

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Development of children occurs in diverse contexts. Family is considered as an important context of development and parents are viewed as agents for developing the child. They are the valuable resources for children as they provide conducive and stimulating environment for their development. The developmental outcomes of the children up to a great extent depend on the parent - child interaction. The parents nurture the children, observe and behave in accordance with them. The children receive guidance from their parents and view them as role models. The process of parenting is governed by the parent and the child characteristics and the broader context in which children are reared. The ideas and ideals that parents have for child's development are ingrained within a cultural context. The ideas that parents have regarding children, their behaviour and development influence the practices they pursue that help the child to achieve parental goals. Child rearing practices and the parenting styles are the channels for socializing children. Positive parenting practices are the root for holistic development of the child.

There also exist linkages between the nurturing techniques and the development of self. The construal of self that parent's wish in their children depends on their expectations and acceptance of uniqueness preferred in a particular culture. The strategies implemented by the parents compose the child's development of self. The diverse mores are central to Indian context (Sinha & Tripathi, 2001., Misra & Sachdeva, 2005); varied forms of self are found to exist (Bharti, 1985., Misra & Giri, 1995).

Furthermore with the impact of globalization the parents are assimilating and accommodating themselves and making efforts to give best to their children.

In the present context this issue of parental ideas regarding child development and rearing and the existence of form of self in Indian cultural context emerge as an interesting theme. The review presented here has been drawn from various sources of literature. It highlights the parental goals, ideas and development of the child, parental roles and practices, existence of self and linkages between them. The information reviewed herein provides a perspective to the relevance of conducting the present study.

Culture and Socialization

Culture is a psychological phenomenon within an individual; it is inseparable and the individual grows with it (Keller & Eckensberger, 1998). Culture includes those patterns, beliefs, meanings, acts, institutions and human behaviour that a particular group of people learn and share, and pass on from generation to generation (Bhogle, 1981., Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003). Broadly it comprises gender, customs, religious conviction, historical phase, generation, social class, vocation and place of origin (Kitayama & Markus, 1995). The cultural practices influence the biological basis of behaviour; individual differences in child's development are not only the result of biology (Matsumoto, 2000). Culture provides a context where socialization process takes place. It shapes the child's early socialization process, influence the caregivers' mode of thinking and action and create appropriate social environment (Mohite, Keller, Shastri, Mankodi, Bhargava, & Jasrai, 2005).

Socialization is viewed as a process, where in one internalizes the rules and patterns of behaviour that are influenced by culture. Within the process of socialization an individual learns and masters the societal and cultural norms, attitudes, values, beliefs and other behaviours to become a member and to function within it (Gardiner, Mutter, & Kosmitzki, 1998). The socialization values and practices get reflected in the parenting attitude and behaviour (Park & Cheah, 2005 and Suizzo, 2002). Socialization of the child cannot be viewed in isolation. There are various aspects (parental expectations, societal norms, religion) that frame it and culture defines all of them. According to Bornstein (1991) human beings while growing up come across various experiences and conditions. The socialization and enculturation pattern depend upon child's immediate social network that varies from culture to culture. The behaviours that are considered appropriate in one culture might not be accepted in other cultural context. There are intracultural and intercultural variations in socialization process; as well as individual differences in child's development.

Cultural context influences the socialization goals and the development ethnotheory that mediates parental efforts to achieve these goals (Goodnow & Collins, 1990 cited in Rosenthal & Roer-strier, 2001). These culturally defined

goals are crucial for parental behaviour towards children, child's socialization process, structure and functioning of the society as a whole (Greenfield & Suzuki, 1998). The parental goals and the families' expectations get reflected in the parental ideas. Parental ideas are the perceptions of parents about child development and child rearing. These ideas are apparent in parenting practices/ strategies and parenting styles. The parents and other caretakers help the child to grow and adapt to a specific culturally and socially appropriate environment (Harkness & Super, 1996., Keller, 1997., Okagaki. & Diamond, 2000).

The development of the child depends on the early childhood experiences that they have. The early behavioural regulations emerge as parental investments for the same. The early experiences that the child gets, socialization situation, child rearing practices, parental ideas are various factors that interact together for developing competencies in childhood and the development of self (Keller, 1999., Keller & Greenfield, 2000). The socio-cultural scenario influences the 'parental ethnotheories' (Keller, Voelker, Yovsi, & Shastri, 2005). Cultural differences exist in the concept and practices of parenting (Maccoby, 1992., Shweder, Goodnow, Hatano, Levine, Markus, & Miller, 1998., Schaffer, 2004).

According to Blustein (1982) and Seccombe (1991) parents value children for their own emotional happiness, support, security, continuity of lineage and to fulfill social demands. These are viewed as benefits and interests parents get from parenthood throughout lives.

Parenting Goals, Ideas and Development of a Child

Parenting is a mechanism through which the transmission of cultural values and practices between generations takes place (Keller & Greenfield, 2000). Parents frame the genetic make up of their children and provide the required experiences and adaptive environment for child's development (Bornstein, 2003). Parents prepare children for socially accepted roles, which are in line with the specific context in which they survive and thrive. For the optimal survival and development of the child, parenting entails a process of adaptation towards specific physical, social and other environmental conditions, within the context

of a given culture (Levine, 1977., Mohite, Keller, Shastri, Mankodi, Bhargava, & Jasrai, 2005). With this the growing child gets ready for competent adult roles and responsibilities (Bhogle, 1981). The intracultural and intercultural similarities and differences exist with respect to the ideas and practices of parenting (Bornstein, 1991., Super & Harkness, 1997).

Parental Goals

According to Levine (1977, 1988) the universal parental goals that parents have for their children include:

- 1) the survival and health of the child,
- 2) the acquisition of economic capabilities,
- 3) the attainment of culturally appropriate values.

Parents interpret the goals depending on the cultural beliefs and values that they possess. The priorities of the goals depend on the ecological context of the family. These goals are ordered in importance and the hierarchy of the goals depends on the subsistence economies of the family (standard of living) and the society's expectations. Survival and health of the child is most valued parental goal in all human societies during first year of life. The other two goals assume importance when the basic goal is ensured. Specifically the first goal is predominant in agricultural families, where the child is valued for work and commitment towards the family members. In such families the risk to survive is high therefore; parents promote physical survival and health of the child. The second or the third goal is predominant in the urban families, where the rate of infants' survival is high. In such families the child is valued not for the work but for the joy and affection they bring in the family. Here the parent's concern is to maximize the resources. Parents promote the skills and behavioural capabilities that the child needs for economic self maintenance as an adult. Once this is obtained, the concern of parents is to promote the goal of self actualization in child. This fosters the behavioural capabilities in the child which maximizes their cultural values like, morality, prestige, self-realization based on the cultural values, religious piousness and the like.

Parental Ideas

Parental ethnotheories are “beliefs concerning the nature and needs of children, parental and community goals for rearing children and the caretaker beliefs about effective rearing techniques” (cited in Super & Harkness, 1986 pp-556).

According to Super and Harkness (1997)., Harkness and Super (1996) parental ethnotheories or parental beliefs system (Segall et. al 1999) or adult view of the child (Kojima, 1988) reflects:

- 1) the cultural beliefs and values that parents hold regarding child development and accepted social roles,
- 2) variables that influence child’s development and the ways in which various skills are acquired by the child,
- 3) role of parents and other members in the child’s development process, and
- 4) child rearing models valued by the society in which parents live and the expectations regarding child’s cognitive, emotional and social development.

According to Keller and Eckensberger (1998) and Keller and Greenfield (2000) the concepts that parents have regarding child, parent and parent-child relationship are described as parental ethnotheories; which are biological based cultural models.

The parental ideas represent the cultural understanding and models that parents have regarding children, families and themselves as parents (Harkness, 2003).

Various factors that influence parental ideas include:

- 1) socio-historical factors, like, culture, media, ecology and rural – urban settings, psychological characteristics of parents, conditions under which they are living, personality traits, personal factors , like; education, occupation, income, ones own experiences, age and gender of parents and the child (Kojima, 1988., Srivastava, 2002., Rosenthal & Roer-strier, 2006., Harkness & Super,1996., Neitzel & Stright, 2004., Tulviste & Ahtonen, 2007),
- 2) contextual factors, like, the partner and the network support and the child’s own characteristics (Bakel & Bikson-Walraven,2002),

- 3) parents past experiences within and outside the family (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and parental ideas about the child's development milestones (Bornstein, 2004).

These factors influence the adult's perception regarding self and their children; the parental practices, the adult-child interaction and the development of children.

Ecological System and Developmental Niche

Parental ideas constitute an essential feature of child's ecology. Bronfenbrenner (1979, pp.21) has defined the ecology of human development as, "the scientific study of the progressive mutual accommodation between an active growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded".

According to Bronfenbrenner, the individual, as an active agent in the process of development comes across various settings and there is a reciprocal relation between the two that is the child and the context/settings. The cultural or environmental context plays a critical role in influencing human behaviour and development. Family represents the child's immediate environment (micro system), where the child has face to face interaction with the parents, siblings and other caretakers. Parental ideas mediate between children's experiences and the larger culture in which they live. The interaction between the settings influences the child's development (meso environment –home and the school). The child's development is also influenced by the social settings or environment of which the child is not a part (exo system). It includes parents' place of work, parental support network, extended family, neighbours and the like. Moreover it is the broader context i.e. the values, beliefs, ideologies and attitude of a culture that gets imbibed in the parent and on the basis of which the development of child operates (macro system). The child's socialization thus takes place between these interconnected contexts.

According to Gardiner, Mutter, and Kosmitzki (1998) there also exists a connection between Bronfenbrenner's approach and the Development Niche, and to understand the bidirectional nature of socialization and its effect on human development, it is essential to study both the approaches in totality.

For understanding child's development Super and Harkness (1986, 1997) gave the idea of Development Niche; a framework for understanding the "cultural structuring of child development" (cultural regulation of the micro-environment of the child). According to this conceptualization just as the eco- biological niche shapes species adaptation to the natural environment, child's development is shaped by the socio- cultural niche. As per this framework there are various aspects of a culture that frames the child's development process, and here child is considered as a unit of analysis and parents are considered as gate keepers. The components that together shape the development niche include –

1. Physical and social settings of everyday life
2. Customs of child care and child rearing
3. Psychology of the caretaker

The physical and social settings include elements like the climate, nutrition, size and organization of living space, family structure, peer group and so on. Eating schedules, caretaking practices, play etc. formulates the customs of child care. The psychology of the caretaker takes account of the value systems (interdependence and independence), parental ethnotheories, cultural belief systems, social representations (types of competencies expected and religion). These components together with the elements of larger cultural context and the caretakers interaction in which child's development takes place mould the child into a culture specific child (Harkness & Super, 1996).

The research by Rosenthal and Roer-strier (2001, 2006) revealed that the eco-cultural context influences the parental ideas. The developmental goals and aspirations that mothers have for their children reflect their respective values and perceptions, which are inline with the context in which the children are raised. Moreover, in any culture the "adaptive adult" is viewed in light of socialization goals of the respective culture. These goals change across and within cultural groups. The changes are more evident in the societies undergoing drastic changes resulting from migration (Roer-strier & Rosenthal, 2001).

Parental Practices and Roles

As per the context of early socialization patterns, 'cultural values' are regarded as the consequences of the adaptation process. The responses towards the specific physical and social environmental conditions are considered as 'child rearing practices'. The above are in line with the values and belief systems that guide them (Keller, 1997., Keller and Eckensberger, 1998). According to Hart, Nelson, Robinson, Olsen and McNeilly-Choque, (1998) "practices" are those subset of parenting behaviour that aim to achieve specific out comes. They are the strategies carried by parents, in specific contexts and situations to accomplish academic, athletic, or social competence goals. Practices can be addressed in terms of content and frequency of behaviour rather than its quality (Stevenson-Hinde, 1998). According to Keller (1998) during developmental transition period, differing pathways in children can be seen because of the different developmental strategies that parents use. The knowledge of child rearing practices and ideas is important to,

- 1) understand, support and improve the child rearing process,
- 2) respond to diversity,
- 3) respect cultural values, &
- 4) provide continuity during time of rapid change (Evans & Myers, 1994).

According to Evans (1994) in traditional cultures the child rearing practices are culturally bound; and depend on the children's need and societal expectations. The practices are relatively more stable from generation to generation in the societies that are less exposed to social changes and are not much in close proximity to each other. In the societies that are more prone to social changes like formal education, media, and so on, the assimilation of tradition and new ideas can be seen. But at the same time it also threatens people's survival; the culture and transmission of values' and beliefs become disorganized. It is thus important to understand the child rearing practices in current scenario where people are aware of traditional and contemporary belief system, and the positive and negative influence of the beliefs on the individual and the society. The child's development also depends on the interaction between child and the environment, and the family and the community are the mediators for the same. Hence an understanding of a broader context is required to focus the ways in which child rearing practices develop and evolve.

Parents play a crucial role in survival, health, education, development and protection of children. They create a link between the continuity and the change through nurturing, emotional bonding and socialization (Desai, 2005). The parents' insights about the child's competencies influence the child's development (Pomerantz & Dong, 2006).

According to Kim (1997) the two roles that mothers' play in child's development, irrespective of the modernization and the social changes that are taking place are devotion and indulgence in the child's life, i.e. the two features of relational mode. This enhances the maternal bond (Kakar, 1979), leading to the aspect of interdependence, as the child imitates the mother's behaviours and assimilates the mothers' values and beliefs as their own. It is the father who links the children across time, through his lineage and across space, through his position in the ^{community} continuity. The father represents the outer world which is governed by co-existence mode, principles, conventions and the mother represents the inner world governed by relational mode i.e. true self. On the other hand, the expectations and beliefs regarding the father's role are governed by the structure and function of family life, which is influenced by the social trends. It includes female employment, increased father absence (Shweder, Goodnow, Hatano, Levine, Markus, & Miller, 1998), increased father involvement and increased cultural diversity. With the increasing involvement of fathers in domestic and child rearing activities, their responsibility for the organization and planning of children's lives also increases. Moreover the father's role should be defined in terms of cultural variations in meaning of fatherhood (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, R., Hoffert & Lamb, 2000).

Summers, Boller, Schiffman, & Raikes, (2006) mention that according to fathers of low-income families (United States), the role of 'good father' is to encourage a secure and stable environment for children (physical and emotional protection and security, financial support); teach, guide and discipline (act as role models, answer child's queries, be consistent, help in academics, inculcate values, tell them about religion, and gender differences); provide emotional care and support (love, positive communication with children, cuddling/comfort) and physical involvement (spending time, playing, engaging in feeding, babysitting). Fathers own emotionally supportive behaviour, cognitively stimulating behaviour,

instrumental involvement (level of responsibility, time devoted) and their competency to provide love, care, protection and financial support contributed to positive father involvement (Coley & Hernandez, 2006).

According to Verma (2003) mothers in the traditional families were considered as the main caregivers and fathers as contributors; with changes in time the dual earner families are becoming a reality. Fathers are considered as providers and have less involvement in childrearing and performing household chores. However not very rapid but definite changes are seen in Indian families where fathers are getting more involved in child care (Karnik, 2002., Saraswathi & Pai, 1997).

Harmony between parents influences the child's development. While focusing on the role of mothers and fathers in the contemporary context; "co-parenting" is the upcoming aspect that continues from generation to generation. The triadic relation between the child-father-mother triad contributes to child's overall development (Stright & Neitzel, 2003).

Parenting Styles

According to Hart et al. (1998) parenting style represents the quality of parent-child interaction over a wide range of situations. The parenting style reflects the cultural differences and similarities and depends on various psychological constructs. Parenting style is in line with the developmental goals that are culturally constructed. Also it is reflected in the values, beliefs, attitude, behavior and the child-rearing practices displayed by the members of the society, which are culturally relevant, essential for survival and required to meet the cultural goals. The differences in parenting styles also depend on the expectations the parents have about child rearing and culture (Matsumoto, 2000). The developmental pathways are influenced by the early experiences and the social relations. Differences in parenting style and socialization will lead to differences in developmental pathways of the children (Mohite, Keller, Shastri, Mankodi, Bhargava, & Jasrai, 2005).

The patterns of parenting styles (Baumrind, 1971, 1973., Maccoby and Martin, 1983 cited in Matsumoto, 2000) are;

1. Authoritarian style, where the parents expect obedience and strict discipline. Here the children reflect shy or rebellious behaviour. They feel less comfortable to interact with others.
2. Permissive style, the parents give more freedom to the child, are less firm and there is less discipline; the children show immature and impulsive behaviour.
3. Democratic or authoritative style, here on one hand where the parents show direction to the child, on the other hand they also provide opportunity to the child to decide on his/her direction. The parents are firm, reasonable, and affectionate and respond to the child. The children are competent, self-confident, independent, co-operative, display self-control, are psychologically healthy and can handle social situations well.
4. Uninvolved parents, who concentrate on their own lives and are least bothered about the children and have less or no time for them.

According to Bisht and Sinha (1981) in Indian context parents in joint families use more authoritarian type of child rearing practices and in nuclear families permissive and less harsh practices.

Construal of Self

Culture and self are interrelated and interdependent. Each individual has certain beliefs, intentions, attitude, norms, roles and values about living a life and to be a good person; rooted within a specific socio-cultural context and are aspects of subjective culture. The self is framed on those lines (Triandis, 1989., Kitayama & Markus, 1995). "A cultures collective ideas about what a self is and how to be a self, shape individual-level psychological process of thinking, feeling and acting. Self is thus a cultural frame" (cited in Kitayama & Markus, 1995 pp-367,368). This is in line with the personality characteristics that the individuals in a society share as they are adaptive to living in that society (Kagitcibasi, 1996 cited in Kapadia, 1998). Thus without one's individual expression the self cannot

be distinguished (Misra & Giri, 1995). Hence the concept of self is important as an individuals thinking and actions are based on it and culture should be considered because it shapes the individuals concept of self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). According to Triandis (1989) some aspects of self are universal; which carries across the same meaning world wide (I'm happy), some are cultural –specific; based on ones religion, mythology and language (I read *Bhagwat Geeta* everyday), some implies action (I should be a good housewife) and some do not (I'm beautiful).

Self-construal constitutes the individual's perception about oneself in context of relationship with others (Lam, 2006). It is described as;

a) At individual level

According to Kitayama and Markus (1995) at psychological level or individual level, the two construal of self are:

- 1) Independent construal of self: preference is given to one's own internal attributes, traits, abilities.
- 2) Interdependent construal of self: focus is on the shared duties, obligations and social responsibilities.

Kitayama and Markus (1995) also described independent and interdependent construal of self as cultural schemas and they are culturally mediated. They shape all aspects of social life, like; practices, customs, and socially accepted behaviors; and the psychological skills and processes. These schemas play an essential role in individual's functioning. The independent and the interdependent construal of self frame everyday practices, and the social structures of a society which inturn reinforce the construal of self.

In psychology independent and interdependent self are taken as cultural values and these values are stored in form of beliefs in each individual's memory (cognitive representation), which in turn gives rise to a variety of customs, practices, societal norms and the like (Schwartz, 1994).

The main differences (cited in Markus & Kitayama, 1991 pp-230) between an independent construal of self and an interdependent construal of self (Table 1) are;

Table 1

“Summary of Key Differences Between an Independent and an Interdependent Construal of Self”

FEATURE COMPARED	INDEPENDENT	INTERDEPENDENT
DEFINITION	Separate from social context	Connected with social context
STRUCTURE	Bounded, unitary, stable	Flexible, variable
IMPORTANT FEATURES	Internal , private (abilities, thoughts, feelings)	External, public (statuses, roles, relationships)
TASKS	Be unique, express self, realize inner attributes, promote own goals, be direct; “say what’s on your mind”	Belong, fit-in, occupy one’s proper place, engage in appropriate action, promote other’s goals, be direct; “read other’s mind”
ROLE OF OTHERS	Self-evaluation: others important for social comparison, reflected appraisal	Self-definition: relationships with others in specific contexts define the self
BASIS OF SELF-ESTEEM *	Ability to express self, validate internal attributes	Ability to adjust, restrain self, maintain harmony with social context

* “Self esteem should be replaced by the term that reflects the realization that one is fulfilling the culturally mandated tasks”.

The most important difference between the two construals is the role of “others”.

In interdependent self, others are placed within the margins of self and in independent self, others are less centrally drawn in one’s self-definition or identity (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

b) At cultural level

According to Hofstede (1991, cited in Kagitcibasi, 1997) at cultural level self is defined as;

- a) individualistic, where individual focuses on one’s self or his/her immediate family,
- b) collectivistic, where people from birth are integrated into in-groups and continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.

According to Triandis (1989) the independent and interdependent construals of self are wider conceptualizations of individualism and collectivism.

Individualism and Collectivism implies to cultures and independence and interdependence are individual level concepts. The individual or the psychological level and the cultural or the sociological level, reflects two different levels that interact and coexist with one another, through intermediate settings, like institutions, norms and beliefs and socialization practices. Although culture shapes the individual's beliefs and attitude it does not decide them. Individual as an active agent adds to the process of sustaining, creating and altering existing culture. They can accept or deny the cultural influences (Kagitcibasi, 1994). The culture and the individual are two different level of analysis (Kim, 1994).

It is thus important to note that the independent and interdependent construal of self; and the individualism and collectivism should be considered as separate dimensions and not opposite poles of single dimensions (not one bipolar dimension of cultural values but are two distinct dimensions) (Bontempo, 1993).

The independent and interdependent developmental goals coexist in varying degrees in cultural notion of parental care (Tulviste & Ahtonen, 2007). They have different ways of expression in diverse cultures (sharing- a matter of personal choice in United States and an expected norm in Indian culture). Also one cannot focus on these dimensions without ignoring the cultural dynamics. To remark, men are considered independent and the women interdependent. However it is the women themselves who give the authority (final decision) to men who make her dependent on him (Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003).

Triandis (1994) mentions that the persons in individualistic cultures focus more on individual roles and thus possess independent self construal whereas the persons in collectivistic cultures focus more on social roles and thus possess interdependent self construal. According to Markus and Kitayama (1991) it does not imply that the person with interdependent self does not have ones own preferences, attitude and characteristics. However while focusing on social matters the independent aspects becomes secondary to the collective or interdependent constituent of self. In a way the social situations also provide an individual a way to express one's inner attributes of self (for example, expressing ones creativity in any event). Fulfilling the goals of others can also be experienced as personal goals.

Besides the independent and interdependent construal of self, Kagitcibasi (1996) proposed three forms of self:

- 1) Separated self
- 2) Relational self
- 3) Autonomous- Relational self

Kagitcibasi (1996-97, 2005), in her functional contextual model of self development and family change (Table 2), differentiated the relational self and the separated self in terms of cultural and socio emotional contexts mediated by the family.

The relational self develops especially in the family model of total (emotional and material) interdependence. This self is visualized in agrarian life styles and urban low-socioeconomic context. They are subsistence economies. This self is also dominant in collectivistic cultures which require intergenerational interdependence for family livelihood. The independence of the child is not valued as the child when grows to be an adult can give more priority to one's own interests than the family interests. The authoritarian and obedience-oriented parenting contributes to the development of the relational self.

With impact of urbanization and economic development (higher education, substitute sources of old age care, financial security of parents by making savings, policies) a shift has been observed from the family model of interdependence to the family model of independence. The separated self typically develops in the family model of independence. It is seen in the Western urban context, with individualistic cultures where intergenerational interdependence is not required for family livelihood. Relatively permissive and self-reliance oriented parenting contributes to the development of separated self.

It is also important to note that as the material interdependencies weaken, the autonomy becomes more prominent in child rearing. The child's autonomy is not seen as a threat as the family is no more dependent on the child for material needs or economic contribution. But because the emotional interdependencies still continues the relatedness/ connectedness of the child with the family members is desired. With reference to above the third category of self is autonomous-relational self. This self is in combination with both collectivistic

(relational) and individualistic (autonomous) elements, at the individual level. It develops in the family model of emotional interdependence. This self is dominant in the urban areas of societies with collectivistic cultures, where material intergenerational interdependencies weaken but emotional interdependencies continue. Combined autonomy and control oriented parenting contributes to this dimension of self.

Table 2

'Family Models, Parenting and the Self' (cited in, Kagitcibasi, 1996 pp. - 183)

	INTERDEPENDENCE	INDEPENDENCE	EMOTIONAL INTERDEPENDENCE
PARENTING STYLE	Authoritarian	Relatively permissive	Authoritative
CHILD REARING ORIENTATION	Control / Obedience	Autonomy / Self-reliance	Control / Autonomy
SELF	Relational	Separated	Autonomous-Relational

According to Kagitcibasi (2005) autonomy and relatedness are considered as basis human needs and they coexist. The individualistic societies identify and encourage the autonomy and ignore the equally essential need of relatedness and the same hold opposite for collectivistic societies. However these dimensions, individualism and collectivism and independent and interdependent, are also criticized because of less empirical support.

According to Keller, Lamm, Abels, Yovsi, Borke, Jensen, Papaligoura, Holub, Lo, Tomiyama, Su, Wang, and Chaudhary, (2006) the cultural models (not individualism and collectivism but the cultural priorities that are part of individual psychologies) of independence, interdependence and autonomous-related are articulated in familism (family standards), which updates the socialization goals and are personified in parental ethnotheories (Lamm & Keller, 2007). For good parenting the socialization goals mediate through the broader socio-cultural orientations/familism and the parental ethnotheories. They also mentioned that the autonomous-relatedness model needs to be refined both

theoretically and empirically as the families (as per their research focusing on urban educated families) are changing and adapting themselves to different life styles. With time as society changes the parental values and goals changes (Tulviste & Ahtonen, 2007). In relation to economic, educational and social conditions, as they change with time, it can be presumed that the cultural models also change accordingly; the socialization goals and parenting styles should thus be modified (Keller, Borke, Yovsi, Lohaus, & Jensen, 2005).

Parental Ideas, Child Development and Existence of Self in the Indian Context

Series of studies on Gujarati Hindu families by Shah, S (2006)., Kshetrapal, N (2003)., Chauhan, G (2002)., Srivastava, R (2002)., Patel, R (2001)., Bandukwala, U (2001)., Shastri, A (2001)., Mendiratta, A (2001) revealed there exist a relation between the developmental pathways of children, the parental ideas about child development and rearing and the practices parents follow for children from infancy to early childhood years. The parenting behaviour depends on the inferences that parents make about themselves and the traits they value in their children. In Indian context parents want their children to develop traits of independence and on the other hand want that the trait of interdependence toward the family should be retained. These researches also revealed gender differences in ideas of parents, their behaviour and child rearing practices.

Culture, socialization techniques (stimulating home environment, exposure to natural setting, presence of siblings), the child and the parent characteristics, and the language plays a key role in child's development specifically the self that emerges at an early age and communicating the infant's self to the adult world.

Traditional and Contemporary Perspective

Influence of Gender

According to Ruble and Martin (1998, pp-943) the contents that define a boy and a girl are "biological/categorical sex, activities and interests (toys, play activities, occupations, household roles and tasks), personal-social attributes (personality traits, social behaviour and abilities), gender-biased social

relationships (sex of peers, friends, lovers, preferred parents, models), styles and symbols (gestures, speech pattern, play styles) and gender-related values (knowledge related to one's sex or gender roles than the others, in group-out group discrimination, attitudes towards egalitarian roles, biased self perception associated with group identification)". These contents are related to concepts or beliefs, identity or self-perception, preferences and behavioural enactment. The differences between boys and girls in terms of their personal and social attributes and the activities and interests were also echoed by Bhogle (1999).

Family is considered as a vital context of development. It promotes and provides a gendered environment. The caregivers in the family (depending on the family type) that is, parents and the grandparents promote gender stereotypic behaviour (activities, dressing), develop gender typed preference (clothes, gender roles) and restrict cross gender type clothing, behaviour, activities. Other factors that foster gender aspect include media, school and peers (Chauhan, 2002).

If one focuses on the traditional scenario, Thorat (1982) revealed that in the family of untouchable landless labourers, child is seen as beneficial as he is able to add to the family's small income even with his modest labour. However when the boy is send to the school the father forgoes his contribution in light of the upward social mobility that will be achieved through child's high status.

Anandlakshmy (1975) mentioned that in rural Harijan families, girls take care of domestic tasks and boys usually play when not in school. Similar findings were revealed by Edwards and Whiting (1980). They mention that in India girls, more than boys, are expected to do household tasks, take care of infants and remain more in home and in the company of females. Das (1982) mentions that in the upper caste urban Punjabis, parents value son for their support in old age. Girl is viewed as belonging to different family and she is socialized in that manner. Parents do not depend on her for material needs but she represents the symbol of honour 'izzat' for them. The presence of a boy is worth in rural societies as he gets married and brings a woman in the family who contributes to the household (Epstein, 1996). According to Saraswathi and Pai (1997) the females' life in India is discriminated in various forms. For the beginning, that is conception the female fetus has more risk to survive because of the preference for the male child. The girls are breastfed for less time and when the mother is free; on the

other hand the boy child is fed on demand. Even the females throughout their life eat food when they have served the whole family. Low income, the illiterate or poorly educated families are not aware of the facilities for early childhood care like immunization, health care and supplementary food. Self-sacrifice, devotion/loyal, dependence, tolerance of pain, submission are the few elements that define the image of women. She should be obedient, shy, gentle and nurturing (Bhogle, 1999). Also the love, acceptance and respect for the women are conditional (good looking, efficient home maker, marriage, pregnancy, motherhood). In spite of all this, women are trying to make their place with increasing participation in work force and getting higher education.

According to Dhawan, Roseman, Naidu, Thapa, and Retteck, (1995) the reason for difference in roles to be performed by men and women might be the dominant social status that is given to men; and gender roles are more related to women social roles than men. Also the women's employment unlike men is viewed in context of their social, marital and familial roles and relationships (Bharat, 2001). Thus prescribed ideal gender roles and norms shape the actions of men and women as they move between family and the world outside the home.

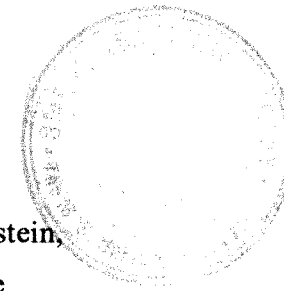
With respect to the contemporary scenario, according to Shastri and Mendiratta (2006) parents' value attributes of relatedness (social, responsible, kindhearted) as well as achievement and ability (good in academics, creative) in 3+ years children belonging from higher middle class Hindu families. Traits of achievement and ability are emphasized for girls together with manifesting relatedness, looking after household chores, etc. Girls are expected to perform the dual roles of homemaker and working outside home. A positive trend was also evident since relatedness as a trait was seen in boys and described positively by the parents. It reflects that parents believe that after growing up boys should be earning as well as looking after other family members. According to Shastri, Chauhan, Kshetrapal, and Ray (2005) the stereotypic traits that describe girls are; being soft, adjusting, caring, wearing accessories, helping family members, taking responsibility of the home and marrying early; and for boys are, being strong, brave, independent, work outside, earn money, career oriented and wear pants shirt and keep short hair. The non stereotypic traits that describe girls are; taking dual responsibility of home and outside home, doing household chores as

well as pursuing studies and wear pants, shirt and dress; and for boys are, being emotional and they should know how to do household chores along with other work. The parents also said the boys and girls also differ in their body structure, facial features and voice. The children develop the understanding about gender through family-the main source, school, peers, neighbors, television and during festival celebrations. Desai (1996) mentioned that it is important for women to work as she contributes to the economic requirement of the family and in children's education and in developing personality and talents in them by providing them opportunities to participate in extra curricular activities.

According to Srivastava (2002) the family members have certain ideas and expectations regarding child's development which influences the practices that parents follow for specific developmental traits. The social aspects together with the individual development remained predominant in expectations of caregivers from their children when they grow up. Differences in beliefs were observed in terms of gender of the child. The boys were expected to perform stereotypical roles and the girls were expected to perform both traditional and contemporary roles. Study by Srivastava (2000) revealed that the existence of traditional and contemporary thoughts in parental ideas for children of five to nine years and young adult children (22-29 years); with reference to educational achievements and the career prospect of children and inculcation of sanskars.

Mothers gave emphasis to the cognitive development of both male and female infants. The boys are expected to be social and girls to be self dependent (Bandukwala, 2001., & Shastri, 2001). This was also true for three year old children. The research revealed that mothers value practices and child development goals related to interrelatedness and cognitive development of their children (Patel, R. 2001). Shah (2006) discussed in her research that the mother of girls and boys (two to five years) gave importance to literacy development for education and to enhance the cognitive skills respectively. The parents thus aimed that their children should possess both social and academic skills.

Thus in the past setting women were anticipated to perform traditional roles and possess stereotypical traits. Whereas in the present scenario women's participation in both traditional and contemporary roles are appreciated.



Influence of Religion

The religious scripts and epics reflect the Indian cultural continuity (Epstein, 1996). Religion is interwoven in culture; it is significant for people. The religious beliefs and practices have a great impact on human lives. It holds the individual and the society together (Tarakeshwar, Stanton, & Pargament, 2003). An individual's everyday action, relationship and basic plans for life and the social identity is revealed through religion (Mishra, 2005). In India the birth of the child is valued. Parents start performing ceremonies and rituals before and after the birth of the child. Religion provides a context for the practices that are followed by the parents. India consists of many religions. The majority of Indians are Hindus and among the minorities Muslims form the larger group.

Hindu religion: As per the Hindu orientation, Hinduism is considered more as a way of life than a religion. The Indian values are reflected in Hinduism. According to Vishvanathan (1992) single founder cannot be traced for Hindu religion. Most likely it is based on the philosophy of the *Anaryans* and *Aryans*. Hindus believe in various Gods and idol worship. The *Bhagwat Geeta*, the scriptures-*Upanishads* and the *Vedas* (Kumar, 2006) and the mythologies-*Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* are considered as sacred by Hindus. Few principles of Hindus are;

1. Believe in God
2. Visit temple regularly and following other religious activities (lighting a lamp, singing hymns, purifying things with water, offering things to the god)
3. Charity to needy and food to animals
4. Fasting
5. Avoidance of non-vegetarian food

Making the soul pure is the basis of their life that is, leading a good life. The Hindu calendar contains a list of festivals that are celebrated all around the year. Some of the festivals celebrated by Hindus are Diwali, Dusshera, Janmashtami, Ramanavami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Holi, MakaraSankaranthi and Raksha Bhandan (Vaswani, 2003).

The parental ideas are the indicators for the Hindu philosophy of life. According to Sinha (1981) Hindu tradition provides a perspective to focus on socialization of Hindu Indian child. The child is considered as a god's gift in Hindu religion.

Kakar (1979) mentions that in Hindi language the term 'palna-posna' (socialization) implies protection and nurturance and not training the child *per se*. The process of development begins with the conception. According to Indian traditional mythology the care of expectant mother and the fetus is considered crucial. As per the Hindu *shastra*, the *sanskars* have their root in mother's womb. In the Indian context, the child's development to a great extent is influenced by the traditional cultural images. These images include beliefs in the principles of *dharma* (duty), *moksha* (liberation), *karma* (action), *gunas* (qualities), *samskaras* (rituals at different stages) and traditional child care attitudes and practices (Kakar, 1979., Tripathi, 1988., Ahuja 1993., Kumar, 2006). The human life is also divided into four ashramadharma (duties related to life stages) that is., brahmacharya (student life) grihastha (the house holder) vanaprastha (step to leave the ordinary life and consciously broadening the perspectives) and sanyasa (pursuit of spirituality) (Moore, 2004).

According to the contemporary scene as given by Misri (1985) based on the study on Indian Kashmiri Pandits; the child can be reconstructed on the following axis-

- a) The Human/Divine axis: here the child being a product of human intercourse is considered as human, but the child is thought to be divine as it is the god's will because of which conception occurs.
- b) Collective/Individual axis, here because the child is a member of the family, the family members have the right on the child and the socio-cultural identity. On the other hand, child is considered as a unique individual because of his *grahas* (planets) and *nakshatras* (stars).
- c) Unalterable/ Transformative axis, here because of the planetary effect on the child, configurations are unalterable, but by performing rituals it can be transformed.

According to Saraswathi, T.S., Ganapathy., Mittu., Dave., Khattar., & Dave, D, (1999) parents, with changing society, are making efforts to make sense of traditional values in children and also trying to adopt ways to rear their children. The parents' perception of a good parent and a good child depends on the 'sanskars'. Parents define good child (0-6years) as one who possesses traits like, being religious, responsible, independent, disciplined, caring, interactive and so on.

Good parents are those who love, nurture, inculcate sanskars, provide basic needs, give guidance and discipline their children.

Hence in the Hindu philosophy the parental beliefs and the child's development are guided by both traditional and contemporary aspects.

Islamic religion: Mohammed, the Prophet of Islam, was born in Mecca in Arabia in 571 AD. The word Islam originated from *Slim* and *Salam* which means peace. Muslims do not believe in idol worship. They are the followers of Islam and Quran is their holy book. According to Islam the Muslims should have five principles (Madan, 2004) of life;

1. Proclaim the unity of God and the prophet hood of Muhammad
2. Offer prayers fives times everyday, and on Friday afternoons in the mosque
3. Give alms to the poor as an offering to Allah and as a religious act
4. Keep fast from dawn to dusk in the *Ramzan* month
5. If possible, make a trip to Mecca in his lifetime

They emphasize on life of good value and kindness. Some of the festivals celebrated by Muslims are Id-ul-Fitr, Id-ul-Zula and Muharram.

Islamic education and rearing are considered as best gift for a child (Mukhtaar, 2000). Between the age of two to seven, parents take the children to *Masjid*, teach them *namaz*, insist them to observe prayers and send them to fulltime Muslim school- *Madarsas*. It is this Islamic context where child develops attitude, behaviour and manners. Child in Islam religion is considered as a source of protection for parents. Training, discipline, love, sympathy, concern, affection and mutual understanding are few indicators of good parent-child relation in Islam. Parents expect children to respect and honour them, to be obedient, honest, humble, sincere and good to people (Sakr, A.H-year unavailable, Islahi, Y.M, 2004). According to Ahmad, K (1980) in Muslim religion there is a balance between the individual personality of the child and the sense of social responsibility that the child should take.

Review states that there are common principles that are followed by Hindu and Muslim parents; the difference is in their way of practicing them. Differences are also evident in the images that guide parents for child rearing. Bhogle (1981) in her study mentioned few variations and commonalities among the Hindus and

Muslims parents in general and specifically to child-rearing practices. The sample is culturally different from each other but share the same physical environment of an urban setting. The commonalities were parents greeted and celebrated during festivals and distribution of sweets was seen in *durgah* same like the *prasad* being distributed in temples. Some of the variations were like, the Hindu mothers started breast feeding on the third day and majority of the Muslim mothers started it on the fifth day, in toilet training the Hindu mothers gave more autonomous training like sending the child to go out on his/her own whereas most of the Muslim mothers used the potty.

Existence of Self in the Indian Cultural Context

The Indian tradition reflects various forms of self (cited in Misra & Giri, 1995 pp-18) “ranging from absolute and indestructible inner self (*atman*) (Verma, 2004) to the denial of self’s reality (*anataman* or no self), and the ego self, i.e. (*ahamkar*)”. The other forms of self (Bharti, 1985) that exist are:

1. Real self; where *atman* is taken as a non-material realization of the real self
2. Empirical self; the state of being which is hierarchically lower than the self of the religious ultimate
3. Material self; which is related to behaviour more situational in nature

In Indian culture the social context is so profound that even the nuclear families do not function in isolation. It is the larger social cluster of their extended family relationship in which they are implanted (Kshetrapal, 2003). According to Triandis, McCusker, Bentancourt, Iwao, Leung, Salazar, Setiadi, Sinha, Touzard, and Zaleski (1993) India is considered as a culture low in independence; dependency, socialization and family integrity are high. Indian culture has more influence on development of self-concept as compared to the gender. Indians describe themselves more with respect to social identity (self -identity, role-identity, group identity, caste identity, class identity, gender role identity), interests (likes/ dislikes) and ideological beliefs (God/ life/cosmos). However the self evaluation (self worth / physical attribute / psychological attribute/ negative states / positive states) also constitute the self concept (Dhawan, Roseman, Naidu, Thapa, & Retteck, 1995).

According to Kapadia (1998) different forms of self exist in different cultures and are central to the cultural goals of independence and interdependence. There is a preconceived notion about Indian culture that it is less individualistic and the mind has been set in this frame. For empirical evidence researches have been conducted in the same area. According to Sinha and Tripathi (2001) the descriptive category of individualism and collectivism is inappropriate for specifying the Indian culture and social reality. Cultural co-existence is found in Indian context. According to Chaudhuri (1965) and Sinha, D, (1979, 1988) the Indian psyche that reflects Indian social reality is considered as highly complex. It has been found that India is exposed to many cultural influences as different people with different cultures live here and they have co-existed rather than merged in the unique socio-cultural setting. According to Sinha, D (1962) this co-existence is a part of Indian lives and culture.

The co-existence of contradictions is prevalent in different aspects of Indian culture and behavior. In philosophy and ethics, related to Indian context, the co-existence is found between *dharma* (duty) and *moksha* (salvation); and *artha* (wealth) and *kama* (sexual satisfaction). On one hand the material wealth and worldly pleasures are taken as “*Maya*” and on the other hand spirituality is emphasized and/or cherished and is portrayed in the *Kamasutra*. Similarly, moral values are a part of Indian life, but in actual behavior, the act of rightness or wrongness depends on the specific context in which the behavior takes place. In Indian moral code, truth has always been given a high priority, but its practice is also context bound. Likewise in India it is a social practice that one shouldn’t eat/drink polluted food that is touched by person of low caste but it is overlooked when one is on a journey or travel. Thus Indian context is more contextual and relational, unlike the western context which focuses on the textual and the individuals. In Indian culture it is not the action/behavior which is judged per se, but it is more the context in which the behavior is performed and which gives it a ethical meaning (Sinha & Tripathi, 2001).

The coexistence of opposite (Mascolo, Misra, & Rapisardi, 2004) is very much evident with respect to individualism/ collectivism in the Indian context. The two aspects that contribute to collectivism are family integrity and interdependence. With respect to family and the kinship ties, Indians are considered as collectives.

Coexistence of individualism and collectivism is found in family life with respect to the older and younger generations' psychological closeness to family. Although attitudinally younger generation is moving more towards nuclearization and individualism; still psychologically they are unable to detach themselves from the advantages of extended family. The aspects that contribute to individualism are religion and ethics. In India individuals have their own specific religion and the manner of worship. The deeds in the present world are considered as consequences of their own past actions, the emphasis is on individuals own conduct and behavior (Sinha & Tripathi, 2001).

The young, highly educated and urban people are less collectivistic and the people with low level of education and residing in villages are both individualistic and collectivistic (Mishra, R.1994). On exploring self construal in the Indian socio-cultural context, Misra and Giri (1995) revealed that the predominance of interdependent self could not be found. There were individual differences in the self construal and no clear demarcation for the preference of one self was found to exist. Females were found to be relatively more independent and interdependent than males.

The review thus states that the existence of both individualism and collectivism is reflected in Indian context (Sinha, D.1988., Tripathi, 1988., Sinha,J.P., Sinha, T.N., Verma,J., & Sinha, R.N , 2001., & Misra & Sachdeva, 2005). The Indian selfhood is framed such that the Indians have a typical way to react and respond and that is very much contextual (Roland, 1984; Ramanujan 1990). The values that Indians have are a part of their cognitive-emotional structure, but in actual practice, the response is as per the situation, that is presence of self in these responses depend/ varies with varying situations (Sinha, J.P., Sinha, T.N., Verma, J., & Sinha, R.N, 2001).

In India the identity of a person or ones self is conceptualized as familial that is revolve around the family notions (Misra, 1995). According to Kakar (1981) most Indians hold their traditional identity where mother represents the child's universe. The relationships with others (Bhogle, 1999) define the identity of an Indian woman. The identity of the Indian women is reflected with respect to her social status as mother; especially the mother of a son, which confirms her sense

of distinctive identity and purpose. The birth of a boy is considered necessary to perform the sacraments; during death of the parents whereas the girls becomes the burden for the families as she does not contribute to the family income and the family has to give dowry during her marriage. In Indian cultures men described themselves with reference to self identity, whereas women described themselves with reference to gender identity. Group identity/affiliation came as an area of concern for Indian men. Indian women described themselves in terms of their own likings/interests; based on the adult roles inside and outside home in Indian social context (Dhawan, Roseman, Naidu, Thapa, & Retteck, 1995).

It is also important to note that the concept of interdependent self-construal prevalent in the larger cultural context form a continuous background where aspects like giving priority to other's goals, restricting self, maintain harmony and being able to adjust are encouraged (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Though these qualities are valued in all persons, they are more strongly encouraged and expected of women. Performing social roles are so much a part of Indian women that they are sometimes viewed as personal goals or achievements. As per the social structure India is considered as a traditional society. Fulfillment of social duties and performing gender roles are the norms and values that exist. The socialization practices stems from the cultural ideologies and the aspects of gender inequality reflects in the daily lives of females (Kapadia, 1998).

Thus on the basis of above review, one can say that the self and culture are related. The construal of self is rooted in the cultural meaning system. In Indian cultural context self can be viewed as a multifaceted phenomenon as various construal of self can be found. On one hand where Indian self is explained as a collectivistic and social self, on the other hand it is also viewed as individualistic and independent self. Though the elements of individualistic and collectivistic on one hand conflict and are also mutually exclusive, the preferred mode of behaviour for Indian people is accepting both the aspects of construal of self. There are individual differences and gender differences in beliefs and attitudes. Within specific cultural context different forms of self can coexist. The development form of self is contextual.

Linkages between Parental Ideas and the Existence of Self

According to Keller and Eckensberger (1998), Keller and Greenfield (2000) the development of independent and interdependent pathways depends on the early developmental stage. The development of specific forms of self depends on parenting style, accepted in a specific cultural context. Depending on the socio-cultural context, each family provides a background for child's development, wherein child acts as an active agent. In cultures where the mothers have face to face interaction with the child, there is exclusive dyadic attention between caregivers and the child, and where the mother orients the child more to the materialistic world, the self develops as an agent. As herein, the individual experiences private knowledge, has figural identity, has own individual definition of traditional norms and values, is more educational oriented and self is in terms of individual identity. Hence, the existence of independent form of self can be seen. It is found more in European, industrial or urban commercial societies. On the other hand, cultures where there is extended body contact with extended nursing, there are multiple caretakers and child care is a co-occurring activity, the self develops as a co-agent (relational). As here in the individual experiences shared knowledge, has background identity, there is co-construction of traditional cultural norms and values, early family formation and self is more in terms of group-related identity. In such cultures interdependent form of self exists. It is found in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Thus socialization practices that promotes individualism/ independence focuses on the concept of self as 'autonomous' and those that promotes collectivism/ interdependence focuses on the concept of self as 'ensemble' (Kim, 1997).

Bromer (1999) made an attempt to present various perspectives in child rearing values with reference to the independence goal and interdependence goal. Few of these are presented in Figure 1. With respect to independence as primary goal, the child rearing values are self-oriented. The emphasis is on child's self as a separate identity wherein the child has one's own special place, freedom to express emotions and the activities are more object oriented. Whereas with respect to interdependence as primary goal, the child rearing values are others-

oriented. Parents identify child in relation to others. Activities are more group-oriented and maintenance of harmony is encouraged.

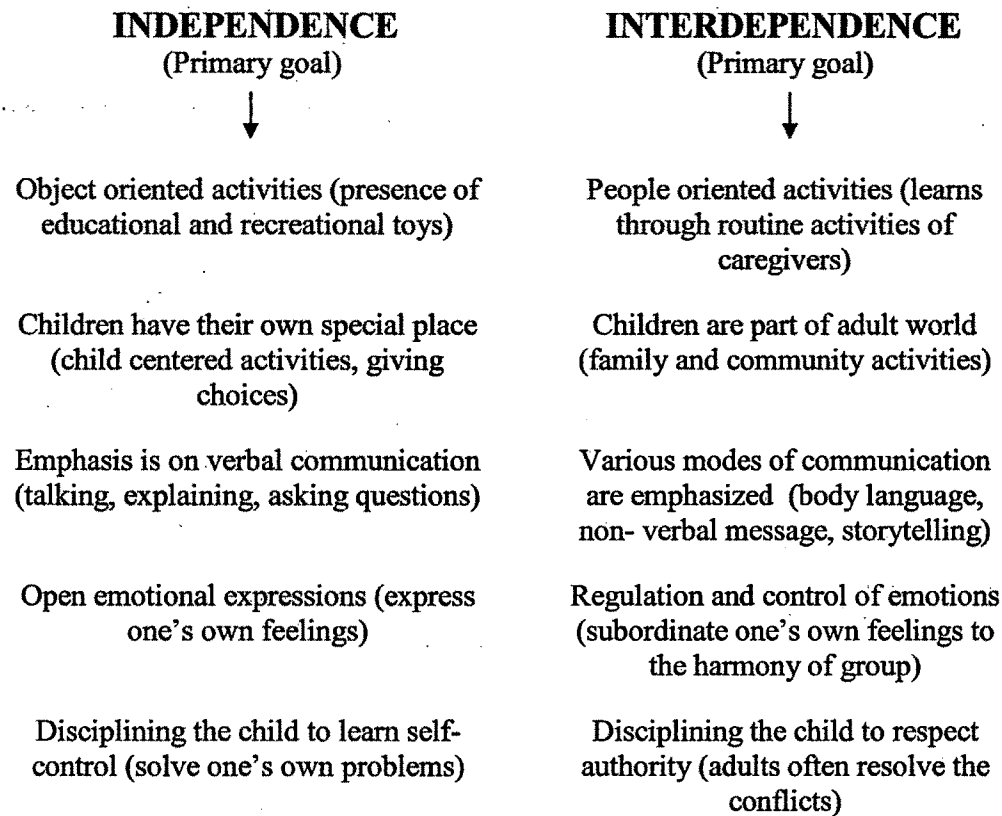


Figure 1. Child rearing values in relation to self (Bromer, 1999)

Focus on Two to Four Years

To describe the course of development from birth until adulthood, their developmental tasks and the interaction between persons and environment, Keller and Eskensberger (1998) put forward three 'functional developmental stages';

- a) reception phase- birth to two-three years
- b) acquisition phase- end of reception phase until puberty
- c) transformation phase- entry into puberty until reproduction

According to them the stages follow culture-specific developments. The duration and time limits (transition from one phase to other) of the stages vary with cultures. However the first stage is regarded as universal. The age of two to three years is considered as a transition period. The child's network expands from the

immediate family to a larger macrosystem. The child enters in a social group within and outside home- although the attainment of social skills is culture bound.

The child at the age of two to seven is egocentric (Piaget, 1971). During the age of one to two years, the child starts helping and sharing, i.e. the sign of pro-social behaviours emerges (Zahn Waxler., Radke-Yarrow., Wagner., & Chapman, 1992). Keller (1999) mentions that by two years of age the infants show relatedness towards primary caretakers. The infant –caregiver interaction shapes those experiences of infants which differentiate his/her self according to the prevailing cultural standards. By the age of three years the child is ready to be disciplined (Saraswathi & Pai, 1997). As per Erikson's (1963) theory of development by three years of age the child has developed a sense of autonomy and independence from the caregivers. Keenan (2002) mentions that during this age the child has an ability to relate a person's action according to his / her own (child's) beliefs and desires. Between the age group of three to four years the child maintains body balance, solves simple riddles, uses vocabulary related to immediate family members, learns to adjust to the routine of preschool and play with other children, build rapport with teachers and forms personal habits like one's own cleanliness and proper use of toilet (Mohite & Shastri, year unavailable). Child becomes aware of one's religious identity and related biases by the age of three to four years. With increase in age the child's understanding about his/her religious identity is not just reflected in the dressing sense or appearance but also in behavioural traits and actions (Mishra & Bano, 2003). By age four the children understands that a person's beliefs can misrepresent a situation. The child also understands that there are networks of perspectives that binds individual into a social system (Selman, 1980 cited in Keenan, 2002). Evans (1994) mentions that preschool child is more self-reliant and requires opportunities to develop various skills.

It is important to focus of age of two to four years as it is a transition phase. The child's interaction extends beyond the primary social group. Parents provide prospects to the children to master competencies. Strategies pursued by them will help the child attain developmental goals.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The theories and review reveals that the child's development takes place within a continually expanding cultural context. In the multilayered context and the complex ecology, children's development is influenced by the nature and quality of their contact and interaction with the parents. The parents are thus a crucial facet of child's ecology. The ecocultural niche integrates with the developmental niche. The parental idea is a common component represented in both ecological system (micro system) and developmental niche (psychology of the caretaker). "The parents in the ecocultural niche of the family as well as in the developmental niche of the individual child play a crucial mediating role between children's experiences and the larger culture in which they live" (cited in , Gardiner, Mutter, & Kosmitzki ,1998 , pp-206). Their goals for children, ideas and practices are influenced by the cultural context. These goals are interpreted depending on the needs of the family that is influenced by the social and cultural changes taking place within a context.

There are various factors in ecological system and developmental niche that influences the parental goals, ideas and practices regarding child's development and child rearing (Figure 2). The individual factors at the micro-level include parent's and child's characteristics like age and gender of the child and gender of the parents. The socio-cultural factors at the macro- level include religion and socio-economic status. The parental goals, ideas and practices influence the adult-child interaction and the child's overall development including the 'self'.

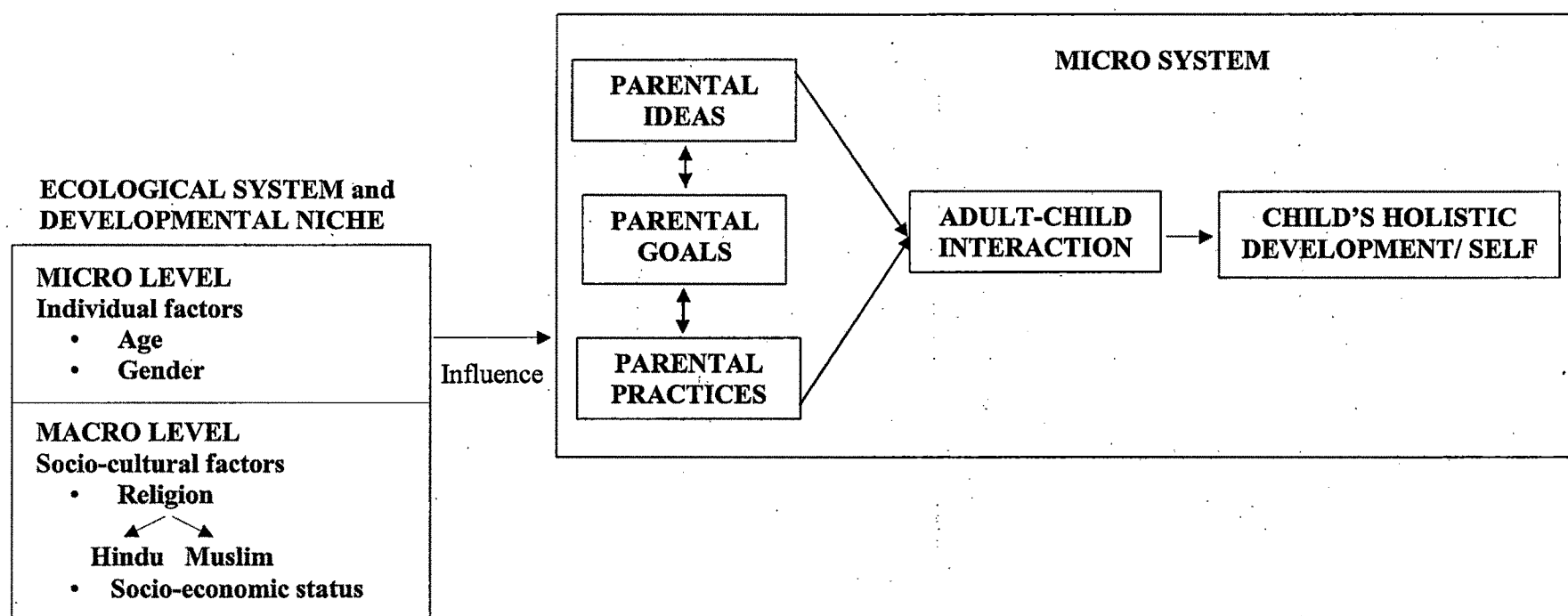


Figure 2. Conceptual framework; parental ideas regarding child development and child rearing in context.

Rationale for the Present Study

India being a multi cultural society is characterized by different cultural traditions. There are vast numbers of different regional, social and economic groups in India. The identity of an individual is revealed by one's own language, caste, class, religion and culture. The Hindus represent the majority group and Muslims represent the majority of the minority groups in Indian context.

Family is considered as a basic unit of human social life in Indian society. It helps one to accomplish the personal and social goals. It lays the foundation stone for maintaining relationships, continuing interdependencies and achieving common goals. However studying families in Indian culture is a complex process. It becomes a challenge to figure out the impact of social changes (increase in the age of marriage, transition of family from joint to nuclear, change in girl's life after marriage compared to others), western education (varied choices of careers), migration, urbanization and industrialization on the Indian family (Misra, 1995). Due to the social changes in the contemporary context, adaptations in socialization process can be seen, like, along with the family, school, day care centers, are considered as essential socializing agents; interchangeability in the parenting role are seen due to women's participation in work force (Sarawathi & Pai, 1997). The social trends provide opportunities to explore how families cope up, adapt and change with changing circumstances (Kakar, 1981). According to Sinha (1988) as far as social change is concerned, in India the changeability of the environment is the key facet. The parents are not sure about the world in which they have to socialize their children. Whether these social changes are rapid or slow, and are we really crystallizing the traditional heritage into the modern context, is still a point of discussion. With impact of formal education, media and other social changes, there is an assimilation of traditional (gender stereotypical roles) and new ideas (dual role of women, decision maker). Continuity (following rituals, festivals, ceremonies) and changes (fathers increased involvement, shared parental responsibilities) in parental roles can be seen. At the same time the culture and the transmission of values and ideas become disorganized. The parents in today's evolving scenario are making continuous efforts to rear their children in the best possible manner

inspite of the changes taking place. Hence with respect to above aspects, some interesting questions arise -

- What goals do Hindu and Muslim parents of young children have for them?
- What are the practices parents follow to help the child achieve these goals?
- What construal of self (independent/interdependent) exists in ideas of parents?

The present research thus aims to study the parental ideas regarding child development and child rearing and the existence of forms of self, in Indian context.

Objectives of the Research

Broad Objective

- Explore the linkages between parental ideas regarding child development and child rearing and the existence of form of self in these ideas.

Specific Objectives

- Understand the developmental goals parents want their child to achieve.
- Explore the qualities that parents would like their child to possess and not to possess when they grow up.
- Describe the practices parents follow which help their child to achieve the developmental goals.
- Explore religion and gender as variables influencing the ideas of parents.
- Explore the existence of self (independent and /or interdependent) in parental ideas about child development and child rearing.