

**PERSONAL VALUES AND SELF-REPORTED CHILD-REARING  
ACTIVITIES OF ESTONIAN AND RUSSIAN PARENTS  
IN ESTONIA**

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**Abstract.** This study explores the differences and similarities in self-reported child-rearing activities and personal values between Estonian and Russian parents in Estonia using archival data. Participants included 236 Estonian and 111 Russian parents whose children, aged 10–16, attend regular schools. Parenting practices were evaluated using the QTP (*Questionnaire for Rearing Tasks*), and personal values using the EVI (*Estonian Value Inventory*). Applying factorial MANOVA led to the conclusion that parents' education and ethnicity are statistically significant factors connecting their values and child-rearing activities. Some cross-cultural differences were also found: Estonians rate highly values like Benevolence, while Russians appreciate Conservatism. Results also suggest that Russian parents set limits and teach social norms to their child more frequently than Estonian parents, and Estonian parents are more frequently concerned about the acceptance and psychological environment of their child than Russian parents. Russian parents also put more time into raising their children than Estonians.

**Keywords:** cultural differences, child-rearing activities, personal values, adolescents

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### **1. Culture and parenting**

There is a growing awareness that universal developmental tasks may be solved differently in different sociocultural environments (Bornstein and Cheah 2006). Culture may be defined in several different ways. At the centre of every concept of culture is the expectation that different nations possess different beliefs and behave differently in respect to parenting (Bornstein and Cheah 2006). Tudge (2000) defines culture as a web of values, beliefs, meaning systems and practices; therefore, variability in the patterns of values and beliefs that exists within societies, such as in the USA and Russia, should not be ignored or treated as

evidence of intrasocietal culture. To paraphrase Tudge, we may say that one important level of intrasocietal culture is the way in which parents raise their offspring.

Cross-cultural comparisons show that virtually all aspects of parenting, whether beliefs or practices, are shaped by cultural habits (Bornstein and Cheah 2006). Parenting is a contribution to the 'continuity of culture' by helping to define cultural patterns and by transmitting cultural information from generation to generation (Darling and Steinberg 1993). For children of ethnic minorities, the cultural influence presented by the dominant culture appears to be a constant threat to their traditional values, and thus may counteract the socialization process. It is therefore important to identify the different values which constitute socialization. Greater awareness about the core values of the majority and minorities may prevent confusion of norms and marginalization amongst ethnic minority families (Lefley 1976). Thus we may say that parenting practices reflect cultural meaning systems (Harwood et al. 2001).

## **2. Russians in Estonia**

It is widely accepted that cultural heritage and beliefs, as well as social factors associated with ethnicity in the country of residence, have important effects on parenting behavior (Forehand and Kotchick 1996, Kotchick and Forehand 2002). Approximately 26% of Estonian inhabitants are of Russian origin (Statistics Estonia 2008). Most of them are immigrants who arrived in Estonia after World War II and their descendants. As knowledge of the Estonian language amongst the Russian population is in many cases poor or lacking (Pavelson 1997, Nimmerfeldt, Schulze and Taru 2011), their chances to acquire education or find a job, and eventually their socioeconomic status itself, is lower than that of Estonians (Statistics Estonia 2008). Thus, one influential factor in the child-rearing habits of Russians and Estonians is probably their differing socioeconomic statuses, and not only the different cultural backgrounds.

The correlation between upbringing and culture has been widely researched, and different connections between the two have been found. There has been much talk about individualism and collectivism (or sociocentrism) as important factors in child rearing. In one study on this topic (Realo and Allik 1999), researchers compared the samples formed by respondents from the USA, Estonia and Russia, and concluded that collectivism is the highest amongst Russian respondents and lowest amongst Estonians. They also stated that Russians living in Estonia were less collectivistic than the Russians living in Russia (*ibid.*). Realo and Allik (1999) connected this fact with the results of research carried out by Vetik (1995), in which it was concluded that 72% of Russians living in Estonia have adopted an 'Estonian' identity. Other researchers have drawn the same conclusion (Pettai 2000): The Russian community in Estonia has constructed a new, Estonian-Russian identity (Fein 2005, Vetik 1995). Similar results were obtained by

Lambert (1987), who examined the values and parenting habits of immigrants in the USA and Canada, as well as by many other scientists (Akhtar 1995). Lambert (1987) studied the values of two social groups: parents residing in each of the countries of origin, and comparable groups (immigrants) of parents established in Canada or the USA. He concluded that the values appreciated by immigrant families are closer to the values appreciated in the new homeland. In his opinion, this can be explained primarily by the fact that immigrant families desire a better life for their children in their new homeland (*ibid.*). However, in forming large, Russian-speaking communities, most Estonian Russians are not integrated, but more likely marginalized: They have not embraced the main values which Estonians appreciate, or the Estonian language, and at the same time they have lost contact with their own culture. The research carried out in Estonia by Tammaru (1997) showed that – in accordance with the theory developed by Berry (1992) – in large Russian-speaking communities the main form of acculturation is marginalization. Therefore, we can presume that the identity of Russians living in Estonia is different from the identity of Estonians living in Estonia.

### **3. Estonian and Russian parenting and values**

Values are considered to be a basis of the structure of individual personality: They represent the aims of individuals, which are connected with all aspects of behavior within the society and certain cultural context (Schwartz 1992). It is obvious that parents differ in the guiding principles they value in their lives. Thus, based on their values, parents' beliefs about what constitute appropriate child-rearing practices contributes to the ways in which they try to shape their children's development. At the same time, a person's everyday experience or socialization and constantly changing social environment have a direct effect on that person's values as well. Since the cultural environment may be different for subgroups, subcultural groups can be distinguished with the help of their values (Smith and Schwartz 1997, Ajzen and Fishbein 2000).

There are numerous studies regarding Estonian and Russian parents, both comparative and non-comparative. Saar and Niglas (2001) examined parental attitudes about child rearing by Estonians and Russians living in Estonia and Russians living in Russia, and concluded that Estonian mothers control their children's behavior less than mothers from the other groups. It has also been established that Russian parents emphasize parental authority, rather than a democratic relationship between children and parents (Ispa 1994, Hart et al. 1998). However, until now the particular child-rearing values of Russian parents living in Estonia in comparison with Estonian parents have not been thoroughly researched.

In 1963, Kohn proposed the following causal sequence between social class and parental behavior: social class → conditions of life → parental values → parental behavior. Tudge et al. (1999) have tested Kohn's (1963) hypotheses in a comparative study based on samples from Estonia, the USA, South Korea and

Russia. Their results clearly supported Kohn's idea linking social class (represented by education and occupation) to values. In consequence, some distinctive features in Estonian and Russian forms of child rearing are probably determined by differences of socioeconomic status. Saar and Niglas (2001) have made the same conclusion, amongst many others. They examined Russians and Estonians living in Estonia and discovered that the higher the level of education, the less important control mechanisms were deemed to be, and that this feature did not depend on ethnicity. Tudge et al. (2000) note that future cross-cultural studies, particularly those comparing industrialized societies, must pay more attention to intrasocietal heterogeneity rather than focus almost exclusively on cross-societal variation. Therefore, we can presume that the education of parents may have a connection to the values and parenting practices in our sample.

#### 4. The present study

The present study analyses the child-rearing activities and personal values of the two major ethnic groups of Estonia: native Estonians and immigrant Russians. The aim of the present study is to compare the similarities and differences between Estonian and Russian parental activities and personal values. Based on results obtained by Kohn (1963), Saar and Niglas (2001), Ispa (1994), and Hart et al. (1998), we hypothesize that:

1. Estonian parents consider Benevolence value to be more important and are more frequently concerned about the acceptance and psychological environment of their child than Russian parents.
2. Russian parents consider Conservatism value to be more important and more frequently set limits and teach social norms to their child than Estonian parents.
3. Estonian and Russian parents have different levels of education, which can influence the importance of different value types.

##### 4.1. Method

The data for this study were part of the Reaction Pattern Research Project (RPR, Rink et al. 2000). The current data were derived from a pool of data collected within the framework of a larger research project that analyzed the antisocial behavior of adolescents and the roots of such behavior.

##### 4.2. Participants

The present study is based on a comparison of Estonian and Russian parents of children aged 10–16 who attend regular schools. The Russian sample consisted mostly of parents who were either born in Estonia or immigrated to Estonia in their childhood, and whose children attend Russian-language schools. The Estonian sample consisted of Estonian parents whose children attend Estonian-language schools.

A total of 347 parents participated in the study, 61% of them mothers and 39% fathers. In total, 236 Estonian and 111 Russian parents took part in the research. The average age of the Russian ( $M = 40.6$ ,  $SD = 5.71$ ) and Estonian ( $M = 40.3$ ,  $SD = 5.93$ ) samples did not differ significantly. Most of the families had two parents; 12.4% of the respondents were single parents. The average number of children in a family besides the child in question was 2.2 in Estonian families ( $SD = 1.02$ ) and 1.9 in Russian families ( $SD = 0.91$ ), and did not differ significantly. The average age of both Russian and Estonian children was 13.5 years (age range: 10–16 years;  $SD = 1.03$ ). The employment status of parents within the Estonian sample (87%) and Russian sample (75.7%) differed significantly at  $F(1, 342) = 5.3$ ,  $p < .05$ .

Table 1 shows that there are more parents with a secondary and basic education (77.5%) and fewer with higher education (22.5%) in the Russian sample than in the Estonian sample (respectively 67.4% and 32.6%). The average level of education differed significantly at  $F(1, 336) = 4.12$ ,  $p < .05$ .

**Table 1. Parents' level of education**

Level of education	Estonian parents ( $n = 236$ )		Russian parents ( $n = 111$ )	
	$n$	%	$n$	%
Basic and secondary	159	67.4	86	77.5
Higher *	77	32.6	25	22.5

Note. \*higher education = university or college education.

#### 4.3. Instruments and measures

*QTP-Questionnaire of Rearing Tasks for Parents.* Parenting practices were studied using a specially constructed questionnaire (Aavik, Aavik, and Kõrgesaar, 2006, Rink et al. 2000). The questionnaire covers all the different aspects of activities in which parents could be engaged throughout the child-rearing process. The reliability (Cronbach alpha) of six, 8-item subscales varied from .78 to .89. The scales were labeled as follows: *Acceptance*, composed of items representing parental communication with the child (“listened to the child’s opinions”); *Setting limits*, involving any discipline-related items such as orders, rules, limits and punishment (“set a bedtime curfew for the child and told him/her to keep it”); *Social norms* scale, involving items that emphasized the teaching of social norms in relation to social relations (“taught the child how to negotiate and reach an agreement when it comes to rules”); *Psychological environment*, comprising items that represent activities parents can use to provide favorable psychological conditions at home (“tried to avoid the incitement of family members against each other”); *Physical safety* scale, comprising activities parents can be engaged in to ensure the day-to-day safety of the child (“taught the child the rules of the road”);

and *Free-time* scale, consisting of activities parents can be engaged in to ensure that their child spends his or her days in an effective and meaningful way (“introduced different types of hobbies, such as music and sports, to the child”). Respondents had to rate items on a 5-point scale (from 1 = *not at all* to 5 = *very much*), assessing the extent to which they had been engaged in this activity while raising the child so far. The mother and father of each child were asked to answer the questions independently from one another, and they were both instructed to keep the child in question in mind throughout the questionnaire.

*EVI – Estonian Value Inventory.* Personal values were assessed with the EVI, the 56-item questionnaire, in which parents’ personal values were assessed with six sub-scales developed previously from a lexical hypothesis (for details, see Aavik and Allik 2002). This is the questionnaire which examines the Estonian language and therefore also the values of the cultural space. Based on this questionnaire, we can observe how much the values appreciated by Russian parents differ from the ones appreciated by native inhabitants. Sub-scales of the EVI are as follows: Benevolence, Self-enhancement, Broadmindedness, Hedonism, Conservatism, and Self-realization. Theoretically, values measured by EVI form two dimensions where the first dimension consists of self-realization and broadmindedness versus conservation and the second dimension comprises benevolence versus hedonism and self-enhancement. Respondents rated the importance of each value as a guiding principle in their life on a 9-point scale from *I am opposed to it* (–1) and *not important* (0) to *of supreme importance* (7). The reliability of the measures (Cronbach’s alphas) was found to be from .81 to .89. Demographic data such as the level of education, employment status, etc. were also collected. In our research education was used as the main indicator of socioeconomic status. There were no questions asked regarding respondents’ occupation or income.

#### 4.4. Procedure

Parents were identified by data received from schools. All families participating in the research received questionnaires concerning their child, with an enclosed letter describing the general objectives of the research project and inviting them to participate in the research. A return envelope was also included with the questionnaire. Completed questionnaires were received from approximately 80% of the families. In all cases, anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed.

## 5. Results

We calculated correlations to validate the connection between personal values and the frequency of the self-reported parenting behavior. The results are shown in Table 2. There were some mild but statistically significant correlations (*Pearson r*, ranging from –.32 to .33) between EVI dimensions and the QTP factor domains.

**Table 2. Correlations between personal values and child-rearing activities**

	Acceptance	Setting limits	Social norms	Psych environ	Physical safety	Free time
Benevolence	<b><u>.33</u></b>	.09	.03	<b>.21</b>	<b>.23</b>	.13
Self-enhancement	<b>-.26</b>	<b>-.17</b>	<b>-.23</b>	<b><u>-.32</u></b>	<b>-.15</b>	-.09
Broadmindedness	<b><u>.22</u></b>	.02	<b>.22</b>	<b><u>.29</u></b>	-.09	<b>.12</b>
Hedonism	-.08	<b>-.18</b>	.01	.08	<b>-.13</b>	-.02
Conservatism	<b><u>-.31</u></b>	<b>.22</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>-.12</b>	<b>.22</b>	-.09
Self-realization	.03	.08	-.00	<b>.19</b>	.01	.11

Note. Boldfaced correlations are significant at  $p < .05$ ; underlined at  $p < .01$ ;  $n = 345$

As can be seen from Table 2, there was no simple and direct correspondence between EVI and QTP factors but the general pattern of correlations was close to the expected. Some parenting practice factors had a significant positive correlation with personal values but at the same time negative with others. For instance, *Psychological environment* had a significant positive relationship with Benevolence, Broadmindedness and Hedonism, but a significant negative relationship with Self-enhancement and Conservatism. In the value structure obtained by Aavik and Allik (2002), these values are situated opposite to each other rather than belonging to the same group. The same pattern of relationships also appeared with other personal values and parenting practices. Thus, our basic assumption that personal values are related with parenting practices was confirmed.

Furthermore, General Linear Models (GLM) were applied to find out which categorically independent variables (ethnicity, parent's gender, child's gender, education, or their interactions) and which continuous predictor variables (parents' age and child's age) significantly affect personal values and child-rearing activities. The analysis revealed the main effect for ethnicity (Estonian vs. Russian),  $F(12, 314) = 13.08$ ,  $p = .001$ ; the main effect of the parental gender (mothers vs. fathers),  $F(12, 314) = 6.03$ ,  $p < .001$ ; the main effect of the parents' education (more educated vs. less educated),  $F(12, 314) = 5.50$ ,  $p = .001$ ; and the main effect of parents' age,  $F(12, 314) = 1.98$ ,  $p = .05$ . No effects regarding the child's gender and child's age were observed. The independent variable Ethnicity interacted with education,  $F(12, 314) = 2.25$ ,  $p < .01$ ; with parental gender,  $F(12, 414) = 2.09$ ,  $p < .05$ ; and with the child's gender,  $F(12, 314) = 2.50$ ,  $p < .05$ . There were no more statistically significant interactions. A one-way ANOVA and Sheffe tests for the category variables were used to specify the differences which are found in Table 1. To apply Sheffe's test to the parents' age, parents were divided into two age subgroups: over 40 years of age ( $n = 177$ ) and under 40 years of age ( $n = 170$ ).

### 6. Comparison of Estonian and Russian personal values and child-rearing practices.

In order to investigate the hypothesized differences of personal values and self-reported parenting practices, we compared the Estonian parents with the Russian parents. Personal values, parenting practices and other important measures were again compared between the two groups by a one-way ANOVA. The results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Results of Factorial ANOVAs for the personal values and child-rearing activities across samples: F Statistics and Sheffe test results**

Categories	One-way Anova (df = 1, error 345)				Sheffe Test			
	Ethnicity	Parents' education	Parental gender	Parents' age	Ethnicity Est vs. Rus	Education Me vs. Le	Parental gender M vs F	Parents' age Yn vs Ol
v: benevolence	39.34***	8.39**	6.83**	Ns	Est > Rus***	Le > Me**	M>F**	ns
v: self-enhancement	56.31***	ns	ns	Ns	Rus > Est***	ns	ns	ns
v: broad-mindedness	10.91**	27.14***	ns	Ns	Rus > Est**	Me > Le***	ns	ns
v: hedonism	18.76***	ns	21.60***	Ns	Est > Rus***	ns	F>M***	ns
v: conservatism	6.48*	8.29**	ns	Ns	Rus>Est*	Le > Me**	ns	ns
v: self-realization	9.11**	8.62**	ns	Ns	Rus > Est***	Me > Le**	ns	ns
r: acceptance	11.43**	ns	63.67***	6.04*	Est > Rus*	ns	M>F**	Yn>Ol*
r: setting limits	17.33***	ns	18.83***	15.45***	Rus > Est***	ns	M>F***	Yn>Ol***
r: social norms	7.52**	ns	12.49***	Ns	Rus > Est**	ns	M>F***	ns
r: psych. environment	ns	5.81*	6.49*	6.95**	ns	Me > Le*	M>F*	Yn>Ol**
r: physical safety	33.33***	ns	35.62***	7.39**	Rus > Est***	ns	M>F***	Yn>Ol**
r: freetime	51.18***	7.30**	12.41***	Ns	Rus > Est***	Me > Le**	M>F***	ns

*Note.* In first column: v – personal value type, r – rearing activity; \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , ns-insignificant; Est = Estonian sample, Rus = Russian sample; Me = more educated (at least at the college level), Le = less educated; M = mothers, F = fathers; Yn = age less than 40 yrs, Ol = age 40 yrs and more

As can be seen, Estonians rate Benevolence and Hedonism higher (respectively  $F(1, 345) = 39.4, p < .001$ ; and  $F(1, 345) = 18.76, p < .001$ ) than Russian parents. At the same time, Russians consider Self-enhancement, Broadmindedness, Conservatism, and Self-realization to be significantly more important (respectively  $F(1, 345) = 56.31, p < .001$ ;  $F(1, 345) = 10.91, p < .01$ ;  $F(1, 345) = 6.48, p < .05$ ; and  $F(1, 345) = 9.11, p < .01$ ) than Estonians. Considering parenting practices, Estonian parents accepted the child's psychological needs more frequently ( $F(1, 345) =$

11.43,  $p < .01$ ), and Russian parents more frequently set limits for their children, taught social norms, did something to ensure the physical safety of the child, and arranged their free-time activities (respectively,  $F(1, 345) = 17.33$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $F(1, 345) = 7.52$ ,  $p < .01$ ;  $F(1, 345) = 33.33$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $F(1, 345) = 51.18$ ,  $p < .001$ ). It is worth noting that in parenting practices mothers significantly exceeded fathers in frequency of parenting practices (Table 3) – mothers have higher scores in all parenting practices. Concurrently, there are only a few personal value differences between mothers and fathers: Fathers exceed mothers in Hedonism,  $F(1, 345) = 21.60$ ,  $p < .001$ ; and mothers exceed fathers in Benevolence,  $F(1, 345) = 6.83$ ,  $p < .01$ . Although the age of the parent was not important in personal values, younger parents (age <40 yrs) more frequently accepted the child's psychological needs, set limits, and cared about the psychological environment and physical safety of the child than older parents (age >40 yrs, respectively,  $F(1, 345) = 6.04$ ,  $p < .52$ ;  $F(1, 345) = 15.45$ ,  $p = .001$ ;  $F(1, 345) = 6.95$ ,  $p < .01$ ; and  $F(1, 345) = 7.39$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In addition, we found differences in the educational levels of parents: more educated (with at least a college education) parents rate Broadmindedness and Self-realization higher ( $F(1, 345) = 27.14$ ,  $p < .001$ ; and  $F(1, 345) = 8.62$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Less educated parents (with at least a secondary education) gave more importance to Benevolence and Conservatism ( $F(1, 345) = 8.29$ ,  $p < .01$ ; and  $F(1, 345) = 8.29$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Compared to personal values, parenting practices were less influenced by education: More educated parents care more about the psychological environment and free-time activities of the child ( $F(1, 345) = 5.81$ ,  $p < .05$ ; and  $F(1, 345) = 7.30$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

In sum, there is considerable differentiation in personal values and some parenting practices of Estonian and Russian parents that may have an impact on child behavior. In addition, a parent's level of education, as well as gender and age, seem to support differences in parenting practices.

## 7. Discussion

For parents of ethnic minorities, the cultural influence presented by the dominant culture appears to be a constant threat to their traditional values, and thus may counteract the socialization process. To understand the processes which constitute parenting practices it was important to identify the different values which comprise socialization. The objective of the research was to understand more deeply how Estonian and ethnic Russian parents in Estonia perceive their own values and practice different rearing activities. Based on the literature, we hypothesized that Estonian parents consider Benevolence to be more important (and Benevolence-related parenting practices) than ethnic Russian parents, and the Russian parents rate Conservatism values higher (and practice more conservatism-related parenting practices). The results of this intracultural study support the hypotheses according to which the personal values and child-rearing activities of Estonians and ethnic Russians are somewhat different. Specifically, Estonians

rated Benevolence value (e.g. complaisance and helpfulness) significantly higher, were more likely to apply *Acceptance* (e.g. listened to the child's opinions and replied to the child's questions) and cared more about the psychological environment of the child (e.g. tried to avoid provoking family members against each other). Another expected finding of this study is the fact that ethnic Russians appeared to rate Conservatism value to be more important (e.g. order, neatness) and thus more frequently set limits for their child (e.g. set a bed-time curfew for the child and told him/her to keep it) and taught social norms (e.g. taught the child how to negotiate and reach an agreement when it comes to rules) than Estonian parents. Previous studies (Saar and Niglas 2001, Ispa 1994, Hart et al. 1998) have shown that Russian parents rate authority and control higher in parenting practices than democratic and equal relationships with the child. Thus, our results are in concordance with previous results.

Furthermore, we closely examined intracultural differences between genders. As a result, we found out that there are small differences, irrespective of ethnicity; generally speaking, fathers value Hedonism higher than mothers, which has been concluded in previous research handling gender and personal values (Aavik and Allik 2002). Although Estonian mothers considered Benevolence to be more important than Estonian fathers, there were no obvious differences between Russian mothers and fathers. Considering self-reported child-rearing activities it was confirmed, according to expectations, that mothers of both nationalities are more occupied with upbringing than fathers. Also, Russian mothers are more occupied with raising children than Estonian mothers. This is probably an example of a typical division of gender roles in Russian families. It is noteworthy in our research that the gender of a child does not influence the way in which he or she is raised.

Therefore, it can be said that the most solid determinant of parental values and child-rearing activities is ethnicity, and, independent of ethnicity, education was the main indicator of socioeconomic status, as concluded by Tudge et al. (2000). The latter could be caused by Russians' relatively poor command of the Estonian language, which is not necessarily the only reason because socioeconomic status can be seen as the heritage of a so-called vicious circle. Therefore, it is possible that Russians who immigrated to Estonia in the 1980s already had a lower socioeconomic status in the Soviet Union.

We also examined the effect of education as a socioeconomic marker to raising a child. We found that parents with a higher education manage their children's free time more than parents with a secondary and basic education. When considering the creation of a favorable Psychological environment, a mother's level of education was significant in that those with a higher or secondary education were more engaged than mothers with a basic education. We also found that parents with a higher education rated Broadmindedness and Self-realization higher, whereas parents with a secondary education valued Conservatism more. Therefore, examining personal values and education gave rather similar results to those reached by Tudge et al. (2000): Regarding the raising of children, middle-class families

consider the child's freedom to be more important whereas working-class families stress social rules. Taking into consideration that covariation analysis showed that differences in the child-rearing activities between the two groups were related to their different values, our second hypothesis was confirmed, and at the same time it brought us back to Kohn's ordering (1963), in which social class (including education) is a premise for living conditions, which influence certain kinds of parental values, and in consequence cause certain parental behaviors.

Whereas in transitional societies parents tend to emphasize values that are desirable to meeting the demands of a changing society and thus independence and achievement (Wang and Tamis-LeMonda 2003), our results demonstrated that these values hold significant importance only for Estonian parents. Parents, who work against the transition, thus valuing traditional or conservative values, have been less studied. Tulviste and Ahtonen (2007) have shown that compared to Finnish and Swedish mothers, Estonian mothers of pre-school children rated Conformity values to be more important. Our study seems to suggest that the Russian parents have retained their conservative values instead of regarding more individualistic values. This difference may be a relic of the former Soviet socialization model that stressed obedience and a rather hierarchical model of parenting, while the more Western style of parenting had a more direct preference for autonomy and equality. Thus, our results may demonstrate the different levels of transition and societal change. Since Russians live mostly within their own cultural environment in Estonia, they are in a different transitional position. However, as in transitional countries, where values are known to change over time until the countries become more economically developed and stable, we believe that this rule applies also to intrasocietal groups. Perhaps the values of Russian parents will change as their socioeconomic status increases?

There may be a limitation to our study. As the EVI is based on Estonian vocabulary, there may be some non-equivalence in wordings or meanings of personal values. Some of the meanings cannot be directly translated into Russian (or English) and certain nuances may have been lost. Although our data was collected on 2000–2001, as different surveys (e.g. Vetik et al. 2008) demonstrate, the Estonian language command among the Russian-speaking population in Estonia is still modest and differs largely depending on their place of residence. Thus we can presume that poor language skills may be a significant barrier to their integration. However, we do believe that we have captured and conveyed adequately all the connotations of the Estonian value system. We also believe that it is important to validate our findings with comparative data from parents with similar transitional situations and in similar ethnic groups (e.g. Latvia, Georgia).

## **8. Conclusions**

In summary, we conclude that Russian and Estonian parents living in Estonia consider different values important in their everyday lives. Estonian parents focus on Benevolence, and Russian parents more on Conservative values. Priorities in

the actual process of child rearing are relatively similar, but the involvement of Russian parents in this process is much more intense. Therefore, we can make a speculative guess that Estonian and Russian children in Estonia have different cultural environments in their homes: Estonian parents give their children opportunities for independent development and create possibilities to this end which are based on benevolence; but Russian children get more of their parents' time, which is based on their conservative views on parenting. The differences noted can partly be explained by social (educational) differences. These differences could also be diminished through clarification of Estonian values and better command of the Estonian language, which would provide Russians with better options in Estonian society. Based on the identified differences in values, it is possible to involve the Russian minority in social inclusion programs, striving to increase their participation in the labor market, as well as in social, cultural and political life. This does not, however, mean that Russian children are in danger of losing their own cultural identity, but that they should become a natural part of the Estonian and European Union cultural and value space.

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