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## AUTONOMY AND RELATEDNESS IN CULTURAL CONTEXT

### Implications for Self and Family

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Autonomy and agency are used extensively and often interchangeably; there is a debate regarding their intersections with relatedness and separateness. This scholarship occurs within mainly a Euro-American cultural context that provides an ideological background of individualism, shedding light on psychological thinking. The article attempts to provide a broad overview of the issues involved. Two distinct dimensions, agency and interpersonal distance, are seen to underlie the self constructs involving autonomy and relatedness that are developed in different spheres of psychological inquiry. Autonomy and relatedness are viewed as basic human needs, and though apparently conflicting, are proposed to be compatible. Problems of conceptualization and operationalization are noted that have prevented the recognition of this compatibility. A model is put forward that involves a fourfold combination of the two dimensions, leading to different types of self and the societal and familial contexts in which they develop. Recent research provides credibility to the model proposed.

**Keywords:** autonomy; relatedness; autonomous-related self; adolescent development; model of psychological interdependence; family

**Autonomy and relatedness** have long been recognized as basic needs in different theoretical perspectives in psychology ranging from psychoanalytic thinking to evolutionary psychology (e.g. Angyal, 1951; Bakan, 1966; Erikson, 1968; Franz & White, 1985; Guisinger & Blatt, 1994; Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996). Autonomy has often been construed as conflicting with relatedness, reflecting tendencies toward independence from others and interdependence with others, variously called “autonomy,” “agency,” or “separation-individuation” versus “surrender,” “communion,” “union,” “fusion,” or “dependency” (Guisinger & Blatt, 1994; Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996). As related to autonomy, agency has received a great deal of attention in social psychology, often at the expense of relatedness. For example, individual agency is the core of the social cognitive theory of Bandura (1989). From a different theoretical tradition, European, particularly German, scholarship on symbolic action theory (Boesch, 1991; Eckensberger, 1995) and individualization theory (Crockett & Silbereisen, 2000; Neubauer & Hurrelmann, 1995) also stresses agency, individual control, and reflectivity. The general thrust is the crucial importance of individual autonomy and agency.

More recently, there has been a reassertion of the importance and compatibility of autonomy and relatedness (Blatt & Blass, 1996; Cross & Madson, 1997; Guisinger & Blatt, 1994; Kagitcibasi, 1996a; Raeff, 1997). There is also evidence supporting the basic nature, thus the universality, of the needs for relatedness (e.g. Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Reis, 1994) and for autonomy (Assor, Kaplan, & Roth, 2002). Self-determination theory (SDT) has been influential in this context (Chirkov, Kim, Ryan, & Kaplan, 2003; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick, 1995; Ryan & Lynch, 1989). SDT posits autonomy and relatedness as basic needs, adding also competence.

An ongoing issue concerns the meanings attributed to autonomy and agency, as put forward in various definitions. Agency, as construed by Bandura (1989), refers to motivated action, with a sense of efficacy, toward a desired outcome. The dictionary definition of autonomy includes self-rule and volition. Although recognizing that there are different definitions of autonomy in psychological and philosophical accounts, the construal of autonomy in this article, and in the theoretical work leading to it, is in terms of agency that also involves volition. It is to be an agent and at the same time to act willingly, without a sense of coercion. Autonomy and agency are thus seen as overlapping. This is akin to SDT's view that "true agency requires autonomy" (Ryan et al., 1995, p. 624) as well as other recent views (Beyers, Goossens, Vansant, & Moors, 2003).

Autonomy and agency are not antithetical to relatedness. Nevertheless, they are at times assumed to be, deriving both from psychoanalytically based conceptualizations of separation-individuation and from an individualistic outlook. For example, some cultural perspectives (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Oishi, 2000; Rothbaum, Pott, Azuma, Miyake, & Weise, 2000; see also Miller, 2002) have questioned the importance, even the existence, of autonomy in collectivistic cultures. This is a key issue dealt with in this article. The thesis of the article is that separateness and relatedness can be equally agentic and volitional. It attempts to show why this is not readily recognized in psychology by examining diverse conceptual and research traditions in the field. It then proposes a model of self and the family that promises to shed light on self-society dynamics and that finds support in a growing body of research.

## TWO UNDERLYING DIMENSIONS

Construals of autonomy often combine two distinct meaning dimensions. One of these has to do with the degree of distancing of self from others. It may be called the "interpersonal distance" dimension, underlying self-other relations and extending from separateness to relatedness poles. It reflects the degree of connection with others. Separate selves are distanced from others with well-defined self-boundaries, whereas the boundaries of connected selves may be fused with others. The other dimension has to do with the degree of autonomous functioning, which may be labeled "agency." It extends from autonomy to heteronomy. The concept of agency is used here in general terms, referring to volitional agency underlying autonomy. The terms "autonomous" versus "heteronomous" morality used by Piaget (1948) in the study of moral development reflect this second meaning. Autonomous morality means subject to one's own rule; heteronomous morality, subject to another's rule. Autonomy is the state of being a self-governing agent, whereas heteronomy is the state of being governed from outside. This conceptualization is akin to the view of SDT, though independently deriving from a cross-cultural developmental orientation to the family and the self (Kagitcibasi, 1990, 1996a, 1996b).

The two dimensions are constructs that are seen to underlie self, self-other relations and social behaviors, and in turn to reflect basic human needs of relatedness and autonomy. One's standing on the interpersonal distance dimension may or may not affect one's standing on the agency dimension. In other words, one of these dimensions does not have to imply the other; their interrelationship is empirical rather than logical. If these two dimensions are distinct, then it is quite possible to have the different poles of each coexist. For example, it should be possible for a person to be high in both autonomy and relatedness, as also recognized by SDT and in other recent work (Markus & Kitayama, 2003; Wiggins & Trapnell,

1996). Similarly, a recent review and meta-analysis by Oyserman, Kimmelmeier, and Coon (2002b) provides evidence for the independence of agency and interpersonal distance, showing that Americans are both high in individualism and personal agency and also in some aspects of relatedness, including familism.

Nevertheless, in the individualistic view of autonomy, reflected in much theorizing on the topic, these two distinct dimensions are often seen to overlap and are even used interchangeably. Such confounding of the two dimensions was seen early in Bakan's (1966) conflict theory, pitting agency against relatedness (communion). Subsequently, feminist theory also crossed over the two dimensions, defining autonomy as separateness and contrasting the female development toward relatedness with the male development toward autonomy (Gilligan, 1982; Jordan, 1997).

### PSYCHOLOGY'S AGENDA: THE INDIVIDUAL

Particularly from a psychoanalytic orientation in the conceptualization of personality, individual autonomy, defined as independence from others, has been considered a requisite of healthy human development (Blos, 1979; Erikson, 1968; S. Freud, 1930/1961; Mahler, 1972). Psychological theory and practice have traditionally stressed the importance of individual independence, achievement, self-efficacy, self-reliance, self-actualization, privacy, and freedom of choice. Individual independence is a cherished value and is reflected in much popular psychology from parent education courses to self-help books, particularly in the United States. What is the reason for this emphasis? It does not readily emerge from an evolutionary perspective, which stresses rather the survival value of cooperation and relatedness in humans and other primates (Euler, Hoier, & Rohde, 2001; Guisinger & Blatt, 1994). It is mainly cultural; psychology as a Western product reflects the individualistic ethos of the Western world. Thus, the synergistic interplay between societal values and the descriptive and prescriptive scholarship on human nature is the issue here.

All societies manage to meet basic human needs such as autonomy and relatedness at least to some extent (Killen & Wainryb, 2000). However, the phenotypical synthesis emerging in any cultural or subcultural group tends to prioritize the expression of one of these to a greater extent (Keller et al., 2003). This can be understood as a "cultural affordance" (Kitayama, 2002; Poortinga, 1992). Thus, a cultural symbol system, ideology, or convention can function as a lens through which people perceive and understand events that they experience. The analysis proposed in this article derives from such a perspective in pointing to the cultural underpinnings of psychology's emphasis on individual agency as a reflection of the Western, particularly American, individualistic worldview.

Searching for the roots of individualism in the Western world, one is struck by the multitude of historical influences. Thus, individualism has been traced in the history of ideas (Taylor, 1989), in political and economic history (Lesthaeghe, 1983; MacFarlane, 1978), in religious history (Capps & Fenn, 1992), and in psychosocial history (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; for a review see Kagitcibasi, 1997). Though the majority of the world's population shares at least some aspects of collectivism, and in Western societies ethnic minorities and lower income groups appear to be more collectivistic (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995), the individualistic worldview tends to be seen as the norm and is exported to the rest of the world as the human model to emulate (Jahoda & Dasen, 1986).

Individualism, as a cultural affordance of the West and particularly notable in psychology, is also reflected in more general scholarship. Thus, Schwartz (1986) argued that

economics, evolutionary biology, and the behavioral sciences are based on *cultural* individualistic assumptions that are presented as “human nature.” Since the 1970s, there has also been concern regarding the dangers of excessive individualism (for a review, see Kagitcibasi, 1997). Psychology has been criticized for contributing to the preoccupation with and the exaltation of the individual, unencumbered by any loyalties to others (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Capps & Fenn, 1992; Schwartz, 1986; Smith, 1994; Wallach & Wallach, 1983).

### ADOLESCENT RESEARCH AS A CASE IN POINT

Recent theorizing in adolescent research is important for this debate, as adolescence is the period where autonomy and relatedness dynamics assume special significance. From an individualistic perspective, Steinberg and Silverberg (1986) view “emotional autonomy” from parents as an important aspect of individuation, following A. Freud’s (1958) and Blos’s (1979) psychoanalytic conceptualization of adolescent autonomy in terms of a second “separation-individuation process” (Mahler, 1972). Others (e.g., J. A. Hoffman, 1984) share this focus on the distancing of the adolescent from the parents as autonomy. Informed by such theorizing, recent research within the object relations approach (e.g., Kroger, 1998) stresses the importance of distancing and disengaging of the adolescent from parents as a significant phase of healthy development. It is clear that in this individualistic construal of autonomy, the two dimensions of agency and interpersonal distance are again confounded. Autonomy is defined as separateness.

The contrasting perspective defines autonomy as agency (see Beyers et al., 2003) and conceives of a close, positive relationship with parents as nourishing the development of healthy autonomy (Bretherton, 1987; Grotevant & Cooper, 1986; Kagitcibasi, 1996a; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan et al., 1995; Ryan & Lynch, 1989). This is in line with the conceptualization of the two distinct dimensions of agency and interpersonal distance being proposed here. This view, espoused both by SDT and attachment theory, has been endorsed in research and in practice. It is found that close ties and attachment to parents, rather than detachment, is associated with adolescent health and well-being in diverse cultures, including the United States (Chirkov et al., 2003; Chou, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Similarly, research in Germany also points to the positive association between autonomous (i.e., secure) attachment and positive relationships with parents (Grossman, Grossman, & Zimmerman, 1999, p. 779), thus integrating autonomy with relatedness rather than with separateness.

However, other researchers, who are critical of the emphasis put on detachment or separation, still consider separation-individuation as the main developmental task of adolescence at which one can succeed or fail (Noom, 1999). Thus, therapeutic or nontherapeutic separation-individuation has been distinguished, with the former involving connectedness to the family (Daniels, 1990). A number of semantic and conceptual issues emerge here. If there is connectedness, then why is the process still called separation? Similarly, there is a recognition that “becoming an autonomous individual and maintaining an interdependent relationship with one’s parents are not mutually exclusive” (Daniels, 1990, p. 107), yet the process is nevertheless called separation-individuation.

Separation-individuation fits the individualistic stance well so that even when it is recognized that it does not represent the whole of the adolescent healthy growth process, there is an attempt to keep it but to add connectedness to it. This results in the conceptual anomaly of separateness and connectedness being together. There is a similar semantic or conceptual

problem with the term *individuation*. Individuation is considered to entail both the ability to achieve a sense of self that is *separate* from significant others but that also maintains a sense of emotional connectedness with them (Bartle & Anderson, 1991), which is problematic because both of these orientations fall on the same interpersonal-distance dimension as, for example, empirically demonstrated by Frank, Avery, and Laman (1988). The question arises, then, why this is called individuation only. Also, how is the state of being less individuated defined? In terms of less separateness or less connectedness? Such confusion is reflected in individuality being seen at times to include connectedness (Cooper, Grotevant, & Condon, 1983; Grotevant & Cooper, 1986) but at other times not. It would appear that a better recognition of the two underlying dimensions of agency (autonomy-heteronomy) and interpersonal distance (separateness-relatedness) would bring in some clarification.

### **CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH AND INDIVIDUALISM-COLLECTIVISM (I-C)**

Most of the relevant cross-cultural research and conceptualization has occurred within the general framework of I-C (for reviews, see Kagitcibasi, 1997; Oyserman, Kimmelmeier, & Coon, 2002a, Oyserman et al., 2002b). We can point to a values orientation and a self orientation to studying I-C. The values orientation emerged earlier and is more dominant in cross-cultural social psychological research. It addresses mostly the "normative I-C" (Kagitcibasi, 1997), as reflected in cultural values, conventions, and rules. It focuses mainly on whether individual interests *should* be subordinated to group interests or *should* be upheld. Somewhat different from the values orientation to I-C is the self-orientation that has to do with "relational I-C" (Kagitcibasi, 1997), focusing on separateness versus embeddedness, that is, self-other relations. Clearly, the interpersonal distance dimension, discussed earlier, is the key here. Cultural and cross-cultural work with a self-orientation to I-C is relevant to the main theme of this article. The distinction of the relational and the separate self, construed as independent-interdependent, has been seen as reflecting interpersonal relations (Kagitcibasi, 1990), developmental paths (Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003; Keller, 2003; Rothbaum et al., 2000), or different types of self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994). The behavioral, cognitive, emotional, and motivational concomitants of the independent and the interdependent self-construals have been studied (e.g., Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998; Markus & Kitayama, 1998). There are also attempts at linking the self to more normative aspects of I-C in the constructs of vertical and horizontal I-C, referring to hierarchical and egalitarian relationships, respectively (Singelis et al., 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). As such, these latter combine normative and relational I-C, as defined above.

Notwithstanding the continuing popularity of the I-C paradigm and the corresponding independent-interdependent construal of the self, there is also serious criticism. One aspect of the criticism addresses the questionable empirical support of the theoretical perspective. For example, Takano and Osaka (1999) reviewed 10 studies comparing Americans and Japanese on I-C and found no evidence supporting "the common view." Matsumoto (1999), with a more extensive review, showed that both the I-C and the independent-interdependent self-construals lacked empirical support. Several studies (mostly reviewed by Matsumoto) question the validity of the independent-interdependent self-construal, using Singelis's (1994) Self Construal Scale, based upon Markus and Kitayama's (1991) conceptualization and/or other scales (e.g. Gudykunst, Matsumoto, Ting-Toomey, & Nishida, 1996; Matsumoto,

Weissman, Preston, Brown, & Kupperbusch, 1997; Stephan, Stephan, Saito, & Morrison Barnett, 1998). On the other hand, Oyserman et al. (2002b), in their meta-analysis, note that despite its shortcomings, I-C has been valuable in showing systematic differences in self, values, and thinking and relating to others. However, they also note the difficulties in conceptualization and methodology, particularly measurement of I-C across cultures.

### CONFOUNDING CONCEPTUALIZATION AND MEASUREMENT

Some of the problems noted above may be due at least in part to the confounding conceptualizations involved in both theory and measurement regarding the independent and the interdependent self as well as I-C. This is indeed not unrelated to the confounding of the dimensions of agency and interpersonal distance in the conceptualization of autonomy as separateness, discussed earlier. The conceptual problem, emerging from the individualistic orientation in mainstream (American) psychology, has shed its shadow on the cross-cultural psychological theory and research also. Running through the conceptualization of I-C and independence-interdependence is the image of individualism and independent self combining autonomy and separateness, and of collectivism and interdependent self combining heteronomy and relatedness.

These combined meanings are often implicit but are at times also made explicit. An example is the vertical and horizontal I-C (Singelis et al., 1995). Vertical-horizontal I-C has to do with normative I-C (Kagitcibasi, 1997) as defined above, mainly referring to whether the individual should be subordinate to the group or not. However, they integrate into this relational I-C in terms of self being related in collectivism but autonomous and separate in individualism. Such combining of normative (equality vs. hierarchy) with relational (separateness vs. relatedness) I-C further contributes to the confounding conceptualization, as seen in the following paraphrased description:

Vertical or horizontal collectivism includes perceiving the self *as a part of a collective*, either accepting inequality or stressing equality, respectively; vertical or horizontal individualism includes the conception of an *autonomous individual* and acceptance of inequality or emphasis on equality, respectively. (Singelis et al., 1995, p. 240, italics added)

Clearly, relatedness does not figure in individualism, and autonomy does not figure in collectivism. Similarly, "Collectivism stands for a society in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive ingroups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for *unquestioning* [italics added] loyalty" (Hofstede, 1991, pp. 260-261) betrays an assumption of lack of autonomy in collectivism.

Although remaining within the relational conceptualization of I-C, Markus and Kitayama's (1991) independent-interdependent self also combines agency and interpersonal distance dimensions. Thus their definitions: "The essential aspect of this view [independent construal] involves a conception of the self as an *autonomous*, independent person" (p. 226) and "The cultural press in the [interdependent model] is not to become separate and autonomous from others but to fit-in with others" (Markus & Kitayama, 1994, p. 97).

Although Markus and Kitayama (1991) point out that interdependence does not mean lack of agency (p. 228), they also concede that for the interdependent self, "the understanding of one's autonomy [is] secondary to, and constrained by, the primary task of interdependence" (p. 227) thus, in effect, pitting autonomy against relatedness. Gudykunst et al.

(1996), following Markus and Kitayama's conceptualization, have measured self-construals when they state, "All items on the independent self construal scale clearly reflect individuals being *autonomous*, unique people. All items on the interdependent self construal scale, in contrast, reflect individuals being *embedded* in group relationships" (p. 527, italics added).

Thus, the conceptual problem is also reflected in measurement. Often the same scale includes items measuring autonomy and relatedness-separateness. This problem may contribute to the inconsistent empirical findings discussed above. A few items from scales widely used in the field will demonstrate the problem. The following items are from the Collectivism (Individualism) scales of Yamaguchi (Y) (1994), Hui (H) (Hui & Yee, 1994), Triandis (T) (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988), Matsumoto (M) (Matsumoto et al., 1997), and Independent-Interdependent Self Construal scales of Kitayama (K) (Kitayama, Markus, Kurokawa, Tummala, & Kato, 1991) and Singelis (S) (1994).

#### MEASURING INDIVIDUALISM AND INDEPENDENCE

- To be superior, a man must stand alone. (T)
- In the long run the only person you can count on is yourself. (T)
- Do you have your own opinions on everything? (How important is it for you to have your own opinions on everything?) (K)
- Having a lively imagination is important to me. (S)
- Speaking up during a class (a meeting) is not a problem for me. (S)
- If the child won the Nobel Prize, the parents should not feel honored in any way. (T)

#### MEASURING COLLECTIVISM AND INTERDEPENDENCE

- I like to live close to my friends. (H, T)
- I sacrifice self-interest for my group. (Y, S)
- I usually go along with what others want to do, even when I would rather do something different. (S)
- To sacrifice your goals (possessions) for; to compromise your wishes to act together with . . . (M)
- Are you kind to others? (How important is it for you to be kind to others?) (K)

Clearly, the dimensions of interpersonal distance (separateness-relatedness) and agency (autonomy-heteronomy) are both included in these scale items, especially combining separateness and autonomy for individualism or independent self-construal. There is also the further complicating factor of hierarchical (vertical) relationships in the items measuring collectivism/interdependence, subordinating the individual to the group and thus reflecting normative collectivism and lack of autonomy.

It has been claimed that I-C do not form a single dimension, that they are not polar opposites, but rather may coexist in groups and individuals at the same time in different situations and with different target groups (Kagitcibasi, 1994, 1997; Triandis, 1995). Singelis (1994) showed that the independence and the interdependence scales are orthogonal. The extensive meta-analysis of Oyserman et al. (2002b) also pointed to I-C as not falling on a single dimension. Though this provides a refinement, it does not solve the problem of confounding the two dimensions of interpersonal distance and agency. This is because the construal of both independence and interdependence contains both dimensions (independence involving autonomy and separateness, interdependence involving heteronomy and relatedness). The two dimensions of interpersonal distance and agency can fit together, loading on the same factor, in sociocultural contexts such as the United States, where being both autonomous and separate is valued, but they may not in other sociocultural contexts where being connected



does not imply lacking autonomy. Thus, the problem of external validity referred to by the critical reviews.

### A MODEL OF THE AUTONOMOUS-RELATED SELF AND THE FAMILY IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

This brings us to a further elaboration of the two underlying dimensions of interpersonal distance and agency, their interface and antecedents. Cross-cultural perspectives address questions regarding different types of self and their concomitant behaviors. Though valuable, this approach falls short of addressing questions regarding how these different types of selves emerge, that is, the different types of socialization processes that engender them. Neither do they deal with the further question of why certain types of socialization occur in certain types of sociocultural contexts. In other words, barely demonstrating that there are links between culture, self, and behavior does not tell us *how* and *why*. To address these questions, developmental perspectives are needed.

Bringing in a contextual developmental orientation, the construct of the autonomous-related self is proposed here. It is based on a construal of autonomy as agency with volition and untangling it from relatedness. Given the two underlying dimensions of agency and interpersonal distance and the two basic needs for autonomy and relatedness, the autonomous-related self promises to have both logical and psychological validity. This is in line with the views, such as SDT, that endorse both autonomy and relatedness to be constitutive of the self (e.g., Blatt & Blass, 1996; Chirkov et al., 2003; Cross & Madson, 1997; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Raef, 1997; Ryan et al., 1995) but goes beyond them in examining the underlying dimensions and in situating the *development* of the self in sociocultural and familial context.

The construct of autonomous-related self emerged within a model of family change (Kagitcibasi, 1990; 1996b), reflecting a global pattern of urbanization and socioeconomic development in the “majority world”<sup>1</sup> with collectivistic cultures of relatedness (Kagitcibasi, 1990). The general model situates the family within the cultural and social structural context and studies it as a system. Generational interdependencies, the values attributed to children, parenting, and the resultant self and interpersonal/familial relations are examined. The background of the family change model goes back to the nine-country Value of Children (VOC) Study investigating motivations underlying fertility behavior (Fawcett, 1983; L. W. Hoffman, 1987; Kagitcibasi, 1982, 1990). Only some aspects of the model that are of relevance to the issues at hand will be briefly examined here.

Three prototypical family interaction patterns are differentiated: (a) the traditional family, characterized by interdependence between generations in both material and emotional realms; (b) the individualistic model, based on independence; and (c) a dialectical synthesis of these two, involving material independence but psychological interdependence between generations. Parenting orientations differ among these three patterns and so do the distinctive characteristics of the emergent selves.

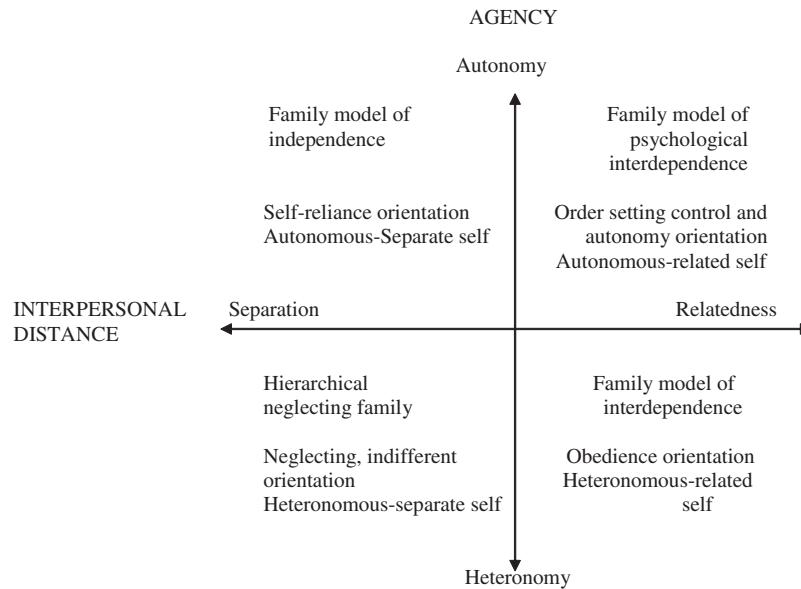
The model of total interdependence is prevalent in rural agrarian society with low levels of affluence but is also seen in urban low-socioeconomic status (SES) contexts, where intergenerational interdependence is necessary for family livelihood. It is found in large areas of the majority world, for example, in Asia. Children contribute to the family economy while young, and they have “old-age security value” for their parents when they grow up (Kagitcibasi, 1982; 1990). Thus, the child’s economic and utilitarian value has salience for

parents, and high fertility is implicated, because more children provide more economic and utilitarian support (Caldwell, 2001; Fawcett, 1983). The independence of the child is not functional (thus not valued), because an independent child may leave the family and look after his or her own self-interest when he or she grows up. Thus, independence and autonomy of the growing child can be a threat to family livelihood through the family life cycle (Kagitcibasi, 1982, 1990). Obedience orientation is therefore dominant in parenting. Much research documents this pattern in traditional society across cultures as well as among ethnic migrants in Western societies (e.g., Dekovic, Pels, & Model, *in press*; Greenfield et al., 2003; Kagitcibasi, 1996b; Keller, 2003; Keller et al., 2003; Nauck & Kohlman, 1999). Both the culture of relatedness (collectivistic culture) and the social structure reflected in lifestyles require and reinforce the family culture of interdependence.

The contrasting pattern of independence is characteristic of the Western industrial society, particularly the American middle-class nuclear family, at least in its professed ideals (Kagan, 1984), reflecting the individualistic worldview. Actually, there appears to be more intergenerational interdependence in the United States than is recognized, particularly in less affluent groups, such as lower income African Americans (Slaughter, 1988). However, given the cultural ideal of independence and self-sufficiency, interdependence is at times found to be problematic, involving ambivalence and feelings of inadequacy (Cohler & Geyer, 1982). Particularly with greater affluence, higher level of education, and alternative sources of old-age support among European Americans, dependence on adult offspring turns out to be unnecessary and even unacceptable (L. W. Hoffman, 1987); thus, children are brought up to be independent and self-sufficient. Autonomy of the growing child is not seen as a threat to family livelihood over the family life cycle but is highly valued and is often construed as separateness. Children are economic costs rather than assets, therefore, there is low fertility (Caldwell, 2001; Fawcett, 1983; L. W. Hoffman, 1987). Both the culture of separateness (individualistic culture) and affluent lifestyles reinforce the family culture of independence.

It is generally assumed that there is a global shift from the family model of interdependence to the family model of independence with urbanization and economic development. This is the modernization convergence hypothesis, which research has shown to be rather simplistic (for reviews, see Kagitcibasi, 1990, 1996b). Rather, there is a need to distinguish material and psychological interdependencies in the family (Kagitcibasi, 1990, 1996b). What seems to happen is that with urban lifestyles and increasing affluence, material interdependence between generations decreases, because elderly parents do not need any longer to depend on the economic support of their adult offspring (Astone, Nathanson, Schoen, & Kim, 1999; Caldwell, 2001; Fawcett, 1983; L. W. Hoffman, 1987; Nauck & Kohlman, 1999). Nevertheless, psychological interdependence, as closely-knit selves, continues, because it is ingrained in the culture of relatedness (collectivism) and is not incompatible with changing lifestyles (Kagitcibasi, 1990, 1996b).

The weakening of intergenerational material interdependencies allows autonomy to enter child rearing. This is because the child's autonomy is not any longer perceived as a threat when his or her material contribution is not required for family livelihood. Nevertheless, because psychological interdependence continues to be valued, the connectedness of the growing child is desired, rather than separateness. Therefore, together with autonomy, there continues to be control rather than permissiveness in child rearing, and control may function as a centripetal rather than a centrifugal force. This is no longer authoritarian parenting because with the autonomy of the child being allowed, control becomes "order setting" rather than "dominating" (Lau, Lew, Hau, Cheung, & Berndt, 1990).



**Figure 1: Agency, Interpersonal Distance, and the Types of Selves and Families**

Thus, in the third prototypical model, the model of psychological interdependence,<sup>2</sup> we see the type of parenting that instills both relatedness and autonomy. Given that the economic contribution of the offspring is no longer necessary for family survival, the child's autonomy is tolerated. Also, although in traditional society an obedience orientation in child rearing is adaptive for nonspecialized tasks in simple agriculture or menial labor, autonomy becomes adaptive in changing urban society. This is because with the greater prevalence of schooling, and increasing specialization in the workplace, capacity for individual decision making emerges as a new asset. Thus, beyond tolerating autonomy, parents may come to value it. Nevertheless, even though autonomy is now valued, separation is not the goal; relatedness continues to be valued, given the enduring influence of the culture of relatedness (Nauck & Kohlman, 1999; Phaet & Schonpflug, 2001).

The family model of psychological interdependence is relevant to the previous discussion on the distinctness of the two dimensions of interpersonal distance (relatedness-separateness) and agency (autonomy-heteronomy). This is because in this model there coexists relatedness and autonomy. Putting everything together, the intersection of the two dimensions and the different family models point to the development of different types of selves (see Figure 1). The orthogonal presentation of the two dimensions is for the purposes of the theoretical argument. As indicated before, their distinctness is the main point made here. Their relationship is empirical; thus, it is possible that in some cultural contexts they may be correlated (Beyers et al., 2003), but not in others, though Wiggins and Trapnell (1996) suggest they are orthogonal across many domains of behavior.

The first type of self is the heteronomus-related self, which is high in relatedness but low in autonomy; it develops in the family model of total interdependence, with obedience orientation. The second one is the autonomous-separate self, which is high in autonomy but low in relatedness; it develops in the family model of independence, with self-reliance orientation. The third one is the autonomous-related self, which is high in both relatedness and

autonomy; it develops in the family model of psychological interdependence, with both (order-setting) control and autonomy orientation. The fourth pattern in Figure 1 may point to a situation of parental neglect or indifference (Baumrind, 1980; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). It has been observed in hierarchical families with rejecting and obedience-oriented parenting, instilling in the child a separated but heteronomous self (Fisek, 1991). It is to be noted that these are prototypical characterizations; they should be seen as involving degrees of variation along the two underlying dimensions of agency and interpersonal distance.

The model of psychological interdependence reflects the changing family in much of the majority world with cultures of relatedness. These are the contexts in which closely knit family and human ties prevail while economic and social structural transformations take place with increasing urbanization, education, and affluence (see Koutrelakos, 2004; Rothbaum et al., 2000). However, the model is not confined to these contexts (Kagitcibasi, 1990, 1996b). There may be shifts from a model of independence to a model of psychological interdependence also, as the latter model involves both of the two basic needs for autonomy and relatedness. Research points to such reaffirmation of relatedness values in postmodern society. For example, Inglehart (1991) and Young (1992) find increasing importance of human relational values in several technological societies, and Jansen (1987) and Weil (1987) point to new living arrangements recreating the community in the Netherlands and in Israel. The criticism of unbridled individualism in the United States also calls for relatedness rather than separateness, as discussed before. Indeed, relatedness may be more common in Western societies, including the United States, than is assumed (e.g., Oyserman et al., 2002b; Slaughter, 1988). It may be claimed that the model of psychological interdependence is a candidate for a healthy universal, as it better recognizes and satisfies autonomy and relatedness needs. Research reviewed earlier (e.g., Blatt & Blass, 1996; Chirkov et al., 2003; Chou, 2000; Grotevant & Cooper, 1986; Ryan & Deci, 2000) supports this claim.

There is a caveat, however. The modernization prediction of a shift toward the model of independence and individualism with socioeconomic development may indeed happen (or may be happening). But this would be due to cultural diffusion rather than the inherent greater adaptability of the model of independence. Globalization involving the influence of Western, especially American, individualistic culture in the mass media, movies, and so forth promotes the Western model as the most "advanced," to be emulated even while it is criticized in the West. "Modern" is often equated with "Western," though the latter may not entail the most adaptive or healthy human model, a point also made by Yang (1988), who noted the substantial overlap between the attributes of modernity and individualism.

## RESEARCH EVIDENCE

The family model of psychological interdependence and the autonomous-related self can be seen as integrative syntheses, because they integrate apparently conflicting orientations regarding family interaction patterns and the self, respectively. A growing body of research provides evidence for the validity of these constructs. A selective overview of this research is presented next to point to the cross-cultural relevance of these theoretical constructs.

As indicated before, the family change model and the family model of psychological interdependence emerged out of the nine-country VOC Study conducted in 1970s, one of the countries being Turkey (Kagitcibasi, 1982, 1990). Recently, a partial replication of the VOC study has been carried out in Turkey (Kagitcibasi & Ataca, in press) as a part of a 10-country project,<sup>3</sup> which provides convincing evidence of change over time. The most notable change

during a period of 3 decades is a decrease in the salience of economic and utilitarian value of the child, including old-age security value, and a much greater emphasis put on the psychological value of the child. Comparing the different social strata, the economic and utilitarian value of the child is stressed most by rural mothers, followed by urban, low-income mothers, and the least by urban upper and middle SES mothers. There are also intergenerational differences, with grandmothers stressing economic and utilitarian value of the child more than mothers and adolescents. Similarly, expectations of (future) financial help from grown offspring are higher among rural and lower income groups. These results provide evidence for a shift from the family model of interdependence to one of psychological interdependence over three decades of socioeconomic development and urbanization. In line with these changes are changes in desired qualities of children. The value put on obedience is found to have decreased greatly since the original VOC Study, whereas autonomy is now desired more, particularly by urban upper-middle SES mothers. This points to a family context conducive to the development of the autonomous-related self. Other research examining familism among Hispanic Americans (Perez & Padilla, 2000; Sabogal, Marin, Otero-Sabogal, Marin, & Perez-Stable, 1987) and self-disclosure among Greeks (Koutrelakos, 2004) also provides support to Kagitcibasi's family change model involving decreased material interdependencies but continuing emotional (psychological) interdependencies with acculturation and socioeconomic development, respectively.

Research also points to the compatibility of autonomy and relatedness. Studies based on SDT found a more positive relationship between autonomy and relatedness than between autonomy and separateness in the United States (Ryan et al., 1995; Ryan & Lynch, 1989) as well as in U.S. and Korean samples (Kim, Butzel, & Ryan, 1998), endorsing the independence of the agency and interpersonal distance dimensions and supporting the autonomous-related self. Similarly, in a recent structural modeling of autonomy (Beyers et al., 2003), separation and agency emerged as two independent dimensions. Several studies point to relations between relatedness and well-being in adolescents. Meeus, Oosterwegel, and Vollebergh (2002) found with Dutch, Turkish, and Moroccan adolescents in the Netherlands that secure attachment to parents fosters the exploration of identity commitment (an agency measure). Inversely, Chou (2000) found the two components of emotional autonomy (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986), that is, individuation (separation) and de-idealization of parents, to be associated with depression in adolescents (Chou, 2000), and Aydin and Oztutuncu (2001) showed depression and negative schema in Turkish adolescents to be associated with separateness, but not with high parental control in the family. Similarly, separateness from parents as measured by the Emotional Autonomy Scale (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986) is found to be associated with developmental problems (Beyers & Goossens, 1999; Chen & Dornbusch, 1998; Garber & Little, 2001). Finally, in a review of research on immigrants in the United States, Kwak (2003) noted the common preference of adolescents for both autonomy and family relatedness.

Studies on parent-child relations shed further light on control, autonomy, and relatedness and provide support to the family model of psychological interdependence. Lin and Fu (1990) compared Chinese parents in Taiwan, immigrant Chinese parents in the United States, and Anglo-American parents and found Chinese groups to be high on both control in child rearing and encouragement of autonomy and achievement. Cha (1994) reported similar findings among Korean parents who grant autonomy to their children while accepting in-group obligations. Research with Turkish minority families in Germany (Phalet & Schonpflug, 2001) showed that parental autonomy goals for adolescents do not imply separateness, and that achievement values are associated with parental collectivism, not

individualism. Dekovic et al. (in press), studying five ethnic minorities in the Netherlands, found the coexistence of strong parental control and warmth (relatedness).

Some developmental roots may be found in early mother-child interactions. For example, Kagitcibasi's model is supported by Keller et al. (2003), who found German and Greek mothers to be similar in their interactional mechanisms with infants (high level of face-to-face contact and child-directed language) that are considered to lead to the development of agency. However, although the German mothers focused more on contingency, which is considered to reinforce the emerging agency as *separate* from others, Greek mothers focused more on warmth, considered "to reinforce the emerging agency as *interrelated* [italics added] with others, thus possibly initiating a developmental pathway to an autonomous relational self" (Kagitcibasi, 1996b, p. 14). Similarly, work with French and Dutch parents by Suizzo (2002) and by Harkness, Super, and van Tijen (2000), respectively, also found an emphasis on agency but not on separateness. For example, French parents "awaken" and stimulate their children, valuing alertness (associated with agency), but they also value compliance and bonding with their children (Suizzo, 2002, p. 298). This is different from the Euro-American parents' disapproval of their children's displays of dependence (Suizzo, 2002, p. 304). These studies point to variations across Western individualistic cultures and to the relevance of the family model of psychological interdependence and the autonomous-related self also in the West.

Several studies provide further evidence for the coexistence of autonomy, control, and relatedness. Stewart, Bond, Deeds, and Chung (1999) studied modern upper-middle-class families in Hong Kong and found support for Kagitcibasi's family change model, showing persistence of "family relatedness and expectations of parental control" (p. 589). This contrasts with American findings pointing to an increased emphasis on autonomy and separateness and more permissive parenting with higher social class standing, reflecting greater adherence to the dominant cultural ideology of independence (e.g., L. W. Hoffman & Youngblade, 1998; Solomon, 1993). Similarly, Jose, Huntsinger, Huntsinger, and Liaw (2000) with Chinese, Chinese American, and Euro-American parents found the Chinese parents to endorse both relatedness and autonomy. Chinese parents also showed combined control and closeness to their children, demonstrating more control than Euro-American parents but equal warmth with them.

The last finding is parallel to the results of an early study demonstrating the distinctness of (perceived) parental control and warmth. Comparing Turkish and American adolescents' perceptions of parental control and warmth, Kagitcibasi (1970) found that although Turkish adolescents reported more parental control, there was no difference between the two groups in perceived parental warmth. Rohner's (Rohner & Pettengill, 1985) and Trommsdorff's (1985) work followed suit in showing that for Korean and Japanese adolescents, parental control was associated with parental acceptance (warmth), but not for American and German adolescents. Combined parental control and warmth are also reported in recent studies conducted with ethnic groups in the United States and the Netherlands (see Dekovic et al., in press; Kwak, 2003; Lansford, Deater-Deckard, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 2003; Smetana & Gaines, 1999) and Chinese in Hong Kong (Yau & Smetana, 1996). All this work, as well as the models of Baumrind (1980, 1989) and Maccoby and Martin (1983), are closely parallel to the conceptualization developed here, though not the same thing, because parental warmth refers mainly to the emotional aspect of relatedness (connectedness) of selves. There can be other kinds of connectedness, for example, based on material rather than emotional interdependencies, as in the traditional context of the interdependent family discussed above.

When asked, people indeed say that relatedness and autonomy can coexist. In an ongoing study by Kagitcibasi with university student samples in Turkey, the United States, Hong Kong, and Sweden, late adolescents all agreed that “a person can be both autonomous and closely attached to someone.” The very high level of endorsement points to the recognition of the two basic needs for autonomy and relatedness and their combination, the autonomous-related self. In Turkey, adults also agreed with the statement, the level of agreement being higher among the younger and the more “modern” urban groups, providing evidence for the autonomous-related self emerging with socioeconomic development in the family model of psychological interdependence. Similarly, in the recent replication of the VOC Study in Turkey (Kagitcibasi & Ataca, *in press*) mentioned before, recognition and endorsement of the autonomous-related self was found to be the highest in the urban higher SES groups and the lowest in the rural groups. It also related negatively to material and utilitarian, and traditional, reasons for wanting to have children. Thus, this seems to be a reflection of an urban and modern pattern, fitting with the family model of psychological interdependence.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR APPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The implications of these findings are significant regarding both theory and practice. A few examples would help make the point. If separation and independence from parents are seen as necessary for healthy adolescent development by counselors and psychologists, this may lead to undermining relatedness needs. Indeed, adolescent counseling is criticized for overstressing the necessity of separation from parents as a developmental goal (e.g., Quintana & Kerr, 1993; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

This can be especially problematic with ethnic minorities who have interdependent family patterns. Considering this family pattern unhealthy and forcing separation might, in fact, harm a healthy family relationship (Fisek & Kagitcibasi, 1999). As discussed before, closely connected ethnic minority families in North America and Europe often involve parental control (Dekovic et al., *in press*; Jose et al., 2000; Kwak, 2003; Lansford et al., 2003; Smetana & Gaines, 1999;). This pattern is often confused with authoritarian parenting by the Euro-American researchers and practitioners because it appears very controlling (Gonzales, Cauce, & Mason, 1996). Yet what is important is the meaning of control for the child. As shown by the research referred to, control can have a variety of meanings ranging from parental hostility to warmth, depending at least in part on the prevalent social norms and practices. There is a need for professionals to be more culturally sensitive and to develop a more encompassing understanding of healthy self-other relationships, involving control, autonomy, and connectedness, rather than separation.

Other research findings pointing to the mismatches in immigration contexts call for a change in the minority values and outlook. For example, Nunes (1993) found that immigrant Mexican parents in the United States believe, erroneously, that if their children are quiet and obedient, then they will succeed in school, whereas their Anglo-American teachers expect them to be autonomous. What is needed here is the awareness on the part of the parents that autonomy of children and adolescents is adaptive in different environments such as schools.

There is evidence that low SES parents can be supported and induced to develop an awareness of different environmental demands and value autonomy while continuing to maintain closeness with their children (Kagitcibasi, Sunar, & Bekman, 2001). In this study, rural migrant mothers in an urban metropolitan center in Turkey initially considered autonomy of the child to be an undesirable attribute (“headstrong”). A change in this attitude was

brought about through an intensive mother support program and was sustained over time. Thus, a shift from the family model of interdependence to that of psychological interdependence was facilitated. Indeed, in urban, developed contexts of cultures of relatedness in the majority world, autonomy-granting parenting is found to foster adolescent adjustment, as shown by Stewart et al. (2000) in Pakistan and by Sunar (2002) in Turkey.

Some questions remain to be answered, particularly with regard to applications. For example, what happens when autonomy and relatedness needs conflict? Or what levels of control and connectedness are optimal, particularly in terms of whether high levels may lead to an underemphasis on autonomy as, for example, in the traditional family model of interdependence? As related to this, overemphasizing harmony might suppress intergenerational conflicts and negotiations (Smetana & Gaines, 1999; Yau & Smetana, 1996), which might not be healthy for the development of autonomy. Feminist views regarding socialization of females for submissiveness in relationships make similar points. Thus, in clinical applications addressing intergenerational or gender power differentials, such questions may become relevant to the debate on autonomy-relatedness dynamics.

Even though autonomy and relatedness, being basic human needs, can and do coexist, it appears that individualistic societies have recognized and nourished the need for autonomy at the cost of ignoring, even suppressing, the equally basic need for relatedness; collectivistic societies have done the reverse. Recognizing the importance of both autonomy and relatedness would point to the autonomous-related self as a healthy developmental model. The distinctness of the two underlying dimensions of agency and interpersonal distance renders this combination logically and psychologically possible.

## NOTES

1. "Majority world" is used to refer to the majority of the world's population, outside of the Euro-American West, where the culture of relatedness (collectivistic culture) is common.
2. This was labeled "emotional interdependence" before (Kagitcibasi, 1990, 1996b). However, that label turned out to be somewhat misleading, with the implication of greater parental affection, which is not proposed in the model. What is proposed is rather greater relatedness on the interpersonal distance dimension.
3. Initiated and coordinated by G. Trommsdorff and B. Nauck.

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