

The mutual influence of social class and their own children on Brazilian parents' child-rearing values

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Introduction

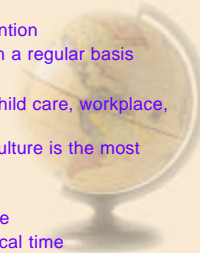
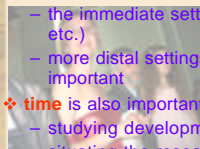
- Theoretical overview and brief sketch of the overall research project (CEYC)
- The PALS part of the CEYC project
- Social class and parents' child-rearing values in southern Brazil
- The impact of developing children on their parents' values



Cultural-ecological theory

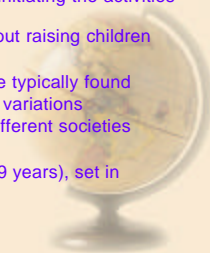
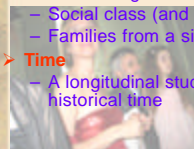
A contextualist theory, based on the theories of Lev Vygotsky and Urie Bronfenbrenner

- ❖ the **everyday activities and interactions** in which individuals engage, that vary by aspects of:
- ❖ the **active individuals** involved (temperament, motivations, beliefs, values, etc.)
 - those who are the focus of attention
 - those who interact with them on a regular basis
- ❖ the **context**
 - the immediate setting (home, child care, workplace, etc.)
 - more distal settings, of which culture is the most important
- ❖ **time** is also important
 - studying development over time
 - situating the research in historical time



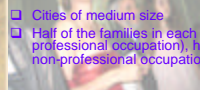
Instantiation of the theory

- **Everyday activities and interactions**
 - Lengthy observations of children and their typical social partners (20 hours)
- **Active individuals**
 - Children's and others' roles in initiating the activities in which the children engage
 - Parents' values and beliefs about raising children
- **Context**
 - The settings where children are typically found
 - Social class (and racial/ethnic) variations
 - Families from a single city in different societies
- **Time**
 - A longitudinal study (from 3 to 9 years), set in historical time



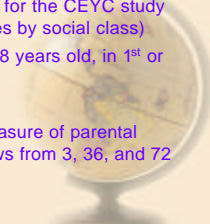
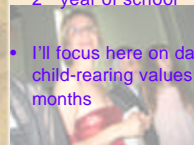
Participants

- ❖ 156 children from 28-45 months (at Time 1), and their parents
- ✓ **25 from Porto Alegre, Brazil** (Fernanda Martins, Rafael Spinelli, Giana Frizzo), part of the Porto Alegre Longitudinal Study (Piccinini, Tudge, Lopes, & Sperb, 1998)
- ✓ 39 from Greensboro, NC, USA (Sarah Putnam, Judy Sidden, Fabienne Doucet, Nicole Talley)
- ✓ 22* from Oboinsk, Russia (Natasha Kulakova, Irina Snezhkova)
- ✓ 20 from Tartu, Estonia (Marika Meltsas, Peeter Tammeveski)
- ✓ 18 from Oulu, Finland (Marika Kuntio, Johanna Matnikko)
- ✓ 12 from Suwon, Korea (Soeun Lee)
- ✓ 20 from Kisumu, Kenya (Dolphine Odero)
- Cities of medium size
- Half of the families in each city were middle class (higher education and professional occupation), half working class (maximum 'some college' and non-professional occupation)



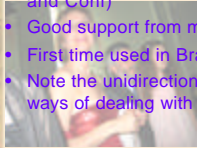
Porto Alegre Longitudinal Study (PALS)

- Data gathering started prior to birth
- 3rd trimester of pregnancy, first-time mothers
- Parents interviewed, short-term interactions, 5 times during first 2 years
- 25 of those participants selected for the CEYC study (matched the other CEYC families by social class)
- The children are currently 7 and 8 years old, in 1st or 2nd year of school
- I'll focus here on data from a measure of parental child-rearing values and interviews from 3, 36, and 72 months

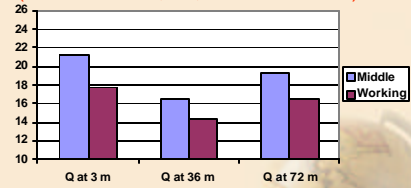


Social class and child rearing

- Mel Kohn
- Importance of parents' current occupation and previous education for child-rearing values
- Middle-class parents more likely to value self-direction (SD) for their children; working-class parents more likely to value conformity (Conf) and following the rules
- Q-sort methodology, yielding 3 scores (overall Q, SD, and Conf)
- Good support from many countries
- First time used in Brasil
- Note the unidirectional flow (class to parents' values to ways of dealing with children)

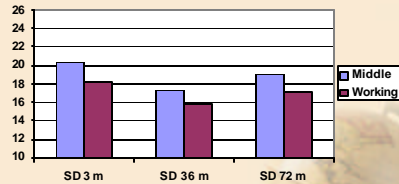


Changes in parents' child-rearing values (Overall Q at 3, 36, and 72 months)



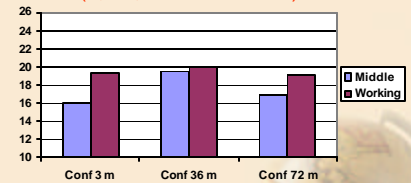
- Time—linear: $F(1, 20) = 3.17, p < .10$
- Time—quadratic: $F(1, 20) = 28.95, p < .001$
- Class: $F(1, 20) = 5.79, p < .05$
- Time X Class: ns

Changes in parents' values for self-direction (3, 36, and 72 months)



- Time—linear: $F(1, 20) = 3.47, p < .10$
- Time—quadratic: $F(1, 20) = 22.97, p < .001$
- Class: $F(1, 20) = 4.71, p < .05$
- Time X Class: ns

Changes in parents' values for conformity (3, 36, and 72 months)



- Time—linear: ns
- Time—quadratic: $F(1, 20) = 7.03, p < .05$
- Class: $F(1, 20) = 4.24, p < .06$
- Time X Class: $F(1, 20) = 2.76, p < .15, ns$

Discussion

- Influence of social class on parents' values, in line with Kohn's position
- But can also see a clear decline in Q and SD (and an increase in Conf) from 3 to 36 months followed by a rise of Q and SD (and a fall in Conf) at 72 months
- Under the influence of the children themselves or a generic change?
- Test this hypothesis with correlations (a generic decline would produce high positive correlations)



Correlations among Q, SD, and Conf (at 3, 36, and 72 months)

	Q 3	SD 3	C 3	Q 36	SD 36	C 36	Q 72	SD 72	C 72
Q 3	---								
SD 3	.78***	---							
C 3	-.84***	-.59**	---						
Q 36				---					
SD 36				.92***	---				
C 36				-.66***	-.42*	---			
Q 72				-.50*	.64***	.55**	---		
SD 72				.63***	.65***		.91***	---	
C 72				-.44*	.52*	-.59**	-.45*	.43*	-.90***

* < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

Parents' reflections over time

- Three groups of responses
 - Most common: easy baby, "terrible twos," adapting to one another
 - A few: easy baby, easy 3-year-old, easy 6-year-old
 - One: difficult baby, worse 3-year-old, ?
- Responses from four families, two middle class (MC), two working class (WC)



- MC Father, at 3m: "[Tânia's] a really easy child to deal with, there's no aspect of her that's difficult, which is really different from what one expects of a child."
- Mother, at 36 m: "When [Tânia] wants something...if she says: 'I want some chewing gum' [I'll say] 'You can't have any chewing gum, you've just finished eating' like, like today, she asked 10 times for chewing gum, and you have to, you know, you have to deal with this, you know, otherwise you end up giving in: 'OK, have some!' and you can't do that. ... Sometimes she gets quite upset, she lies on the floor ... she can start crying 'You're not going to get any now, it's not the right time' and she stops and gets up."
- Mother, at 72 m: "You have to respect her individuality, the way she is, right? She hates to wear clothes under other clothes, things under her clothes. That's the way she is. You just have to respect that."
- Father, at 72 m: "Obviously at times you want to get her to do things and she tries to dominate, but that's the way she is, you can see that that's her personality. ... She's going to come to grief because of her strong temperament, but it's nothing that we can't get over."

- MC Father, at 3 m: [Carlos is] "happy, really calm."
- Mother, at 3 m: "[He's] calm, I think that he's really happy ... affectionate."
- Mother, at 36 m: "It was a difficult bath time and he was crying and everything just too much. So then I gave him two slaps, right, and he told me not to hit him. ... He was very angry. ... But really his behavior has always been very adaptable, you know. Now this is just a function of his age."
- Father, at 36 m: "This happens with all of them [children], you know. And I think this way: it's a phase. ... They're phases that he's going through."
- Father, at 72 m: "In his 'Your Highness' moments he's very difficult to deal with. ... He tries to assert his will, right? And so, depending on the day, he's Piaget or Pinochet, you know?"

- WC Mother, 3 m: "I thought that [Roberta] would be a crier, that she wouldn't let me sleep. But she's not like that, she's great the way she is. ... She just hates to be left alone, you know? If she's left alone she cries, and it's the same in the dark."
- Mother, 36 m: "She never gives me much work, because she's always been this way, to accept stuff, that's just her way. I think that she was [always] very peaceful. ... She always was really calm, even as a baby. ... I think that she's a really happy child, you know?"
- Mother, 72 m: "I think that Roberta is really nice. She's really sincere, and I like this in her, you know? She can't lie. If she's done something wrong she immediately comes with that sort of look, already half laughing, she can't disguise it. You say to her: 'Roberta, you're not telling the truth,' and then she tells you, you know? This is something I really like about her."

- WC mother, 3 m: "I don't know what to tell you, because I think that [Daniel] seems angry. I think that he's going to be really angry. He smiles a lot, but when he's like this, irritable, wow, you just have to see him."
- Mother, while pregnant: "I think that he's going to be an angry one [she smiles]. Because sometimes he's, sometimes I'm just fine and he, you know, he, depending on whether I'm sitting, I think that he's angry and he kicks me really hard."
- Mother, 36 m: "My biggest problem with him is this, he's very [she pauses] aggressive, you know, very much like that ... it's a little strange."
- Mother, 72 m: [Daniel has a] "strong personality, very strong" (and she laughed). But, she continued, she had dramatically changed her approach with him. She used to hit him all the time, she said, but that was not working: "I stopped and thought, 'What am I doing?' And then I realized, and stopped hitting. I hadn't thought about what I was doing."

Conclusions

- A link between social class and parents' child-rearing values
- Those values clearly influenced by their developing children
 - First-time parents may have an idealized view of their 3-month-old infants, particularly when viewed as "easy"
 - Children develop their own likes and dislikes, make more demands
 - Adaptive nature of successful family systems
- Child-rearing values not simply the product of social class or any other type of cultural group or an individual construction, but involve a dynamic interplay between the developing context and the developing individuals within, just as contextualist theories specify

Thanks for your attention!
Questions???



- For more details, see: Tudge, J. (2008). *The everyday lives of young children: Culture, class, and child rearing in diverse societies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Various papers and presentations can be downloaded from:
- www.uncg.edu/hdf/facultystaff/Tudge/Tudge.html