

## Supervision and Conformity: A Cross-cultural Analysis of Parental Socialization Values<sup>1</sup>

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This paper integrates the existing theories on the antecedents of parental values in socialization, drawing heavily on the work of Kohn; Barry, Child, and Bacon; Stephens; and Olsen. Their theories, although varying in specific hypotheses, may be partially subsumed under the general proposition that supervision of the parent in salient behavioral domains is positively related to a parental value on conformity and negatively related to a value on self-reliance. Hypotheses derived from this theory are tested on a sample of 122 cultures drawn from the Human Relations Area Files and the Standard Cross-cultural Sample and are generally supported. Implications for further theoretical development are discussed.

### SOCIAL CLASS AND PARENTAL VALUES

Sociologists have long been interested in the association between socioeconomic status and parental values in the socialization process. Kohn's work (1959a, 1959b, 1963, 1969; Kohn and Schooler 1969, 1973; Pearlin and Kohn 1966), pointing to a negative relationship between socioeconomic status and a parental value on conformity in children, has been of particular interest (see also Gecas and Nye 1974; Wright and Wright 1976; Gecas 1978).

The interpretation of this relationship is often couched in terms of class differences between blue- and white-collar workers. Briefly, a part of the argument is that members of these strata operate under differing reward

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#### EXTENSIONS OF THE THEORY

Kohn's theory has most frequently been interpreted as a theory of the effects of social class on socialization values, with dimensions of occupational experience serving as intervening variables. Olsen (1974), however, has demonstrated that the implications of the theory may be considerably broader than this. She generalizes the theory by concentrating on the supervision dimension and noting that closeness of supervision is a general concept which pertains to many behavioral domains other than occupation.<sup>5</sup> One of these domains is the family. Olsen reasons that mothers in patrilocal extended families are closely supervised in the performance of family roles by the husband's mother. She hypothesizes that "... mothers in three-generational households should resemble working-class men in the high value they place upon conformity and obedience in children, while mothers in nuclear families should place more emphasis on autonomy and self-reliance" (1974, p. 1396). This hypothesis was supported on a Taiwanese sample. Olsen concludes that the effects of closeness of supervision in extended families may be interpreted according to the logic developed by Kohn for the explanation of occupational stratum differences in parental values. Closeness of supervision of the parent, whether in the occupational or familial role, causes the parent to value the traits of conformity and obedience in children.

Anthropologists have also investigated antecedents of socialization values via cross-cultural research and have employed similar conceptualizations of the dependent variables. Barry, Child, and Bacon (1959) distinguish between "compliance" and "assertion" as socialization values.<sup>6</sup> Their dependent variable is actually a composite of four separate measures, including emphasis on responsibility and obedience (which define the "compliance" pole of the continuum) and emphasis on achievement and self-reliance (which define "assertiveness"). They discover that, where economic systems permit the accumulation and storage of food (pastoral and agricultural economies), the culture tends to emphasize the value of compliance. But in hunting, gathering, or fishing economies food cannot usually be stored

<sup>5</sup> Pearlin (1971) and others have measured closeness of supervision and the requirement of self-reliance in work separately, and Olsen (1974) uses only the concept of supervision as the basis for her generalization of the theory. However, these two variables appear to be closely related on the conceptual level and are also negatively correlated empirically (Pearlin 1971, p. 65). A high degree of self-reliance in work implies a low degree of supervision, almost by definition. These two concepts will thus often be employed interchangeably or in combination in the present analysis.

<sup>6</sup> For related studies, see Barry 1969; Barry et al. 1976; Berry 1967; Draper 1975; and Munroe, Munroe, and Daniels 1973. The basic logic of each of these studies is similar to that of Barry, Child, and Bacon (1959); see also Barry et al. (1967) and Inkeles (1968).

structures in the pursuit of occupational (and thus economic) success.<sup>2</sup> Blue-collar workers are typically subjected to a high degree of supervision on the job. Their tasks are likely to be routinized, adherence to established procedures is required, and there is little need for innovation. Satisfactory performance is largely defined by conformity to external authority. Blue-collar parents, so the interpretation goes, generalize this value to other arenas of behavior and thus value the trait of conformity in their children.<sup>3</sup> White-collar workers, on the other hand, achieve success largely by virtue of individual initiative. They are less closely supervised and must often exercise independent judgment. The reward structure in white-collar occupations is likely to place a premium on autonomy and self-reliance. Since these traits are perceived as conducive to success, white-collar parents value them in their children.

In support of this theory, Kohn and others have consistently found that American blue-collar parents value conformity in children over self-reliance,<sup>4</sup> while the opposite is true of white-collar parents. In addition, these findings have been supported in several studies outside the United States (see Kohn [1977, introduction] for a summary of this literature). Pearlin (1971, pp. 58-70) demonstrates, with data from both Italy and the United States, that class differences in parental values are due largely to class-related differences in the nature of occupational experiences. There are three relevant types of differences: differences in the closeness of supervision, in the major component of work (things, people, or ideas), and in the requirement of self-reliance in work. White-collar occupations are characterized by low supervision, an emphasis on people or ideas rather than objects, and a relatively high degree of self-reliance. Each of these factors is negatively related to the value placed on conformity in children and thus contributes to the explanation of class differences in socialization values.

<sup>2</sup> For more detailed summaries of this theory, see Kohn 1969; Pearlin 1971; Lee 1977; and Gecas 1978.

<sup>3</sup> This is not intended to imply that blue-collar children are actually more conforming than others; in fact, the opposite may well be true (see Devereaux, Bronfenbrenner, and Rodgers 1969; Devereaux 1970, 1972; Lee 1977). The relevant point here is that blue-collar parents appear to value conformity in children more than white-collar parents do.

<sup>4</sup> A great number of terms have been employed by Kohn and other researchers working with similar ideas (see below) to refer to the general trait which we label here as self-reliance. The terms have included self-direction, autonomy, independence, and even assertiveness. We do not wish to confuse conceptual clarity with labeling decisions; consequently we employ the term "self-reliance" throughout this paper. Our intention is to refer to the essential common properties of the terms noted above as the concepts have been employed by previous researchers. It is not our intention to replicate precisely the conceptualization of any previous researcher, singly or collectively. Our operational definition of self-reliance is given in the Methods section below.

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### Parental Socialization Values

or accumulated. Here the value structure places a higher premium on individual achievement and self-reliance.

The explanation offered for the association between socialization values and type of economy is that economic systems which permit the accumulation of food generally require routinized, cooperative, and organized labor. This implies supervision and "faithful adherence to routines" (Barry et al. 1959, p. 62). Individual innovativeness in method may threaten the organization and functional effectiveness of the work group. Hunting and gathering, though, are usually more individualistic activities. Aggressiveness and autonomy are prerequisites for success; cooperation and adherence to routines are not so clearly required. Since parents value traits in their children which they perceive to be instrumental in their own activities, self-reliance is valued in hunting and gathering societies, obedience (conformity) in pastoral and agricultural societies.

The logic employed by Barry et al. (1959) may be integrated with a part of Kohn's theory. In cross-cultural terms, type of economy may be conceived as an indirect measure of closeness of supervision in subsistence activities. Where adult workers are closely supervised (i.e., in high-accumulation technologies), they value conformity in their children. Where their work is more autonomous, self-reliance is the more valued outcome of socialization.

A second anthropological observation on sources of variation in socialization values implicates the political structure. Stephens (1963, p. 372) shows that societies with autocratic political states tend to be characterized by relatively "severe" socialization practices, including clear-cut power and deference relationships and strong emphasis on obedience. Tribal societies, which have no centralized or autocratic political structure, require less obedience and conformity of their children. To the extent that autocratic political structures imply close supervision of adults, this relationship may be interpreted using the same general logic. Barry et al. (1976), in another study employing societies contained in the Standard Cross-cultural Sample, report that complexity of political structure is positively related to a measure of socialization for obedience and negatively related to socialization for self-reliance. However, they offer no explanation for these associations. Aberle (1961) also suggests that degree of political supervision is correlated with inhibition of aggression. Finally, Bronfenbrenner (1970) points out that socialization in the Soviet Union is much more oriented toward producing conformity than is the case in the United States; This difference is consistent with Stephens's (1963) observation on the effects of autocratic political systems (see also Ellis 1977).

From this brief review, it is apparent that anthropologists and sociologists have actually been employing a very similar basic theory in their

attempts to explain parental values in socialization (see Lee [1977, pp. 258-74] for a more detailed explication of this point). The theory has been applied to different behavioral domains by the two disciplines, thus implicating different independent variables. However, each set of empirical relationships can be at least partially interpreted through the more abstract concept of closeness of supervision and the requirement of self-reliance. Where adults are closely supervised in their economic, political, or family roles, they tend to value conformity in their children; where they are more autonomous in these roles, self-reliance becomes a primary socialization value. This similarity of theory is not the result of interdisciplinary exchange, since the correspondence has rarely been recognized (for a partial exception, see Olsen 1974). Instead, the theory appears to have been independently generated within each discipline.

The central proposition of this general theory is that parental valuation of conformity relative to self-reliance in children is positively related to the extent to which adults are themselves closely supervised in the performance of their own roles. If this is true we may deduce hypotheses about the effects of supervision of adults on socialization values in areas of social life which have not yet been explored from this perspective.

One such behavioral domain is religion. Perceptions of the supernatural may vary along a continuum corresponding to an abstract conceptualization of supervision over human affairs. At one extreme, the god or gods may be culturally endowed with great powers over human destiny which they exercise for human benefit or detriment according to the morality of human behavior. Deviation from culturally defined moral behavior may be believed to invoke negative sanctions from the supernatural forces. In this situation, the supernatural constitutes an external authority, conformity to which is perceived as crucial to human well-being. At the other extreme, the supernatural may be endowed with insufficient power to enforce behavioral standards. Also, in many cultures the deities are believed to be quite arbitrary in their administration of positive and negative sanctions; there is little that human beings can do to influence their fate. Here, conformity to the perceived wishes or prescriptions of the supernatural is much less of a virtue; human fate is largely independent of one's relationship with the deity or deities.

If the relationship between supervision and socialization values is generalizable beyond the occupational domain, we would expect closeness of supervision by the supernatural to influence these values.<sup>7</sup> Consistent with the basic theory, we hypothesize that closeness of supervision by the super-

<sup>7</sup> Lambert, Triandis and Wolf (1959) found that a belief in aggressive (as opposed to benevolent) gods is positively related to socialization for independence and self-reliance. However, aggressiveness by the deities is not the same as closeness of supervision and is not clearly related to the theory discussed here.

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quired for this study, the actual sample consists of the 122 societies which are included in both.

This sample is not random, nor can it be considered representative of all cultures in the world. However, it is impossible to obtain a random or representative cross-cultural sample (Lee 1977, pp. 22-23). Nonetheless, with the exception of industrial societies, the sample contains a complete range of societal types and is fully appropriate for testing hypotheses regarding relationships between supervision and socialization values. It is also notably larger than the samples of other cross-cultural studies requiring primary coding of ethnographic data.

#### Measurement

Five indicators of closeness of supervision were obtained from the precoded data in the SCS. They are intended to index closeness of supervision in the economic, familial, and political domains.

The first independent variable, closeness of supervision in the economic sphere, is indexed by type of economy. The various primary subsistence bases represented in our cross-cultural data sets may be ranked along a continuum ranging from highly individualistic activities, in which group cooperation is minimal, to highly structured and routinized cooperative endeavors. The cooperative activities require greater interpersonal coordination, planning, and therefore supervision. As Barry et al. (1959, p. 52) point out, activities such as fishing and hunting are more likely to yield immediate rewards for individual initiative. In accord with this logic, the various types of subsistence economies were ranked in rough order of increasing supervision as follows: fishing, hunting, gathering, animal husbandry, incipient agriculture, extensive agriculture, and intensive agriculture.<sup>9</sup> There are undoubtedly many instances in which this ordering does not precisely conform to a continuum of closeness of supervision; for example, fishing and hunting may occasionally be done in large groups which require coordination, leadership, and therefore supervision. However, it is reasonable to contend that cooperative group activities requiring supervision are more essential to and frequent in agricultural economies than fishing or hunting (see Steward 1955; Barry et al. 1959; Nimkoff and Middleton 1960; Blumberg and Winch 1972; Lee 1977). Furthermore, group cooperation and interpersonal coordination are more clearly required in the more complex forms of agriculture (such as intensive agriculture,

<sup>9</sup> Our ordering of subsistence types is similar to but not identical with that of Barry et al. (1959). The differences are attributable to the fact that their order was intended to index ability to store and accumulate food, while ours is an attempt to tap closeness of supervision. These two abstract concepts should be positively, but not perfectly, correlated.

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natural is positively related to conformity relative to self-reliance as a value in socialization of children.

In summary, a considerable body of research and theory in several disciplines suggests that parental values in socialization are responsive to variation in the criteria of success for adults. These criteria pertain to diverse behavioral domains, including the family, politics, and religion, as well as the economic or occupational realm. In each case, adult experience may be arrayed along a continuum representing closeness of supervision or, alternatively, self-reliance. The central proposition of this study, which results from a partial synthesis of theory in both sociology and anthropology, is that parents value conformity over self-reliance in children to the extent that conformity supersedes self-reliance as a criterion for success in their own endeavors. The importance of conformity in adult behavior may be estimated by indirect measures of closeness of supervision in the various behavioral domains discussed above; these provide multiple measures of the value of conformity in adult life.

#### METHODS

##### Sampling

The empirical objective of this study is to bring cross-cultural data to bear upon the theory developed above.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, the Standard Cross-cultural Sample (Murdock and White 1969) was employed as one source of data. The sample ( $N = 186$ ) is representative of all geographic and cultural regions in the world; furthermore, the societies which constitute the sample were selected in such a way as to minimize proximity between members of the sample. This reduces the probability that correlations between cultural traits observed on this sample are attributable to "cultural borrowing" or diffusion (see Marsh 1967, pp. 274-303; Naroll 1968, pp. 258-62; Lee 1977, pp. 44-47).

Most of the independent variables implicated by the theory are available in the Standard Cross-cultural Sample (SCS). These data do not, however, contain satisfactory indices of parental values in socialization or closeness of supervision in the religious domain. These variables were therefore coded from the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF; see measurement section below for coding procedures). The HRAF consists of classified ethnographic data in verbal form. Of the 186 societies in the SCS, 122 also appear in the available microfiche version of the HRAF. Since both data sets were re-

<sup>8</sup> By "cross-cultural" data we mean, in this case, information gleaned from ethnographic reports. Such data provide one observation per variable for each society or culture included in the sample. For a more detailed explication of the nature, potentials, and limitations of cross-cultural data in sociological research, see Lee (1977, pp. 10-11, 22-24, and 31-34.)

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which implies permanent fields, the use of rudimentary mechanical devices, and often irrigation) than in extensive or, particularly, incipient agriculture. In this order, the scale corresponds roughly to an index of economic complexity (the complexity of the collective technology, not of individual tasks) and will be labeled as such. More complex technologies require greater coordination, supervision, and conformity to established routines.

Three variables are available in the SCS as measures of closeness of supervision in the familial domain. The first is a simple index of the dominant family structure, categorized as nuclear, stem, small extended, and fully extended. In this order, the categories represent increasing structural complexity of the family in terms of the number of social positions contained in the family structure (see Nimkoff [1965, p. 19] and Lee [1977, pp. 112-15] for detailed definitions of each type). In any of the three types of extended families the parental generation is not the senior generation and is subject to the supervision of its own parents or in-laws. The extent of supervision, then, is presumed to increase as the structural complexity of the family increases.

A second family-related variable measures the dominant mode of tracing descent. Societies with bilateral descent systems have no corporate kin groups; individual families are autonomous with respect to kinship structure. We therefore take bilateral descent as indicative of low supervision and any form of unilineal descent as reflective of higher supervision. It is also possible, however, to distinguish between patrilineal and matrilineal systems along this dimension. In virtually all cultures, the mother is the primary agent of socialization (Minturn and Lambert 1964; Olsen 1973, p. 513). The mother is clearly more subject to supervision by senior members of kin groups in patrilineal systems than in the matrilineal case. The wife-mother in a patrilineal group is an "outsider," at least until she attains some seniority over other in-marrying females such as daughters-in-law. But in matrilineal systems the wife-mother retains membership in her natal kin group throughout her life. If she is subject to supervisory control, it is the control of senior members of her own kin group. This is likely to be much less strict and rigorous than in the patrilineal case. Furthermore, the matrilineal mode of tracing descent cannot be combined with any single custom of postmarital residence in a manner which produces localized kin groups (see Aberle 1961; Fox 1967; Lee 1977, pp. 161-62). This reduces the potential for supervision of parents by senior members of their kin groups. Therefore, supervision of the primary socializing agent is highest in patrilineal kinship systems, lowest in bilateral, and intermediate in matrilineal.

A third measure of familial supervision has to do with cultural control over mate selection. This variable indexes cultural rules regarding com-

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munity endogamy and exogamy. Some cultures require that communities be strictly endogamous or exogamous, others have rules that are similar but loosely enforced, while still others have no effective custom on the matter. We posit that strict rules requiring either community endogamy or community exogamy are indicative of high degrees of supervision over the mate-selection process, while the absence of such rules indicates low supervision. Societies with flexible customs were classified as intermediate on this variable.

Finally, an index of supervision in the political realm is given by the complexity of the political structure, measured in terms of number of distinct jurisdictional levels. We assume that political structures increase in complexity as the need for control and organization above the local level increases. A highly differentiated political system exercises more control and supervision than a less differentiated or nonexistent structure. A five-point scale is employed as a measure of political supervision, which ranges from stateless societies where authority is not centralized even at the local level to societies with three or more administrative levels above the local community. This scale was used by Barry et al. (1976, p. 101) and is consistent with Stephens's (1963) logic, but is much more discriminating than the "kingdom" versus "tribe" dichotomy he employed.

Satisfactory measures of supervision in the religious domain were not available in the SCS and were thus coded from the HRAF. Two variables were employed. The first indexes religious taboos, or the extent to which supernatural forces are believed to negatively sanction certain behaviors, thereby directing the behavior of human beings.<sup>10</sup> This variable was coded independently by two judges on a five-point scale, ranging from no supernaturally sanctioned behaviors to the existence of taboos pertaining to virtually every aspect of daily life. The Pearson product-moment correlation between the two coders' ratings was determined to be +.662, based on 115 cases for which sufficient information was available.<sup>11</sup> To assign a final score on this variable to each society, the two coders' ratings were

<sup>10</sup> Space precludes the presentation of complete coding procedures and instructions here. Copies of these instructions may be obtained by writing to Godfrey J. Ellis, Dept. of FRCD, 241 HEW, O.S.U., Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074.

<sup>11</sup> This estimate of coder reliability, while acceptable according to standards of cross-cultural research, nonetheless indicates a substantial amount of coder disagreement. As a check for the effects of coder error, all cases in which coders disagreed by more than 2 points on the five-point scale were dropped from the analysis. This resulted in the loss of 14 cases; the intercoder correlation coefficient for the remaining 101 societies was +.808. All analyses reported below were then run with only these 101 cases; however, no differences occurred in the behavior of the religious-taboo variable when compared to analyses employing all 115 cases. Therefore the results reported below were obtained by using the entire sample for which sufficient data are available.

since we anticipated that many societies would differentiate strongly between the traits deemed appropriate for each sex. However, the original correlations between socialization codes for boys and girls were in excess of +.9, and the two variables behaved in virtually identical fashion in relation to each of the independent variables. This paper therefore reports only the correlates of socialization values for boys; however, the results for the socialization of girls are identical for all relevant purposes. The intercoder correlation for socialization values was +.503, based on 100 analyzable cases.<sup>12</sup> Final scores were assigned by summing the two coders' ratings.

The data were analyzed by means of partial correlation techniques. This method produces readily interpretable estimates of the correlation between the dependent variable and each independent variable net of the effects of other independent variables. In addition, an estimate of total variation explained by all independent variables was obtained from a regression analysis. Methods of causal modeling, including path analysis, are not employed here since we are interested solely in the extent to which socialization values may be explained by the multiple indices of closeness of supervision over adults. The theory to be tested does not require specification of a causal order among the independent variables.

#### FINDINGS

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients between all possible pairs of variables in our model are reported in table 1.<sup>13</sup> Correlations between conformity versus self-reliance in socialization and the independent variables are reported in column 8. At the bivariate level each hypothesis except one is clearly supported. Conformity relative to self-reliance as a value in socialization is positively related to economic complexity ( $r = .479$ ), political complexity ( $r = .411$ ), mode of descent ( $r = .360$ ), an-

<sup>12</sup> As a check for the effects of coder error, 11 cases on which coder disagreement exceeded 2 points on the seven-point scale were temporarily dropped from the analysis. The intercoder correlation for the remaining 89 cases was +.751. All analyses were then performed for these 89 societies, and results compared with those obtained from the 100 cases with nonmissing data on this variable. Again, there were no significant differences in the behavior of the socialization-values variable. In the interest of maximizing sample size, we therefore report results obtained from the total sample for which data are available in spite of the relatively low intercoder correlation.

<sup>13</sup> All correlations were originally computed using both listwise and pairwise deletion of missing values (Nie et al. 1975, pp. 312-13). The results obtained with each option were essentially identical. Consequently the analysis with pairwise deletion is reported here. This has the advantage of utilizing as much of the data as possible. In addition, an analysis-of-variance test for nonlinearity was conducted for all possible bivariate relationships (Blalock 1972, pp. 411-12). No significant violations of the linearity assumption were detected. However, see table 3 in the Discussion section below.

summed, creating a nine-point scale; higher scores indicate closer supervision.

A second measure of religious supervision indexed the presence or absence of ancestor worship. We were specifically interested in the extent to which the ancestors are believed to play a part in the affairs of the living by controlling their fate, rewarding good behavior, punishing immorality, etc. This variable was originally coded as a simple dichotomy differentiating between the presence and absence of ancestor worship. There was, however, substantial disagreement between coders in the application of this dichotomy, as indicated by an intercoder correlation coefficient of +.614, based on 120 cases. The disagreements uniformly represented cases where the religion stipulated the existence of ancestral spirits but accorded them minimal influence over human affairs. It was therefore decided to employ cases of coder disagreement as an intermediate category on a three-point scale, created by summing the two codes for each society. A high score on this variable represents a clear belief in ancestors who have the power, and the proclivity, to control the outcomes of human endeavors according to their approval or disapproval of human behavior; a low score indicates the absence of ancestor worship.

The dependent variable, emphasis on conformity relative to self-reliance in socialization, was also coded from the HRAF. This variable was coded on a seven-point scale, with high scores indicating a greater emphasis on conformity (obedience, compliance) than self-reliance and low scores a greater emphasis on self-reliance (independence, self-sufficiency) than conformity. The emphasis in coding this variable was upon the kinds of behaviors for which children were rewarded or punished. High scores (representing conformity) were assigned where children were encouraged to be cooperative and obedient to parental authority, or were punished for failure to follow parental directives or group norms involving compliance and responsibility to others. Low scores (indicative of a value on self-reliance) were assigned to cases where children were encouraged to be independent, self-sufficient, or autonomous. This is perhaps most clearly exemplified by initiation rites which require individual survival under arduous conditions. These codes were, of course, made in the absence of any knowledge of the independent variables from either the SCS or from other sections of the HRAF. The two coders for each case worked independently at all times. The current conceptualization of this variable is compatible, although not identical, with those of Kohn (1969, p. 24), Pearlman (1971, p. 57), Barry et al. (1959, p. 58; 1967), and Olsen (1974, p. 1405).

Separate ratings were made for the socialization of males and females,

TABLE 1  
BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS AND UNIVARIATE DISTRIBUTIONS

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	$\bar{x}$	SD	N
1. Economic complexity		.598	.204	.190	.099	.367	.178	.479	5.03	1.99	121
2. Political complexity			.035	.029	.057	.272	.124	.411	2.03	1.18	122
3. Religious taboos				.345	.109	.193	.094	.313	6.64	2.15	115
4. Ancestor worship					.183	.248	.112	.335	3.43	.82	120
5. Family complexity						.085	.112	.016	2.37	1.17	122
6. Mode of descent*							.252	.390	2.07	.72	126
7. Control over mate choice								.322	2.01	.72	126
8. Conformity/self-reliance†									8.00	2.74	100

\* High scores are assigned to patrilineal systems, low scores to bilateral systems. Matrilineal systems are intermediate.

† High scores indicate emphasis on conformity.



cestor worship ( $r = .335$ ), control over mate choice ( $r = .322$ ), and religious taboos ( $r = .313$ ); each of these relationships was predicted by the theory. One hypothesis is not supported: conformity relative to self-reliance is unrelated to family complexity ( $r = .016$ ).

Since the independent variables are intercorrelated to varying degrees, it is possible that they account for some of the same variation in the dependent variables. To determine the correlation between each independent variable and the dependent variable net of all other independent variables, partial correlation analysis was employed. Table 2 reports the sixth-order partial correlations between conformity/self-reliance and each independent variable controlling for all other independent variables. In most cases the relationships are attenuated by the multivariate controls; however, in each case a substantial association remains.

Family complexity, as in the bivariate analysis, is uncorrelated with conformity versus self-reliance when the other variables are controlled ( $r = .009$ ). Also, the correlation between mode of descent and conformity is reduced to a nonsignificant level ( $r = .114$ ) by controlling for the other independent variables.<sup>14</sup> However, the remaining partial correlations are significant in both statistical and substantive terms. The magnitudes of these partial correlations are similar, ranging from .188 (religious taboos) to .239 (control over mate choice). The seven independent variables in the

TABLE 2  
BIVARIATE AND SIXTH-ORDER PARTIAL CORRELATIONS  
BETWEEN INDEPENDENT VARIABLES AND  
CONFORMITY VERSUS SELF-RELIANCE

Independent Variable	Bivariate Correlation	Partial Correlation	N
Economic complexity	.479	.193	82
Political complexity	.411	.225	82
Religious taboos	.313	.188	82
Ancestor worship	.335	.213	82
Family complexity	.016	.009	82
Mode of descent*	.360	.114	82
Control over mate choice	.322	.239	82
Multiple $R = .635$ $R^2 = .403$			

NOTE.—High scores indicate an emphasis on conformity.  
\* See table 1 for variable metric.

<sup>14</sup> This partial correlation has a probability of .148 (one-tailed test) and is, therefore, not significant at conventional levels. All other partial correlations are significant beyond the .05 level, and all bivariate correlations are significant beyond the .001 level. However, tests of significance have limited meaning, given the nature of cross-cultural data. While the societies included in the Standard Cross-cultural sample and the Human Relations Area Files are generally considered to be fairly representative of known nonindustrial societies, they do not constitute a probability sample. Hence significance levels are not reported in the tables.

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TABLE 3  
CONFORMITY VERSUS SELF-RELIANCE BY FAMILY  
COMPLEXITY AND POSTMARITAL RESIDENCE

RESIDENCE	FAMILY COMPLEXITY		
	Nuclear	Small Extended*	Fully Extended
Nonpatrilocal	7.7 (15)	6.7 (12)	7.2 (9)
Patrilocal	7.9 (21)	8.8 (23)	8.4 (11)

NOTE.—High mean scores indicate greater relative emphasis on conformity; N's in parentheses.  
\* Includes both stem and lineal family types.

The problem here may well be one of measurement—that is, the epistemic correlation between our abstract construct (supervision) and our empirical indicator (family complexity). The relevant variable appears to be the extent to which the mother is directly and immediately supervised by senior members of her husband's family, particularly her mother-in-law. In nonpatrilocal residence systems the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law are members of different households and families, regardless of family structure. In nuclear family systems, patrilocal postmarital residence usually means that the couple resides in the same community as the husband's parents, but not in the same household. The implications of this for supervision of the mother by her husband's mother are, it appears, minimal. In fully extended families, several daughters-in-law may be simultaneously present, and family size is also likely to be quite large. This may reduce the immediacy of the supervision of each mother by senior females. Thus, while our logic was not sufficiently refined to predict the pattern shown in table 3, these results are not necessarily contrary to the general theory. Supervision of the mother may well be highest in small, extended, patrilocal families. The nonlinear relationships and interaction effects observable in this table also show why no linear relationship is observed between family complexity and socialization values. Our results do not contradict those of Olsen (1974) but rather show that the relationship becomes much more complex when the range of the independent variable (family complexity) is expanded (see also Minturn and Lambert 1964).

It is also important to consider here the fact that our measurement of the properties of family complexity, as in any cross-cultural study, pertains solely to the cultural level of analysis. That is, system properties reflected in the measurement of family complexity are indicative of ideal or preferred family types. As Levy (1965) and others have shown, extended family systems are not uniformly populated by extended families; there

analysis yield a multiple correlation coefficient of .635 and collectively explain 40.3% of the variation in the dependent variable.

These results support the proposition that an emphasis on conformity over self-reliance in the socialization process is fostered by recurring structured situations in economic, political, religious, and familial domains which require adults to conform to external authority. Where the behavior of adults is more autonomous in these areas, self-reliance is more highly valued in children.

## DISCUSSION

Of the seven hypotheses relating closeness of supervision to emphasis on conformity over self-reliance in socialization, five were clearly supported. The two variables which do not behave according to the predictions of the theory are both family related. Family complexity is simply uncorrelated with socialization values, and the correlation between mode of descent and socialization values is greatly reduced when the effects of the other independent variables are removed.

The ineffectiveness of family complexity as an antecedent of socialization values is particularly surprising, since it is clearly implicated by the theory and since Olsen (1974) found marked differences in socialization values between nuclear and extended families in her Taiwanese sample. Her results supported the theory in this respect; ours do not. The relevant question here is whether the problem lies with the theory or the measurement—that is, the fit between the abstract concept of closeness of supervision and the empirical indicator, family complexity.

Olsen (1974) compared the values of mothers in nuclear families with those of mothers in extended families. However, the extended families in her sample were actually of only one specific type: patrilocal stem families. Our measure of family complexity distinguishes between nuclear, stem, small extended (lineal), and fully extended family systems, without regard to postmarital residence patterns. Mean conformity scores by family complexity and postmarital residence are shown in table 3. The difference observed by Olsen between nuclear and small extended families in patrilocal societies is clearly replicated by these cross-cultural data: in patrilocal systems socialization for conformity relative to self-reliance is highest in small extended families and lowest in nuclear family systems. However, societies with fully extended patrilocal families place less emphasis on conformity than those with small extended families. In societies with residence systems other than patrilocal (neolocal, bilocal, matrilineal, or avunculocal), conformity scores are uniformly lower and do not covary with family structure in any systematic fashion predictable from the theory.

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are many conditions (such as low life expectancy) which inhibit the general attainment of this ideal by individual families. This means that, in any given extended family system, only a variable proportion of families are in fact extended (see Goode 1963). Thus there is considerable slippage between the variable of family complexity and the abstract concept of supervision by family elders. This may account, in part, for the small correlation between family complexity and socialization values.

This study provides further evidence that, at least in terms of selected parameters, Kohn's theory of social class and socialization values may be generalizable beyond the bounds of American and Western cultures. But more important, the range of independent variables implicated by this theory has been expanded. The seven independent variables employed here are admittedly rough indicators of the extent to which adults are subject to requirements for conformity in several aspects of their daily lives; alternatively, they may be viewed as inverse indicators of the utility of self-reliance or autonomy. Collectively, they explain approximately 40% of the variation in socialization values along a dimension of conformity/self-reliance. The findings of this study support the proposition that adults value in their children traits or qualities which they have found to be instrumental to their own success in a variety of behavioral domains, including the familial, religious, and political, as well as the economic.

This study is obviously not a replication or extension of Kohn's complete theory. Instead, we have concentrated on certain aspects of this theory which relate most directly to previous theoretical formulations in anthropology and comparative sociology. However, the fact that hypotheses pertaining to many areas of social life may be derived from only a small portion of Kohn's theory, and were supported on a cross-cultural sample such as this, indicates that the scope and explanatory utility of the theory may be much broader than we have previously believed.

An ability to explain a significant proportion of the variation in socialization values is, however, of little theoretic utility unless these values themselves have demonstrable consequences for either parental behaviors or the outcomes of the socialization process. Possible connections between socialization values and parental behaviors in the child-rearing process are currently being investigated through cross-cultural research and will be the subject of a subsequent paper.

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