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# Personal and Family Sources of Parents' Socialization Values: A Multilevel Study

Fuentes personales y familiares de los valores de socialización de los padres:  
un estudio multinivel

Fontes pessoais e familiares dos valores de socialização dos pais:  
um estudo multinível

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## Abstract

This study was focused on parents' socialization values, namely the values that parents want their children to adopt, and their sources. In a sample of 325 Italian families with one adolescent child (14-18 years), it aimed at comparing fathers' and mothers' socialization values and assessing parents' own personal values and family value climate as antecedents of the values parents would like their children to endorse. For each family both parents and the adolescent were involved and asked to complete the Portrait Values Questionnaire individually. The Anova results showed significant differences between fathers' and mothers' socialization values: in particular, fathers gave more importance to openness to change and self-enhancement values in their children's rearing than mothers did. Using multilevel analysis, as

fathers and mothers were nested within families, we found significant and positive relations between parents' personal values and all their socialization values, as well as between family value climate and some of the parents' socialization values. Conversely, cross-level interactions between parents' personal values and family value climate did not contribute to predict the values parents want their children to adopt. Implications of this research and its possible developments are discussed.  
*Keywords:* Parents' socialization values; parents' personal values; family's values; multilevel analysis.

## Resumen

Este estudio se centró en los valores de socialización de los padres, es decir los valores que los padres quieren que sus hijos adopten, y sus fuentes. En una muestra de

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325 familias italianas con un hijo adolescente (14-18 años), se compararon los valores de socialización entre los padres y las madres, y se evaluaron los valores personales de los padres y el clima de valores familiares como antecedentes de los valores que los padres quisieran que sus hijos adquirieran. Para cada familia se tuvieron en cuenta a ambos padres y al adolescente, y se les pidió que completaran individualmente el *Portrait Values Questionnaire*. Los resultados de la Anova han revelado una diferencia significativa entre los valores de socialización de los padres y los de las madres: los padres consideran más importantes que las madres los valores de apertura al cambio y los del autocrecimiento en la educación de sus hijos. Utilizando un análisis multinivel, al incluirse tanto padres como madres dentro del contexto familiar, hemos encontrado relaciones significativas entre todos los valores personales de los padres y sus valores de socialización, por un lado, y entre el clima de valores familiares y algunos de los valores de socialización de los padres, por el otro. Contrariamente, la interacción entre los valores personales de los padres y el clima de valores familiares no contribuye en predecir los valores que los padres quieren que sus hijos adopten. Se discuten las implicaciones de esta investigación y sus posibles desarrollos.

*Palabras clave:* valores de socialización de los padres; valores personales de los padres; valores familiares; análisis multinivel.

## Resumo

Este estudo centrou-se nos valores de socialização dos pais, é dizer os valores que os pais querem que os seus filhos adotem, e as suas fontes. Em uma amostra de 325 famílias italianas com um filho de adolescente (14-18 anos) compararam-se os valores de socialização entre os pais e as mães e se avaliaram os valores pessoais dos pais e o clima de valores familiares como antecedentes dos valores que os pais gostariam que os seus filhos adquirissem. Para cada família consideraram-se a ambos os pais e ao adolescente e pediu-se lhes que preencheram individualmente o *Portrait Values Questionnaire*. Os resultados da Anova têm revelado uma diferença

significativa entre os valores de socialização dos pais e os das mães: os pais consideram mais importantes os valores de abertura à mudança e os do auto crescimento na educação dos seus filhos do que as mães. Utilizando uma análise multinível, ao incluir-se tanto pais como mães dentro do contexto familiar, temos encontrado relações significativas entre todos os valores pessoais dos pais e os seus valores de socialização por um lado, e entre o clima de valores familiares e alguns dos valores de socialização dos pais pelo outro. Contrariamente, a interação entre os valores pessoais dos pais e o clima de valores familiares não contribuem em prever os valores que os pais querem que os seus filhos adotem. Discutem-se as implicações desta investigação e os seus possíveis desenvolvimentos.

*Palavras-chave:* valores de socialização dos pais; valores pessoais dos pais; valores familiares; análise multinível.

The transmission of values between generations is an important goal of socialization and it is a crucial process in the individual development and the functioning of society (Ranieri & Barni, 2012; Schönplflug, 2001). Defined as desirable abstract goals that apply across situations, values are used to characterize individuals and societies, to explain the motivational bases of attitudes and behaviors, and to trace societal change over time (Schwartz, 2005).

The family is not only the most relevant arena for children's acquisition of relational competences throughout their lives (e.g., Donato, Iafrate, & Barni, 2013), but also the primary context for the transmission of values: Fathers and mothers are viewed as society's first representatives, "the front-line troops in the perennial battle to transmit the culture to neonates" (Smith, 1983, p. 13). Traditionally, transmission was viewed as a mechanism by which the reproduction of values occurred in each successive generation. In this vein, the principal outcomes of transmission within the family were measured in terms of conformity of

children to the personal values of parents, implicitly assuming that parents want their children to acquire a direct, full copy of their own personal values (i.e., “Fax Model” by Strauss, 1992). This assumption has been recently criticized, however, because it reduces the transmission to an automatic copying process (for a review, see Kuczynski & Navara, 2006).

Psychological research has made substantial progress in the past decades toward recognizing the dynamic nature of the transmission of values across generations. Transmission is now conceptualized as an interactive process in which parents and children are assumed to have inherent capacities for initiating action, making sense of their interactions with each other, and choosing. Inter-generational differences may derive from choices that parents make regarding what values they will transmit and from children's choice to accept or reject them (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994).

The values parents would like the most to see in their children are usually called “socialization values” in the literature (e.g., Tam & Lee, 2010). Sometimes parents may acknowledge the need to differentiate between what is good for themselves and what may be good for their children. The finding that parents can tolerate two differentiated value systems, one for themselves and the other for their children, suggests that parents modify their socialization values in order to make them fit with what they think is beneficial for their children (Knafo & Galanski, 2008). This is especially likely from children's adolescence because parents understand that they need to prepare their children for social life (Benish-Weisman, Levy, & Knafo, 2013; Kuczynski, Marshall, & Schell, 1997; Tam, Lee, Kim, Li, & Chao, 2012). Indeed, adolescence is the time of identity development, characterized by tension between an increasing need for autonomy and an increasing conformity to family and societal expectations, with the latter being essential for acquiring models of appropriate behavior (Barni, Ranieri, Scabini, & Rosnati, 2011; Marta, Lanz, &

Tagliabue, 2012; Scabini, Marta, & Lanz, 2006). Of course, beyond parents' efforts there are other socialization influences (e.g., horizontal transmission between members of the same generation, like peers) as well as genetic and environmental influences on adolescents' value development (e.g., Knafo & Spinath, 2011).

Considering values as part of the socialization process within an ecological perspective, this study focused on Italian parents' socialization values. Specifically, we intended to examine the individual and family antecedents of the values parents wish their adolescent children to acquire. Until now, in the literature parental socialization values have been linked to parents' personal values (e.g., Benish-Weisman et al., 2013) and to the wide sociocultural context of belonging (e.g., Tam et al., 2012), whereas little is known about the influence of the family value climate on parents' socialization values.

### **What Are Parents' Socialization Values?**

Parents' socialization values occupy a central place in the studies of the family because these values are known to play a role in shaping parents' practices and how parents organize their children's home environment (Kikas, Tulviste, & Peets, 2014; Tulviste, 2013). They have been defined as the goals and aspirations that guide parents in upbringing and socializing their children (Lasker & Lasker, 1991), both in a short-term perspective, that is what parents value for their children in the present, and in a long-term perspective, that is what parents would like to see in their children in adulthood (Tulviste, Mizera, & De Geer, 2012). Previous studies have shown that parents have a representation of an “adaptive adult” that serves as a guiding metaphor in their childrearing belief and socialization goals, in order to favor the optimal context and condition for successful functioning in a given society in the present and future (Rosenthal & Roer-Strier, 2006). This “adaptive” image

potentially represents a dynamic concept, influenced by different sources at the micro- and macro-levels (i.e., personal and family's characteristics and cultural context) and, thus, greatly variable across parents (Tulviste et al., 2012).

When parents set desired values for their children, they rely to a great extent on their own personal values (Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988). Prior research, which mostly relied on Schwartz's Theory of basic human values (1992), showed that parents (both fathers and mothers) ranked self-transcendence values (i.e., concern for the welfare and interests of others) and conservation values (i.e., self-restriction, preservation of traditional practices, and protection of stability) as the most important in their lives as well as in their sons' and daughters' socialization (Barni, 2009). Fathers considered agentic-instrumental values—such as self-enhancement (i.e., pursuit of one's own interests and relative success and dominance over others)—as desired values for their adolescent children more strongly than did mothers, while mothers aspired to expressive-communal values—such as self-transcendence—more strongly than did fathers (Knafo & Schwartz, 2009; Tulviste & Ahtonen, 2007). Unlike parents' gender, children's gender did not result to influence parental socialization values (Paguio, 1983; Tulviste, 2013; Tulviste & Ahtonen, 2007).

More recently, Tam et al. (2012) demonstrated that the content of parental socialization is also based on the salient normative values of society, that is, the prevailing value climate in a given society at a given time. According to their Intersubjective Model of Value Transmission, parents want to transmit to children not only the value they personally endorse, but also to help children internalize societal values and thereby function adaptively. For instance, this is particularly evident in immigrant parents, engaged in the “acculturation” process, for whom the perceptions of the host society's values are stronger determinants of socialization values than for non-immigrant parents (Kuczynski, Narva, & Boiger, 2011).

In brief, parents' personal values, as well as the distal social context, have showed to contribute significantly to determine parents' socialization values. But what about the family, that is the most proximal context of the parent-child relationship and child development? The Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) describes the environment as a set of nested and mutually interacting structures: macrosystem, mesosystem, and microsystem. The most distal environmental settings and dynamics are at the macrosystem level (broad ideological and institutional features). The mesosystem comprises the linkages between microsystems, which refer to patterns of interactions and relationships in immediate settings, including the family, the school, the peer group etc. In a relational perspective, family bonds, family value climate and shared expectations of family members are considered to be the proximal contexts for understanding socialization processes and the dynamics of parent-child interaction. In this vein, parents' socialization goals may be influenced by the proximal characteristics of the family microsystem (Kuczynski & Parkin, 2007).

## The Present Study

In light of the above background, this study focused on the values parents consider to be important in their adolescent children's rearing and socialization. In defining values, we adopted Schwartz's Theory of basic human values (1992). This theory defines values as desirable and trans-situational goals, which vary in importance as guiding principles in people's lives, and distinguished ten value types included into two bipolar higher-order value continuums. The first continuum contrasts conservation values (tradition, conformity and security) and openness to change values (hedonism, stimulation and self-direction); the second continuum contrasts self-transcendence values (universalism and benevolence) and self-enhancement values (power and achievement) (table 1).

Table 1  
Schwartz's value higher-order dimensions

Value dimension	Definition
Conservation	Order, self-restriction, preservation of the past, and resistance to change. It includes tradition (i.e., respect, commitment, and acceptance of the ideas and customs that one's culture or religion provides), conformity (i.e., restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to violate social expectations), and security (i.e., safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self).
Self-transcendence	Concern for the welfare and interests of others. It includes benevolence (i.e., preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact) and universalism (i.e., understanding, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature).
Openness to change	Independence of thought, action, and feelings and readiness for change. It includes hedonism (i.e., pleasure and enjoyment), stimulation (i.e., excitement, novelty, and challenge in life), and self-direction (i.e., independent thought and action).
Self-enhancement	Pursuit of one's own interests and relative success and dominance over others. It includes power (i.e., social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources) and achievement (i.e., personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards).

Specifically, the study goal was twofold.

1. The first goal was to describe parents' socialization values, by comparing fathers and mothers in order to understand the extent to which they hold similar or different socialization values. Most previous research on the values parents would like their children to endorse, and more generally on the socialization processes, involved only one parent (usually the mother) for

each family (e.g., Benish-Weisman et al., 2013). The few multi-informant studies (i.e., involving both of parents), however, provided evidence that fathers and mothers differ from each other in the importance given to childrearing values, with the first emphasizing agentic-instrumental values and the second giving importance to expressive-communal values (e.g., Tulviste & Ahtonen, 2007). Based on these results, we hypothesized that in the socialization of their children fathers give more importance to openness to change values and self-enhancement values as compared to mothers, while mothers attribute more importance to conservation values and self-transcendence values than do fathers (Hp1).

2. The second goal was to analyze parents' personal values and family value climate, as well as their interaction, as antecedents of parents' socialization values. Family value climate was conceptualized as the perception of the importance of each specific value dimension (i.e., conservation, self-transcendence, openness to change, self-enhancement) that is shared by the family members involved (in our case, the father, the mother, and their adolescent child) and that is able to shape family interactions and guide relational patterns (Trommsdorff, 2009). According to the literature (e.g., Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988), we expected to find significant and positive relations between parents' personal values and their socialization values (Hp2). Moreover, we hypothesized that there is a value climate that is typical of each family and can influence socialization value priorities of parents as well. It is likely that, apart from referencing what they personally value, parents also want their children to continue their "family's values", or, in other words, the values that are perceived as especially relevant within their family context (Hp3). Finally, as suggested by previous studies reporting that those personal values shared within the broader context



are able to exert strong effects on individual values, attitudes, and behaviors (e.g., Barni, Vieno, Rosnati, Roccato, & Scabini, 2014), we hypothesized that the relation between parents' personal values and their socialization values is strengthened by the family value climate (Hp4).

## Method

### Participants

Three hundred and twenty-five Italian family triads<sup>1</sup>—composed of both parents and one adolescent child—participated in this study, for a total of 975 participants.

The mean age of fathers and mothers was 48.29 (SD = 5.56) and 44.98 (SD = 4.66) respectively. Within the parental group, 37.4% of fathers and 30.1% of mothers had a low level of education (equal to or less than 8 years), 54.5% of fathers and 58.4% of mothers a medium level, and 8.1% of fathers and 11.5% of mothers a high level of education (more than 13 years).

Adolescents (40% males, 60% females), all high-school students, were aged between 14 and 18 years ( $M = 15.19$ ,  $SD = 1.17$ ). The majority (91.3%) lived in two-parent families, while a minority lived with their mother (7.7%) or their father (1.0%) only.

### Procedure

Families were recruited with the cooperation of 15 public and private high schools, chosen to provide a sample of the major high school types in Trento, a large city in the North-East of Italy. Families were informed by letter about the main objectives of the research, and they were informed that participation would be free and voluntary. Adolescents whose parents consented to their par-

ticipation in the study filled out a self-report questionnaire in their classrooms during school hours, in the presence of a teacher and a staff member. Fathers and mothers were asked to fill out their questionnaires separately, at home, and to return the completed questionnaires to the researchers, but were given the opportunity to phone or meet researchers if any help was needed. A total of 418 families were contacted. Complete data from the adolescent and both his/her parents were collected for 325 of the families (77.8%).

### Measures

Personal and socialization values. The instrument used in this study was a self-report questionnaire, consisting of a socio-demographic data sheet and the short version of the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) (Schwartz et al., 2001), measuring the four higher-order value dimensions described in Schwartz's theory (i.e., conservation, self-transcendence, openness to change, self-enhancement). The PVQ includes 21 verbal portraits describing a person's goals, aspirations, or wishes that point implicitly to the importance of one value dimension. To measure their own personal values, parents and adolescents answered "How much like you is this person?" for each portrait on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from "not like me at all" (1) to "very much like me" (6). An item example is: "It is important to him/her always to behave properly. He/She wants to avoid doing anything people would say is wrong". Respondents' own values were inferred from their self-reported similarity to the people in the portraits. The items that were intended to measure a specific value dimension (4 to 6 items per value) were averaged to obtain an importance score for each of the dimensions. The reliabilities (Cronbach's Alpha) were acceptable, ranging from .65 for fathers' openness to change to .76 for adolescents' self-enhancement.

To measure parents' socialization values, fathers and mothers were asked to indicate their responses

1 The sample did not include immigrant families.

to the question: "How would you want your child to respond to each item?" on a six-point scale from "not like him/her at all" (1) to "very much like him/her" (6). Again, the items that were intended to measure a specific value dimension were averaged to obtain an importance score for each of the value dimensions. Cronbach's Alphas ranged from .74 for mothers' openness to change to .83 for mothers' self-transcendence.

**Family value climate.** Four principal component analyses, each regarding one value, were run. The unit of analysis was the family. More specifically, personal values were entered as variables (one variable for each family member —i.e., the father, the mother, and the child— measuring a specific value dimension), using the regression refined method (DiStefano, Zhu, & Mîndrilă, 2009). In this way, the factor score, which was calculated through a regression equation in which the item factor loadings were multiplied by the item scores and summed up, represents the linear combination of the three family members' perceptions, accounting for their specific contribution to the factor (the shared variance between each variable and the latent factor) and the unique, not explained variance. This score can be conceptualized as an over-dimension, that is there is a family value factor that affects the importance each family member assigns to each value dimension. As said, the unit of analysis is the family triad, so that each family triad has one factor score for each value dimension, and each member (mother, father, child) within a family has the same factor score as the other members.

## Data Analyses

Descriptive statistics for the study variables were computed through the software SPSS 19. A series of repeated measure Anova, with parents as within-subject factor (2 levels: fathers vs. mothers) and socialization values as the dependent variable, were carried out to reveal possible differences between fathers' and mothers' socialization values.

To examine the extent to which personal values and family value climate impacted on mothers' and fathers' socialization values a multilevel analysis, in which fathers and mothers were nested within the family, was run through the software HLM 6 (Raudenbush, Bryk, Cheong, & Congdon, 2004).

Because within the couple dyad members are distinguishable, a two-intercept model was used (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006; Raudenbush, Brennan, & Barnett, 1995). In the MLM equations, therefore, socialization values (the outcome) were predicted by fathers' and mothers' personal values (Level 1 predictors: individual), family value climate (Level 2 predictor: family) and the cross-level interactions between personal and family values. The level-1 predictors were centered at the grand mean for the entire sample<sup>2</sup>.

## Results

Descriptive statistics of the study variables are presented in table 2. Our focus was specifically on parents' socialization values. Both fathers and mothers scored self-transcendence as the most important type of values to transmit to their adolescent children, followed by conservation, openness to change, and lastly by self-enhancement. Comparisons between fathers' and mothers' socialization values, however, showed significant differences for openness to change and self-enhancement, partly confirming our first hypothesis. Specifically, fathers perceived openness to change values,  $F(1,324) = 9.96, p < .01, \eta^2 = .03$ , and self-enhancement values,

- 2 Centering refers to the reference value from which deviations are taken. With level 1 predictors in a two-level model there are three centering options: grand-mean, group-mean, and zero-centering. Interpretation of parameter estimates, especially of intercepts, changes according to the centering option used. In grand-mean centering the intercepts represent the expected value for an observation for which the level 1 predictor is at the grand-mean for that predictor. For example, if the mother's personal value is centered at the grand mean the mothers' intercept represents the expected score for a mother who endorses an "Average" (in terms of all the parents in the sample) level of the related value.



$F(1,324) = 46.31, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13$ , as more important in their children's socialization than mothers did. On the contrary, no difference emerged as far as self-transcendence values,  $F(1,324) = 3.13, p = .08$ , and conservation values,  $F(1,324) = 1.17, p = .28$ , were concerned.

Table 2  
*Descriptive statistics for personal and socialization values of fathers and mothers (N = 325)*

		Mean	SD
Fathers' personal values	Conservation	4.00	.87
	Self-transcendence	4.63	.79
	Openness to change	3.51	.83
	Self-enhancement	2.58	.95
Mothers' personal values	Conservation	3.94	.84
	Self-transcendence	4.73	.78
	Openness to change	3.15	.84
	Self-enhancement	2.11	.83
Children's personal values	Conservation	3.43	.85
	Self-transcendence	4.31	.86
	Openness to change	4.19	.79
	Self-enhancement	2.76	1.00
Fathers' socialization values	Conservation	4.18	.83
	Self-transcendence	4.86	.75
	Openness to change	3.82	.82
	Self-enhancement	2.93	1.02
Mothers' socialization values	Conservation	4.05	.84
	Self-transcendence	4.93	.79
	Openness to change	3.66	.82
	Self-enhancement	2.54	.98

The intraclass correlation coefficients suggested that socialization values (conservation:  $\rho_1 = 0.25$ ; self-transcendence:  $\rho_1 = 0.31$ ; openness to change:  $\rho_1 = 0.43$ ; self-enhancement:  $\rho_1 = 0.40$ ) were clustered within families. Multilevel analyses results showed that, for both fathers and mothers, personal values significantly predicted socialization values

for the whole four value dimensions, in accordance with the second hypothesis. Family value climate, moreover, predicted all four mothers' socialization values as well as fathers' openness to change and self-enhancement values, partly confirming our third hypothesis (table 3). In order to compare the size of the effects of personal values vs. family value climate we constrained them to be equal in the six models in which family value climate resulted to be significant. In cases in which personal values and family value climate were both significant, personal value effects resulted to be stronger than family value effects for mothers' conservation ( $\chi^2(1) = 11.72; p < .001$ ), self-transcendence ( $\chi^2(1) = 7.78; p < .001$ ) and openness to change ( $\chi^2(1) = 8.16; p < .001$ ), while personal value effects resulted to be equal to family value climate effects for mothers' self-enhancement ( $\chi^2(1) = 2.30; p = \text{n.s.}$ ) and fathers' openness to change ( $\chi^2(1) = 0.37; p = \text{n.s.}$ ) and self-transcendence ( $\chi^2(1) = 2.58; p = \text{n.s.}$ ).

Contrary to our expectation (Hp4), no significant cross-level interactions between parents' personal values and family value climate were found (table 3).

## Discussion

This multilevel study examined parents' socialization values, namely the values that parents want their children to adopt, and their antecedents within Italian families with adolescent children. Specifically, it analyzed the family microsystem as a potential source of parents' socialization values, by itself and in interaction with parents' personal values. Multilevel analyses, in fact, allowed us to capture the family systemic interconnections that explain parents' desired values for their children, by investigating the single family member's influence (i.e., fathers' and mothers' personal values), the family influence (i.e., family value climate), and the influence of their interaction.

Socialization values are considered as a crucial construct by developmental and social psycholo-

Table 3

*Fixed effects for models predicting socialization values from fathers' and mothers' reports of personal values and family value climate*

		Conservation	Self-transcendence	Openness to change	Self-enhancement
Fathers	Intercept	4.179*** (.04)	4.865*** (.04)	3.752*** (.04)	2.833*** (.05)
	Personal value	.573*** (.04)	.430*** (.05)	.219*** (.06)	.466*** (.07)
	Family value	.007 (.05)	.072 (.05)	.282*** (.06)	.235** (.08)
	Personal X Family	-.029 (.03)	.038 (.02)	.030 (.03)	-.020 (.03)
Mothers	Intercept	4.089*** (.04)	4.907*** (.04)	3.732*** (.04)	2.668*** (.05)
	Personal value	.459*** (.05)	.361*** (.05)	.424*** (.05)	.462*** (.07)
	Family value	.111* (.05)	.112* (.05)	.141** (.05)	.273*** (.06)
	Personal X Family	-.024 (.03)	.003 (.02)	.025 (.02)	-.026 (.03)

Note. Standard errors are in parentheses. \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$

gists, because they influence parental childrearing practices, help shape children's value system and behaviors, and affect children's life chances and pathways to psychosocial adjustment (Tulviste, 2013). Despite the popularity of research on socialization values, many questions have remained unanswered regarding issues such as the differences between fathers' and mothers' socialization values and the sources of these value preferences (Kikas et al., 2014). Prior studies concerning the origins of parents' socialization values have focused on parents' personal characteristics and value preferences (e.g., Benish-Weisman et al., 2013) or on the macro social context (e.g., Tam et al., 2012), while family value climate (i.e., the values shared in the family context) has been underinvestigated as an ecological source of the values parents would like their children to endorse, although it has a great potential for an additional influence on children's socialization (Barni et al., 2014).

As far as the first goal of this study was concerned, our results showed that in their children's socialization both fathers and mothers gave the greatest relevance to self-transcendence (i.e., benevolence and universalism) and conservation values (i.e., tradition, conformity, and security) rather than to openness to change (i.e., hedonism,

stimulation, and self-direction) and self-enhancement values (i.e., power and achievement). In other words, parents would like their children to express concern for the welfare and interests of others and to attribute importance to the respect of cultural traditions and customs, self-restriction, stability, and safety. That is, moral, conventional and prudential issues are judged by parents to be the priorities in their children's rearing. Interestingly, Smetana (2000) noted that parents generally are less prone to tolerate transgressions from their adolescent children and adolescents consider their parents' authority more legitimate with regard to moral, conventional, and prudential issues rather than to personal issues. Openness to change and self-enhancement values concern instead personal issues, which are those whose consequences directly affect the actor only (Schwartz, 1992; Knafo & Schwartz, 2009).

It is worth noting, however, that there were some significant differences between fathers' and mothers' socialization values. Consistently with previous studies (Knafo & Schwartz, 2009; Tulviste & Ahtonen, 2007) and partly with our first hypothesis (Hp1), fathers gave more importance to openness to change and self-enhancement values compared to mothers. According to social role

theory and evolutionary approaches, these values are inherently important to men for themselves (see Schwartz & Rubel, 2009 for a detailed discussion). In their broad study concerning personal values and involving 127 adult samples from 70 countries, Schwartz and Rubel (2005) found that men attributed consistently more importance than women did to hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, power, and achievement. Intriguingly, our results suggest that this gender-difference can be extended to socialization values too. Indeed, as we will discuss below, parents' socialization values strongly (but not completely) reflect their own personal values.

Contrary to Hp1, however, no differences emerged between fathers' and mothers' socialization values with regard to conservation and self-transcendence. These values, indeed, were given equal importance by fathers and mothers in their children's socialization, even if some previous studies on personal values showed the greater importance of benevolence and universalism, and less consistently of security, for women than for men (Knafo & Spinath, 2011; Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). This finding further supports the importance, shared by fathers and mothers, of self-transcendence and conservation as relevant values to transmit to their children.

Where do parents' socialization values come from? Referring to the second goal of this study, it clearly emerged that both parents relied to a great extent on their own personal values to set desired values for their adolescent children. This result is in line with our second hypothesis (Hp2) and with the limited literature on this issue (e.g., Benish-Weisman et al., 2013; Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988). It could indicate that parents consider their personal values as good enough to adopt them as the principal benchmarks in the intergenerational transmission of values. The present study, however, showed that some of parents' socialization values were also guided by the family context, the most proximal context of socialization processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Our third hypothesis (Hp3) about the con-

tribution of the family context in defining parents' socialization values was only partially confirmed. In particular, family value climate was related to the importance parents, both fathers and mothers, gave to self-enhancement and openness to change values for their children. It is worth noting that self-enhancement is one of the value dimensions, together with stimulation (i.e., a part of openness to change), showing the highest individual differences in importance ratings (Benish-Weisman et al., 2013; also in our study, see SDs in table 2), and the strongest social disapproval (Schwartz, Verkasalo, Antonovsky, & Sagiv, 1997). Moreover, self-enhancement values are frequently judged as being the least important by people. Thus, we could speculate that parents refer to the family context to establish the value of those contents there is less social consensus about and they are less interested in: The more family members (i.e., the father, the mother, and the adolescent child) shared a family value climate characterized by highly important self-enhancement and openness to change values, the more parents desired their children to adopt these same values.

Actually, the relations between family value climate and socialization values were also significant for conservation and self-transcendence values, but weaker than for self-enhancement and openness to change, and, more interestingly, only for mothers. Living in a family characterized by highly important conservation and self-transcendence values pushed mothers to give a great relevance to these same values in their children's socialization. Thus, family value climate contributed to mothers' socialization values more largely than for fathers, being involved in all the four value dimensions. Family research has consistently shown that the mother is the principal reference figure to seek advice, help and support for affective and relational issues. In Italy mothers usually assume greater care giving and childrearing responsibilities than do fathers, they play a predominant role in the intergenerational transmission of values and are

very sensitive to the family relationship quality (Scabini et al., 2006). All this can help to explain the “family’s omnipresence” in shaping mothers’ socialization goals.

All in all, in the light of the present study’s findings, we could extend the intersubjective model of value transmission (Tam et al., 2012) by stating that when socializing children parents, both fathers and mothers, strongly refer to what they personally endorse, but also to what they perceive to be important within their family. As we speculated, the influence of the family, however, could depend on the value content, being potentially stronger in the case of less normatively important values, and on parents’ gender, being a constant point of reference for mothers.

We conceptualized and measured family value climate in terms of the linear combination of the father’s, the mother’s, and the child’s endorsement of each value. Thus, the impact of this variable suggests that also the child contributes in defining their parents’ socialization values, some of which are likely to be the result of a reciprocal negotiation between parents and children (Knafo & Galansky, 2008). This supports the recent perspectives highlighting the bidirectional nature of value transmission, that could be better conceptualized as an interactive process, to which both parents and children contribute (Benish-Weisman et al., 2013). In particular, the results of the present study seem to indicate that the impact of adolescents’ personal value orientations on their parents’ socialization values becomes more relevant for mothers and for those value priorities there is less social consensus about.

No cross-level interactions between parents’ personal values (individual level) and family value climate (family level) emerged. Differently from our fourth hypothesis (Hp4), this result suggests that the link between personal and socialization values is not reinforced (neither hindered) by the sharing of values within the family context. Notably, there seems to be a “family value context-in-

dependence” of the link between parents’ personal values and socialization values, that is the strength of this link is independent from the family value climate the three family members contribute to construe regarding each value.

This study had two strong points. First, we analyzed data stemming from a large sample, involving more than one family informant (child and both parents), and based on an established measure of a broad set of values. Second, our study was one of the first using the multilevel approach to analyze parents’ personal preferences and the family context as *nested* sources of the values parents would like their children to adopt.

On the negative side, our results cannot prove causality due to the correlational nature of the study. Caution is also needed in interpreting the results related to our measure of the family value climate as it assesses the values that the specific family triad (i.e., father, mother, child) endorses as more important, but may not refer to the climate of the broaden family in which the triad lives, potentially including other members (other siblings, grandparents, etc.). This variable, moreover, refers to the (weighted) sum of the personal ratings of each member of the family triad and does not provide information on the family value climate actually *perceived* by them. Finally, since the study was carried out within one country (i.e., Italy) the results are likely to be culturally dependent. As far as values and socialization processes are concerned, Italy is characterized as rather “family-oriented”, following a Mediterranean model, in that the family is a significant socialization agent for its members and, at the same time, is a value itself (Scabini et al., 2006). Research in other countries will broaden our understanding of the role that the family might play in processes of socialization for values and, more interestingly, of the possible interaction between family and cultural contexts. Interactions between micro- and macro-systems have rarely been investigated (Lenzi et al., 2012), although they could have a great potential for an

additional influence on parents' socialization preferences and practices.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the great importance of parents' personal values in determining parents' socialization values, but also highlights the role played by family value climate in influencing the values mothers desire for their children's future. For fathers, the family seems to be a particularly important reference point for those values there is less social consensus about. Further studying the sources of parents' socialization values, which contribute to shape the ways in which parents raise their children (Kikas et al., 2014), can provide new insights into parenting and value transmission processes.

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