

Links Between Adolescents' Relationships With Peers, Parents, and Their Values in Three Cultural Contexts

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Abstract

The study examined associations among adolescents' perceived mother-child and father-child relationship quality (intimacy, conflict, and admiration), perceived peer acceptance, and their values (individualism and collectivism) in a sample of 795 Estonian, German, and Russian 15-year-olds. Adolescents from the three cultural contexts differed in terms of their relationships with parents and peers but were similar in valuing both individualism and collectivism highly. Individualistic values were positively linked to adolescents' peer acceptance in individualistic cultures, whereas collectivistic values of adolescents were positively associated with the quality of their relationships with parents in all cultures. Across cultures, maternal and paternal admiration showed the strongest positive association with peer acceptance of adolescents. Among Estonian adolescents, further associations emerged: higher levels of intimacy with fathers and conflict levels in both mother-child and father-child relationship were related to adolescents' lower peer acceptance. The results are discussed from a social-cultural perspective.

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peer acceptance, adolescents, parent-child relationship, cultural comparison, individualism, collectivism

Although previous research has examined the quality of adolescents' relationships with parents and peers in different cultures (e.g., Schwarz et al., 2012; Yau, Tasopoulos-Chan, & Smetana, 2009), little attention is paid to the socio-cultural context when studying associations between these two areas of adolescents' relationships. Most cross-cultural studies, in turn, have investigated these relationships separately from each other. We know from previous studies that the dominant cultural values are reflected in social relationships. Moreover, the meaning and function of adolescents' relationships with parents and peers are assumed to differ in diverse cultures. We also know that individual values are usually shaped by cultural values. So far little is known whether and how far cultural values are related to the way adolescents' values are associated with the kind and importance of their social relationships, especially with parents and peers. It is also yet poorly understood whether and how the importance of parent-child relationship for adolescents' peer acceptance varies in different cultures. The present study attempts to add to the literature on adolescents' relations with parents and peers by analyzing the possible moderating role of culture. Here, we examine adolescents' relationships with parents and peers in three countries with different emphasis put on individualistic and collectivistic values.

Relationships in Three Cultural Contexts

Estonia, Germany, and Russia were chosen because they share a recent history of extensive ideological, political, and economic transformations in the last decades of the previous century. Estonia and Russia have experienced the collapse of Soviet Union and its totalitarian and collectivistic ideology, and Germany has experienced its reunification. At the same time, the three countries have been found to differ in terms of cultural values—individualism and collectivism. *Individualism* is defined as the extent to which one's personal uniqueness and independence is valued and *collectivism* is defined as the extent to which duty to in-group and relatedness is valued (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). According to Hofstede (2001), Germany and Estonia are individualistic countries with an index of individualism being 67 and 60 out of 100 respectively, whereas Russia has a lower score of 39.

As a set of shared activities and meanings (Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003), culture shapes individuals' values, expectations, behaviors, and also their interactions and relationships with other people. In general, less emphasis is given to close ties with others in individualistic than in collectivistic cultures (Triandis, 1995). In collectivistic cultures, more preference is given to ingroups such as one's family (Triandis, 1995). In the present study, we examine three specific dimensions of the parent-child relationship: intimacy (i.e., disclosure to parents about personal matters), conflicts (i.e., arguing), and admiration (i.e., being told you are good at many things). In addition to covering both positive and negative features of the parent-child relationship, these dimensions are especially relevant when examining parent-child relationship during adolescence in different cultures (Rothbaum, Pott, Azuma, Miyake, & Weisz, 2000). In individualistic cultures, adolescent children are seen as partners to their parents, they are expected to express their opinion, and conflicts are viewed as a normal part of a healthy relationship (Trommsdorff & Kornadt, 2003). In collectivistic cultures, parent-child relationships are characterized by hierarchical relations and conflict is more likely to be avoided for the sake of the harmony (Rothbaum et al., 2000; Trommsdorff & Kornadt, 2003). Studies show that adolescents disclose less to their parents in collectivistic cultures where hierarchical nature and well-defined roles describe family relationships than in individualistic cultures (Cooper, 1999; Trommsdorff & Schwarz, 2007; Wink, Gao, Jones, & Chao, 1997; Yau et al., 2009). There is some evidence for the existence of hierarchical parent-child relations in Russia (Hart, Nelson, Robinson, Olsen, & McNeilly-Choque, 1998; Ispa, 1994) and Estonia (Tulviste, Mizera, De Geer, & Tryggvason, 2003).

Cultural values have also been associated with the nature of adolescents' peer relationships. In the present study, we examine adolescents' peer acceptance (i.e., their likeability among peers; Badaly, Schwartz, & Gorman, 2012) because of its priority during adolescence. Peer acceptance is linked to the formation of friendships and to adolescents' general social adjustment (Bukowski, Pizzamiglio, Newcomb, & Hoza, 1996; McElhaney, Antonishak, & Allen, 2008). The findings of Schwarz et al. (2012) suggest that in individualistic cultures, peer acceptance is more important for adolescents' satisfaction with life than in collectivistic cultures. The authors explained that in individualistic cultures, peers support the adolescent in individuation from parents and identity development. In collectivistic cultures, they are more relevant for helping the adolescent in adapting to the cultural expectations.

In the present study, we aim to increase the understanding about the extent to which individualistic and collectivistic values of adolescents shape their relationships with parents and peers. Cultural contexts provide specific elements,

such as beliefs, values, and behaviors, which children are going to understand and master through interacting with more competent individuals like their parents, and that are likely to be reflected in how children relate to others and perceive their relationships with other people (Hogan & Tudge, 1999; Vygotsky, 1994a, 1994b). To our knowledge, no studies have, however, examined how individualistic and collectivistic values at the individual level are associated with family and peer relationships in different cultural contexts. Assuming that values at the individual level function similarly to those at the cultural level and also taking into consideration the dominant values in Estonia, Germany, and Russia, we can predict that adolescents' individualistic values relate positively to their peer acceptance and to the quality of the parent-child relationship (especially to the intimacy and conflict dimensions) in Estonia and Germany. Adolescents' collectivistic values are likely to be positively related to peer acceptance and negatively to the intimacy and conflict levels in the parent-child relationship in Russia.

Association Between Parent-Child and Peer Relationships

Theories and research findings suggest that in the course of interactions with parents, children develop working models that act as prototypes for their future relationships (Bohlin, Hagekull, & Rydell, 2000; Bowlby, 1969; Ducharme, Doyle, & Markiewicz, 2002; Hartup, 1979; Raudino, Fergusson, & Horwood, 2013). The open question is whether cross-cultural differences in adolescents' relationships with parents and peers (i.e., the quality and the meaning and function) are accompanied by cross-cultural differences in the importance of parent-child relationship to adolescents' peer acceptance. Previous research has come to different conclusions on whether the relationship with both parents (e.g., Attili, Vermigli, & Roazzi, 2010; Henggeler, Edwards, Cohen, & Summerville, 1991) or with only one parent (e.g., Tamm, Kasearu, & Tulviste, 2014; Verschueren & Marcoen, 2002) is linked to children's peer relations.

In the present study, we examine whether and how the specific dimensions of both mother-child and father-child relationships relate to adolescents' peer acceptance in cultures that differ in terms of how much emphasis is given to individualism and collectivism. Seginer, Shoyer, Hossessi, and Tannous (2007) are among those few authors who have examined the association between family and peer relations in different cultures. They found support for the importance of both maternal and paternal acceptance for adolescents' peer acceptance, but this was more evident in collectivistic than in individualistic cultures. Schwarz et al. (2012), however, found that parental admiration

that—similarly to acceptance—expresses parental support was important for adolescents' life satisfaction in diverse cultural contexts including Germany and Russia.

It might be that cultural differences lie in the importance of intimacy and conflict—the dimensions that differ between mother-child and father-child relationships and also between cultures as indicated above. Adolescents across cultures have been found to be closer, to talk more about personal matters, but also have more conflicts with their mothers than fathers (Georgas, Berry, van de Vijver, Kagitcibasi, & Poortinga, 2006; Noller & Callan, 1990). This probably relates to the different roles of mothers and fathers: mothers are more often the primary caregivers, whereas fathers at least traditionally engage more in playful interactions with their small children and become less involved as children enter adolescence (Collins & Russell, 1991; Lamb, 2000). Differences in the mean levels of intimacy and conflict do not, however, enable us to make justified predictions on whether and how the importance of these two dimensions differ between the mother-child and father-child relationships or between the three cultural groups. Conflicts with parents can be expected to be negatively related to adolescents' peer acceptance, whereas intimacy and admiration levels to be positively linked to it. These associations will be compared between Estonian, German, and Russian adolescents.

Method

Participants

The study is part of the VOC-IR (The Value of Children and Intergenerational Relations) project that was initiated by Nauck and Trommsdorff, but carried out in a large number of countries in collaboration with several cooperating teams from different disciplines (overview by Trommsdorff, Kim, & Nauck, 2005; Trommsdorff & Nauck, 2005, 2010). The present study was conducted among adolescents who had both a mother and a father. The sample included 795 adolescents: 270 Estonians ($\bar{X} = 15.54$ years, $SD = 1.12$), 309 Germans ($\bar{X} = 15.67$ years, $SD = 1.07$), and 216 Russians ($\bar{X} = 15.34$ years, $SD = 1.25$; see Table 1 for demographics). A total of 50% of Estonians, 44% of Germans, and 41% of Russians were boys.

Measures and Procedure

All three subsamples included adolescents from urban and suburban regions and with varying socioeconomic characteristics. Participants were recruited

Table 1. Demographics of Estonian, German, and Russian Adolescents.

	Estonian sample	German sample	Russian sample
Adolescents			
<i>n</i>	270	309	216
% of boys	50	44	41
Age (\bar{X} , <i>SD</i>)	15.54 (1.12)	15.67 (1.07)	15.34 (1.25)
Mothers			
Age (\bar{X} , <i>SD</i>)	41.19 (5.94)	43.54 (4.88)	40.93 (5.70)
Education in years (\bar{X} , <i>SD</i>)	13.80 (3.09)	10.76 (1.53)	9.67 (0.83)
Fathers			
Age (\bar{X} , <i>SD</i>)	43.7 (6.98)	46.37 (6.76)	42.48 (6.94)
Education in years (\bar{X} , <i>SD</i>)	12.5 (2.84)	10.84 (1.76)	9.31 (0.93)

through residents' registration offices in Germany and through random selection of residential addresses in Estonia. Russian data were collected through vocational and secondary schools. The participation was voluntary. Paper-and-pencil instruments were used for collecting the data. Adolescents filled out the questionnaires in a separate place while their mothers were interviewed. In the present study, only adolescent data were used.

The questionnaires were translated from English to German and Estonian by a bilingual native speaker of the relevant languages. In Russia, the questionnaires were translated from German to Russian. The translation process included several steps: translating the questionnaires to Estonian, German, and Russian; comparing and discussing the translations of different translators; back-translating the questionnaires into the source language; and comparing these versions with the original ones.

Peer acceptance. Adolescents' peer acceptance was measured by the Peer subscale of the Mother Father Peer Scale (Epstein, 1983). The questionnaire consists of 10 items concerning adolescents' relationships with peers (e.g., "People my age are usually friendly to me" and "People my age are often unfair to me"). Adolescents indicated the degree to which they agreed with each statement on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). In the present study, we excluded two items ("People my age spend their free time with me" and "People my age usually stick up for me") that did not load significantly onto the corresponding factor in all three samples. The reliability coefficients of the scale ranged from .80 to .85 in the three samples.

Quality of relationship with parents. Intimacy, conflict level, and admiration in the mother-child and the father-child relationship were measured using the relevant subscales from the Network of Relationship Inventory (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Intimacy was assessed in terms of adolescents' disclosure to parents about personal matters (e.g., "How often do you share secrets and private feelings with your mother/father?"). The conflict dimension assessed how often adolescents argue and have disputes with their parents (e.g., "How often do you and your mother/father disagree and quarrel?"). Parental admiration was assessed in terms of parental approval of their adolescent children's activities and behavior (e.g., "How often does your mother/father like or approve of the things you do?"). Each dimension was measured with three items and adolescents responded on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). In our samples, the Cronbach's alphas ranged from .78 to .87 for the dimensions of the mother-child relationship quality and from .73 to .87 for the dimensions of the father-child relationship quality.

Individualism and collectivism. Adolescents' individualistic and collectivistic values were measured as two distinct dimensions by the short version (Chan, 1994) of Collectivism and Individualism (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). Adolescents were presented a list of values and asked to indicate the importance of each on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*not important at all*) to 5 (*very important*). The scale consists of 13 items: six items measured individual's collectivism (social order, showing respect, national security, self-discipline, politeness, and obedience) and seven items his or her individualism (independence, creativity, pleasure, varied and exciting life, adventure seeking, and freedom). Each individual value was expressed with one word, but accompanied by a short description in the brackets (e.g., "a varied life" was described as being filled with challenge, novelty, and change and "obedience" as fulfilling duties and meeting obligations). The reliability coefficients of the scale ranged from .73 to .78 for collectivism and from .70 to .76 for individualism.

Data Analysis

We used regression equations in SPSS Missing Value Analysis for estimating missing values (4.4%) in the data set. The data were missing completely at random and no significant differences occurred between adolescents with and without complete data. SPSS 20.0 was also used to perform dispersion variance analyses. The relevant items were averaged in order to compute scores for adolescents' peer acceptance, mother-child and father-child relationship dimensions, and values. The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA)

was used to compare differences between Estonian, German, and Russian adolescents in the mean scores. A mixed ANOVA enabled us to compare the mother-child and father-child relationship across the three groups. The dimensions of these relationships (intimacy, conflict, and admiration) were entered as within-subject variables and culture as a between-subject variable. Significant country differences were examined further with the Bonferroni post hoc tests.

AMOS 20.0 software was first used to conduct a multiple-group confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) that assessed the relationships between the latent variables and their indicators across the three groups. We run a series of nested CFA models with covariances between the latent factors. The models became increasingly constrained: configural model (no constraints), metric model (factor loadings constrained to be equal across the three groups), and a scalar model (intercepts of test item constrained to be equal across the three groups).

The factor structure that was confirmed in the measurement model was the basis for the structural model. A multiple-group structural equation modeling (SEM) examined the relations between the latent variables across the three groups. Due to the non-normality of the data (Mardia's coefficients > 20 , critical ratios for kurtosis exceed 1.96), we used a resampling method—bootstrapping with maximum likelihood (with 2000 iterations and 95% confidence intervals; see Shrout & Bolger, 2002). In the results section, we report only the bootstrapped estimates, standard errors, and associated significance levels of SEM.

The effects of the mother-child relationship and father-child relationship were examined in separate models. With non-normal data, we need more cases per indicator to ensure that the parameter estimates are stable and significance tests have enough power. In both models, we correlated some errors: between four pairs of errors within the peer acceptance scale, one pair of errors within the individualism scale, and one pair of errors within the collectivism scale. Additionally, we correlated the error of intimacy with the error of admiration. Correlated errors increased the model fit significantly, but had minimal effect on the results. The decision to correlate errors was based on the modification indices, but more importantly, on theoretical considerations. In all instances, we considered the meaningfulness (i.e., whether it makes theoretical sense) and transitivity rules (i.e., when A is correlated with B and B is correlated with C, then A should be correlated with C). More specifically, we correlated the errors of items with very similar meaning (e.g., valuing freedom and valuing independence; my peers criticize me and my peers pick on me). Regarding the association between intimacy and admiration, there was no multicollinearity, but these variables do overlap to some

degree. It was a better solution to correlate their errors than to combine them into one factor (as a result we would lose valuable information and the model fit would decrease).

To test the moderating effect on adolescents' cultural background on the structural paths, the model with all structural path parameters constrained to be equal across the three groups was compared against a model where all paths were allowed to vary. A chi-square difference test and the change in the comparative fit index were used for determining whether the difference in model fit between the constrained and the unconstrained model was significant or not. To assess the goodness of fit of CFA and SEM models, we followed Hoe's (2008) suggestions and used the comparative fit index (CFI; >0.90 indicates good fit), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; <0.05 indicates good fit), and the χ^2/df ratio (3 or less indicates good fit). Critical ratios indicated differences in regression weights between the three groups ($z > 1.96$ means that the difference is significant at $p < .05$).

Results

Differences in the Mean Scores

No statistically significant difference was found in Estonians', Germans', and Russians' ratings of the importance of individualistic and collectivistic values. The comparison of Estonians', Germans', and Russians' scores on the peer acceptance scale (maximum score = 5) indicated that there was a statistically significant difference, which, due to the violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variance, is conveyed by the Welch F statistic: $F(2, 521.84) = 41.27$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .08$. The Bonferroni post hoc test showed that German adolescents ($\bar{X} = 4.16$, $SD = 0.54$) perceived higher peer acceptance than their peers in Estonia ($\bar{X} = 3.92$, $SD = 0.57$) and Russia ($\bar{X} = 3.96$, $SD = 0.50$).

Several differences emerged in the mean scores of the dimensions of the parent-child relationship quality (maximum score = 5) between Estonians, Germans, and Russians (see Table 2 for mean scores). Russian adolescents perceived greater intimacy in the mother-child relationship than Estonians, $F(2, 793) = 6.21$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Germans reported being more admired by their mothers than Estonians and Russians, Welch's $F(2, 492.91) = 16.03$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Estonian adolescents reported having fewer conflicts with their father than their peers from Germany and Russia, $F(2, 793) = 8.22$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .02$. All three groups differed from each other in terms of the degree to which they felt being admired by their father, Welch's $F(2, 499.47) = 25.02$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .06$. German adolescents perceived the highest and

Table 2. Means for Study Variables by Country.

	Estonians	Germans	Russians	<i>p</i>
	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	
Peer acceptance	3.92 (0.57)	4.16 (0.54)	3.96 (0.50)	***,d
Father-child relationship				
Intimacy	1.87 (0.91)	2.02 (0.82)	2.03 (0.79)	
Conflicts	2.06 (0.86)	2.32 (0.78)	2.26 (0.72)	***,b
Admiration	2.56 (1.07)	3.13 (0.90)	2.78 (0.93)	***,a
Mother-child relationship				
Intimacy	2.58 (1.04)	2.75 (1.0)	2.90 (0.92)	***,c
Conflicts	2.32 (0.76)	2.26 (0.62)	2.27 (0.68)	
Admiration	3.16 (0.91)	3.50 (0.73)	3.20 (0.81)	***,d
Individualism	4.06 (0.54)	4.10 (0.50)	4.0 (0.54)	
Collectivism	3.78 (0.58)	3.79 (0.62)	3.71 (0.66)	

^aAll three cultural groups differ from each other.

^bEstonians differ from Germans and Russians.

^cEstonians differ from Russians.

^dGermans differ from Estonians and Russians.

****p* < .01. *****p* < .001.

Estonian adolescents the lowest degree of paternal admiration. Regarding the effect sizes, we can say that 2% to 6% of variance in the quality of the parent-child relationship is due to adolescents' cultural background.

A mixed ANOVA indicated that there were significant differences in adolescents' perceptions of their relationships with their mothers and fathers. All three groups of adolescents reported less intimacy in the father-child relationship than in the mother-child relationship, $F(1, 789) = 476.28, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .38$. They also perceived more maternal than paternal admiration, but this effect varied in the three groups, $F(2, 789) = 5.19, p = .006, \eta_p^2 = .01$: The Bonferroni post hoc test showed that differences between maternal and paternal admiration were larger among Estonian than German adolescents. Country differences also emerged in the degree to which adolescents' reports of conflicts with mothers and fathers differed, $F(2, 789) = 10.65, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$. The post hoc test indicated that these differences were larger among Estonians who had more conflicts with their mothers than fathers.

Relations With Mothers and Peers

Measurement models. The fit indices for the configural model were the following: χ^2/df ratio = 1.64, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .03. Imposing

Table 3. Correlations Between Study Variables.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Estonia								
1. Peer acceptance								
2. F-c intimacy	-.07							
3. F-c conflict	.24***	-.16**						
4. F-c admiration	.03	.70***	-.16**					
5. M-c intimacy	.15*	.47***	-.09	.28***				
6. M-c conflict	.30***	-.21***	.28***	.11	.06			
7. M-c admiration	.26***	.33***	-.07	.49***	.70***	.14*		
8. Individualism	.28***	.13*	-.05	.14*	.06	-.11	.10	
9. Collectivism	.20**	.18**	-.07	.18**	.15*	.04	.22***	.40***
Germany								
1. Peer acceptance								
2. F-c intimacy	.21***							
3. F-c conflict	.03	.18**						
4. F-c admiration	.25***	.61***	.23***					
5. M-c intimacy	.14*	.50***	.02	.21***				
6. M-c conflict	-.02	.04	.29***	.03	.24***			
7. M-c admiration	.19**	.36***	-.05	.61***	.47***	.21***		
8. Individualism	.24***	.07	-.03	.12*	.01	-.13*	.05	
9. Collectivism	.10	.13*	.09	.15**	.16**	.08	.17**	.30***
Russia								
1. Peer acceptance								
2. F-c intimacy	.07							
3. F-c conflict	-.01	.01						
4. F-c admiration	.19**	.50***	.24***					
5. M-c intimacy	.11	.31***	.08	.19**				
6. M-c conflict	.05	.05	.41***	.19**	.16*			
7. M-c admiration	.22**	.32***	.07	.62***	.49***	.36***		
8. Individualism	.18**	-.01	-.09	.04	-.05	-.11	.04	
9. Collectivism	.06	.06	.11	.10	.11	.18**	.20**	.42***

Note. F-c = father-child relationship; M-c = mother-child relationship.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

constraints on factor loadings did not significantly decrease the model fit, χ^2/df ratio = 1.68, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .03, thus metric invariance was established. The scalar model decreased the CFI to .81, but the χ^2/df ratio (2.22) and RMSEA (.04) indicated an acceptable fit. The correlations between the variables are shown in Table 3 and the results of SEM models are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Bootstrapped Standardized Parameter Estimates, Standard Errors, and Significance Levels.

	Estonians			Germans			Russians		
	B	SE	p	B	SE	p	B	SE	p
Model 1									
DV: peer acceptance	R ² = 29.5%			R ² = 15.6%			R ² = 14.6%		
M-c intimacy	-.21	.16		-.01	.09		-.06	.14	
M-c conflict	-.43	.08	**	.02	.08		-.14	.13	
M-c admiration	.30	.20		.24	.09	*	.33	.15	*
Individualism	.27	.09	**	.28	.10	*	.24	.17	
Collectivism	-.03	.09		-.03	.10		-.21	.18	
DV: m-c intimacy	R ² = 6.3%			R ² = 9.0%			R ² = 11.7%		
Individualism	.01	.09		-.13	.11		-.26	.12	*
Collectivism	.22	.09	*	.31	.09	**	.36	.11	**
DV: m-c conflict	R ² = 5.4%			R ² = 10.5%			R ² = 27.3%		
Individualism	.19	.09	*	.30	.09	**	.48	.16	**
Collectivism	-.19	.09	*	-.28	.09	**	-.55	.15	**
DV: m-c admiration	R ² = 13.7%			R ² = 8.4%			R ² = 19.9%		
Individualism	.02	.10		-.07	.11		-.24	.17	
Collectivism	.34	.09	**	.29	.09	**	.49	.14	**
Model 2									
DV: peer acceptance	R ² = 27.5%			R ² = 16.5%			R ² = 13.6%		
F-c intimacy	-.42	.18	*	.01	.10		-.18	.14	
F-c conflict	-.36	.07	**	.03	.07		-.05	.11	
F-c admiration	.31	.17	*	.25	.10	*	.37	.14	**
Individualism	.25	.09	*	.24	.09	*	.14	.12	
Collectivism	.10	.09		-.01	.09		-.07	.13	
DV: f-c intimacy	R ² = 6.2%			R ² = 6.7%			R ² = 3.9%		
Individualism	.16	.09		-.05	.10		-.10	.12	
Collectivism	.11	.09		.25	.09	**	.14	.12	
DV: f-c conflict	R ² = 1.8%			R ² = 5.5%			R ² = 11.9%		
Individualism	.04	.10		.12	.09		.30	.13	*
Collectivism	.04	.09		-.23	.09	**	-.33	.11	**
DV: f-c admiration	R ² = 7.2%			R ² = 7.0%			R ² = 6.1%		
Individualism	.09	.09		.09	.10		-.08	.12	
Collectivism	.19	.09	*	.19	.09	*	.23	.11	

Note. DV = dependent variable; M-c = mother-child relationship; F-c = father-child relationship.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Structural models (see Figure 1). There was a statistically significant difference in the fit of the configural and the constrained model, $\chi^2(22) = 42.17$, $p = .006$; $\Delta CFI = 0.01$. The unconstrained model fit the data better

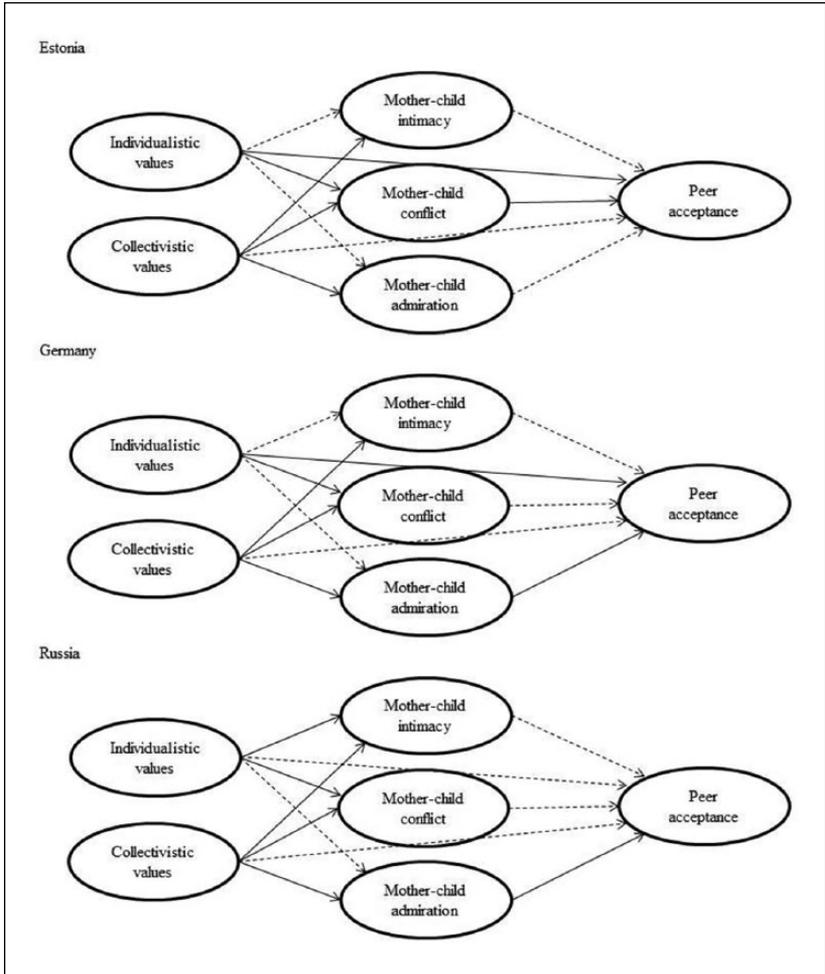


Figure 1. Associations among adolescents' values, the quality of the mother-child relationship, and peer acceptance.

Note. Solid lines represent significant paths and dashed lines represent insignificant paths.

(χ^2/df ratio = 1.73, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .03), thus suggesting the moderating effect of adolescents' cultural background on the structural paths.

In the Estonian sample, adolescents' individualistic and collectivistic values and ratings of the quality of mother-child relationship explained the highest percentage of variance in their peer acceptance scores. Estonian and

German adolescents' individualistic values were positively linked to their peer acceptance. The level of conflict in the mother-child relationship had a significant association with Estonian adolescents' peer acceptance: as conflicts with mothers increased by one standard deviation, adolescents' perceived peer acceptance decreased by .43 standard deviations. This association was not significant and significantly weaker in the German and Russian samples ($z > 1.96$, $p < .05$). Maternal admiration was positively linked to German and Russian adolescents' acceptance by peers, $B_{\text{Germany}} = .24$, $B_{\text{Russia}} = .33$. The strength of this path did not differ between the three groups of adolescents.

In all three groups, adolescents' collectivistic values had a positive association with the intimacy and admiration levels in the mother-child relationship. In the Russian sample, adolescents' individualistic values were negatively related to the mother-child intimacy ($B = -.26$). The strength of these paths did not differ in the Estonian, German, and Russian samples. Adolescents' individualistic values were positively and collectivistic values were negatively related to the level of conflicts with mothers in all three groups, but these links were much stronger among Russians ($z > 1.96$, $p < .05$).

Relations With Fathers and Peers

Measurement model. The fit indices for the configural model were the following: χ^2/df ratio = 1.60, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .03. Imposing constraints on factor loadings did not significantly decrease the model fit (χ^2/df ratio = 1.66, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .03), thus metric invariance was established. The scalar model decreased the CFI to .84, but the χ^2/df ratio (2.11) and RMSEA (.04) indicated an acceptable fit.

Structural models (see Figure 2). There was a statistically significant difference in the fit of the configural and the constrained model, $\chi^2(22) = 42.17$, $p = .006$; $\Delta\text{CFI} = 0.01$. The unconstrained model fit the data better (χ^2/df ratio = 1.68, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .03).

In the Estonian sample, adolescents' individualistic and collectivistic values and ratings of the quality of father-child relationships explained the highest percentage of variance in their peer acceptance scores. Estonian and German adolescents' individualistic values and perceived peer acceptance were positively related. The level of intimacy ($B = -.42$) and conflict ($B = -.36$) in the father-child relationships had a significant negative association with Estonian adolescents' peer acceptance. These paths were significantly stronger in the Estonian sample than in the German and

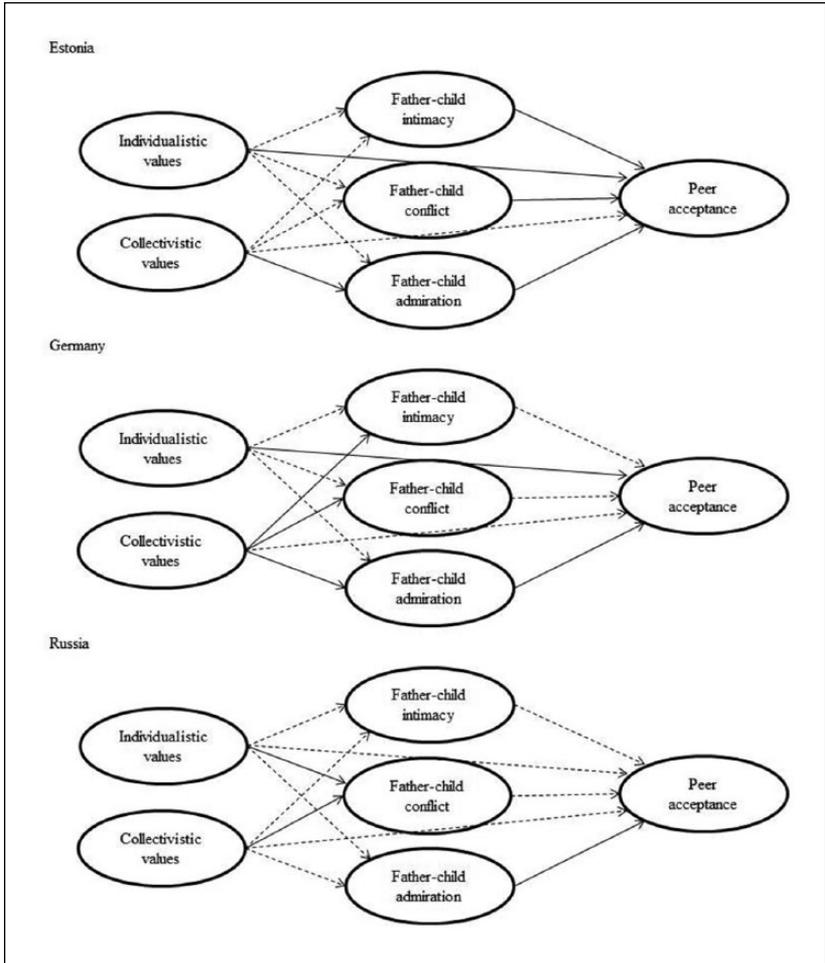


Figure 2. Associations among adolescents’ values, the quality of the father-child relationship, and peer acceptance.

Note. Solid lines represent significant paths and dashed lines represent insignificant paths.

Russian samples ($z > 1.96, p < .05$). Parental admiration was positively linked to adolescents’ peer acceptance in all three groups and the strength of this path did not differ.

Estonian and German adolescents’ collectivistic values had a positive association with paternal admiration. Among Germans, adolescents’ collectivistic values were positively linked also to the intimacy in the father-child

relationship, $B = .25$. Moreover, German adolescents' collectivistic values were negatively related to the level of conflict with fathers, $B = -.23$. Russian adolescents' collectivistic values had a negative association with the levels of conflict with fathers ($B = -.33$). Their individualistic values, however, were positively linked to the level of conflict with fathers, $B = .30$. These links between adolescents' values and conflicts with fathers were stronger in the Russian than in the Estonian and German samples ($z > 1.96, p < .05$).

Discussion

The present study explored links between the quality of adolescents' relationship with mothers and fathers, adolescents' values, and their perceptions of peer acceptance. The results showed differential roles of adolescents' individualistic and collectivistic values for their relationships with parents and peers. Moreover, several conclusions can be made regarding cultural similarities and differences in associations between the quality of adolescents' relationships with both parents and their acceptance by peers.

Estonian, German, and Russian adolescents' reports of the quality of their relationships with mothers and fathers and of their peer acceptance were similar to what has been found in previous studies conducted in these cultures. In accordance with prior results that peer relations are more important in cultures high in individualism (Diener & Diener, 1995; Schwarz et al., 2012), German adolescents in the present study reported higher acceptance by peers than Estonian and Russian adolescents. Moreover, German adolescents differed from Estonian and Russian adolescents by reporting higher levels of admiration in both mother-child and father-child relationships. This might also be linked to individualistic values being of high importance in Germany (Hofstede, 2001). Namely, parental admiration is likely to promote adolescents' feelings of their uniqueness, higher self-esteem, and higher confidence—all of which are especially emphasized in individualistic cultural contexts (Oyserman et al., 2002).

Some studies suggest that in cultures, where collectivistic values are considered highly important, adolescents disclose less to their parents due to hierarchical parent-child relations (e.g., Cooper, 1999; Yau et al., 2009). Our findings did not confirm this. We found that Russian adolescents perceived higher levels of intimacy—measured as disclosure to parents—in the mother-child relationship than Estonian and German adolescents. It might be that the difference also lies in the topics of disclosure. Yau et al. (2009), for instance, found that Chinese American youth disclosed less to their parents about personal and multifaceted issues than their European American peers. Although the items in the present study tapped into disclosure about personal issues,

some items could have been interpreted differently (e.g., talk about things you don't want others to know).

Adolescents' Values and Relationships

Surprisingly, Estonian, German, and Russian adolescents were similar in terms of valuing both types of values—individualism and collectivism—relatively highly. According to Kağıtçıbaşı's (2013) family change theory, such value orientation characterizes families that have adopted the model of autonomy-relatedness: self-oriented individualistic values and other-oriented collectivistic values are considered equally important. Our findings thus suggest that in developing cultural contexts, not only parents (e.g., Tulviste, Mizera, & De Geer, 2012) but also adolescents seem to manifest the model of autonomy-relatedness. Considering both types of values important might also be specific for adolescent years. In this formative period of values, people's value priorities have not yet stabilized and they are struggling with different values (Tulviste & Tamm, 2014).

Despite similarities in individualistic and collectivistic values of Estonian, German, and Russian adolescents, there were some differences in how these values were linked to adolescents' relationships with parents and peers in the three countries. Although the nature of our data does not enable us to make any firm conclusions about causal influence and its direction, the results suggest that individualistic values promote positive peer relations, whereas collectivistic values promote positive relationships with parents. Namely, we found that adolescents' individualistic values (independence, creativity, pleasure, varied life, and freedom) were positively associated with peer acceptance in Estonia and Germany, but not in Russia. It has been found that individualism is less important at the cultural level in Russia than in Estonia and Germany (Hofstede, 2001). It is likely that the congruence between values of adolescents and values of their age mates is also relevant for better peer relations. Adolescents' collectivistic values (social order, self-discipline, politeness, and obedience) had no association with peer acceptance.

In all three samples, there were more links between adolescents' values and the quality of their mother-child relationship than their father-child relationship. Although individualism and collectivism were conceptualized and measured as separate dimensions (Trommsdorff, Mayer, & Albert, 2004), they displayed associations with adolescent-parent relationships that were in the opposite direction. Namely, in all three cultural contexts, adolescents' collectivistic values were positively related to the quality of the parent-child relationship (i.e., higher intimacy and admiration, but lower conflict level). Adolescents' individualistic values, on the contrary, were negatively related

to the quality of the parent-child relationship (i.e., lower intimacy and admiration, but higher conflict level). Compared with their Estonian and German peers, for Russian adolescents both types of values were more strongly related to the level of conflict with mothers and fathers. Previous research has shown the importance of conformity, obedience, and the maintenance of harmony within relationships in collectivistic cultures (e.g., Trommsdorff & Kornadt, 2003). It is possible that the adolescents' deviance from the dominant cultural values is related to disruptions in the parent-child relationship.

In Estonia and Germany, more associations emerged between adolescents' collectivistic values and the quality of mother-child and father-child relationships than between their individualistic values and relationships with parents. Although Estonian and German mothers have been found to value individualistic socialization goals highly (e.g., Tamm, Kasearu, Tulviste, & Trommsdorff, 2016), they seem to consider collectivistic values important when it comes to their relationship with their adolescent children. Drawing upon the findings of Realo and Allik (1999), the same is likely to apply to adolescents: In their study, Estonian and Russian youth valued family-related collectivism most highly, whereas peer-related collectivism least highly.

Adolescents' Relationships With Parents and Peers

Researchers have contradictory views about the importance of relationships with parents to children's developmental outcomes and functioning in adolescent years (Hill, Bromell, Tyson, & Flint, 2007; Steinberg & Silk, 2002). Our findings show that the quality of relationships with parents does matter for adolescents' peer acceptance but not all dimensions are equally relevant. We examined the importance of positive and negative dimensions of the parent-child relationship. As hypothesized, perceiving admiration from both parents was positively related to adolescents' peer acceptance. The strength of these relationships did not differ between the three samples. Thus, promoting adolescents' higher self-esteem and higher confidence might be a culturally universal way of supporting adolescents' relationships with peers.

Despite adolescents from all three samples perceiving more intimacy and admiration in the mother-child relationship than in the father-child relationship, peer acceptance of German and Russian adolescents was similarly linked to their relationships with mothers and fathers. Among Estonian adolescents, links between their peer acceptance and the quality of relationships with mothers and fathers were more complex. The results showed that Estonian adolescents' peer acceptance was negatively related to the level of conflicts with their mothers and fathers, and positively to paternal admiration. A somewhat unexpected finding was the negative relationship between adolescents' peer

acceptance and the intimacy in the father-child relationship. It should be pointed out that we studied the importance of the quality of relationships with mothers and fathers in separate models. We do not thus know the relative importance of mother-child and father-child relationships to adolescents' peer acceptance. In Estonia, it seems, however, that the quality of the father-child relationship is more important for adolescents' positive peer relations. It might be that due to fathers in Estonia still being less engaged in childrearing than mothers (Aavik & Aavik, 2012; Kikas, Tulviste, & Peets, 2014), their contribution might be highly valued and more strongly linked to children's outcomes.

It is, however, a surprising finding that disclosure to one's father was negatively associated with peer acceptance in Estonia. Although not statistically significant, the same tends to apply to Russia. It might be that Estonian and Russian adolescents with an open father-child relationship confide in their fathers and consider their fathers more like friends. While it is unlikely that time is an explanatory variable, it might be that adolescents spend more time with their father at the expense of time spent with peers.

Limitations and Future Directions

The main limitation of the present study is the use of cross-sectional data that do not enable us to talk about causal relationships between the variables of interest. All the data were reported by adolescents. On the one hand, it has been shown that, for example, perceived peer acceptance is more important for adolescents' adjustment and success with peers than the accuracy of these perceptions (Bellmore & Cillessen, 2003; McElhaney et al., 2008). On the other hand, adolescents' reports could reflect a negative bias, especially regarding relationships with parents. The intergenerational stake hypothesis (Bengtson & Kuypers, 1971) claims that adolescents perceive the parent-child relationship more negatively than parents.

As the VOC-IR project included individuals from three generations, we had a relatively small sample of adolescents. Further research is needed to clarify the role of culture in associations between children's and adolescents' parent-child and peer relations. Along with examining more diverse cultures, a more refined conceptualization of individualism and collectivism is needed. The present study also examined only one dimension of peer experience. Future studies are encouraged to focus on different features of peer relationships. Moreover, bidirectional effects between parent-child and peer relations should be examined and compared between different cultures. Due to space limitations, we did not include analyses on sex differences. Future research could clarify the extent to which associations between parent-child and peer relationships differ among boys and girls.

Conclusions

The results of the present study confirm the previous findings regarding differences in adolescents' relationships with parents and peers in individualistic and collectivistic cultures. The study contributes, however, to our understanding of associations between these two types of relationships in different cultures. Our findings suggest that the quality of relationships with parents continues to be important for adolescents' outcomes. Nevertheless, not all dimensions are equally important for adolescents' acceptance by peers. Across cultures, maternal and paternal admiration showed the strongest association with peer acceptance of adolescents. Thus, parents can support their adolescent children's peer relations by promoting their self-esteem that most likely underlies positive developmental outcomes.

A further key finding of the present study is the association between adolescents' values and their relationships with parents and peers. The results suggest that individualistic values of adolescents promote their positive peer relations in individualistic, but not in collectivistic cultures. Adolescents' collectivistic values, however, seem to promote positive relationships with parents quite similarly in different cultures.

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