First publ. in: Family, ties and care : family transformation in a plural modernity ; the Freiberger survey about family transformation in an international comparison / Hans Bertram... (Eds.). - Opladen [u.a.] : Budrich, 2012. - pp. 315-342. - ISBN 978-3-86649-392-6

A Cross-Cultural Study of Intergenerational Relations:

The Role of Socioeconomic Factors, Values, and Relationship Quality in Intergenerational Support[1]

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1. Background and Research Questions

Industrialized countries with rising life expectancy and falling birthrates are experiencing a far-reaching demographic transformation involving changes in various areas of society. The increasing life expectancy signifies a potentially longer common lifespan among generational cohorts of different ages.

These changes imply questions about the shaping of intergenerational relations under conditions of demographic and also socioeconomic change. Adding to the drama of these relationships for modern industrialized societies at present is the question of whether intergenerational conflicts will arise. The scenario acquires even more explosive power when seen against the idea of the individualization of society and the dissolution of familial bonds ostensibly associated with it. On the other hand, Bengtson has developed another scenario, supported by an abundance of empirical data, which includes the model of intergenerational solidarity (Bengtson 2001, Bengtson/Roberts 1991, Silverstein/Bengtson/Lawton 1997). The theoretical and empirical advantage of Bengtson's approach is that intergenerational relations are not simply seen at the aggregate level as relationships between cohorts. On the contrary, Bengtson sees intergenerational relations as relationships between generations that have familial attachments to one another, such as those that children have to their parents and to their parents' parents (the children's grandparents). Bengtson's approach, however, means that studies must focus on individual family members who belong to the different generations and on the relationships that they have to one another.

1 This work is based on data from the Value of Children (VOC) and Intergenerational Relations project, sponsored by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation) and led by Gisela Trommsdorff at the University of Konstanz and Bernhard Nauck at the Chemnitz University of Technology. We are grateful to our collaborators on the VOC project: Gang Zheng, Shaohua Shi, Hong Tang (People's Republic of China); Bernhard Nauck, Daniela Klaus, Jana Suckow, Beate Schwarz, Isabelle Albert (Germany), Colette Sabatier, Lyda Lannegrand-Willems (France); Ramesh Mishra (India); Zaretkhan Kh.-M. Saralieva, Vladimir A. Blonin, Alexander A. Iudin (Russia); Cigdem Kagitcibasi, Bilge Ataca (Turkey).

Familial relationships imply a reciprocal interdependence, where one's own behavior and well-being is not independent from that of the other family members. Such familial relationships are asymmetrical and bidirectional; they are long-term commitments that cannot be terminated at will. Unlike partnerships, they do not come about through agreement. Furthermore, they are relevant for the identity of individuals, because these family relationships are adopted into an individual's lifelong socialization. Finally, intergenerational relationships grounded in the family are socially relevant because they are a driving force anchored in the conditions of socialization to pass on values, knowledge, and behavioral preferences. Familial relationships not only influence the new, children's generation, but also the generations of the parents and grandparents (Trommsdorff 2009b). The transmission effects in both directions determine the continuity of the society and the direction of its change.

This chapter pursues the question of how such interdependent intergenerational relationships grounded in the family come about in an era of far-reaching demographic change, and how these are formed. We will first discuss the psychological foundations for their emergence and formation in the theoretical section immediately below. We will then determine whether our assumptions should be on a universal or culturally-specific basis. In the empirical section that follows, we will report on the results of cross-cultural studies that are based on data from the "Value of Children and Intergenerational Relations" project. We will conclude by suggesting an integrative theoretical model that considers both the sociological and psychological aspects of intergenerational relations.

2. Theoretical Foundations

2.1 Psychological Aspects of Intergenerational Relations: Characteristics and Contributing Factors

2.1.1 Characteristics of Intergenerational Relations

The various qualities of intergenerational relations and their associated aspects can change over the course of life because of altered demands on parents and children (Trommsdorff 2005, 2006). Only studies on selected aspects can be discussed below. With regard to the lifespan, here we will focus only on intergenerational relations among adults and seniors (and therefore not among children), namely parents and grandparents. One of the qualitative aspects we are interested in is the relationship quality experienced in day-to-day communication, such as verbal closeness and frequency of conflict (see Furman/Buhrmester 1985). Another is the *support between the generations* (between parents and grandparents) as solidarity that has relevance for behavior and implications for social and family policy as well.

Do the parents (adult children) and their parents (grandparents) give financial, instrumental, and/or emotional support to one another? And do they plan on mutually supporting one another in the future, even if they must acknowledge their personal limitations? This planned support in particular can have various motivations: they can be more pro-social-altruistic or more normatively oriented. The *motivational foundations* of intergenerational support have so far not been studied in the specific sense of altruism research (see Trommsdorff 2005). Another aspect can detract from intergenerational relations: filial anxiety. Mothers in particular, who are caring for and raising children themselves, are in the difficult position (the so-called sandwich generation) of anticipating that they will have to (eventually) support their aged parents (see Künemund 2002).

2.1.2 Explanatory Models and Empirical Findings

Quality of Attachment. The emergence of intergenerational relations has its sociobiological roots in the universal need to pass on one's genes and provide optimal care to one's own offspring. Thus the psychological foundations for a close emotional relationship between mother and child are found in early childhood. This affects the *quality of attachment* (secure/insecure attachment) and the internal working model associated with it; it also influences the further socioemotional and cognitive development of the child (Bowlby 1988). The quality of attachment is not an unchangeable characteristic of a person; it is a relationship characteristic and can be influenced by later experiences. Attachment quality influences the ongoing parent-child relationship, as well as the relationship with one's eventual life partner and one's own children (see Steele/Steele/Fonagy 1996, Schwarz/Trommsdorff 2005a). Attachment quality is therefore an important factor for intergenerational relationships across the lifespan; in addition, it is an important factor in passing on relationship quality across the generations.

Contextual Conditions. The quality of attachment that emerges in early childhood is not the only determinant in the conditions of intergenerational relations, however, primarily because attachment is embedded in a sociocultural and familial context. Rather it is much more likely, in the sense of an ecological-contextual, culturally informed model of development, that distal and proximal contributing factors act at the macro and micro levels (Trommsdorff 2007, see Bronfenbrenner 1989, Whiting/Whiting 1975). These conditions are primarily seen in socioeconomic and cultural contexts, as well as in the values that are transmitted through socialization.

For this reason we cannot simply assume that cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism describe homogeneous cultures. To the contrary, cultures are complex and in no way static. Taken individually, theoretically relevant characteristics such as values (but also family structure or religion) do not represent sufficient characteristics to describe a culture, but they can be used for hypothesis-based statistical analyses if one considers the sociocultural context when interpreting the empirical results.

Of the terms *individualism* and *collectivism*, the former comprises values that tend more toward independence and self-sufficiency, whereas the latter includes values of group orientation, harmony, and attachment with the corresponding behavioral preferences (Triandis 1995). Oyserman, Coon, and Kemmelmeier's meta-analysis (2002) criticizes the undue simplification of complex cultural characteristics. The substance of their argument is that, while generalizations are unwarranted, entirely situation-specific valences can be targeted that correspond to the value dimensions of *individualism and independence* and *collectivism and interdependence* and can influence experience, behavior, and socialization in families. These values of independence and interdependence are the real basis of the few cross-cultural studies of the conditions and consequences of intergenerational relationships.

Family values – here meaning the importance of an orientation toward the family and the norms of family obligations in particular – are closely connected to these values. Orientations toward the family are especially strong in traditional cultures and in countries where material resources are primarily amassed and passed on within the family. In these countries, therefore, the *Value of Children* (VOC) and its consequences for fertility is more contingent on utilitarian and normative expectations. Familial relationships in these countries tend to have an obligatory nature, meaning that they have an order that comes from normative regulations and is hierarchical (rather than partnership-based). Here obedience to one's elders and acceptance of the rules are important, whereas "autonomous" decisions are encouraged throughout the lifespan in more individualistic value contexts. Cultural values, family values, and the Value of Children can thus be understood as psychological prerequisites for intergenerational relations.

The Value of Children and Intergenerational Relations. Questions about the conditions and expressions of intergenerational relations anchored in the family unit can be discussed on the basis of theoretical considerations and data from the international "Value of Children and Intergenerational Relations" study (Trommsdorff/ Nauck 2005, 2010). The Value of Children (VOC) approach of the 1970s was supposed to explain the generative behavior in various societies, especially the overpopulation in some parts of the world (see Arnold et al. 1975). The "value" or "utility" of children was seen in parents' expectations that their children would fulfill utilitarian-normative and emotional needs. In recent decades, economists in particular have discussed generative behavior from the perspective of the costs of children, in order to explain the declining birthrates in prosperous societies. The earlier approaches of the VOC Study have thus been taken up only partially.

The VOC Study asks questions about the correlations between generative behavior, parenthood, and intergenerational relationships (Trommsdorff/Nauck 2005, 2006). These questions can be seen in the psychological works of Hoffman and Hoffman (1973) and Kagitcibasi (1982, 2007). In addition, Nauck (2001, 2007a,

2007b, in this volume) has looked at these questions from a cross-national perspective of family sociology and theory of action.

The basic VOC approach assumes that the desire for children and the generative behavior of parents is motivated by such things as generalized values and a specific Value of Children; these imply, in part, certain expectations of children and of future intergenerational relations (e.g., support in old age), as well as certain (childrearing) behavior toward the children. Where individualistic values predominate, as opposed to collectivistic ones, the Value of Children is less associated with utilitarian-normative expectations and more directed toward fulfilling emotional needs; parents will encourage autonomy, rather than obedience, in childrearing (Albert/Trommsdorff/Wisnubrata 2009, Trommsdorff/Mayer/Albert 2004).

Furthermore, the VOC approach begins with the assumption that generalized values and the Value of Children depend in part on the level of prosperity in the society (and the family), and that these influence fertility decisions in terms of the number of children desired. Empirical evidence shows that the lower the prosperity level, the higher the utilitarian-normative expectations for offspring and the higher the number of children (Kagitcibasi 1982, 2007, Nauck 2007b, Trommsdorff 2009a, Trommsdorff/Kim/Nauck 2005, Trommsdorff/Nauck 2005). In contrast to the utilitarian-normative expectations for offspring, parental expectations of emotional fulfillment from their offspring are not assumed to be related to the prosperity level.

The obvious assumption is that for utilitarian-normative and emotional aspects the Value of Children is linked to corresponding values for intergenerational relationships. This assumption, however, requires that the Value of Children be based on relatively generalized values that are also effective later in life, when individual fertility decisions have been made long before, even many years back. We can certainly assume this type of continuity when the conditions necessary to see an effect for generalized VOC values and intergenerational relationship type exist in the given sociocultural context. Where can such conditions exist?

Theory of Family Models. Even though not specifically investigating intergenerational relations, Kagitcibasi's (2007) theoretical approach to changes in *family models* is relevant to our inquiry. According to Kagitcibasi, the family model of emotional and material *inter*dependence is linked to collectivistic values; it implies a more normatively oriented Value of Children and a more interdependent but asymmetrical parent-child relationship. The family model of emotional and material *in*dependence, on the other hand, is shaped more by individualistic values and an emotional Value of Children, with a more partnership-oriented parent-child relationship. The third variant, the model of emotional interdependence, primarily describes societies in transition, in which material dependencies within the family decline but emotional interdependence remains strong.

In a study across 30 nations, Georgas, Berry, van de Vijver, Kagitcibasi, and Poortinga (2006) report empirical findings with regard to Kagitcibasi's model,

namely that emotional closeness within families is at its most pronounced in cultures with an interdependent family orientation, followed by cultures with emotional interdependence and cultures with an independent family orientation. Differences between the cultures are greater for instrumental familial relationships (material interdependencies) than they are for emotional closeness. The significance of family values in each specific culture, and how these are expressed in the preference for familial attachment, is related to collectivistic values and to children's willingness to obey their parents (as opposed to individualistic values and the desire to be independent from one's parents).

The approaches of Georgas et al. (2006) and Kagitcibasi (2007) do not deal directly with our issue of the cultural characteristics, conditions, and consequences of intergenerational relations, but they are nonetheless relevant to our question because of their focus on family values and the Value of Children (VOC), parental childrearing goals and behavior, and the significance of autonomy and attachment.

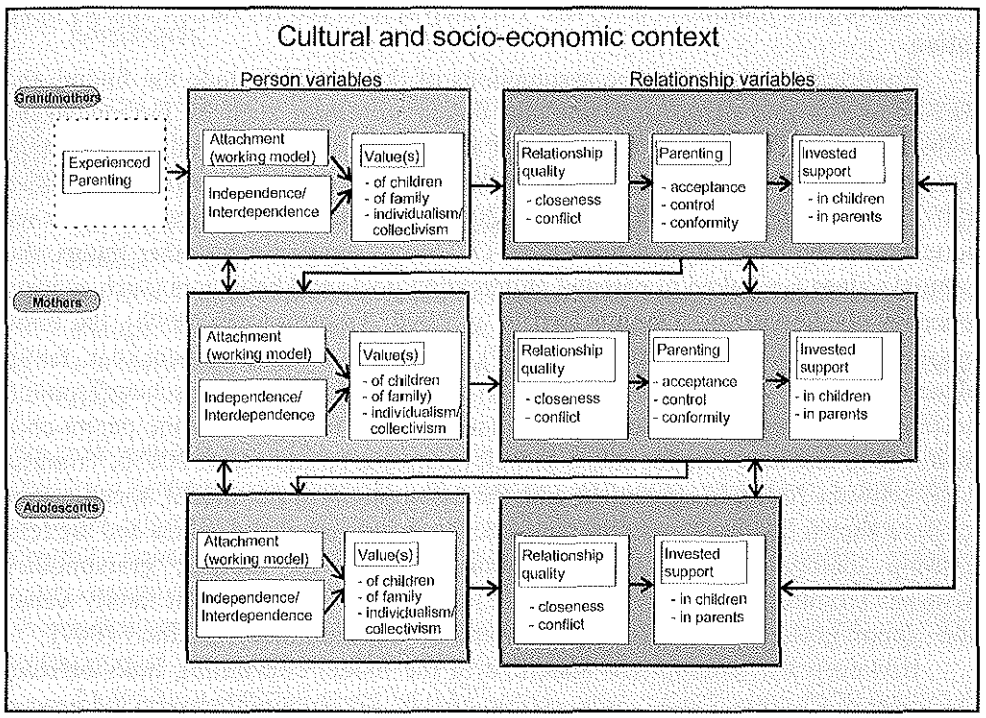
Distinctive Cultural Features of Intergenerational Relations. The approaches listed above, however, do not cover the cultural and developmental psychology aspects of parent-child relationships across the lifespan, of how these are relevant for intergenerational relations and above all for relationships across various generations. This is why Trommsdorff (2006, 2007) has taken the Value of Children approach further with her *culturally informed model of intergenerational relationships* across the lifespan. This model is based on the approaches that Rothbaum, Pott, Azuma, Miyake and Weisz (2000) and Trommsdorff and Rothbaum (2008) have taken to study culturally specific conditions for parent-child and intergenerational relationships.

It is assumed here that in cultures that give preference to the values of independence and individualism, parent-child relationships across the lifespan are structured more as partnerships and are characterized by their negotiation of conflicting interests. With the individuation of adolescence comes increasing detachment from parental expectations and the pursuit of individual goals. Later in life, the normative aspects of obligation to one's parents may grow stronger, as may the worry (filial anxiety) about whether one can give sufficient support to his or her aged parents.

In cultures that give preference to values of *interdependence* (collectivism), on the other hand, parent-child relationships are arranged to be as harmonious as possible; in some cultures, we can even observe a kind of symbiosis between parent and child. A socialization that is both empathy-based and norm-oriented transmits a feeling of togetherness, community, and close attachment from generation to generation: in this type of culture, familial obligations and parents' insistence on obedience are not seen as threatening. To the contrary, obligations (obedience, loyalty, caring) like "filial piety" in Asia (Hsu 1971, Rothbaum et al. 2000) encourage harmonious intergenerational relations, and, above all, a feeling of assurance and security on both sides (see Rothbaum/Trommsdorff 2007, Trommsdorff 2006). The interdependence encouraged by these obligations should, therefore, have both an

emotional and normative basis and underlie the attachment on both sides of intergenerational relationships, even at later ages.

Figure 1: Culturally informed model of intergenerational relations



Source: Trommsdorff (2001).

In sum, among the things we can assume in accordance with our culturally informed model of lifelong intergenerational relationships (see Figure 1) is that material conditions at the macro and micro level (the relative prosperity of a society, the socioeconomic and educational status of the family) and cultural norms and values as macrovariables are related to the parenting styles in a culture, and these methods in turn have effects on the experiences of attachment and the concept of self (independent versus interdependent). Both of these should influence the formation of individual values (family values, expectations for offspring) in the course of development. The person variables of values, self-definitions, and internal working models are then associated with the relationship variables of relationship quality (communication, verbal closeness, conflict frequency, filial anxiety) and to the types of intergenerational support (such as financial, instrumental, and emotional support). The socialization of the next generation, and thereby the (cultural) transmission of the concept of self, values, and relationship patterns occurs in part through these relationship variables, which also involve parenting styles (see Figure 1).

Empirical support is already available for some of the central assumptions of our model. These studies, however, do not yet focus on the specific direct and indirect connections at the macro and micro level that should theoretically be assumed, and they also are not yet based on systematic comparisons that encompass various cultures and require multilevel analyses. This step is reserved for further studies in the future.

Empirical results using the assumptions of this model include the finding that *socioeconomic and cultural factors* are linked to *values* such as individualism/-collectivism (Hofstede 2001, Oyserman et al. 2002), the importance of family values (Georgas et al. 2006), and the (emotional/normative) Value of Children (Kagitcibasi 2007, Trommsdorff 2007, 2009a, Mayer 2009a). Further investigations we have undertaken on the basis of data from the VOC Study show, among other things, that cultural values are linked to parental childrearing goals and behaviors (such as insistence on obedience; see Trommsdorff et al. 2004, Trommsdorff 2009b), the transmission of values (see Albert et al. 2007), the results of development (e.g. family planning) in the younger generation (Mayer 2009a, Mayer/Kuramschew/Trommsdorff 2009, Mayer/Trommsdorff 2010), and not least to aspects of the parent-child relationship that hold true for adults as well (Schwarz/Trommsdorff 2005b, Trommsdorff/Schwarz 2007). In agreement with the assumptions of our model, specific studies have shown (culturally specific) links between individualistic values and the relationship quality between the generations (adolescent, mother, grandmother; Schwarz/Trommsdorff/Albert/Mayer 2005) as well as links between family values and support given to parents (in Germany and China; Trommsdorff/Albert 2009).

However, the assumptions specified in the model concerning links between the Value of Children (VOC), relationship quality, and support between the generations have not yet been tested across cultures. In the next section we will, therefore, examine individual conditions for aspects of intergenerational relations across cultures.

3. Aspects of Intergenerational Relations: Cross-Cultural Results

The culturally informed model of intergenerational relations and its theoretical assumptions as outlined above underlie the following analyses and our discussion of them. Of particular interest here are the questions of:

a) which cultural differences exist in the Value of Children (VOC), intergenerational relationship quality, and support;
b) how and whether these differences are associated with socioeconomic conditions and individualist/collectivist orientations in the cultures;

c) whether culturally embedded values (at the individual level) influence the quality of the parent-child relationship and the (type of) support between the generations.

3.1 Methods

The present work includes six cultures and societies with certain cultural characteristics of individualism and collectivism and varying levels of prosperity (a total of 16 cultures were included in the VOC study).

a) Societies with *individualistic* values and *high prosperity*: Germany and France;
b) Societies with *collectivistic* values, *mid-level prosperity*, and heavy social change: Turkey, Russia, and China;
c) a society with collectivistic values, low prosperity, and heavy social change: India

We realize that it would be a gross oversimplification to imply that these six countries have homogenous "cultures." In countries like India, which has a multitude of different languages and ethnicities, it is obvious that our chosen sample (even a carefully considered one) can only depict one piece of the predominant reality of intergenerational relationships there. All the same, cross-cultural research has shown that cross-national comparisons are of great use when ascertaining and illustrating global variations in culture-based psychological characteristics.

As we have reported in earlier VOC work, these societies also differ considerably in their cultural values and familial relationships (overview in Trommsdorff/Nauck 2005; on Germany see Trommsdorff et al. 2004, Mayer/Albert/Trommsdorff/Schwarz 2005; on France see Albert 2007; on India see Mishra/Mayer/Trommsdorff/Albert/Schwarz 2005; on China see Lai/Liu/Zheng 2009; on Russia see Mayer et al. 2009). Nauck (in this volume) reports on distinctive features in the family structure for some of these countries.

For the results reported here, we examined two generations in a family (adult daughters and their older mothers) in all the cultures involved. The underlying sample contains n = 300 adult daughters and circa n = 100 older mothers for each culture, respectively. The paired sample, therefore, comprises 100 dyads, with an additional 200 adult daughters studied. The adult daughters were all also mothers of (at least) one adolescent child between the ages of 14 and 17 (this was asked, but not considered in the current study). Face-to-face interviews were conducted with study participants using the standardized VOC-IR questionnaire (Trommsdorff/Nauck/Schwarz/Chakkarath/Schwenk 2002). Although it would have been desirable to also include the views of adult sons and of their fathers, the focus in the VOC Study was on the maternal line. The primary reason for this focus was eco-

nomic, since a cross-cultural study of three generations (the adolescent children who are not included here were both male and female) comes at considerable financial and organizational expense that makes it necessary to set priorities. The data were evaluated separately for the adult daughters and for the older mothers. For the mean-value comparison, we standardized the Likert-scale variables of the VOC questionnaire for each respondent (so called ipsatization) in order to control for culturally specific response bias. A constant was added to the standardized mean values to allow for better representation and facilitate comparison to the original five-point Likert scale. For the correlation analyses at the cultural level, we calculated nonparametric correlations (Kendall's tau). Although significance tests with a sample of $n = 6$ cannot be conclusive, we carried out exact (one-sided) tests of the hypotheses. For reasons of space, these macro-level correlations are only presented for the adult daughters. Regression analyses (per country and per generation) were carried out to explore relationships at the individual level.

3.2 Mean Value Differences between the Cultures

Cultural differences were significant (at least $p < .01$) for all variables and for both generations (with the exception of emotional support given by adult daughters to their own mothers). The effect sizes (explained variance in the sense of η^2) are described following Cohen (1988) as small ($.01 \leq \eta^2 \leq .06$), medium ($.06 < \eta^2 \leq .14$) and large ($\eta^2 > .14$). Small effect sizes will also be described below as *small cultural differences* and medium effect sizes will also be described as *substantial cultural differences*. Because of the variety of sample sizes, we did not carry out statistical tests of the mean differences between adult daughters and older mothers, but these differences will be descriptively reported.

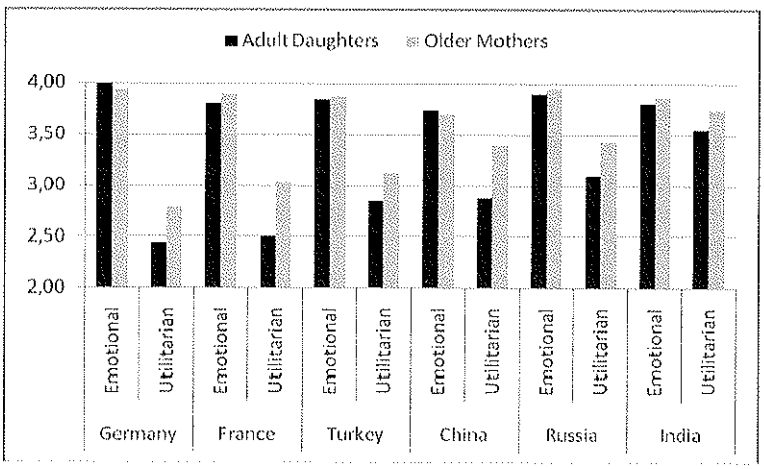
3.2.1 Value of Children

Previous factor analyses have yielded two theory-compliant factors that have proved to be valid across cultures (for related cross-cultural equivalence analyses, see Mayer 2009b). In the tradition of the Value of Children Study (see Arnold et al. 1975, Kagitcibasi 1982), these two factors can be described as the *emotional Value of Children* and *utilitarian Value of Children*. The emotional value concerns the emotional needs of the parents that are fulfilled by the child, whereas the utilitarian value deals with economic needs (e.g., old-age security) but also normative "needs" (such as the need to meet the expectations of relatives or of society as a whole). Nauck (in this volume) reports on very similar VOC dimensions, but he characterizes them differently, using economic and sociological theories of human need structures. Whereas there is hardly any cultural difference visible for the *emotional Value of Children*, there are great cultural differences in the *utilitarian Value*

of Children, in accordance with our expectations. Here 42 percent (adult daughters) and 27 percent (older mothers) of the variance can be attributed to cultural differences. We can differentiate among three groups of cultures: higher (India), medium (Russia, China, Turkey), and lower (France and Germany) utilitarian Value of Children (see Figure 2).

Even though this pattern is stronger among the adult daughters than the older mothers, the older mothers in all cultures report a higher importance for the utilitarian Value of Children than do the adult mothers, with a particularly strong difference shown in China and France. The conservative values of the older generation are the underlying basis for this difference (see Figure 2). We can also see that in all countries the emotional Value of Children is more important than the utilitarian Value of Children. Particularly striking is the stark discrepancy between the expression of the emotional and utilitarian Value of Children in Germany and France and the correspondingly lower discrepancies in other countries, especially India, where the emotional and utilitarian Value of Children are almost equal. We should also take a look at the relative significance of utilitarian VOC in comparison to emotional VOC.

Figure 2: Cross-cultural and cross-generational comparison of the Value of Children



Note: Ipsatized values with an added constant to approach the original scale. Original scale from "1 = not important at all" to "5 = very important".

At the cultural level, there is a marginally significant correlation (Kendall's tau = .60, $p = .07$) between the country's prosperity level in terms of the Human Development Index, (HDI, UNDP 2009) and the difference between utilitarian and emotional VOC in each country. The higher the HDI, the greater the difference, and

thus the higher the relative importance of emotional VOC in comparison to utilitarian VOC. By contrast, Hofstede's (2001) nation-level individualism index has no substantial correlation with the discrepancy between emotional and utilitarian VOC (Kendall's tau = 0.20, $p = .36$).

3.2.2 Relationship Quality

The items were adapted from Furman and Buhrmester's Network of Relationships Inventory (1985) and were used to measure verbal closeness (frequency of interpersonal exchange on intimate topics; frequency of experience of relationship partner's affection) and the frequency of conflict in the mother-daughter relationship.

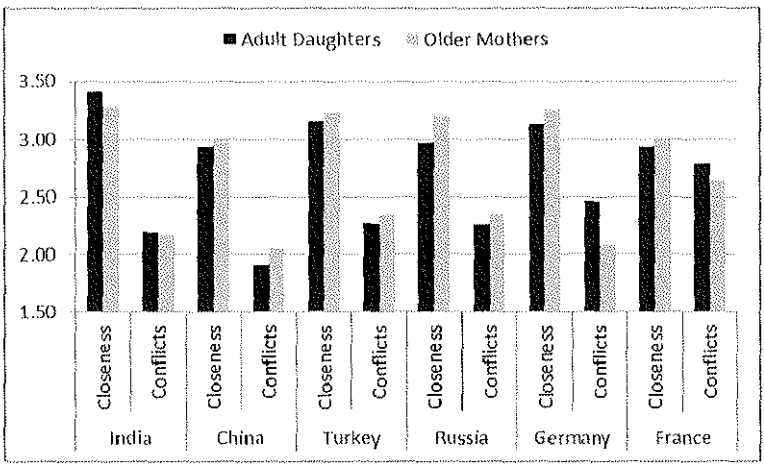
Substantial cultural differences can be seen for both *closeness* and *conflict* (explained variance for adult daughters and older mothers, respectively: for closeness, 14 percent and 8 percent; for conflict, 15 percent and 12 percent). For all of the countries, closeness is higher than frequency of conflict (see Figure 3). The discrepancy between closeness and conflict, however, differs greatly between the cultures. The discrepancy is greatest in India, followed by China, Turkey, and Russia. The discrepancy is at its lowest in Germany (only for the German adult daughters) and especially France. As for the mother-child relationship in adulthood, then, these results indicate that in Asian cultures, conflicts are mostly avoided or largely counterbalanced by closeness, whereas conflicts in France, a Western culture, are practically as frequent as verbal affection between the generations. We can see a significant rank correlation (Kendall's tau = -.87, $p < .01$) between the HDI and the relative frequency of closeness versus conflict in the mother-daughter relationship (from the perspective of the adult daughters): The higher the HDI, the smaller the difference between closeness and conflicts, and therefore the greater the relative frequency of conflict in the mother-daughter relationship. The correlation with Hofstede's individualism indicator goes in the same direction, but is not significant (Kendall's tau = -.47, $p = .14$).

This result corresponds to the predictions of our culturally informed model of intergenerational relationships. In prosperous societies, the orientation toward individual goals in parent-child relationships allows for the expression of interpersonal conflicts. Such expression is quite undesirable in a collectivistic society with relatively low prosperity such as China, a country that has also been shaped by Confucianist norms. Here it is important to maintain a normatively hierarchically organized family structure, in which each member fulfills his or her obligations and contributes to stabilizing harmony.

Filial anxiety, which we understand here in a broader sense as part of relationship quality, was only asked in the adult daughters' interviews. We used a scale from Cicirelli (1988) to account for this construct and measure the concern among adult daughters about whether they would be able to give their older parents the necessary support. With 15 percent explained variance, we can see a strong cultural

effect here that is traceable to the high level of filial anxiety among French and German adult daughters (with mean values of 2.83 and 2.79, respectively) and the clearly low levels among Turkish (2.5), Chinese (2.48), Indian (2.41) and above all Russian adult daughters (2.03). While the HDI and the levels of filial anxiety have no significant correlation (Kendall's tau = .47, p = .14), Hofstede's individualism shows a positive correlation with filial anxiety that approaches significance (Kendall's tau = .60, p = .07). Filial anxiety, then, seems to be stronger in individualist societies than in collectivist societies.

Figure 3: Cross-cultural and cross-generational comparison of mother-daughter relationship quality



Note: Ipsatized values with an added constant to approach the original scale. Original scale from "1 = never" to "5 = always" (related to the frequency of verbally close and conflictual behaviors, respectively).

These findings also correspond to the expectations of our model in that there is less of a reliable lifelong relationship between the generations in individualist cultures than in collectivist cultures. Indeed, relationships in individualist cultures must be constantly renegotiated, whereas in collectivist cultures these relationships are characterized by the self-evident and secure nature of reciprocity and attachment. This is particularly apparent in China, where the Confucian value of "filial piety" (Hwang 1999) obligates children to provide for their parents' welfare throughout the lifespan yet engenders no great concern about failing to meet this commitment. We can attribute the very low level of filial anxiety among Russian adult daughters to the fact that the mutual interdependence among this society's generations is already very high because of the transformation from a communist to a post-communist society and its accompanying economic crisis (cf., Nauck, in this volume). The adult daughters in the survey are thus familiar both with economic risks and with familial attachments, and therefore experience less filial anxiety.

3.2.3 Support

Here we check for selected characteristics of Bengtson's model of intergenerational solidarity (2001; see also Bengtson/Giarrusso/Mabry/Silverstein 2002). This model assumes that intergenerational relationships have an integrative function in modern societies. Research using Bengtson's model of generational solidarity shows a lifelong financial transfer from the parents' generation to the children's generation in prosperous societies where there is relatively good financial protection for the older generation (Szydlik 2000).

This begs the question of whether such a transfer can also be observed in societies with worse economic conditions or in prosperous societies with less institutionalization of national provisions for retirement. Life expectancy in most of the societies is likewise rising, even if these societies are not prosperous societies in the narrower sense of the word. The intergenerational support that is important for our purposes here is primarily instrumental and emotional support, along with financial support. We thus take up the concepts of the utilitarian and emotional Value of Children and ask whether support between the generations is expressed across cultures in a similar way to VOC. We will register the levels of support using an instrument we developed, measuring the frequency of emotional, instrumental (practical), and financial support provided to the mother or daughter in the last 12 months on a five-point Likert scale (from 1 = never, to 5 = always).

For *emotional support*, we can see no significant cultural difference among the adult daughters, but among the older mothers there are substantial cultural differences (12 percent explained variance). The adult daughters consistently report giving a high level of emotional support to their own mothers, whereas the older mothers, especially in France and Germany, report a lower level of emotional support for their daughters (see Figure 4). Both of these countries, with their high prosperity and predominantly individualistic values, have older generations that appear to either be less able or be less willing to support the younger generation emotionally. We may be able to attribute this in part to the relatively high level of conflict between mothers and daughters mentioned earlier. Since there are hardly any cultural differences to be seen, it's no surprise that the correlations at the cultural level for emotional support (as reported by the daughters) are not significant for the HDI (Kendall's tau = .28, p = .29) or for Hofstede's individualism (Kendall's tau = .14, p = .43).

We can see a very similar pattern for the *instrumental support* provided (through explained variance for cultural differences at five percent for the adult daughters and 11 percent for the older mothers). Here we have another strong discrepancy in Germany and France between adult daughters and older mothers. There is an altogether smaller frequency of practical assistance reported, in comparison to emotional assistance (see Figure 4). Instrumental support also does not correlate significantly with the HDI (Kendall's tau = .20, p = .36) or with Hofstede's individualism (Kendall's tau = -.20, p = .36).

Financial support shows considerable cultural differences for both generations (14 percent and 9 percent explained variance, respectively). On the one hand, the older mothers in all cultures except for China provide more frequent financial support to their adult daughters than vice versa (see Figure 4). Only in China does the financial transfer take place more from the children's to the parents' generation, in line with the Confucian tradition of filial piety. On the other hand, financial transfer from the older to the younger generation is at its highest in collectivist countries with a lower level of prosperity, such as Russia. Russia and China show the greatest magnitude and highest frequency of mutual financial support, even independent of generation. In Russia in particular, this magnitude can be attributed not only to the country's basic collectivistic orientation, but also to the present economic situation and the somewhat uncertain provision of national services that makes a high level of mutual support within the family necessary.

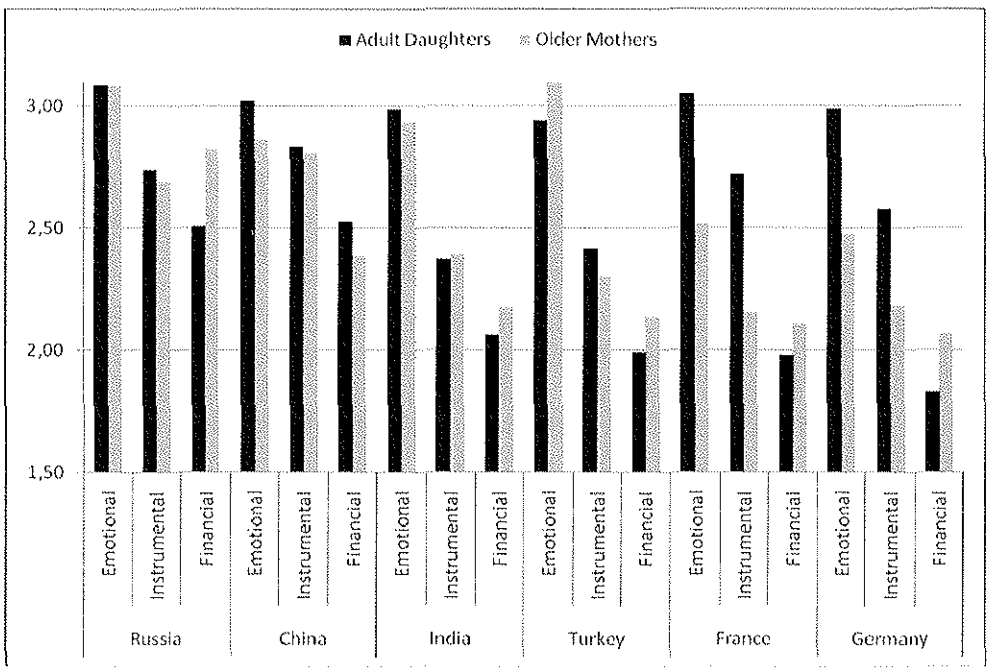
The correlation at the cultural level between the financial support reported by the adult daughters and the prosperity level (HDI) of the corresponding country is substantial but not statistically significant (Kendall's tau = -.47, p = .14), whereas the correlation between financial support and Hofstede's individualism is marginally significant. This result shows that in individualist cultures, there may be less financial transfer from the parents' to the grandparents' generation than in collectivist cultures.

There are hardly any cultural differences in *prospective support*, meaning the willingness to accept personal limitations and to make sacrifices in the future in order to support the other generation of adult mothers or older mothers in case of need (explained variance of two percent for adult daughters and two percent for older mothers). As for generational differences, older mothers in Russia and Turkey seem to be willing to accept greater limitations than their daughters. The mean value for all samples is above the scale's midpoint of three (between 3.21 and 3.48 for adult mothers, and between 3.38 and 3.66 for older mothers). In accordance with the low cultural differences, prospective support as reported by the adult daughters has no significant correlations at the cultural level with the HDI (Kendall's tau = -.07, p = .50) or with Hofstede's individualism (Kendall's tau = -.47, p = .14).

Is the support willingness reported by the adult daughters and older mothers more *altruistically* or *normatively* motivated? We developed our own instrument on the basis of Staub (1986) to measure the motivation for support. Both motivation dimensions yield substantial cultural differences. Among adult daughters, the explained variance for normatively oriented motivation is greater than the explained variance for altruistic motivation (21 percent versus 12 percent); among older mothers, there are similar effect sizes for both dimensions (nine percent versus eight percent). In all of the cultures, the altruistic motivation is stronger than the normative motivation, and indeed is at its strongest and visible for both generations in Germany and France. Intergenerational relations in both of these countries are formed more through individual preferences than through normative guidelines, according

to our theoretical model. This is especially true for the generation of adult daughters, and somewhat less true for the generation of older mothers. Similarly, in Turkey a relatively weak expression of normatively motivated prospective support can be seen, which points to a value shift in intergenerational relationships. In Russia and China, and even more so in India, normative motivation is expressed nearly as strongly as altruistic motivation. This finding confirms the normative character of intergenerational relationships that was postulated for these collectivist cultures.

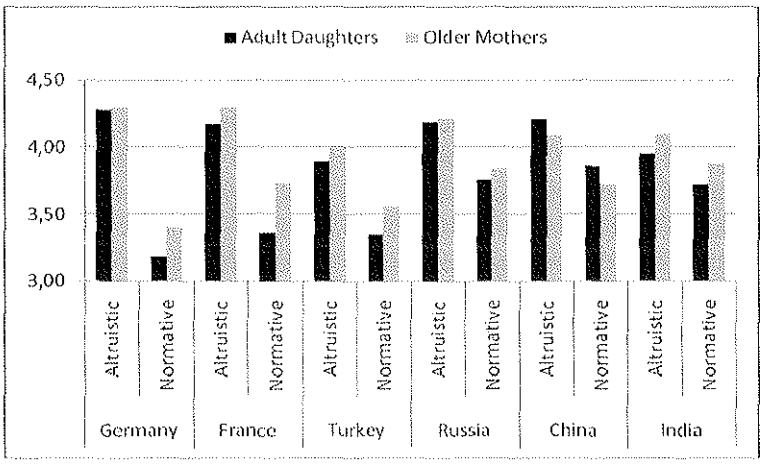
Figure 4: Cross-cultural and cross-generational comparison of mutually provided support (emotional, instrumental, financial) among mothers and daughters



Note: Ipsatized values with an added constant to approach the original scale. Original scale from "1 = never" to "5 = always" (related to the frequency of the respective supporting behaviors).

At the cultural level, we can see a significant rank correlation (Kendall's tau = .73, $p < .05$) between a country's prosperity level and the difference between the altruistic and normative motivations reported by the adult daughters: the higher the HDI, the higher the relative importance of altruistic motivation for prospective support (willingness to make sacrifices) in comparison to normative motivation. In contrast, there is no significant correlation between Hofstede's individualism and the difference between altruistic and normative motivation (Kendall's tau = 0.33, $p = .25$).

Figure 5: Cross-cultural and cross-generational comparison of motivation for prospective support between mothers and daughters



Note: Ipsatized values with an added constant to approach the original scale. Original scale from "1 = strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree" (related to altruistic and normative reasons, respectively, for prospective support).

Summary. The results for the Value of Children (VOC), relationship quality, support, and especially the motivation for such support show a clear pattern of cultural differences, particularly for the two Western European countries in comparison to the other countries, but also to a certain extent for the collectivist countries with mid-level prosperity (Turkey, China, and Russia) in comparison to India, which continues to be a very traditional culture with a low level of prosperity. The a priori cluster classification that we performed confirms the pattern of cultural differences in values for support motives and relationship quality. Our classification corresponds to the cluster classification in the Human Development Index (note the significant correlations at the cultural level of these constructs with the HDI). The cultural differences in filial anxiety and in financial support, on the other hand, correlate more strongly with individualism and less with the HDI. This indicates that although prosperity level and cultural individualism may overlap in some instances when placed in opposition to collectivism, the two should not be equated with one another. Beyond the cultural aspect, we can see a stronger emotional basis for intergenerational relationships than an instrumental-utilitarian one. This confirms Bengtson's (2001) assumptions about family models, as well as Kagitcibasi's (2007).

3.3 Correlations Between Value of Children, Relationship Quality, and Support

In order to describe the psychological *structure* of intergenerational relations in the following, we report on some of the relationships (found through regression analyses by culture and generation) between values, relationship quality, and support provision in the cultures. At the same time, we will argue on the basis of our culturally informed model of intergenerational relationships that the Value of Children as a generalized value not only influences the relationship to one's own children, but also can affect the configuration of a multitude of personal relationships, including the relationship to one's own mother. According to this model, relationship quality is in turn closely connected to the support currently provided to the relationship partner and the support planned in the future. In our analysis, we begin with an ideal-typical causal model that uses values (and self-conceptions) as the starting point, relationship quality as the mediating variable, and support/willingness to support as the dependent variable. This model, however, is only one of various possibilities and, therefore, should be understood as a simplified model of a complex array of effects. For example, provision of support could also generate conflicts and thereby influence relationship quality.

While cross-cultural comparisons of the *expression* of values, relationship quality, and support provision (and the analysis of correlations at the cultural level) confirm the expected intercultural variations and the pattern of similarities and differences that is true for the cultural sphere, we expect that analyses of the individual-level relations of these variables will reveal more cultural similarities than differences. For example, regardless of the relative significance of the emotional Value of Children in a given culture, at the individual level this value should correlate positively with a close relationship (in the sense of great closeness), and this close relationship should in turn correlate with a high provision of emotional support.

3.3.1 Value of Children as Explanatory Variable for Relationship Quality

The *Value of Children* as a generalized value can explain certain aspects of *intergenerational relationship quality.* The VOC dimensions for adult daughters, however, do not show any predictive value for the quality of their relationships with their older mothers. The exceptions are the positive effects that utilitarian VOC has on closeness as reported in France, and the positive effects that emotional VOC has on closeness in China and Turkey, as well as a negative effect that emotional VOC has on frequency of conflict as reported in India. Among older mothers, by contrast, we see more significant effects: In Germany utilitarian VOC has both a positive effect on closeness and a negative effect on the frequency of conflict.

Here we should recall that the utilitarian VOC was clearly lower in individualist cultures than in more collectivist cultures. It appears, however, that in these very

same individualist cultures, such conservative values among the older generation can play a positive role for relationship quality. For the older generation of mothers, we can see that emotional VOC has a positive effect in most countries on the closeness experienced in the mother-daughter relationship. This effect is especially strong in India. The link between the Value of Children (VOC) and conflicts is also hardly visible among the older mothers.

All in all, then, we can see consistent effects of emotional VOC among older mothers on the mutual closeness in the relationship. It remains to be seen to what extent we can speak of a causal connection between generalized values that see relationships with children as fulfilling emotional needs, and a positive emotional relationship quality.

Table 1: Regression analyses to predict relationship quality through the Value of Children

Affection	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**
Value of Children	**Germany**		**France**		**China**	
Utilitarian	0.04	0.37**	0.25**	0.14	0.07	-0.04
Emotional	0.09	0.06	0.06	0.33**	0.25***	0.31***
Value of Children	**Russia**		**Turkey**		**India**	
Utilitarian	0.05	-0.11	0.12	0.19	0.05	-0.39***
Emotional	0.09	0.33**	0.17*	0.19	0.07	0.74***
Conflicts	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**
Value of Children	**Germany**		**France**		**China**	
Utilitarian	-0.06	-0.30*	0.08	0.13	-0.01	0.05
Emotional	0.11	0.11	0.10	0.04	0.05	-0.17*
Value of Children	**Russia**		**Turkey**		**India**	
Utilitarian	0.08	0.03	0.07	-0.02	0.09	-0.06
Emotional	-0.03	-0.15	-0.01	0.01	-0.36***	-0.55***

Note: Hierarchical regression analyses. Coefficients are the β values in the last model. Coefficients controlled for age, number of children, and socioeconomic status.
+ $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

3.3.2 Values and Relationship Quality as Explanatory Factors for Filial Anxiety

In Germany and France, the Value of Children (VOC) does not play a role in the expression of filial anxiety among adult daughters (no table supplied for these results). However, there is a "protective effect" of the closeness experienced in the relationship with the mother. VOC does show effects for China, Russia, Turkey, and India: in all four countries, we can see positive effects from utilitarian VOC, and in Russia and India we can see negative effects from emotional VOC. Generalized expected economic benefits of children seem, then, to be associated with higher anxiety about filial obligations, while generalized emotional benefits of

children seem to lessen this anxiety. Besides these findings, we can see that conflict frequency in the relationship with the mother increases the filial anxiety experienced by adult daughters in China and Russia (and has a marginal effect in Turkey and India as well).

3.3.3 Values and Relationship Quality as Explanatory Factors for Support

The Value of Children has little influence on *financial support*, and, moreover, we see only slight and relatively weak correlations with relationship quality. In some samples we see modest positive effects of closeness and the provision of financial support. Interestingly, there is a positive correlation in France, Russia, and Turkey between conflict frequency and the frequency of financial support as reported by both generations. We can assume from this not that conflicts bring about higher financial support, but rather that the (necessity of) financial support goes hand in hand with more frequent conflicts.

Utilitarian VOC proves to be an effective predictor of *instrumental support* (reported by adult daughters), except in the Chinese and Turkish samples. The relation is positive among German, French, and Russian daughters. Among Indian adult daughters it is negative (see Table 2). On the other hand, for Indian adult daughters emotional VOC predicts stronger instrumental support, and it has a marginally predictive effect among their older mothers as well. For other cultures the emotional VOC has no such effects. In contrast to financial support, which shows hardly any observable effect on relationship quality, we can see the positive effects of mutual closeness on instrumental support in all countries. For both the adult daughters and the older mothers (with the exception of older mothers in Russia and Turkey), a high degree of esteem and intimacy experienced in the mother-daughter relationship correlates strongly with the practical assistance provided. By contrast, conflict has almost no effect on mutual instrumental support.

This pattern continues even more strongly for *emotional support*. Here we see that the level of closeness in the relationship substantially increases the provision of support in all samples (coefficients are all between .31 and .46). Here too there are hardly any relations with conflict, with the exception of older mothers in Germany, China, and Turkey (see Table 2). We may be able to attribute these positive correlations between frequency of conflict and emotional support to support that the daughter does not want, and the conflicts associated with this.

Table 2: Regression analyses to predict reported support through VOC and relationship quality

	Germany		France		China		Russia		Turkey		India	
Financial support	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**
Value of children												
Utilitarian	0.14+	-0.15	0.17*	0.07	-0.04	-0.08	-0.06	0,20+	-0,04	0,02	0,16+	-0,13
Emotional	-0.09	0.05	0.01	-0.04	0.08	-0.14+	-0.00	-0,12	0,04	-0,12	-0,21*	-0,02
Relationship quality												
Closeness	0.09	0.20+	0.17*	0.00	0.05	0.27***	0.16*	-0,11	0,08	0,10	0,09	0,27*
Conflict	0.06	0.06	0.15*	0.26**	0.05	0.13+	0.19**	0,27*	0,11+	0,29**	0,10	-0,01
	Germany		**France**		**China**		**Russia**		**Turkey**		**India**	
Instrumental support	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**
Value of children												
Utilitarian	0.21**	0.05	0.16*	0.16	-0.06	-0.08	0.19**	0,13	0,04	0,04	-0,20**	-0,21+
Emotional	-.01	0.06	0.10	-0.09	0.08	0.06	0.10	0,17	-0,13+	-0,01	0,32***	0,32+
Relationship quality												
Closeness	0.21**	0.23*	0.24**	0.22*	0.35***	0.14*	0.21**	0,10	0,20**	-0,05	0,34***	0,28*
Conflict	0.08	-0.02	0.07	0.04	-0.05	0.01	0.15*	0,07	0,13*	0,07	0,02	0,04
	Germany		**France**		**China**		**Russia**		**Turkey**		**India**	
Emotional support	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**	**Daughters**	**Mothers**
Value of children												
Utilitarian	0.01	0.13	0.11	0.17+	-0.28***	0.00	0.12+	-0,07	-0,29***	0,15	-0,13*	-0,37**
Emotional	0.08	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.22***	0.06	0.13+	0,05	0,10	-0,08	0,46***	0,50**
Relationship quality												
Closeness	0.31***	0.46***	0.35***	0.32**	0.45***	0.37***	0.31***	0,44***	0,35***	0,35***	0,32***	0,32**
Conflict	0.08	0.27**	0.08	0.12	-0.02	0.18**	0.07	0,08	0,13	0,32**	-0,20***	-0,03

Note: Hierarchical regression analyses. Coefficients are the β values in the last model. Coefficients controlled for age, number of children, and socio-economic status.

$+ p < .10$. $* p < .05$. $** p < .01$. $*** p < .001$.

The Value of Children has effects only in Asian cultures, whereas in Germany, France, and Russia only relationship quality predicts the provision of support. The VOC effects in China, Turkey, and India go in the expected direction. Utilitarian Values of Children have negative effects on emotional support, while emotional Values of Children have positive effects. Consequently, generalized expected economic benefits of children in these cultures stand in the way of an emotionally supportive relationship, while values oriented toward emotional needs also involve increased (willingness to provide) emotional support.

Willingness to Make Sacrifices (Prospective Support). Which factors explain the different levels of willingness among adult daughters and older mothers to assist the other generation in case of need? Of special interest is the motivation for making sacrifices. We have already described above how normative motivation is clearly greater in collectivist cultures than in individualist ones, but that, at the same time, altruistic motives are more important than normative motives overall. The results for influences at the individual level show clearly that in all cultures and for both generations (except for Turkish and Russian older mothers), altruistic motivation explains the willingness to assist one's own parents or one's own daughter in case of need, even if to do so would require considerable strain (no table provided for these results). The normative motivation has only among Turkish adult daughters and Chinese older mothers an additional positive effect for altruistic motivation.

In sum, we can state the following about the individual-level relations among the constructs under study:

(1) The ability of VOC to predict relationship quality among the older mothers may indeed be somewhat higher than among adult daughters (it may be that VOC has a child-specific function, in addition to its function as a generalized value, that only comes into play in the relationships that the older mothers have with their own daughters), but the effects here are rather inconsistent. This means that, even though we find strong cultural differences in these values, the within-culture variation of these values predicts relationship quality in the mother-child relationship only to a very limited extent;
(2) Except for in Germany and France, filial anxiety has a meaningful correlation with both VOC dimensions and in most countries is also influenced by the relationship quality with one's mother;
(3) The financial support of either generation is not affected by values and is little affected by relationship quality. We assume that the opposite course of action is to blame for the positive effects of conflict frequency in some countries: in other words, that frequent intergenerational support goes hand in hand with conflict.
(4) VOC as a generalized value has only very limited influence on instrumental and emotional support by either generation. When it does have effects, however, such as in India and China, these go in the expected direction.

(5) The instrumental and emotional support by both generations in all of the cultures is consistently predicted by the closeness reported by both groups, but conflict has little predictive value for such support.
(6) In all of the cultures, altruistic motivation is decisive for the level of prospective support and willingness to make sacrifices.

4. Summary and Prospects

Our findings show clear cultural differences, as well as a domain-specific variation in relationship quality and support. To a certain extent, we can explain these results in agreement with the theoretical models introduced at the beginning.

Our results correspond somewhat to the findings reported in the literature for Western societies but also partly contrast with them; all in all, the results paint a different portrait of intergenerational relations and highlight the significance of cross-cultural analyses.

We have seen that in both individualist and collectivist cultures, relationships founded on emotion play a particularly important role in intergenerational support. Mutual closeness among both generations has a positive effect on instrumental and emotional support in all countries: When both partners in the mother-daughter relationship experience esteem and intimacy, there is clearly more emotional and practical assistance provided. On the whole, we saw very similar effects at the individual level for all six cultures that we reported on. The effects of emotional and utilitarian VOC on relationship quality, filial anxiety, and (willingness to provide) emotional support were few and were inconsistent overall. Perhaps these very focused values actually lent themselves less to generalization and were less relevant for behavior in close intergenerational relationships than we originally suspected.

On the other hand, we saw clear *cultural differences* in the importance of values and motives, the frequency of closeness and conflict in the adult child-mother relationship and the frequency of the provision of support. These cultural differences are partly linked to prosperity level. The VOC (utilitarian versus emotional) and the motivation for support (altruistic versus normative) exhibit strong connections to the prosperity level in a country. These cultural differences are also partly related to the value dimensions of cultural individualism/collectivism: this is true for both filial anxiety and financial support. We can, thus, to some extent, divide these cultural differences into theoretically significant *groups*.

Corresponding to this is the *financial* transfer from the older to the younger generation that can be observed in all countries except for China and is even greater than the findings that have previously been reported in the literature (primarily for Western cultures). This finding, however, does not agree with Kagitcibasi's model, which stipulates that in non-Western cultures with low prosperity,

support should flow from the younger to the older generation above all. The finding reported in the literature of *practical* support going primarily from the middle generation to the older generation was *not* replicated here for non-Western countries (but can be clearly identified in Germany and France). In individualist cultures, this type of support from the middle to the older generation is characterized by partnership and open communication, but also by conflict. For both generational cohorts, the expression of esteem (affection) from one generation to the other is important; it strengthens each generation's willingness to support the other. The direction of transfers between generations, so far studied primarily for Western countries (see Kohli/Künemund 2001), needs more cross-cultural study.

In order to explain the *culturally specific result pattern* established here, both values and aspects of relationship quality must be considered as influential variables. As indicated above, prosperity level plays a role in the type and quality of intergenerational relationships, in addition to the value dimension of the individualism/collectivism in a country. But macro-level prosperity alone cannot explain the cultural differences. Values and relationship quality are also significant. Our results thus give us three groups of countries characterized by similar values (VOC), relationship traits, and support features, and which correspond to our a priori classification of the countries involved.

The two individualist cultures, where prosperity is at its highest, are relatively similar in many respects. Here both conflict and close emotional relationships occur, and the discrepancy in support from adult daughters to their mothers is clearly larger than in all other countries. This finding bears witness to a more partnership-oriented relationship that even so is steeped in conflict, all the more since filial anxiety among the daughters in these two countries is at its highest. China, Turkey, and Russia are frequently grouped together. What's more, in China the Confucian value of harmony means that conflict plays hardly any role in intergenerational relationships. Indeed, in China, as in Turkey and Russia, the traditional Value of Children is the foundation for normatively shaped intergenerational relationships. In India, on the other hand, intergenerational relationships feature signs of marked emotional interdependence (presumably more with the actual mother) and a normative foundation (presumably more with the mother-in-law, with whom women normally live).

Beyond the correlations that values and intergenerational relationships have with individualism/collectivism and prosperity level, we also see covariation in the patterns of cultural differences in VOC, relationship quality, and especially financial support. In order to explain the distinctive features of intergenerational relations, then, we must consider cultural differences in *values*. Trommsdorff's culturally informed model (2006, 2007) of intergenerational relationships across the lifespan achieves this.

It also explains the high discrepancy between the generations for instrumental and emotional support in Germany and France: the mothers in these countries give their own mothers on average more support than the adult daughters receive (al-

though this does not imply that inequalities or a lack of reciprocity exist at the individual level).

Indeed, this discrepancy could signify a relatively strong independence (independent relationship) of the generations. The intergenerational relationship is more fraught with conflict here than in other countries (German and French adult daughters report more conflict) and generates more filial anxiety (filial anxiety among daughters in these countries is stronger than in all other countries). Here the intergenerational relationship across the lifespan is characterized more by (generative) tension than by (symbiotic) harmony (see Rothbaum et al. 2000).

Intergenerational relations in Russia, on the other hand, where there are traditional family values and VOC, are emotionally closer (balanced emotional support, the least filial anxiety among daughters). In China and India, where conflicts between the generations of a family are not accepted within the harmony-oriented value systems of these cultures, children are valued according to more utilitarian-normative criteria. This combination of characteristics for intergenerational relations widely corresponds to the assumptions made in the various developmental pathways for parent-child relationships across the lifespan. Intergenerational conflicts and tensions may arise in situations of independence but in no way do these imply a necessary reduction in the provision of support to the older generation. In situations of interdependence, normative expectations in each respective culture are so integrated with emotional attachments that the resulting relationship imparts security and harmony on the whole and is characterized by extensive mutual support.

Our overall results correspond to the model of intergenerational solidarity of Bengtson and his colleagues (e.g., Bengtson/Roberts 1991), which prior to our study had not yet been proved in a cross-cultural comparison. But our findings only partially agree with the assumptions of Kagitcibasi's family models of independence, interdependence, and emotional independence (2007).

Indeed, our findings suggest that there are differentiations in the model of intergenerational solidarity and that these are a result of the cross-cultural comparisons, since intergenerational relations differ across the various cultures in terms of characteristics and causal factors. These differentiations require additional theoretical assumptions that can be stated more precisely through our culturally informed model of intergenerational relations.

With cultural values (family values and VOC) and their associated normative obligations on one side, and the emotional quality of the relationship on the other, both systems serve important functions for support between the generations in a family. It remains to be determined what effects an economic transformation and value shift will have on intergenerational relationships in the future, and whether relationship characteristics that can be understood as distinctive cultural features will maintain their stability.

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