparison.

Figure 1
Sources of Caregiving Socialization



Ancient Indian Perspectives on Emotion

Paranjpe and Bhatt (1997) assert that the construct of emotion as a concept has been analyzed and well-studied by ancient Indian literary critics, philosophy and religion compared to modern Indian work. The field of aesthetics has explored the causes, control, and modulation of emotions. The ancient Sanskrit text *Natyasastra* (science of dramatics) was composed by the philosopher Bharata around third century AD primarily in the context of theatre. The Indian approach of emotions is developed in *rasa* (juice, extract, flavour, essence) theory (Menon, 2000). In Hindu tradition, the major goal of arts (e.g., dance,

Figure 2

Depiction of Nine Rasas

Note. Reprinted from “All the feels: 9 emotions” by Manaswini, A. (2020, February 25).

Retrieved from <https://www.nrithyamani.com/post/all-the-feels-the-9-emotions>



drama, and poetry) are to enable the audience to cultivate an aesthetic sensitivity to transcend the modern concerns of everyday life and taste the *rasa* of different emotions (see Figure 2).

There are nine aesthetic moods or *rasas* and their corresponding common human emotions or *bhavas*. The nine major *rasas* are *srngara* (love), *hasa* (laughter), *karuna* (compassion), *krodha* (anger), *vira* (persistence), *bhayanaka* (fear), *bibhatsa* (disgust) and *adbhuta* (wonder) and later added *sama* (serenity). The corresponding emotions are

rati (erotic), hasa (mirth), soka (sorrow), krodha (anger), utsaha (energy), bhaya (fear), jugupsa (disgust), vismaya (astonishment) and santa (peacefulness) (see Figure 2). Additionally, Bharata recorded thirty-three minor and transient emotions. Bharata postulated that emotions have aesthetic, cognitive, animalistic, moral, and spiritual components. The theory further suggests that the expression of emotions includes four conditions: causes (vibhava), symptoms (anubhava) and other ancillary feelings (sancaribhava) and their conjunction (samyoga) and it is through the samyoga (union) of bhavas that rasas are expressed (Sibia & Misra, 2011).

Tasting the flavor of emotions is considered an opportunity to capture the essence of ultimate reality that is intrinsic in everyone (Menon, 2000). Indian cultural ideals warrant the experience as well as expression of certain emotions. For example, sukha (happiness) is thought to be an immature emotion, and only young children can experience it because they are still ignorant about life's realities and responsibilities (Menon, 2000). This sentiment is echoed in an urban Indian context wherein mothers upregulate the experience and expression of happiness and empathy of their toddlers (Kathuria, 2018). However, when adult men and women experience happiness, it is transitory in nature, ending as soon as one recalls the turbulence of life (Menon, 2000). Rather than happiness, the goals of contentment (sukha) and well-being (hitta) are emphasized. The theory of human emotions is a theory of morality and a particular way of living. The primary emotions in Hindu folk thought are linked to the four goals of human life. First goal of pleasure (kama) is associated with the sexual passion. Second goal of control and power (artha) is linked with the anger. Third goal of social duty and moral value (dharma) is associated with perseverance. The fourth and the ultimate goal of salvation (moksha) is linked to serenity (Shweder & Haidt, 2000).

Compared to the Western perspective of emotion, Shweder (1993) claims that "three of the nine basic emotions (anger, fear and sorrow) are genuinely familiar, in the sense of possessing an equivalent shape and meaning for medieval Hindus and contemporary Anglo-Americans" (p. 421). But he also admits that the meanings associated with the other emotions listed in the Rasadhyaya are difficult to compare as they have different connotations. For example, Hindu disgust with its connotations of disenchantment and world-weariness seems much broader than the American notion in which the primary meaning is one of nausea. Furthermore, Hindu wonder is less being taken aback by a sudden, unexpected development which is typical for American surprise, and more wondrous awe with a tinge of exaltation.

Modern Emotion Research on Emotion Socialization in the Indian Context

This ancient Indian perspective on emotion offers insights into the emic view of emotions. However, the conceptualization of emotions and the application of emotion socialization in contemporary society as described in the rasa theory was never investigated in empirical studies. Accessible research on emotion socialization in Indian context is based on emotion theories that emerged within the Western psychology. Especially Raval and colleagues carried out several studies in India and described similarities and differences in emotion

socialization regarding urban versus rural settings, type of emotion, the interactive partner, as well as child's characteristics (e.g., gender and age) (McCord & Raval, 2016; Raval et al., 2007; Raval & Martini, 2009, 2011).

India is a vastly diverse society, and the contextual variations are likely to influence the expression and regulation of emotions in different communities (e.g., urban, old part of city, new part of city, rural setting). Raval and Martini (2009) compared traditional old-city and suburban mothers' reports about their beliefs on social acceptability and responses to their children's emotional expressions in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Socio-demographic variations in the old city and suburban parts of the city influenced parental emotion socialization. Parents in the suburban community had higher education and higher annual income than parents in the old city but did not differ in family structure and mother's work. Both the families living in suburban community as well as living in old city primarily have joint family structure and mothers were mainly homemakers. Mothers from the old city considered children's expressions of anger and sadness less acceptable than suburban mothers. Old city mothers also reported feeling more embarrassed than suburban mothers in response to expression of emotions (e.g., anger and sadness). With reference to their children's emotion expressions, old-city mothers reported more negative emotions, as well as scolding and spanking towards the children's anger, and were less likely to report encouraging their children's sadness than suburban mothers. The difference in rural and old city mothers' responses towards child's emotion expression may be accounted by different family expectations. Appropriate social behavior was of utmost importance for old city families. In contrast, families in suburban city held more expectations concerning the academic success for children and were less concerned with expectations of appropriate social behavior (Raval & Martini, 2009). In rural Indian context, with an overall emphasis on interdependence, parents' socialization is directed to inculcate culturally sensitive emotion regulation among adolescents to maintain social harmony in diverse social situations (Yeo et al., 2021).

Hierarchy, Display Rules, and Regulation of Emotion Expression

Besides the urban-rural divide, social hierarchy is present at all levels of the Indian culture and is likely to guide the regulation of emotion expression and display rules that influence emotion socialization practices of the caregivers.

In the South Asian context, such as India, the relationship between parent and child is vertical, and hierarchy determines power and social status (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004). Expressions of negative emotions, especially when they have disruptive character, are less accepted in the presence of parents than peers, indicative of cultural emphasis on respecting elders (Raval & Martini, 2009). Socially disengaging emotions like anger or jealousy are disruptive as they threaten the group harmony. Socially engaging emotions like sadness or fear are not disruptive for others; they rather call for support. Since fathers are seen as an authority figure in the family, mothers reported non-supportive behavior to children's expression of socially disengaging negative emotions towards their fathers than peers. Expression of fear towards father was encouraged and anger was discouraged (Pai, 1988). In an exploratory study of emotion socialization in Gujarati culture Pai (1998)

examined parental ethnotheories and emotional ecology of children (9-16 years). The findings of the study indicated that the children hid the expression of both positive and negative emotions. Parental ethnotheories suggest that parents approve children's expression of emotion that enhances family harmony and academic success. Children were encouraged to express emotion differently to different people based on family and societal social structure. For example, Expression of fear was encouraged towards the father, but the expression of anger was discouraged. The expression of both fear and anger was accepted towards the mother. The findings of the exploratory study highlight the importance of Indian societal values of patriarchy, and familism. Likewise, Raval et al. (2007) in a comparative study of 5 to 6 years old children found that children in an old city considered others to be less accepting of their expressions and hence controlled their expressions more than children in the suburban community. Expression of negative emotions is less approved in relation to parents than peers (Raval & Martini, 2012). Another study by Raval et al. (2010) revealed that children were less likely to express anger and sadness through verbal communication than physical pain. The emotion of anger may be experienced but not expressed since it interferes with group harmony. Raval and Martini (2011) have proposed a framework for understanding emotion socialization in urban India. The model depicts that emotion socialization of children in Gujarati families is conceptualized in the context of "making the other understand." In other words, mothers attempted to make children understand (*samjhavavu*), directed either by child-centered goals (desire to teach something to the child, calm the child's emotion) or parent-centered goals (conformity to the society).

Furthermore, caregivers' expectations of display rules are likely to change, as children grow older. In India, children are typically overindulged for the first five years of life (Kakar, 1981). In the early years, children are considered near perfect and divine; infancy and childhood are seen as a time for indulgence (Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002). Thereby, fewer expectations are placed on younger children than older children who are expected to exhibit more control in regulating their emotional expressions. Older children hide emotions more than young children (Pai, 1988) possibly because they learn or are trained to abide by the societal expectation of appropriate emotional expression.

Emotion Socialization Strategies

Many studies in non-Western cultures refer to six parental emotion socialization strategies for negative emotions that were originally created in the Western context by Fabes et al. (2002) (e.g., Song et al., 2022; Tao et al., 2010; Yang et al., 2020): three supportive strategies, namely (1) problem-focused reactions: parents help the child to cope with the negative emotion related to the problem; (2) emotion-focused response: parents use comforting responses to help child feel better and (3) expressive encouragement: parents validate emotion expression of child, and three non-supportive strategies, namely (4) punitive reactions: parents tend to punish (scold, spank) the child to reduce the need to cope with their emotions, (5) minimization reactions: parents devalue the seriousness of child's emotions, and (6) distress reactions: parents experience distress due to child's emotion.

The application of these parental strategies in an Eastern context that endorses different degrees of individualistic versus relational emotion competency requires expansion (Friedlmeier et al., 2011; Yeo et al., 2020). Based on the pioneering work of Pai (1988), much of the available research on parental emotion socialization in the Indian context includes the emotions of anger and sadness (see Raval & Martini, 2009; Wilson et al., 2012) with recent studies on parental emotion socialization of positive affect in South India (Aggarwal et al., 2022; Raval et al., 2019). Raval and Martini (2009) pointed out that the parents' primary focus is on teaching the child to express those emotions that maintain social harmony and to regulate those emotion that can be a risk for group harmony. The norms, duties and expectations of others guide the social behavior of the people. Based on the qualitative research on emotion socialization in India, Raval and colleagues added culturally salient parental strategies beyond those that were originally created in Western context by Fabes et al. (2002). The supportive parental strategies include an explanation-oriented problem-focused response which means that mothers' response to their children's anger and sadness was not directed to resolve the problem; rather it provides an explanation to the children to facilitate acceptance of the situation (Raval & Martini, 2009). This strategy shows some commonalities with *training response* that they added in a later study (Raval et al., 2018). The training strategy aims to teach the child emotion-feeling rules and appropriate ways of expressing emotions by using moral reasoning and was described earlier by Chan et al. (2009) for Chinese adaptation. They also added culture-specific non supportive strategies, such as scolding and not talking to the child for a brief period (Raval & Martini, 2011).

Based on this wider view of type of emotions and strategies, Kathuria (2018) included negative and positive emotions and used an open-ended interview to not exclude culturally relevant strategies in a study with urban Indian mothers and their toddlers. Based on vignettes, mothers described their behavioral responses to young children's negative socially disengaging emotions (anger and jealousy), negative socially engaging emotions (sadness, fear, and shame) as well as positive self-focused emotions (happiness) and positive other-focused emotions (empathy). The deductive-inductive coding led to eleven strategies; five strategies were mentioned most often: emotion and problem-focused strategies, training (including explanation-oriented problem-focused strategy), dismissive (minimizing), and disciplinary strategies (scolding).

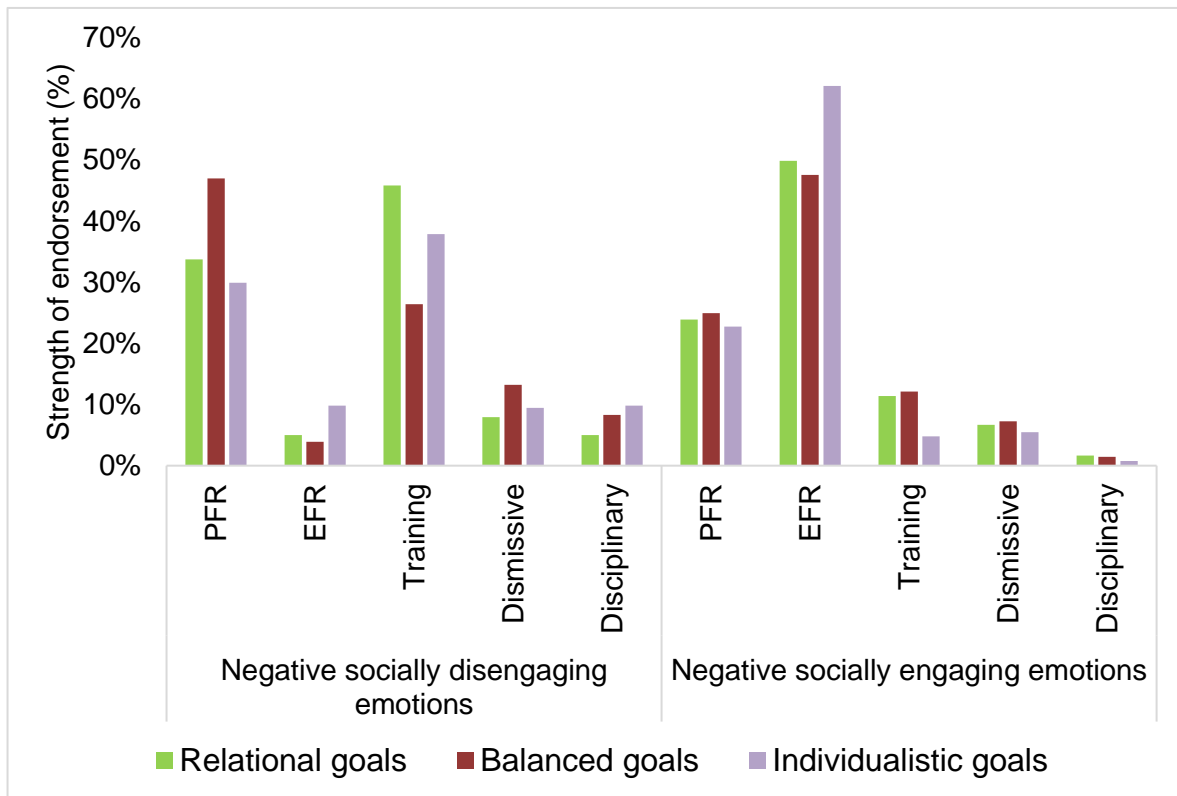
Overall, the Indian mothers endorsed comforting responses (emotion-focused) much more when confronted with negative socially engaging emotions (e.g., sadness), and more problem-focused and training strategies when confronted with negative socially disengaging emotions (e.g., anger) (see Figure 3). These results are in line with the cross-cultural study by Corapci et al. (2018) that compared similar strategies with European-American, Romanian, and Turkish mothers. For the social disengaging emotion of anger, mothers across all the cultures focused on teaching coping skills to the children.

Furthermore, we assessed the mothers' emotion competence model according to Chan et al. (2009) that differentiates between individualistic and relational model. The relational model focuses on the view that negative socially disengaging emotions should not be expressed, negative socially engaging emotions can be expressed, and appropriate

emotion display rules are more important than emotional independence. According to the individualistic model the natural expression of emotion is seen as legitimate and valued. 20% of caregivers (mothers and secondary caregivers) endorsed the relational (traditional) emotion competence model. A similar percentage (22%) of the caregivers endorsed the individualistic emotion competence model. Most caregivers endorsed a balanced emotion competence model, i.e., they valued both models highly.

Figure 3

Maternal Goals and Strategies for Negative Socially Disengaging (Anger and Jealousy) and Negative Socially Engaging Emotions (Fear, Sadness, and Shame)



Notes: PFR - Problem focused response; EFR - Emotion focused response

Regarding differences in the endorsement of emotion regulation strategies based on their emotion competence model, we found some variations (see Kathuria, 2022): For negative socially disengaging emotions (anger, jealousy), caregivers with relational goals endorsed training strategies significantly more and focused on teaching the child that the expression of such an emotion is not acceptable. For negative socially engaging emotions (sadness, fear), caregivers with individualistic goals endorsed emotion-focused strategies (comforting the child) more than the other groups (see Figure 3). For positive other-focused (empathy) and self-focused emotion(joy) caregivers endorsed mirroring and upregulation strategies. There was no significant link between caregivers' socialization goals and strategies regarding positive emotions. Positive emotions are less in the focus of caregivers' emotion

regulation (see Vaish et al., 2008). Additionally, fostering empathy may start at a later age and differences between children with mothers endorsing relational versus individualistic goals may become more prominent later in childhood.

These results demonstrate that from a young age, children are taught to express emotions in a socially appropriate manner and caregivers' regulatory interventions are at least partly guided by their emotion competence models. Mothers with relational goals emphasized on guiding the child with specific instructions (training) for negative disengaging emotions while other caregivers rather endorsed comforting responses than specific instructions for negative socially engaging emotions since these emotions do not pose risk for group or interpersonal relationship (Kathuria, 2022).

Gender and Emotion Socialization

Caregivers have gender-guided expectations related to emotional expressions and experience (Root & Denham, 2010). Gender stereotypic emotion socialization is evident across cultures and is influenced by cultural values, parents' gender, child's gender, types of emotion (Kapadia & Gala, 2015). In addition to the cultural context, the degree to which mother and father differ may also vary depending on their ethnicity (Brown et al., 2016). Research studies related to gender differences in emotion socialization in the Indian context are indicative of allowing expression of negative emotion (anger) more to boys than to girls. A study by Pai (1988) found that girls hide emotions more than boys. Raval and Martini (2007) in their study with school age children found girls to be less expressive for anger than boys, indicative of the fact that anger is more acceptable for boys. Similar findings are echoed by Menon and Shweder (1994); their findings with Oriya Hindu participants indicated that men could experience and express uncivilized emotions of anger and laughter whereas women are likely to experience and express refined emotions such as modesty and deference. Such expectations seem to be different from European-American culture with its historical beliefs of women as "hysterical" and with less reason than men, because reason prevails rather than emotionality. Therefore, it is not surprising that such stronger non-supportive socialization for girls may result in understanding the difference between felt and expressed emotion. Joshi and McLean (1994) in a comparative study between Indian and English children's understanding of apparent and real emotions reported that Hindu girls from an early age understand the difference in expression of emotion and real feelings than their counterparts (Indian Boys and Britain participants) reflective of differential gender socialization.

Kathuria (2018) did not find gender differences regarding caregivers' emotion socialization strategies. This could be due to the young age (18-36 months) of the children (Kathuria, 2018) or it could also point to a shift in the Indian context, especially in the urban setting as a cross-cultural study with older children (6 to 9 years) between India and United States found no gender differences in expressions of the anger and sadness (Wilson et al., 2012).

Parents' gender is also an important determinant in socialization of emotions. Mothers are considered as emotional gatekeepers of the family whereas fathers play a role of loving playmate. Furthermore, mothers value teaching about emotions more than fathers does (Denham, et al., 2010). Most empirical Indian studies on emotion socialization included mothers and their children, and mothers were found to be more sympathetic towards sons' expression of anger than daughters (Raval & Martini, 2011) indicating the cultural expectation of less acceptance of anger among women.

Discussion and Conclusions

This review on emotion socialization in India offers insight that the interdependent and hierarchical view of society leads to some culture-specific features of emotion socialization, especially variation in the expression of the same emotion in relation to the interaction partner. At the same time, studies about maternal emotion regulation also pointed to different orientations in rural, suburban, and urban Indian contexts. The study by Kathuria (2018, 2022) suggests that there are differences within urban Indian mothers' preferences of socialization goals: some follow the traditional pathway, and some adopt and include a more Western-influenced perspective and endorsed more autonomy. These orientations have consequences on the emotion socialization, and based on these interactive experiences, the children will develop different views regarding emotions and the display of them. This review is limited, and we did not include all relevant topics in detail. In the following, we will summarize main points, include shortcomings as well as outline suggestions for future steps of research.

Theoretical Model of Emotion Socialization

This review mostly focused on emotion socialization practices. Based on existing theoretical models (Castro et al., 2015, Morris et al., 2007), there are indirect sources that affect children's development of emotion expression and regulation. The way parents talk about emotions with their children and the family emotion expressivity are important sources, but these factors are not yet studied in Indian context. Furthermore, the caregivers' emotional reaction to the child's emotion is a central piece that is understudied. As mentioned above, the CCNES includes a distress reaction - the caregiver feels uncomfortable being exposed to the child's expression - but this dimension was rarely studied by itself. Either it was left out for data analysis or put together with unsupportive strategies. It might be worthwhile to study such emotional reaction to child's emotion more specifically as such spontaneous reaction may provide highly relevant information to the child regarding the appropriateness of his/her own display beyond the teaching or explanation part.

Furthermore, the current research in the Indian context does not include the discussion of all cultural factors relevant for this topic. Cultural dimensions like individualism and power distance are important starting points to explain cultural variations, but they are at risk to lump cultures together if no further distinctions are included. Based on this critique,

Halberstadt and Lozada (2011) suggested five cultural frames for emotion socialization: Beside individualism and power distance, the children's place in family and culture (e.g., the value of children), the relations with children, ways children learn, and value of emotional experience and expression are three additional relevant cultural frames for emotion socialization. These three additional frames may be relevant not only to explain maternal emotion socialization beliefs in India but also to explain intracultural variations along the individualistic and relational goals.

Ancient Perspective

Emotion socialization is aligned with culturally valued ways of relating, that is, all processes that help to attain the culturally appropriate emotional experiences. The ancient Indian perspective on emotions as presented in rasa theory provides insights into an emic view of emotions. This emic conception was not taken up to study scientifically and no empirical evidence is provided. It would be important to investigate whether these traditional concepts still prevail in the Indian society (e.g., Pandit, 2011) as there is a distinction between real-life experience and artistic or theatrical expressions in dance and song as represented in Rasa theory (Chaudhary et al., 2022). It could be an interesting task for the future to take a closer look at these emotion concepts, their meanings, and consequences for emotion socialization in an empirical perspective. The empirical research solely focuses on conceptualization of emotions that evolved in Western psychology.

Geographical Limits

The available empirical research on emotion socialization in the Indian context is essentially situated in Western India. Given the heterogeneity of Indian culture, more research is warranted from other parts of the country to understand the similarities and differences within the cultural context including the role of multiple caregivers (e.g., extended family members, paid caregiver at home) in emotion socialization.

Methodological Perspective

Most of the available empirical studies are based on self-reports of participants; it would be meaningful to employ observations to gain deeper understanding of cultural perspectives on emotion socialization practices. For example, we studied the relation between maternal regulatory strategies on toddlers' negative emotion in a stressful waiting situation for Indian, Turkish, and American dyads. Contingency analyses showed that distraction was not effective for Indian dyads and did not lead to a decrease in the child's negative emotion in contrast to American dyads. One main reason for this difference was the fact that American mothers used this strategy when the child's negative emotion was low while Indian mothers tended to apply it when the negative emotion was rather strong (Friedlmeier et al., 2022, June).

Meaning of the Emotion Regulation Strategies

The parental expectations regarding the appropriate emotion regulation differs across cultures. Most studies applied quantitative measures created in the US, e.g., CCNES (Fabes et al., 2002) and cross-cultural studies added culture-relevant adjustments (e.g., Wilson et al., 2012). The available cultural knowledge in this field is rather a patchwork of partly adjusting either culture-specific situations (e.g., Pinter et al, 2018; Raval et al., 2014; Tao et al., 2010) or strategies (e.g., Gamble et al., 2007; Raval & Martini, 2011; Raval et al., 2014). There is a lack of systematic inquiry of potential regulatory strategies that are not immediately obvious in Western cultures as well as ambiguous meanings of the same labelled strategy. An example is the problem-focused strategy. In western context individualistic cultures, where an individual's own goals and needs guide their social behavior, problem-focused responses involve teaching the child to resolve the situation that caused the feeling and these strategies are linked with positive child outcomes in Western samples (Eisenberg et al., 1998). However, in collectivist cultures, like India where the goals of the collective take priority over individuals' own goals, removing obstacles may be less relevant and rather resolving the situation/deal with the emotion is "problem focused." The goal is to remind the child of their social role and helping to solve situation that led to negative emotions. Such explanation-oriented responses aim at facilitating acceptance of the situation fit with relational socialization goals of Indian mothers who would like their children to be adaptable in social situations and maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships (Raval et al., 2012). Therefore, systematic research of regulatory strategies in non-Western cultures is warranted to get a better overview of the range of strategies, and to integrate the expanded strategies into a universal theory of emotion socialization and a culture-sensitive instrument to assess the variety of strategies within the contexts.

Conclusions

To conclude, we aimed to describe emotion socialization in India as embedded in the cultural context and related socialization practices to provide an overview of the variability and how various levels are linked together. The review showed that the traditional emotion socialization model may still dominant, but modernization processes influence these beliefs and practices and create intracultural heterogeneity of emotion socialization. Some mothers use internet as an important source to learn about socialization (Kathuria, 2018). Most mothers endorsed a balanced emotion socialization model with relational and individualistic components, and the selection of strategies to regulate their child's negative and positive emotions are consistent with the preferred model, e.g., teaching of appropriate display and control of negative socially disengaging emotions are important for mothers with relational goals. Problem-focused responses are more endorsed by mothers with individualistic goals (Kathuria, 2022). The heterogeneity may be more pronounced across contexts like rural versus urban environment.

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Suggested Videos/ Articles

Rasa theory and shakuntala of Kalidas: <https://youtu.be/EjBWvpv7vDc>

Rasa theory: Indian Aesthetics by Dr. Shakuntala Gawde, Assistant Professor in the department of Sanskrit, University of Mumbai

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9vGkW5w_ck&t=774s

NatyaShastra by BharatMuni

<https://archive.org/details/NatyaShastraOfBharataMuniVolume1/mode/2up>

Dancing with Nine Colours: The Nava Rasa Roller-Coaster

https://youtu.be/rAqW7fW_W60

Questions for Discussion

1. How do parenting practices influence emotion experience and emotion expression?
2. What cultural ideas and practices related to emotions were you exposed to as a child? Reflect on how your early experiences of emotion socialization have shaped your emotional expressions and regulation as an adult?
3. What are your perspectives on negative and positive emotions?
4. Identify and discuss any gender difference that you have observed in your parents' emotion regulation behavior?
5. What are the various socialization sources that influence emotion regulation in different cultural contexts?
6. Discuss how gender is likely to influence emotion socialization.
7. What types of methods would be most useful to study emotion socialization in cultural perspective? - Identify the strengths and challenges of each method.
8. Compare the nine emotions central for the Ancient Indian Perspective with Ekman's basic emotions or other scientific emotion theories (Izard, Tomkins, Frijda). What are commonalities and differences? – How can we explain the differences?
9. Check for emotion words in a language that do not have a corresponding “one word” translation into English. For example, “fureai”, “oime”, “natsukashii”, in Japanese or “Schadenfreude” in German. Does this mean that people in English-speaking countries do not experience these emotions?

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