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Consumer Socialization, Parental Style, and Developmental Timetables in the United States and Japan

In this article, the author examines consumer socialization, parental age expectations, and overall patterns of parent–child interactions in a cross-national context. Socialization is defined by a patient, maturational approach to parenting in Japan and by a greater emphasis on autonomy in the United States. Japanese mothers have late consumer-related developmental timetables and maintain greater control over their children's consumption than do American mothers, who encourage and expect the earlier development of independent consumption.

Socialization is an inherently cultural process in which "children, through insight, training and imitation, acquire the habits and values congruent with adaptation to their culture" (Baumrind 1980, p. 640). Yet previous consumer socialization research has examined "the process by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace" (Ward 1974, p. 2) almost exclusively in the United States. Several North American studies have established the importance of individual differences in parenting and early learning within the family (e.g., Baumrind 1971; Rickel and Biassatti 1982). General patterns of parent–child interactions are related to specific consumer socialization practices, including restricting and monitoring children's media use and consumption and providing children with opportunities for independent consumption (Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Less is known about consumer socialization in other nations. Although Robertson and colleagues (1989) describe cross-national differences in television viewing and purchase requests among Japanese, American, and British children, they examine a relatively limited set of variables among relatively small samples. Thus, many of the core findings in consumer socialization research have not been extended to an international context.

This study examines consumer socialization in the United States and Japan. The United States is an individualistic, independent, self-oriented society, whereas Japan represents a collectivist, interdependent culture (Kitayama and Markus 1992). These nations provide ideal contexts for exploring similarities and differences in consumer socialization.

The specific goals of this study are threefold. First, the research attempts to assess the extent to which findings and concepts generated primarily in North America can be extended to a collectivist, Asian nation, Japan. Second, it attempts to integrate theoretically the findings from previous developmental, cross-cultural, and consumer socialization research. Third, the research aims to examine differences in consumer-related developmental timetables.

Developmental timetables are expectations or beliefs about what is normal or typical for a child at a specific age. Parents often describe children as "smart," "late bloomers," or "normal" for their age. In a broad sense, "one might say that these ideas are aspects of 'parents' developmental scripts' or 'developmental scenarios'" (Goodnow, Knight, and Cashmore 1986, p. 293). In a narrow, more operational sense, developmental timetables involve age expectations or norms about specific competencies. Previous research has related developmental timetables to cultural background (Goodnow et al. 1984). This study examines parents' age expectations about the development of consumer-related skills and children's ability to understand advertising practices. The underlying rationale behind this investigation is the commonplace observation that parents frequently purchase toys and evaluate television commercials on the basis of implicit age norms.

Overall, this study integrates several diverse bodies of research. Previous research has explored parental style and consumer socialization in North America (Carlson and Grossbart 1988). This article builds on such research by (1) examining parental style and consumer socialization in an international context, (2) exploring consumer-related developmental timetables, (3) relating developmental timetables to parental style, and (4) examining the relation between developmental timetables and consumer socialization. Thus, this study provides a theoretical foundation for understanding societal differences in consumer socialization. Specific consumer socialization practices are expected to reflect modal societal tendencies, as well as individual differences in parental age expectations and overall patterns of parent–child interactions.

From a business standpoint, this study provides an initial examination of Japanese parental styles and developmental timetables in a consumer-oriented context. Parental style could provide a means of segmenting parents across international boundaries. Developmental timetables could predict the likely reaction of parents to new advertisements and products.

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Theoretical Background

Socialization was one of the first topics in cross-cultural research (Berry et al. 1992). Early studies identified six dimensions of childhood training that formed two major clusters (Barry, Bacon, and Child 1957). The first, "pressure toward compliance," included obedience and responsibility training, with nurturance moderately related to this cluster. The second, "pressure toward assertion," included achievement, self-reliance, and independence training. In their review, Berry and colleagues (1992, p. 21) describe two major conclusions from early socialization research:

> First, "child training the world over is in certain respects identical.... In that it is found always to be concerned with certain universal problems of behavior" (p. 63, Whiting and Child, 1953). Second, "child training also differs from one society to another" (p. 64, Whiting and Child, 1953). In this pair of conclusions are the two prototypical and most frequent empirical results found in cross-cultural psychology: first, there are some common dimensions that serve to link humankind together; second, individuals and groups differ in their typical place on these dimensions.

In short, some issues in socialization are universal. All societies must nurture their children and establish some degree of compliance; however, societies, as well as individual parents, differ in the degree to which they restrict their children's behavior and encourage autonomy. The next section examines differences in Japanese and American parenting. Although nationality is an imperfect proxy for culture, cross-national comparisons provide useful information about modal societal differences.

Socialization in the United States and Japan

American and Japanese parents "share many of the same goals for their children, notably educational achievement and economic security" (Bornstein 1989, p. 197). However, they differ dramatically from each other by the means they use to promote these goals and the degree to which they emphasize "group identification versus individual assertiveness" (Bornstein 1989, p. 197). The United States is the prototypical example of a nation with an independent self (Kitayama and Markus 1992). People are viewed as autonomous, bounded entities, characterized by individual rights, abilities, and motives. Japan, in contrast, is composed of an inherently interrelated set of group members, prototypical of the interdependent self.

People in the United States are socialized to become distinct autonomous individuals (to "stand out"), whereas Japanese are socialized to become inherently integrated with others (to "stand in"). Doi (1962, p. 132) believes *amae*—a highly interdependent and indulgent relationship that encourages dependence on others—is the key to understanding the modal Japanese personality:

> Amae is the noun form of amaeru, an intransitive verb that means to depend and presume upon another's benevolence. This word has the same root as amai, an adjective that means sweet. Thus, amaeru has a distinct feeling of sweetness and is generally used to describe a child's attitude or behavior toward his parents, particularly his mother.

Although the word *amae* means dependence, it is only used after a child reaches one year of age, because the child must be conscious of his or her wish to *amaeru*, to depend on others. Doi (1962) believes that the interdependence of Japanese society originates in the maternal relationship and is encouraged and institutionalized in the Japanese social structure.

Comparative studies emphasize the strongly interdependent nature of the Japanese mother–child relationship. Japanese children are protected and sheltered, allowed time to mature, and expected to naturally develop an internalized need to conform based on a strong attachment and desire to please their mothers. Japanese mothers emphasize feelings, consideration for others, social interactions, and politeness (Hess et al. 1980; Power, Kobayashi-Winati, and Kelley 1992). Internalization is accomplished through frequent appeals to the mother–child bond and by stressing the affect of the child's actions on others, particularly the mother.

Japanese parents are generally indulgent toward preschool children. They focus on maintaining and strengthening the adult–child bond until the child naturally internalizes adult standards (Hess et al. 1980). One of the implicit principles in discipline is that "one should never go against the child" (Vogel 1967, p. 245), for this might weaken the emotional bond between mother and child. Thus, Japanese mothers avoid conflict and direct expressions of negative emotions toward their children (Miyake et al. 1986). Obedience is not a central concern, and discipline is based on persuasion and placing the child's actions in an interpersonal context.

Mothers in the United States, as a group, emphasize independence, assertiveness, and autonomy (Caudill and Schooler 1973). They begin independence training earlier and use external rewards and punishments more frequently than Japanese mothers do. Thus, two distinct modal profiles of socialization emerge. Japanese childrearing is more focused on interpersonal context and harmony than U.S. socialization, which focuses more on actively developing and promoting independent reasoning and skills.

Developmental Timetables

Developmental timetables are parental expectations about what is "typical" or "normal" for a child at a specific age. As a whole, developmental timetables represent beliefs about children's rate of development. In the broadest sense, cultures differ in their approach to childrearing. Some emphasize early training and believe that earlier is better; others take a more maturational approach and allow children to develop at their own rate (Goodnow et al. 1984). Thus, in their entirety, developmental timetables are societal beliefs about the emotional and cognitive development of children. However, developmental timetables generally are operationalized as specific age expectations about specific competencies.

Age expectations provide a benchmark against which children are compared. Although maturation provides a common developmental pattern, culture determines the specific skills that are emphasized and the rate at which specific competencies are established (Hess et al. 1980). This study examines parents' age expectations about consumer-related skills and children's ability to understand advertising. Parental expectations about the development of

consumer-related skills are central to the degree of freedom allowed a child in consumption. For example, if parents believe seven-year-olds are capable of making their own lunch, they may allow their children greater input in deciding which foods to purchase. Exploring parental expectations about when children can understand and interpret advertising practices is predicated on the larger notion that cultures vary in their normative expectations for the cognitive development of children and, consequently, in their beliefs about the degree to which children must be protected from the media and advertising. If, for example, parents believe six-year-olds are capable of understanding the persuasive intent of advertising, they should place a greater emphasis on explaining advertisements to their children. Thus, this study examines consumer-related developmental timetables by assessing parental age expectations toward advertising and consumption.

Previous research has not examined consumer-related developmental timetables. However, Japanese mothers foster dependence, focus on interpersonal obligations, and use a maturational approach to childrearing (Caudill and Schooler 1973). In contrast, American parents are preparing children for an individualistic society. They are more focused on the early development of independent reasoning and individual skills (Hess et al. 1980). Thus,

H_1: Mothers in the United States hold earlier age expectations for (a) the development of consumer-related skills and (b) an understanding of advertising practices than do Japanese mothers.

Consumer Socialization

Consumer socialization is a complex, environmental process. Although previous research has examined many variables, parents' consumer socialization practices can be described parsimoniously using the following dimensions: (1) communication about consumption, (2) children's consumption autonomy, (3) children's influence and participation in family purchases, and (4) restriction of consumption and media exposure (cf. Carlson and Grossbart 1988).

Carlson and Grossbart (1988) measure parent–child communication about consumption as a broad, parsimonious dimension that includes both verbal communication and reciprocal patterns of purchase-oriented behavior. Although international research has not examined communication about consumption explicitly, American mothers report higher levels of general communication from their children than do Japanese mothers (Robertson et al. 1989). Thus,

H_2: Communication about consumption will be higher in American than in Japanese families.

McNeal (1992) divides children's purchasing power into direct (money they control themselves, such as an allowance) and indirect (parental expenditures that they initiate or influence). Consumption autonomy examines the extent to which parents promote and encourage direct, independent consumption by their children; American mothers are less protective and encourage independence in their children (Caudill and Schooler 1973). Thus,

H_3: Consumption autonomy will be higher in American than in Japanese families.

Participation in family purchases measures children's ability and opportunity to influence parental purchases. Previous research in the United States has documented the influence of children and adolescents on consumption (e.g., Beatty and Talapade 1994) and linked the frequency that parents shop with their children (coshop) to a tendency to allow children greater input in parental purchases (Grossbart, Carlson, and Walsh 1991). Cross-national research has not examined the child's influence. However, Japanese mothers foster dependence, are preoccupied with anticipating and satisfying their children's needs, and exhibit high levels of interaction (Caudill and Schooler 1973), which should be associated with high levels of participation in family purchases. Thus,

H_4: Children's influence and participation in family purchases will be higher in Japanese than in American families.

Restrictiveness frequently has been conceptualized as an overall parental trait (e.g., Becker 1964). However, restriction of consumption and mediation of the media form separate dimensions in previous research (Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Although previous research has not assessed cross-national differences in restriction of consumption and media exposure, Japanese mothers promote dependence in their children (Doi 1962), perceive their children as more dependent, and have more consumption rules than do their U.S. counterparts (Robertson et al. 1989). Thus,

H_5: Restriction of (a) consumption and (b) media exposure will be higher among Japanese than American families.

Differences in developmental timetables are expected to be associated with differences in consumer socialization. Although causation is hard to assess, especially in a complex, multifaceted process such as socialization, cross-national differences in consumer-related developmental timetables should influence specific consumer socialization practices.

Developmental timetables should have practical ramifications. Mothers who believe children mature slowly should allow their children less autonomy, less influence, and fewer opportunities for independent consumption. Furthermore, parents who believe children develop cognitive skills relatively slowly will want to protect their children from outside influences, particularly those with a persuasive intent, such as advertising. Thus, parents' developmental timetables should influence the amount of purchase autonomy that they grant their children and the degree to which they control their children's media exposure.

Parents with early expectations for consumer-related skills should believe that children are capable of understanding, participating in, and benefiting from parent–child discussions. Parents with late developmental expectations should engage in fewer discussions about consumption, provide their children with less influence, and provide fewer opportunities for independent consumption. Thus,

H_6: Late expectations for consumer-related skills will be related negatively to (a) communication about consumption, (b) children's consumption autonomy, and (c) chil-

dren's influence and participation in family purchases and related positively to (d) restriction of consumption.

Age expectations for understanding advertising should be related to media-oriented parental practices. Previous research has established that parents can mediate their children's media exposure directly, by limiting the number of hours and the types of programs to which children are exposed, or indirectly, through discussions (Ward, Wackman, and Wartella 1977). In general, family communication reflects a proactive parental orientation (Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Communication about consumption and discussions about advertising (in particular) should reflect a concomitant belief that children have sufficient cognitive resources to understand and discuss advertising. Late expectations for understanding advertising, in contrast, should reflect a more protective, less communication-orientated perspective. Thus,

H_7: Late expectations for understanding advertising practices should be (a) related negatively to communication about consumption and (b) related positively to restriction of media exposure.

Parental Style

Becker (1964) proposes three dimensions of socialization. Warmth describes the degree of love or nurturance in the parent–child relationship, restrictiveness examines the degree to which parents are controlling or strict, and anxious-emotional involvement (AEI) describes the degree of parental concern and protectiveness versus calm detachment or indifference (Becker 1964).

Baumrind (1971) proposes a widely accepted typology of U.S. parental styles that repeatedly has been found among North American samples (e.g., Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Authoritatives are warm and restrictive, authoritarians are cold and restrictive, and permissives are warm and nonrestrictive.

Less research has been done on Japanese patterns of socialization. However, Power, Kobayashi-Winati, and Kelley (1992) find two primarily Japanese (indulgent and strict) and three primarily American (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) parental styles among mothers of children between the ages of three and six years. As a whole, American mothers were more nurturing, but indulgents were more responsive, more nurturing, and less likely to yell at their children than stricts. The next two sections present a brief overview of the methods used to classify parents into specific parental styles. Then, specific hypotheses are advanced.

Identification of specific styles. Parental style was determined empirically through a cluster analysis. This procedure is consistent with previous research (Baumrind 1971; Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Power, Kobayashi-Winati, and Kelley 1992), provides a means of simultaneously examining both within- and between-culture variance, and avoids creating hypotheses about nonexistent groups.

Eight specific scales were used as indicators of parental style. The specific scales used were selected for their ability to measure warmth, restrictiveness, and AEI. Initially, a two-group (United States and Japan) confirmatory factor analysis was conducted, and reliability estimates were computed for all of Carlson and Grossbart's (1988) parental style scales (for further information on this procedure, see Rose 1995). Several scales, specifically avoidance of communication, early maturity demands, and authoritarianism, exhibited poor reliability, particularly in Japan. Prior to dropping these scales, however, the confirmatory factor analysis in this study, Carlson and Grossbart's (1988, p. 81) exploratory factor analysis, and prior theory were reviewed to ensure that the major conceptual elements of warmth, restrictiveness, and AEI were captured. Finally, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to determine the dimensions of the remaining eight scales (χ^2_{682} [second order model] = 1,196, $p < .001$, goodness-of-fit index [GFI] = .881, adjusted goodness-of-fit index [AGFI] = .929), with nurturance and encouraging verbalization measuring warmth (the second order factor); strictness, values conformity, and firm enforcement measuring restrictiveness; and fostering dependence, excluding outside influence, and independence (negatively loaded) measuring AEI. Overall, these scales (which are described in the "Methods" section) provide reasonable indicators of parental style in both nations.

Cluster analysis. A two-stage cluster analysis was conducted with Ward's hierarchical clustering method to determine the number of clusters and obtain initial estimates of their centroids, followed by an iterative K-means approach. Although several measures of cluster homogeneity were assessed (see Rose 1995), the decision to employ a six-cluster solution was made primarily on the basis of interpretability. More specifically, moving from a six- to five-cluster solution combined two permissive clusters (indulgent *amaes* and detached) that differed primarily in their level of AEI, whereas moving from a five- to four-cluster solution combined two restrictive clusters (authoritatives and authoritarians) that differed primarily in their level of warmth. Thus, a six-cluster solution seemed reasonable.

Table 1 contains standardized means and Tukey–Honestly-Significant-Difference paired comparisons for the six clusters. Clusters were labeled on the basis of my interpretation of difference in their means. Authoritatives had high levels of strictness and nurturance and low levels of fostering dependence. Authoritarians had high levels of strictness and the lowest levels of nurturance, whereas permissives were nurturing and had low levels of strictness, fostering dependence, and excluding outside influence. Overall, these three clusters closely match previous descriptions of the three most commonly found parental styles in the United States. Permissives are warm and nonrestrictive (Baumrind 1971). They allow children to regulate their own activities, seldom use overt control, and encourage their children to develop an internally defined set of standards and perspectives. Authoritarians, in contrast, are cold and restrictive. They demand obedience, use power-assertive forms of discipline, and demand strict adherence to externally defined standards. Finally, authoritatives are warm and restrictive. They direct rather than control, use power strategically to

TABLE 1
Standardized Means by Cluster

	Detached (n = 96)	Authoritative (n = 156)	Indulgent *Amae* (n = 79)	Authoritarian (n = 109)	Permissive (n = 110)	Strict *Amae* (n = 76)
Parental Style						
Warmth	$.32_{cde}$	$.21_{cde}$	$-.12_{abdef}$	-1.48_{abcef}	$.64_{abcd}$	$.48_{cd}$
Nurturance	$.02_{bcde}$	$.53_{acd}$	$-.43_{abdef}$	-1.28_{abcef}	$.56_{acd}$	$.24_{cd}$
Encouraging verbalization	$.60_{bd}$	$-.33_{acdef}$	$.36_{bd}$	-1.24_{abcef}	$.48_{bd}$	$.62_{bd}$
Restrictiveness	-1.19_{bcdef}	$.80_{acdef}$	$-.64_{abdf}$	$.53_{abce}$	$-.51_{abdf}$	$.50_{abce}$
Strictness	$-.87_{bcdf}$	$.66_{ace}$	$-.30_{abdef}$	$.37_{ace}$	$-.66_{bcdf}$	$.48_{ace}$
Values conformity	-1.69_{bcdef}	$.55_{acf}$	$-.53_{abdef}$	$.48_{ac}$	$.42_{ac}$	$.27_{abc}$
Firm enforcement	$-.28_{bcdef}$	$.74_{acef}$	-1.29_{abdef}	$.54_{ace}$	$-.62_{abcdf}$	$.31_{abce}$
Anxious Emotional Involvement	$-.33_{bcdef}$	$-.59_{acdef}$	1.05_{abdef}	$.22_{abcef}$	$-.84_{abcdf}$	1.43_{abcde}
Fostering dependence	$-.26_{cf}$	$-.46_{cdf}$	$.78_{abdef}$	$-.06_{bcef}$	$-.55_{cdf}$	1.30_{abcde}
Child's independence	$-.07_{bce}$	$.55_{acdf}$	-1.00_{abdef}	$-.20_{bcef}$	$.50_{acdf}$	$-.44_{bce}$
Excluding outside influence	$-.50_{cdf}$	$-.33_{cdef}$	$.59_{abef}$	$.35_{abef}$	$-.79_{bcdf}$	1.33_{abcde}
Cluster Profile						
Nationality						
Japanese (n)	60	11	65	17	24	60
U.S. (n)	36	145	14	92	86	16
% Japanese	62.5%	7.0%	82.3%	15.6%	21.8%	78.9%
Demographics						
Maternal education	$-.39_{bde}$	$.30_{ac}$	$-.50_{bdef}$	$.27_{ac}$	$.01_{ac}$	$-.01_{c}$
Child's age	$-.13_{be}$	$.38_{acdf}$	$-.46_{be}$	$-.10_{be}$	$.30_{acdf}$	$-.44_{be}$

Notes: Subscripts for parental styles indicate significant differences between groups, Tukey–Honestly-Significant-Difference paired comparisons, $p < .05$, where a = detached, b = authoritative, c = indulgent *amae*, d = authoritarian, e = permissive, and f = strict *amae*.

promote socially responsible behavior, and encourage children to develop their own ideas and perspectives (Baumrind 1971; Carlson and Grossbart 1988).

Two clusters (indulgent *amae* and strict *amae*) had high levels of AEI. Both had positive coefficients for fostering dependence and excluding outside influence and a negative coefficient for child's independence. The first, indulgent *amae*, closely matched modal descriptions of Japanese parenting (e.g., Caudill and Schooler 1973). They were anxiously emotionally involved, nonrestrictive, and had a slightly negative standardized coefficient for warmth (overall levels of warmth, however, were high: at least 4.5 for all groups except authoritarians). The second group was warm, restrictive, and anxiously emotionally involved. Although Becker (1964) would refer to this cluster as overprotective, dependence and protectiveness are expected in Japan; thus, this cluster was labeled strict *amae*, because of its restrictiveness and high level of dependence.

The final cluster, detached, was nonrestrictive, not anxiously emotionally involved, and less warm than permissives. Although it is in many respects similar to Becker's (1964) neglecting category, overall levels of warmth were high; thus, it was labeled detached. As a whole, the clusters in this study represent reasonable differences among middle- to upper-middle–class parents. Specific hypotheses are now advanced.

Hypotheses. Parental styles are expected to vary across nations. Modal differences in childrearing are well established (e.g., Doi 1962; Hess et al. 1980), and preliminary evidence suggests (on the basis of one study; Power, Kobayashi-Winati, and Kelley 1992) that Japanese and American mothers have different parental styles. More specifically, detached parents are expected to be composed primarily of American mothers, based on their low level of AEI. Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parental styles commonly are found in North America (e.g., Carlson and Grossbart 1988), whereas indulgent and strict *amae* parents exhibit high levels of AEI, which is consistent with previous descriptions of Japanese parenting (Doi 1962).

H_8: A larger proportion of American than Japanese mothers will exhibit a detached, authoritative, authoritarian, or permissive parental style, whereas a larger proportion of Japanese than American mothers will exhibit a parental style of indulgent *amae* or strict *amae*.

Developmental timetables examine parental beliefs about when children establish specific competencies. Although the age expectations of specific parental styles has not been examined in previous research, overall patterns of parent–child interactions reflect individual differences in prior experience and cultural beliefs about how, why, and when children develop (Goodnow, Knight, and Cashmore 1986). Therefore, beliefs about children's rate of development may influence parental style. Protective parents should

exhibit late age expectations. They attempt to shelter and shield children from outside influence (Baumrind 1971), which is consistent with an underlying belief that children mature slowly. More specifically, AEI styles (authoritarian, indulgent *amae*, strict *amae*) that are protective and foster dependence should have later developmental expectations than their more independence-oriented counterparts (detached, authoritative, permissive).

H_9: Authoritarian, indulgent *amae*, and strict *amae* parents should hold later expectations for (a) consumer-related skills and (b) understanding advertising practices than detached, authoritative, and permissive parents.

Previous research has related parental style to consumer socialization tendencies in North America (Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Although less is known about the consumer socialization practices of Japanese parents, research in the United States provides a basis for predicting differences across groups. For example, warmth is related to the open communication of ideas and frequent and reciprocal patterns of interaction. Authoritatives and permissives have high levels of both warmth and parent–child communication about consumption (Carlson and Grossbart 1988).

H_{10}: Authoritatives and permissives will communicate more about consumption than detached, indulgent *amae*, authoritarian, and strict *amae* parents.

Previous research has not examined explicitly the relation between parental style and children's participation in family purchases. However, warm and/or involved parental styles should provide children with more influence than cold and/or detached parental styles. More specifically, authoritatives and permissives display high levels of warmth and communicate frequently with their children (Carlson and Grossbart 1988), whereas indulgent and strict *amaes* display high levels of dependence, which should be associated with frequent parent–child interactions that provide an opportunity for child's influence.

H_{11}: Authoritative, indulgent *amae*, permissive, and strict *amae* parents will allow their children more influence and participation in family purchases than detached and authoritarian parents.

Consumption autonomy involves a parental desire to promote children's independence actively (Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Authoritative and permissive parents actively encourage independence (Baumrind 1971); they should be more inclined to encourage consumption autonomy than detached parents, who are less involved, or authoritarians, indulgent *amaes*, or strict *amaes*, who foster dependence in their children.

H_{12}: Authoritatives and permissives will grant their children more consumption autonomy than detached, indulgent *amae*, authoritarian, and strict *amae* parents.

Finally, restriction and monitoring of consumption and media exposure should be highest among more restrictive parental styles. Specifically,

H_{13}: Authoritatives, authoritarians, and strict *amaes* will be more restrictive of their children's (a) consumption and (b) media exposure than detached, indulgent *amae*, and permissive parents.

Method

Sample and Procedure

A questionnaire was distributed to mothers of children between the ages of three and eight years in the United States and Japan. These countries provide an ideal setting because they are industrialized countries with nuclear family structures and distinct cultural characteristics. Mothers were sampled because of their pervasive and primary influence in socialization (Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Finally, mothers of children three to eight years of age were sampled for three reasons: (1) the majority of conscious consumer training occurs in early childhood, (2) parent–child communication patterns that are established in early childhood are continued into later childhood, and (3) parental power is at its peak at this time (Ward, Wackman, and Wartella 1977).

In total, 320 Japanese and 980 U.S. questionnaires were distributed. In Japan, 243 were returned, and 6 were excluded because of missing data, for a usable response rate of 74.1%. In the United States, 418 were returned, and 29 were excluded, for a usable response rate of 39.7%. Japanese respondents were obtained from three kindergartens (kindergarten runs for children three to six years of age in Japan) and one elementary school. Three of the schools were contained in middle- to upper-middle–class suburban districts of a moderate-sized city in southern Japan; the remaining school was in an exurb approximately five miles from that city. The U.S. sample was obtained from two preschools and four elementary schools in a moderate-sized city in the Pacific Northwest. Questionnaires were administered in the fall of 1994 in Japan and the winter of 1995 in the United States. The specific schools sampled in the United States were selected to match the relative socioeconomic status of those in the Japanese sample. Thus, both samples consist primarily of married, middle- to upper-middle–class suburban mothers. American mothers and their children, however, were older than their Japanese counterparts. The largest age categories were 36 through 40 years for American mothers (40.4% in the United States and 32.8% in Japan) and 31 through 35 years for Japanese mothers (20.6% in the United States and 42.7% in Japan), with 9.7% and 14.2% of respondents under 30 years of age and 29.3% and 10.3% of respondents over 40 years of age in the United States and Japan, respectively. The percentages of American and Japanese children of each age were as follows: 1.8% and 7.9% for three years, 2.9% and 14.5% for four years, 10.2% and 20.6% for five years, 22.9% and 17.5% for six years, 30.2% and 21.9% for seven years, and 32.0% and 17.6% for eight years of age, respectively.

Approximately 97% of Japanese and 88% of American mothers were married, with approximately 65% of Japanese and 56% of American mothers reporting family incomes between $40,000 and $80,000 (4,000,000–8,000,000 yen). Thus, both samples represent relatively well-educated, middle- to upper-middle–class families in moderately populated areas in their respective nations.

Pretesting

Initial pretesting focused on evaluating the clarity of the questionnaire and determining its applicability in Japan. Interviews were conducted with five U.S. nationals, three

Japanese nationals, and an anthropologist who specializes in Japan. A focus group also was conducted among five Japanese nationals—pre-MBA students, 29 to 32 years of age, two men and three women, who had been in the United States for slightly less than three months. After incorporating changes from these interviews, a pretest was conducted of the developmental timetable items among a convenience sample of 57 American mothers. Item-to-total correlations and coefficient alphas were examined for each scale. Finally, five Japanese mothers completed the revised questionnaire and were interviewed about its content and clarity.

Translation and Back-Translation

The questionnaire was translated into Japanese by a Japanese national who had been living in the United States for approximately four years. She previously had worked as a professional language instructor (in both English and Japanese for approximately ten years) and as a translator. The back-translation was conducted by a U.S. national who has been living in Japan for ten years and is a professor of English at a Japanese University.

Measures

Parental style. Eight scales were used as indicators of parental style (see Table 1). All scales were computed as averages, and all items were measured by a five-point scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree), unless otherwise noted. Nurturance ($\alpha_{US} = .82$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .74$) is a nine-item scale that measures the degree that parents openly express affection and "share feelings and experiences with their children" (Rickel and Biassatti 1982, p. 132). Encouraging verbalization ($\alpha_{US} = .69$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .61$), strictness ($\alpha_{US} = .72$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .69$), and fostering dependence ($\alpha_{US} = .70$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .60$) are four-item scales. Encouraging verbalization measures the extent of reciprocal and open parent–child communication, strictness measures parental attitudes toward discipline, and fostering dependence examines the extent that a mother attempts to protect or shelter her child. Values conformity (three items; $\alpha_{US} = .70$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .71$) and firm enforcement (two items; $\alpha_{US} = .55$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .47$) are composed of dichotomous items developed by Baumrind (1971). Typical items include "a child must learn to/should not have to conform to all school rules" for values conformity and "other parents probably see me as rather firm/permissive with my child" for firm enforcement. Finally, excluding outside influence (three items; $\alpha_{US} = .67$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .53$) includes items such as "children should never learn things outside the home which make them doubt their parents," and child's independence (Schaefer and Finkelstein 1975) measures maternal perceptions of children's independence (six items; $\alpha_{US} = .76$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .74$), using items such as "my child tries to do things for him/herself" and "my child thinks of things to do him/herself," on a five-point scale (very seldom to very often).

Confirmatory factor analysis indicated that these scales formed the expected dimensions (χ^2_{682} [second order model] = 1,196, $p < .001$, GFI = .881, AGFI = .929). Nurturance and encouraging verbalization measured warmth (the second order factor). Strictness, values conformity, and firm enforcement measured restrictiveness; whereas fostering dependence, excluding outside influence, and child's independence (negatively loaded) measured AEI.

Developmental timetables. Table 2 contains a factor analysis of the developmental timetable items.[1] Factor 1, understanding advertising practices, examined the age at which parents believe children become cognizant of the techniques that marketers employ to persuade them. Factor 2, consumer-related skills, examined several specific consumption activities. All items were measured on an 11-point scale (from 2 to +12). Parents were asked "at what age a typical child can do the following things," with the first five items in Table 2 measuring understanding advertising practices ($\alpha_{US} = .77$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .82$) and the remaining items measuring consumer-related skills ($\alpha_{US} = .77$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .68$).

Consumer socialization scales. A total of 15 consumer socialization scales were employed. Extent of family communication (three items; $\alpha_{US} = .71$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .71$) examined overall levels of consumer-oriented communication, for example, "I talk to him or her [the child] about where different products can be bought." It used a five-point scale, with very seldom and very often as endpoints. These same endpoints were used for the next three scales as well. Discussion about television viewing examined the frequency that mothers talk with their children "about the contents of television advertising." Concept orientation (seven items; $\alpha_{US} = .70$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .68$) measured reciprocal patterns of communication (e.g., "I ask my child what he or she thinks about things that he or she buys for him or herself"). Control television viewing (three items; $\alpha_{US} = .89$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .85$) measured the extent of parental restrictions on the programs their children "can watch, when they watch television, and how many hours each day they can watch."

Child's payment (three items; $\alpha_{US} = .74$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .74$) examined the likelihood that children would be allowed to purchase candy, a game or toy, or a specific type of clothing if the "child agrees to use his or her money." It used a five-point scale, with very unlikely and likely as endpoints. Yielding, refusing with an explanation, and refusals use a similar scale. Yielding (three items; $\alpha_{US} = .66$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .56$) examined the likelihood that a mother would "buy it" if her child asked for one of the previously listed products. Total child income assessed income from allowance and other sources (in dollars and yen). Refusing with an explanation (three items; $\alpha_{US} = .72$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .65$) measured the likelihood that mothers would provide an explanation, "explain why," when refusing to buy their children "candy, a game or toy, or a specific type of clothing."

Child's influence (four items; $\alpha_{US} = .70$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .74$) measured the degree to which a "child's opinions should be included when: purchasing groceries, selecting a vacation site, buying a home, or selecting a restaurant." It used a five-point scale, with strongly disagree and strongly agree as endpoints. Coshopping (four items; $\alpha_{US} = .80$, $\alpha_{Japan} = .82$)

[1]All developmental timetable items were developed for this study. Consumer-related skills initially contained a larger pool of items that was reduced empirically through pretesting. Understanding advertising practices was developed to measure frequently voiced concerns about children's ability to understand marketing practices, such as separating between programs and advertisements and understanding advertising's persuasive intent.

TABLE 2
Factor Pattern, Mean Age, and Standard Deviation for the Developmental Timetable Items

	Factor Loadings[a]							
	Mean (Standard Deviation)		Understand Advertising Practices		Consumer-Related Skills		Communality[b]	
At what age can a typical child:	**U.S.**	**Japan**	**U.S.**	**Japan**	**U.S.**	**Japan**	**U.S.**	**Japan**
Understand that not all advertisements are true	7.4 (2.1)	9.6 (2.3)	.85	.77	.08	.04	.73	.74
Tell when an advertiser is exaggerating	8.1 (2.1)	9.9 (2.2)	.84	.81	.09	−.01	.71	.71
Understand the difference between a television program and a television advertisement	5.4 (1.7)	5.1 (2.7)	.55	.48	.07	.14	.33	.31
Understand that actors that endorse a product may not really use that product	8.1 (2.2)	10.1 (2.3)	.76	.73	.16	.15	.61	.61
Understand that television characters are just pretending or playing a role	6.2 (1.7)	8.6 (2.6)	.73	.76	.20	.10	.57	.57
Spend money carefully	8.4 (2.3)	8.4 (2.4)	.33	.28	.45	.63	.32	.32
Receive an allowance	6.1 (1.7)	8.0 (2.2)	.00	.16	.67	.74	.45	.45
Purchase groceries by him or herself	9.4 (2.2)	7.5 (2.5)	.14	.01	.66	.77	.46	.46
Purchase things with his or her own money	5.9 (1.8)	7.7 (2.3)	.08	.04	.76	.79	.58	.58
Prepare his or her own lunch	7.1 (1.8)	9.7 (2.0)	.14	.04	.68	.64	.48	.48
Eigenvalues	—	—	3.5	3.3	1.7	2.0	—	—

[a]A varimax rotation was used. Factor loadings represent standardized regression coefficients.
[b]Communality estimates represent the squared multiple correlations for predicting the estimated factors.

measured the perceived importance and frequency that parents reported taking their children along on shopping trips (e.g., "When I go grocery shopping, I take my child"). It used a five-point scale, with very seldom and very often as endpoints. Consumption dependence (seven items; α_{US} = .65, α_{Japan} = .62) examined typical parent–child purchasing patterns (e.g., "how is your child's clothing purchased?") using a four-point scale, where 1 = child chooses for self, 2 = child chooses but talks to parents first, 3 = parent chooses but talks to child first, and 4 = parent chooses and does not talk to child.

Coviewing (three items; α_{US} = .90, α_{Japan} = .80) measured the frequency that mothers watched "television with their children" on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays (five-point scale, very seldom to very often). Amount of child's television viewing measured the average number of hours children watched television per day. Socio-orientation (five items; α_{US} = .68, α_{Japan} = .70) measured the degree to which communication is one-sided (parent to child) and to which parents control their children's consumption (e.g., "I tell my child what things he or she should buy"). Refusals measured the likelihood that mothers would refuse to buy their children "candy, a game or toy, or a specific type of clothing" without providing an explanation. See Carlson and Grossbart (1988, p. 80) for the original sources of these scales.

Data Analysis

The analysis was conducted in three phases. First, a factor analysis was conducted to determine the dimensions of the consumer socialization practices. Second, the hypotheses were tested in a series of direct models. More specifically, the influence of nationality, developmental timetables, and parental style were examined sequentially in a series of models without any other independent variables. Third, a full model was analyzed, both with and without covariates (child's age and maternal education), to examine the effects of each of the independent variables (nationality, parental style, and the two developmental timetable scales) on the five consumer socialization factors, while statistically controlling for the other variables.

Results

Factor analysis was employed to reduce the consumer socialization scales to a manageable set of dimensions (see Table 3). The first factor, communication about consumption, included extent of family communication, discussions about television advertising, and concept orientation. Control television viewing cross-loaded on this factor (as well as on television viewing, Factor 4). Consumption autonomy (Factor 2) examined a child's ability to make independent purchases. It included (1) child's payment, (2) yielding, (3) child's income, and (4) refusing with an explanation (negatively loaded). Child's influence (Factor 3) examined a child's ability to influence parental purchases. It included (1) child's influence, (2) coshopping, and (3) consumption dependence (negatively loaded). Factor 4, television viewing, included the amount of child's television viewing (measured in hours) and coviewing. Restriction of consumption (Factor 5) included socio-orientation and refusals.

Hypotheses Tests

H_{1-5} examine cross-national differences in developmental timetables and consumer socialization practices. A one-way MANOVA with nationality as the independent variable and follow-up ANOVAs indicated significant differences across the set of dependent variables (Wilks' $\lambda_{7,618} = .56$, $F = 69.1$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .44$), as well as significant univariate differences ($p < .05$) for each of the dependent variables (Table 4). Mothers in the United States held earlier developmental expectations for consumer-related skills (H_{1a}) and understanding advertising practices (H_{1b}) than did their Japanese counterparts, in support of H_1. Communication about consumption (H_2) and consumption autonomy (H_3) were higher among American families, whereas child's influence (H_4) was higher among Japanese families, in support of H_{2-4}. H_5, however, was supported only partially. Restriction of consumption was higher among Japanese families (in support of H_{5a}), but Japanese mothers (contrary to H_{5b})

TABLE 3
Factor Pattern for Consumer Socialization Practices

Variable[a]	Factor 1 Communication About Consumption	Factor 2 Child's Consumption Autonomy	Factor 3 Child's Influence	Factor 4 Television Viewing	Factor 5 Restriction of Consumption	Communality[b]
Extent of family communication	.72	.08	−.33	.01	.01	.64
Discussions about television advertising	.71	.11	−.02	.15	−.01	.54
Concept-orientation	.63	.31	.40	−.08	.05	.66
Control of television viewing	.57	−.09	−.27	−.48	.05	.65
Child's payment	.18	.66	.07	.06	.05	.48
Yielding	.09	.55	.26	.16	−.01	.41
Total child income	.28	.55	−.14	−.01	−.19	.44
Refusing with an explanation	.30	−.57	−.06	.01	−.07	.43
Child's influence	.11	−.13	.71	−.01	−.01	.54
Coshopping	.33	−.10	.55	.24	−.28	.54
Consumption dependence	.08	−.34	−.63	−.01	.00	.53
Coviewing	.30	−.03	.05	.76	−.02	.66
Amount of child's television viewing	−.18	.18	−.01	.75	.14	.64
Socio-orientation	.32	−.12	−.07	−.01	.79	.75
Refusals	−.38	.16	−.05	.14	.62	.58
Eigenvalues	2.83	1.98	1.42	1.26	0.99	—

[a]A varimax rotation was used. Factor loadings represent standardized regression coefficients.
[b]Communality estimates represent the squared multiple correlations for predicting the estimated factors.

TABLE 4
Standardized Means and Univariate F Values (Sum of Squares III)

	Consumer-Related Skills	Understand Advertising Practices	Communication About Consumption	Consumption Autonomy	Child's Influence	Television Viewing	Restriction of Consumption
Nationality							
Standardized means							
Japan	.36	.57	−.43	−.52	.12	.21	.18
United States	−.22	−.35	.26	.32	−.08	.13	−.11
F values							
Nationality alone (1,624)	52.3**	153.2**	80.4**	124.6**	5.8*	18.1**	12.5**
Full model (1,617)	—	—	21.0**	79.0**	2.5	9.9**	7.8*
Full model with covariates (1,615)	—	—	4.8**	77.3**	.1	.1	7.2*
Parental Style							
Standardized means							
Detached	$-.13_{f}$	$.19_{be}$	$-.05_{bc}$	$-.48_{bde}$	.06	.02	$.02_{e}$
Authoritative	$-.17_{cdf}$	$-.35_{acf}$	$.43_{acdf}$	$.16_{af}$	$-.12_{c}$	$-.20_{f}$	$-.01_{e}$
Indulgent *amae*	$.26_{be}$	$.54_{bde}$	$-.64_{abef}$	$-.12_{d}$	$.30_{bd}$	.13	$.04_{e}$
Authoritarian	$.22_{be}$	$-.06_{cf}$	$-.32_{be}$	$.42_{acf}$	$-.30_{ce}$	.15	$.19_{e}$
Permissive	$-.28_{cdf}$	$-.26_{acf}$	$.32_{cdf}$	$.05_{a}$	$.14_{d}$	$-.17_{f}$	$-.41_{abcdf}$
Strict *amae*	$.35_{abe}$	$.39_{bde}$	$-.18_{bce}$	$-.26_{bd}$	.09	$.28_{be}$	$.29_{e}$
F values							
Parental style alone (5,620)	7.3**	14.4**	20.9**	11.2**	4.6**	3.9*	6.0**
Full model (5,617)	—	—	9.1**	6.3**	2.5*	2.0	5.4**
Full model with covariates (5,615)	—	—	8.1**	4.7**	3.3*	1.1	4.6**
Developmental Timetables							
Consumer-related skills							
Beta coefficient	—	—	−.21	−.15	−.19	.02	.08
F values							
Developmental timetables alone (1,623)	—	—	25.7**	13.1**	19.5**	.3	3.8
Full model (1,617)	—	—	15.4**	10.6**	19.1**	.7	2.2
Full model with covariates (1,615)	—	—	17.1**	18.3**	19.9**	.1	.5
Understand advertising practices							
Beta coefficient	—	—	-.21	−.03	.05	.04	.04
F values							
Developmental timetables alone (1,623)	—	—	26.9**	.5	1.8	1.1	1.1
Full model (1,617)	—	—	4.7*	10.1**	.3	.1	.3
Full model with covariates (1,615)	—	—	3.4	8.5**	.5	2.6	.1

*$p < .05$.
**$p < .001$.
Notes: The full model includes nationality, parental style, consumer-related skills, and understanding advertising practices. Two covariates (child's age and maternal education) were added to the full model labeled as "with covariates." Subscripts for parental style indicate significant differences between groups, Tukey–Honestly-Significant-Difference paired comparisons, $p < .05$, where a = detached, b = authoritative, c = indulgent *amae*, d = authoritarian, e = permissive, and f = strict *amae*. Negative coefficients for the developmental timetable variables are associated with early developmental expectations. Degrees of freedom are in parenthesis.

reported higher levels of television viewing than did their U.S. counterparts.

H_6 and H_7 examine the relation between developmental timetables and consumer socialization. Late expectations for consumer-related skills were related negatively to communication about consumption (H_{6a}), consumption autonomy (H_{6b}), and child's influence (H_{6c}) and related positively to restriction of consumption (H_{6d}), in support of H_6. Late expectations for understanding advertising practices, as expected, were related negatively to communication about consumption (H_{7a}), but understanding advertising practices and television viewing were not related significantly (H_{7b}). Thus, H_7 was supported only partially. Parental expectations about children's understanding of advertising practices appears to result in higher mediation through discussions rather than in a direct ban or limit on the types of programs that children are allowed to watch. Further research could assess developmental timetables associated with children's programming and parental limits on children's television viewing.

The remaining six hypotheses examine differences across parental styles. H_8 initially was examined by assessing the overall association between cluster and nationality through a chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 243.4$, $p < .001$, degrees of freedom = 5). Then a confidence interval was constructed around the expected sample proportion of Japanese or American respondents for each parental style ($p < .05$). Although the null hypotheses that nation had no affect on parental style could be rejected for all groups, the proportion of detached parents who were Japanese (62.5%) was unexpectedly larger than the proportion of U.S. parents. This finding, though somewhat surprising, is consistent with Power, Kobayashi-Winati, and Kelley's (1992) finding that a substantial proportion of permissive parents (nearly 40%) were Japanese. Whereas Power, Kobayashi-Winati, and Kelley (1992) employ a five-cluster solution, this study employed a six-cluster solution, which may have isolated the two forms of nonrestrictive parenting (permissive and detached) better. All other proportion tests were as expected. Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parental styles were composed primarily of American mothers (Table 1), whereas indulgent and strict *amaes* were composed primarily of Japanese mothers. Thus, H_8 was supported partially.

Parental style also was associated with differences in developmental timetables. However, the pattern of relations was more complex than that predicted in H_9. As expected, authoritatives and permissives held earlier expectations for consumer-related skills than authoritarians, earlier expectations for understanding advertising practices than detached parents, and earlier expectations for both scales than indulgent and strict *amaes*, partially in support of H_9. However, no significant differences were found ($p < .05$) between authoritatives and permissives and detached parents for consumer-related skills, nor between authoritatives and permissives and authoritarians for understanding advertising practices.

H_{10-13} examine consumer socialization and parental style. Authoritatives and permissives exhibited high levels of communication about consumption (H_{10}), higher than authoritarians, indulgent *amae*, and strict *amae* for both groups, and higher than detached parents for authoritatives, partially in support of H_{10}; however, the difference between permissive and detached parents was not statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Limited support was found for H_{11}. Permissives and indulgent *amaes* allowed their children more purchase influence than authoritarians, but no significant differences were found for detached parents or between authoritative and authoritarian parents. Overall, indulgent *amaes* grant their children the most influence, whereas authoritarians grant their children the least influence, but not all paired comparisons were significant.

H_{12} also was supported partially. As expected, authoritatives and permissives exhibited high levels of consumption autonomy, higher than detached for both groups and higher than strict *amaes* for authoritatives. However, no significant differences were found between these groups and authoritarians or indulgent *amaes*. Instead, all primarily Japanese clusters (detached, indulgent *amae*, and strict *amae*) had negative standardized coefficients, whereas the coefficients for the remaining, primarily U.S. groups, were positive.

Finally, H_{13} was supported partially. Permissives placed fewer restrictions on their children's consumption than any other group, which partially supported H_{13a}; however, television viewing was higher (opposite the predicted direction) among strict *amaes* than authoritatives and permissives. Thus, H_{13b} was rejected.

Additional Analysis

The potential of demographic variables (child's age, child's sex, family income, and maternal education) to explain cross-national differences was assessed. All were less important than nationality, which was related significantly to the set of consumer socialization practice factors, even after controlling for demographics.[2] Child's age and maternal education, however, were sufficiently important to be included as covarietes. Child's age was related positively to communication about consumption ($F_{1,615} = 4.4$, $p < .05$) and consumption autonomy ($F_{1,615} = 51.1$, $p < .001$), whereas maternal education was related positively to communication about consumption ($F_{1,615} = 17.7$, $p < .001$) and related negatively to consumption autonomy ($F_{1,615} = 19.8$, $p < .001$),

[2]A MANOVA assessed the influence of demographic differences on the consumer socialization scales. Child's age (measured in years and months) and maternal education (measured by the following scale: 1 = grade school, 2 = some high school, 3 = high school graduate, 4 = trade/technical school graduate, 5 = some college, 6 = college graduate, and 7 = advanced degree) had the greatest effect on the set of consumer socialization practices and were added to the full model (Wilks' $\lambda_{5,616} = .86$, $F = 19.8$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .14$ for child's age and Wilks' $\lambda_{5,616} = .77$, $F = 37.3$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .23$ for maternal education). Family income (Wilks' $\lambda_{5,616} = .97$, $F = 3.4$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .03$) and child's sex (Wilks' $\lambda_{5,616} = .98$, $F = 1.9$, $p > .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$), the other factors, had limited effects and were not used as covariates.

child's influence ($F_{1,615} = 16.9$, $p < .001$), and television viewing ($F_{1,615} = 78.2$, $p < .001$).

Analysis of the Full Model

A full model was analyzed, both with and without covariates. The five consumer socialization dimensions were used as dependent variables, with nationality, parental style, and the two developmental timetable scales used as independent variables. Comparing the results between the full and direct models (e.g., "nationality alone") (Table 4) can help determine the extent to which the direct effect of a variable on a consumer socialization factor can be explained by differences in the other independent variables. Examining the direct effects of each variable (nationality, parental style, and the two developmental timetable scales alone) can help evaluate the complex, underlying processes behind consumer socialization. For example, early developmental timetables, specifically early expectations for consumer-related skills and understanding advertising practices, are associated with independence-oriented parental styles (permissive and authoritative). Overall, expectations for children's development may underlie differences in parental style. Alternatively, differences in parental style could produce differential expectations and experiences among parents. Assessing the causation between developmental timetables and parental style is beyond the scope of this study. Both are likely to be linked reciprocally and inextricably, with differences in parental beliefs (developmental timetables) influencing overall patterns of parent–child interactions, and perceptions of previous interactions influencing parental beliefs.

Overall, the relations in this study are complex. Nationality is related directly to parental style, developmental timetables, and consumer socialization. The direct effect of nationality, however, can be explained fully by developmental timetables and parental style for child's influence, plus the addition of the covariates for television viewing (the F values become nonsignificant for these variables in the full model with and without covariates, respectively) (Table 4). A comparison of the results in the full and direct models for television viewing, in conjunction with the previously reported analysis of the effects of demographic variables on the consumer socialization factors, indicates that maternal education is the primary driver in television viewing. Differences in parental style, particularly the low influence in authoritarian families and differences in age expectations for consumer-related skills, underlie cross-national differences in child's influence. Thus, cross-national differences in television viewing and child's influence can be explained by the other variables in this study.

Communication about consumption, consumption autonomy, and restriction of consumption were related directly to nationality and parental style. Developmental timetables for consumer-related skills were associated with communication about consumption and consumption autonomy, whereas understanding advertising practices was related to communication about consumption. These relations remained significant in the full model, which suggests that parental style and the two developmental timetable scales could not explain all of the cross-national variance in the dependent variables. Conversely, nationality could not explain all of the variance accounted for by parental style or the developmental timetable scales. These findings have two important implications. First, nationality has a comprehensive influence on parental beliefs, specific socialization practices, and parent–child interactions. Second, differences in consumer socialization are the result of within- as well as between-nation differences. Thus, parental style and developmental timetables affect consumer socialization, both as a result of and beyond modal differences across nations.

Discussion

This study examines the consumer socialization, parental style, and developmental timetables of U.S. and Japanese mothers of children three to eight years of age. Cross-national differences in consumer socialization were related to differences in developmental timetables and general patterns of parent–child interactions.

Cross-national differences. Between-sample differences in parental style, developmental timetables, and consumer socialization are consistent with societal patterns of interpersonal relationships. Japanese mothers hold relatively late developmental timetables and allow few opportunities for independent consumption. They expect children to develop consumer-related skills and an understanding of advertising practices relatively late, restrict their children's consumption, allow less consumption autonomy, and report high levels of child's influence, which is consistent with a collectivist, interdependent society in which children are benevolently dependent on their parents (Doi 1962) and considered too immature to make their own decisions. American mothers, in contrast, encourage and expect the development of independent consumption relatively early. They have high levels of communication about consumption, hold early developmental timetables, and allow their children more consumption autonomy than do Japanese mothers. In short, modal U.S. consumer socialization is characterized by directed independence, which is consistent with an individualistic orientation. Cross-national comparisons, however, are always complex. Thus, differences across samples were evaluated in the context of potential intervening processes.

Developmental timetables. Differences in developmental timetables were related directly to consumer socialization practices. Early developmental expectations for understanding advertising were related to greater communication about consumption, whereas early expectations for consumer-related skills were related to greater communication about consumption, greater consumption autonomy, greater child's influence, and fewer restrictions of consumption. Thus, this study offers preliminary evidence of the utility of developmental timetables in a marketing context.

Parental style. Both Carlson and Grossbart (1988) and this study relate differences in consumer socialization to broad, general patterns of socialization. Authoritatives (nurturing, restrictive) are the largest cluster, followed by permissives (nurturing, nonrestrictive). Although both promote independence in their children and exhibit high levels of

communication about consumption, authoritatives are more restrictive of their children's consumption than permissives. Authoritarians (nonnurturing, restrictive), in contrast, exclude outside influences, allow their children little influence, and report low levels of communication about consumption. As a whole, these findings are consistent with those of Carlson and Grossbart's (1988) Midwestern U.S. sample and have at least some generalizability.

This study also extends the relation between consumer socialization and parental style to a collectivist Asian culture. Indulgent *amaes* (nonrestrictive and anxiously emotionally involved) are consistent with modal descriptions of Japanese parenting (e.g., Caudill and Schooler 1973; Power, Kobayashi-Winati, and Kelley 1992). They, along with strict *amaes* (nurturing, strict, and anxiously emotionally involved), foster dependence, hold late developmental timetables, and report low consumption autonomy. What would be labeled overprotective in U.S. society (Becker 1964) may be the ideal preparation for Japanese society. Both strict *amaes* and authoritatives are warm and restrictive. Warmth in Japan, however, is related to high levels of mother–child dependence rather than to the promotion of autonomy, which is consistent with an interdependent or collectivist culture in which mutual bonds and relationships are the bases of self-perception (Kitayama and Markus 1992).

The final parental style, detached (nonrestrictive and moderately nurturing), may be a hybrid of permissive and traditional Japanese parenting. Detached parents are less anxiously emotionally involved, hold earlier developmental timetables than *amaes* (either indulgent or strict), communicate more about consumption than indulgent *amaes* but less than authoritatives, and grant their children less consumption autonomy than any of the three primarily U.S. groups. Thus, modal cross-national differences across samples are related consistently to different patterns of parent–child interactions, which are related to differences in consumer socialization.

Implications and Directions for Further Research

The relations in this study are consistent with a complex, environmental process such as consumer socialization. This study establishes the utility of applying a parental style framework in an international context and points to the need to examine nationality and developmental timetables simultaneously. Although all are interrelated, additional research could assess the direction between parental style and developmental timetables. This study establishes an association between general patterns of socialization and beliefs about children's rate of development. Further research could assess the degree that developmental timetables act as self-fulfilling prophecies or as parental hypotheses, which are modified in the face of existing evidence. Longitudinal research could assess the constancy of parents' expectations over time, and experimental research could assess the extent that parents modify their expectations and attributions on the basis of the situation.

This study establishes the direct impact of developmental timetables on consumer socialization and the potential value of this underresearched area in marketing. Additional research could connect global beliefs about children's rate of development to consumer-related beliefs by assessing a more comprehensive set of developmental timetables, looking for interrelations between sets of beliefs, and directly relating these timetables to children's outcomes. Alternatively, further research could assess developmental timetables in a much more specific context. Makers of computer software, for example, might assess parental beliefs about when children acquire specific computer and cognitive skills, the extent to which parents believe these skills can be developed through good software, and the effect of these beliefs on purchases. Thus, developmental timetables provide an important set of parental beliefs with a potentially wide range of applications. However, further scale development is needed.

This study confirms and extends the relation between general parental socialization tendencies and domain-specific consumer socialization practices (e.g., Carlson and Grossbart 1988) to a cross-national context. Parent–child interactions, moreover, reflect larger societal patterns of interpersonal interactions. Warmth, for example, is associated with communication about consumption in both societies. The relative mix of child's influence and consumption autonomy, however, varies across nations. American society is individualistic, and children are granted more opportunities for independent consumption. Japanese society is interdependent, and warmth is associated with a high degree of influence rather than autonomy.

Thus, cross-national differences in consumer socialization are related to differences in parental style, as well as differences in developmental timetables. Although neither of these variables explains all the variation across nations, both evaluate cross-national differences in consumer socialization within a more general, theoretically integrated framework. More specifically, Japanese parents, as a group, hold later developmental expectations and exhibit socialization patterns with a high level of AEI. These patterns are associated with more specific consumer socialization practices, such as high restriction of consumption and low consumption autonomy.

Developmental timetables and parental style also highlight differences within nations. Authoritarians, for example, are anxiously emotionally involved, hold late developmental timetables, and report low levels of communication about consumption for a U.S. group. Thus, modal cultural tendencies are accentuated or dampened by individual differences in parenting.

As a whole, this study theoretically has incorporated consumer socialization into an overall framework. Parental style and developmental timetables provide important means of systematically assessing both individual and between-nation differences in consumer socialization. Consumer socialization, however, is a complex process. Thus, differences in parental styles and developmental timetables do not explain cross-national differences in consumer socialization fully. Further research could assess the influence of specific cross-national dimensions, such as economic development, on consumer socialization. This research ideally would be conducted on a wide variety of systematically selected, nationally representative samples.

Limitations

This study samples middle- to upper-middle–class suburban mothers in the United States and Japan. Although this approach provides a relatively good basis for comparison among a convenience sample, the samples obtained do not represent all U.S. and Japanese parents. Within-nation differences also may be understated. Finding differences within relatively homogeneous convenience samples provides relatively strong support for within-nation differences in both the United States and Japan. Further research should explore differences in other nations.

Scales developed in one culture also are used to describe or categorize subjects in another. This limitation is present in almost all cross-cultural studies, and every effort was made to check the applicability of these scales to Japan by a thorough review of the literature, a professional and thorough translation and back-translation, and interviews and pretests with Japanese nationals. Emic perceptions of parental style and consumer socialization would be a fascinating area for additional research.

Managerial Implications

Parental style represents a potentially important tool for cross-national segmentation. Managers could assess the overlap and specific types of parental styles across nations to determine the effectiveness and likely reaction of parents to various products and promotions. For example, nations with a high percentage of authoritative parents should be particularly receptive to educational products. Managers also could tie parental style to demographic and psychographic variables that are readily available to marketing companies. Authoritative parents, for example, are relatively educated and have high incomes. Products directed to upper-middle–class children, therefore, can expect relatively high parental mediation of the child's media exposure and product use.

Parents' age expectations should influence their reaction to specific products and marketing programs. In this study, early expectations were related to communication about consumption, consumption autonomy, and child's influence. Many other possibilities exist. If, for example, a mother believes five-year-olds are incapable of understanding the persuasive intent of advertisements, she may support a ban on advertising to children. In short, developmental timetables represent an underused area in marketing.

Finally, this study highlights the potential importance of cross-national differences in consumer socialization. Japanese children, for example, have a more indirect influence on consumption, through parental purchases, than do American children, who are granted more autonomy. Thus, marketing programs in the United States could be targeted directly at children, whereas those in Japan could be targeted more to parents. Overall, this study extends the relation between general and consumer socialization to a cross-national context. Japanese parents are relatively protective and hold late developmental timetables. General and consumer socialization are defined, in Japan, by a more dependent approach to parenting and, in the United States, by a greater emphasis on independence and developing consumer-related skills.

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