

ROMANIA'S CULTURAL PROFILE AND RECENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGES: IMPLICATIONS FOR PARENTAL BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT. In the present review our first aim is to analyze the Romanian culture and the way it is related to prevalent parental beliefs and practices. Our second aim is to explore how recent socio-economic changes that have taken place in the country are associated with changes in the Romanian culture and prevalent parental beliefs and practices. To this end, we will firstly analyze the Romanian culture starting from Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Afterwards, we will discuss the implications of this analysis for prevalent parental beliefs and practices. Next, we will review extant studies that focus on the Romanian culture, socio-economic changes and parental beliefs and practices, so as to see if they suggest that recent socio-economic changes are associated with the modification of the Romanian culture and prevalent parental beliefs and practices.

Keywords: *Romanian culture; parental beliefs; cultural change*

1. Introduction

In the present review, we will focus on the Romanian culture and the way it is related to parental beliefs and practices of parents from Romania. We will also review current evidence regarding the impact of recent socio-economic changes that have taken place in the country, to

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investigate whether they are associated with changes in cultural orientations, as well as in prevalent parental beliefs and practices. Such an endeavor is significant, given the very few reviews that integrate research dedicated to the association between culture and parenting beliefs and practices, in the case of East-European countries, and in particular Romania. Also, the present review fills an important gap in existing knowledge about cultural changes in the case of countries that are transitioning, both socially and economically. In this review, by countries exposed to social and economic transitions we refer to countries that are transitioning towards democracy, higher levels of formal education and wealth, market economy, urbanization and globalization (Greenfield, 2018).

In the first part of the paper, we will discuss the Romanian culture by focusing on Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov's (2010) cultural dimensions. Based on these cultural dimensions, we will consider the potential impact of the Romanian culture on prevalent parental beliefs and practices. In the second part, we will review existing studies that will aid us in elucidating how the socio-economic changes that Romania has been exposed to are associated with changes in the Romanian culture and prevalent parenting beliefs and practices.

2. Conceptualization of culture

Culture is a concept that is very difficult to define. Consequently, there are many definitions and conceptualizations of culture (Triandis, 2007). Yet, most theories concur in postulating that culture refers to a shared system of meanings (i.e., abstract values, beliefs or norms; e.g., Greenfield, 2018; Hofstede, 2011; Keller, 2018; Keller & Kartner, 2013; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1996), practices, and artefacts. These symbols, practices, and artefacts are generated and implemented through social interactions, as well as interactions with the environment, while they are also inter-generationally transmitted (Keller & Kartner, 2013). Most theoretical models of culture also maintain that the shared systems of meaning have a central and guiding role in influencing how members of a culture think, act, and feel (Berry & Poortinga, 2006; Soliman & Glenberg, 2014). It is important to underline the fact that culture

is neither stable, nor transmitted “as it is” across generations, since it suffers modifications due to changes in the ecocultural environment, interactions with other cultures or innovations (Georgas et al., 2006).

In this review, we will adopt a theory of culture that is based on the ecological framework, which states that culture is an adaptation to the ecological context in which a community functions (Dong, Talhelm, & Ren, 2018; Keller, 2018; Keller & Kartner, 2013). As such, we define culture as a community that has a shared system of symbols, practices, and artefacts, in the virtue of a common socio-demographic profile (Keller, Borke, Chaudhary, Lamm, & Kleis, 2010). We define a community by its shared socio-demographic profile, and we view it as the basis of the values, practices, and artefacts people share, because we start from the assumption that culture is an adaptation to the context we live in; therefore, as a function of the socio-demographic profile, certain beliefs, practices, and artefacts are adaptive and others are not. In this sense, in rural communities with a low level of economic development and education, where subsistence agriculture is the main means of survival, people develop a focus on heteronomy or obedience and harmonious interaction, because these values and the practices associated with them are essential for survival (Greenfield, 2018). For example, Fonseca, Cavalcante, Kartner, and Koster(2018) studied agricultural communities in the Amazon region, near the city of Belem, and showed that there was a focus on heteronomy and relatedness in such cultural niches, since every individual's contribution to the tasks of the community was essential for survival. In these types of communities, the economic value of children is very important (i.e., the importance of children for the economic survival of the family and for the survival of parents at old-age; Kagitcibasi, 2017; Kagitcibasi & Ataca, 2016; Sam, Peltzer, & Mayer, 2005). In urban contexts from Western societies, where there is a high level of education and economic development, individuals do not depend on their community for livelihood, and the economic value of children is not very important. The school and work contexts in these communities are promoting and rewarding uniqueness, autonomy, creativity, and the ability to interact with new people. Starting from these descriptions, it is evident that a focus on heteronomy and relatedness is not adaptive in such contexts; instead, a focus on being autonomous, separate, and distinct from others,

as well as capable to adapt to novel social situations is more important (Kagitcibasi, 2017; Keller, 2013).

Starting from this ecological framework, in the present paper we will firstly focus on Romania's culture and the possible impact it might have on parenting beliefs and practices. Secondly, we will focus on how the recent social, economic, and political changes that the country has been through since the fall of communism have affected its culture, and the prevalent parenting beliefs and practices, respectively (Mone, Benga, & Susa, 2014). Culture is considered an adaptation to the eco-social context from the standpoint of the ecological framework. Hence, we assume that the recent socio-economic changes that Romania has gone through have influenced the Romanian culture as well as prevalent parental beliefs and practices, increasing their fit with and adaptability to the new socio-economic context.

3. Cultural dimensions, parental beliefs, and parental practices: The Romanian case

In the first step, we will use the cultural dimensions defined by Hofstede and colleagues (2010) to analyze the Romanian culture. We will also explore what predictions can be made regarding prevalent parental beliefs and practices based on this analysis of Romanian culture. Hofstede and colleagues (2010) assume that cultural change is produced on an extended time-frame, thus their predictions regarding prevalent parental beliefs and practices in Romania do not take into consideration recent social and economic developments. Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimensions are society level factors that are associated with variations in prevalent cultural norms between societies. These variations in cultural norms arose from differences in ecocultural contexts and histories of the different cultures (e.g., the influence of Confucianism on the development of Chinese national culture; Hofstede et al., 2010) but they govern how the different institutions and social structures are constructed in the present. The cultural dimensions on which the cultures of different societies vary are: Power Distance, Individualism - Collectivism, Masculinity - Femininity, Avoidance of Uncertainty, Short-Term - Long-Term

Orientation and Indulgence - Restraint (Hofstede et al., 2010). Power Distance refers to the degree to which individuals with less power from a society accept inequalities regarding how power is distributed and consider that these inequalities are unavoidable (Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede et al., 2010). Regarding the definition of Individualism - Collectivism, Individualism refers to the preference for a diffuse social network in which individuals focus on taking care of themselves and their family. Collectivism is conceptualized as referring to a compact social network in which individuals, in exchange for loyalty, expect that the other members of the in-group will take care of them (Hofstede et al., 2010). Masculinity - Femininity refers to the degree to which gender roles overlap in a society. In Masculine cultures or societies, there is a focus on success, challenge, competition, advancement, earning, being recognized and there is a clear delineation between gender roles (Ljunge, 2016). A Feminine society is one in there is a focus on cooperation, modesty, consensus, relationships and quality of life and in which gender roles overlap. Both men and women should be tender, modest and concerned with the quality of life (Hosfede et al., 2010). Uncertainty Avoidance refers to the degree to which individuals from a culture or society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty, ambiguity, and unpredictability (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004). Long-Term Orientation - Short-Term Orientation refers to the degree to which values oriented towards achieving future goals and attaining future rewards are encouraged in a culture (Hofstede, 1991; Hofstede et al., 2010). In Long-Term cultures, we can observe that values like perseverance and thrift are promoted because they are oriented towards future rewards. In Short-Term cultures, we can observe that values like preservation of face, respect for tradition and fulfilling social obligations (e.g., returning favors) are promoted. Indulgence -Restraint refers to the degree to which a culture allows gratification of basic and natural human desires (Hofstede et al., 2010). In a culture characterized by Indulgence we can observe a tendency to allow free gratification of these basic human desires related to enjoying life and having fun. In cultures characterized by Restraint we can observe the fact that there is a belief that the satisfaction of these needs has to be curbed and regulated by rigid social norms. The countries that have been included in studies of Hofstede et al., (2010) have a score ranging from 0 to 100 on each of the dimensions.

The higher the score, the higher the country is positioned on the respective dimension.

In the following we will present Romania's standing on each of the six dimensions and discuss how this might impact parenting beliefs and behaviors. Romania's scores on the six dimensions were taken from Hofstede and colleagues (2010). Regarding Hofstede's et al. (2010) Power Distance dimension, Romania has a score of 90, signifying that it is a country with a high Power Distance, in which individuals accept power inequalities and hierarchies. In these types of cultures, subordinates think that it is normal to be told what to do and expect their leader to behave as an autocrat, while centralization of institutions is popular (Hofstede et al., 2010). In cultures with high Power Distance like Romania, as compared to cultures with low Power Distance, there is a focus on child obedience, on family hierarchy, and on the power difference in the mother-child relationship (Dermuth, 2013; Shearman & Dumlao, 2008; Scwhab, 2013). Hofstede et al (2010) also states that in high Power Distance cultures, children are socialized to be obedient and respectful to those that are higher in the hierarchy (oftentimes status is associated with age) and decision-making in the family is done by those higher in the hierarchy (i.e., parents; Oetzel et al., 2003). In the case of these cultures, independence and exploration on the part of the child is not encouraged (Oetzel et al., 2008).

On the Individualism-Collectivism dimension, Romania has a score of 30, thus being considered a Collectivistic culture, with high interdependence between members. This can be seen in a prevalence of extended families, long commitment of individuals and emotional investment in groups to which they belong (Hofstede et al., 2010; Mone et al., 2014). In this type of culture, the group also accentuates the fact that all members are responsible for each other. Based on Romania's standing on this dimension, we would expect that parents would value the development of abilities that facilitate harmonious interpersonal interactions (e.g., cooperation, empathy, self-effacing behaviors) and obedience (Hofstede et al., 2010; Keller, 2018; Minkov et al., 2018). Regarding valued parental practices, we would expect that parents from Romania value parental practices through which one promotes obedience (e.g., punishing

the child for disobedience, not offering explanations for requests), interpersonal harmony, and relatedness (e.g., encouraging cooperativeness and self-effacing behaviors; Kagitcibasi, 2017; Majdandzic, 2017).

Regarding Masculinity-Femininity, Romania has a score of 42, suggesting that it is a Feminine society with a lower discrepancy between gender roles with both genders focusing on quality of life and interrelatedness (Hofstede et al., 2010). In a Feminine culture, we would expect to see the fact that there are smaller differences between how boys and girls are socialized. More specifically, we would expect that in the case of both boys and girls, parents will value and promote modesty, non-aggressiveness, expressing one's emotion, developing a focus on relationships and interrelatedness. We would also expect to see that caring for children and earning money is equally distributed between parents. As we shall see when discussing the impact of socio-economical change on the Romanian culture, there are studies that contradict this contention by showing that there is greater inequality between gender roles (Friedlmeier & Gavreliuc, 2013).

Regarding Uncertainty Avoidance, Romania has a score of 90 and is thus a high Uncertainty Avoidant culture, in which new ideas and behaviors are avoided, and there are strict, rigid codes of conduct and beliefs (Hofstede et al., 2010). Individuals in these cultures have a need for security, rules, predictability, punctuality, while innovation is discouraged. Hofstede et al (2010) claim that in high Uncertainty Avoidance cultures there is a stronger system of rules and norms in the family and children are more likely to experience guilt. Children are also protected from experiencing unknown situations and are more likely to develop the belief that the world is hostile and novel and unknown situations are risky. In high Uncertainty Avoidance cultures, parents as well as children express emotions, both positive and negative, with a greater intensity (Dwairy & Achoui, 2006).

Regarding Long-Term Orientation, Romania has a score of 52, which suggests it is intermediate in this respect, neither being a Long-Term orientated culture, neither a Short-Term oriented culture. As regarding the influence of this dimension on family functioning, Hofstede et al. (2010) states that, in families from Long-Term orientation cultures, there is a focus on socializing delay of gratification, thrift, determination

in pursuing goals and humility, while self-assertion is not encouraged. In the case of families from Short-Term orientation cultures, there is a focus on socializing children to respect traditions, to be stable individuals, to respect social rituals (e.g., reciprocating favors, greetings or gifts), to immediately gratify needs, to spend and be sensitive to social trends of consumption. Taking into consideration that Romania has a score that doesn't allow us to categorize it as being a Long-Term or Short-Term culture, we might expect that there is a mix of characteristics pertaining to both a Long-Term and a Short-Term culture, when we look at parenting practices and beliefs.

Regarding Indulgence, Romania has a score of 20, suggesting that it is a culture of Restraint, in which there isn't a focus on leisure time and hedonism, but on the control of the gratification of desires and on the fact that indulging oneself is wrong. In these types of cultures, there is also a high frequency of pessimism and cynicism (Hofstede et al., 2010). This is the most recently added dimension and as such its association with parenting beliefs and behaviors is not yet determined. What is established is the fact that restraint cultures are tight cultures (i.e., many strong norms and low tolerance for deviant behavior, Gelfand et al., 2011) in which individuals have an external locus of control and feel they do not control what happens to them. In these cultures, there is a lower importance of leisure and having friends and a higher importance of thrift. Individuals from these cultures have a lower satisfaction with life, manifest high social cynicism, are more frequently neurotic, have high moral discipline, and are more frequently pessimistic. They also are more likely to accept strictly prescribed gender norms and unequal sharing of household chores with partners (Hofstede et al., 2010). Based on this description, we would expect that parents would value and encourage the development of obedience, thrift, discipline, and self-control.

From what we discussed, starting from Hofstede and colleagues' (2010) model, we can expect that in Romanian families there would be a focus on hierarchy, with strict, rigid rules and a focus on child's obedience and conformism. We would also expect a focus on the development of thrift, respect towards elders, relatedness, humbleness, self-control, and delay of gratification in the case of the child. Another expectation would be that girls and boys are socialized in similar ways. We would

also expect children to be taught to avoid unknown, risky situations and to develop a need for predictability. Another expectation would be that children would develop a high level of social cynicism.

As we stated before Hofstede et al (2010) conclude that cultural changes take place on an extended time-frame, and, as such, they do not take into consideration recent social, economic, and political changes that have taken place in Romania, when predicting prevalent parental beliefs and practices. Romania has gone through major social and economic transitions since the fall of communism in December 1989, with shifts towards democracy, market economy, urbanization, and globalization (Friedlmeier & Gavreliuc, 2013; Mihai & Butiu, 2012; Mone et al., 2014). In concordance with these economic, social, and political transitions, we observe that the educational level of parents has increased, the fertility rate has started to decline, the age at first birth has started to increase, the number of children has started to decrease, and the nuclear family has become more frequent (Mureşan, Hărăguş, Hărăguş, & Schroder, 2008). There is also a higher focus on child's education and general well-being (Negovan, Glăveanu, & Stănculescu, 2016). Despite Hofstede et al.'s (2010) predictions, this might have produced shifts in the structure of the Romanian culture and prevalent socialization patterns. In the following, we will review theoretical models that are based on the ecological framework and that have divergent predictions from those of Hofstede et al.'s (2010) regarding how these social, economic, and political changes have affected the Romanian culture. We will also review studies whose results will offer hints regarding the nature and presence of an effect of recent social, economic, and political changes on the Romanian culture and prevalent parental beliefs and practices.

4. Influence of socio-economic changes on the Romanian culture and on prevalent parenting beliefs and practices

There are two models in the literature that make different claims about how socio-economic development impacts a society's culture and prevalent parenting beliefs and practices. One of the models is that of family change, developed by Kagitcibasi (1985, 1990, 2017), which fo-

cuses on the influence of ecocultural context and culture on human development. Kagitcibasi (2017) identifies socio-economic development of a community as the major factor that influences the structure of its culture, parenting beliefs, and practices. The model starts from the culture (i.e., individualistic or collectivistic) that a community has and the living conditions of the community (e.g., urban or rural environment, socio-economical profile of the community, level of affluence). The culture of a community and the living conditions influence how the family is structured. The family structure is defined by characteristics such as fertility, household patterns (e.g., nuclear or extended families), women's status or economical responsibilities of family members. Culture, living conditions, and family structure influence what are the values that guide the family, how family interactions are structured and what are the prevalent socialization patterns (Georgas, Berry, van de Vijver, Kagitcibasi, & Poortinga, 2006). Family values, interactions and socialization patterns then influence the type of self and self-other interactions that the child will have, and this ultimately feeds back and influences not only how future families will be structured, but also how the culture and context in which a family lives will be structured (Kagitcibasi, 2005, 2017).

Kagitcibasi (2017) states that self-construals of individuals can vary on two orthogonal or independent dimensions: agency and interpersonal distance. The first dimension, agency, refers to the degree of autonomous functioning of the individual and varies from autonomy to heteronomy. Autonomy refers to defining oneself as being an individual that acts upon one's own will, purposes and motivations. Heteronomy refers to defining oneself as being an individual that is governed from the outside, acting based on social pressure and norms (Kagitcibasi, 2013). Interpersonal distance refers to the degree of distance between self and others and can vary from separateness to relatedness. At one end of the continuum, we have the separate self, who is defined as being distinct and separate from others. At the other end of the continuum, we have the related self which is connected to others and defined as a function of the relationships in which it is included.

Kagitcibasi focuses on three types of selves and their associated cultures, living conditions, and family models. A first family model described by Kagitcibasi (2017) is the model of interdependence, which

leads to the development of a heteronomous related self. We observe the interdependent model in rural communities with low educational and economic development, whose survival is based on subsistence agriculture. These communities have a collectivistic culture that is focused on relatedness. In these types of cultures and living conditions, the most frequent type of family structures are extended family structures, in which there is high fertility (i.e., high number of children), low status of women, and a lower age at first birth (Greenfield, 2018; Kagitcibasi, 2005). In this type of community, there is a focus on obedience and social harmony, and children have economical values (i.e., they will help parents at old age and they have a contribution to the family economy and survival; Trommsdorff, Kim, & Nauck, 2005). There is also emotional/psychological interdependence between members of the family (i.e., low interpersonal distance with overlapping selves; Kagitcibasi & Ataca, 2015)

A second family model identified by Kagitcibasi (2017) is the model of independence, which leads to the development of an autonomous separate self. This type of family model can be seen in urban Western communities with a high level of education and economic development. These types of communities are characterized by an individualistic culture with a focus on autonomy. The prevalent family structure found in these communities is the nuclear family (i.e., two generations living in the same household), with low fertility and with older ages of mother at first child and higher woman's status. This type of culture, living conditions, and family structure lead to family values related to the development of independence, creativity, curiosity, and separateness; the child has psychological value (i.e., parents have children for the psychological satisfaction they provide; Kagitcibasi, 2017) and the emotional interdependence is low.

Kagitcibasi (2017) describes a third family model, that of emotional interdependence or autonomous-relatedness. The author states that, with economic development, what happens is that the utilitarian value of the child and the economical dependency between generations disappear, but the emotional dependency remains (Kagitcibasi, 1996, 2005, 2017; Kagitcibasi & Ataca, 2015; Kagitcibasi & Yalin, 2014). This type of family model can be seen in collectivistic communities in which there has been increased economic and educational development, and

thus we observe industrialized urban communities with increased affluence (Georgas, Berry, van de Vijver, Kagitcibasi, & Poortinga, 2006). In this type of cultures and living conditions, families start to organize in nuclear patterns (two families in a household), to have fewer children at older ages and to have increased woman status. In this type of family, the extended family is still important, but for psychological and emotional reasons, not for economic ones (Kagitcibasi, 2005). The material dependency between generations is gone, as children are no longer needed to sustain their parents at old age, with parents now being the ones that invest in their children's development until late in their development (Kagitcibasi & Ataca, 2015). The emotional dependence still remains, with emotional interdependence between family members being important and with selves that are defined as a function of the relationships they have (Kagitcibasi & Yagmurlu, 2015; Mayer, 2017). In this type of culture, living conditions and family structure, the prevalent values in the family are centered on family and group loyalty and relatedness, emotional connections between family members, autonomy and independence of the child. In these communities, the child has a psychological, not utilitarian value (Kagitcibasi, 2017).

Based on the theory of Kagitcibasi (2017), we expect that in Romania, because of recent social and economic development, we will notice the emergence of an autonomous-related cultural model. As such, based on this model we would expect that Hofstede's predictions regarding the existence of a focus on obedience and conformity of the child will not be confirmed, but those regarding the existence of a focus on relatedness will be confirmed.

Another model that focuses on the influence of culture on development and stems from the ecocultural tradition is the model developed by Greenfield (2013, 2016, 2018). This model focuses on how economic, social, and political changes lead to modifications in culture and human development. More specifically, this model focuses on what changes in the culture of a community when a series of social and economic transitions take place. The model specifically refers to the transition from a rural community, based on subsistence agriculture, with low educational, economic and technological development, to an urban community, whose survival is based on commerce and market economy, with high

educational, economic and technological development. This shift from a rural to an urban community is also associated with a shift from the high prevalence of extended families (i.e., three or more generations under the same roof) to the high prevalence of nuclear families (i.e., two generations under the same roof). This shift also leads to an increase in the age when the mother has the first child. Greenfield (2018) speculates that these changes lead to a shift from a focus on collectivistic values (e.g., focus on obedience, hierarchy, interpersonal harmony, tradition), that characterizes rural communities, to a focus on individualistic values (e.g., focus on equality, independence, creativity, innovation, materialism). With the change from collectivistic to individualistic values, several changes are shown to appear at the level of the learning environment and socialization of children: more autonomy is given to the child and less guidance; there is less criticism and more praise and support directed towards the child; there is less focus on what the obligations of the child are to the family and more focus on his individual development; there are more social interactions mediated by technological means (Greenfield, 2016). These changes in turn have an impact on how the individual develops. More specifically, we see a shift from children that develop to be respectful, obedient, and shy to children that develop to be independent, autonomous, curious, and extraverted. There is another shift in child development, from children that develop to have abilities that make them able to harmoniously interact with the group (e.g., greater social skills, empathy, desire to fit in, a focus on other's needs, low self-esteem) to children that develop to have abilities that make them able to focus on self-development and on being assertive in social interactions (e.g., focus on own internal states and feelings, greater technological skills, high self-esteem, desire to stand out).

Based on Greenfield's (2018) model, we would expect to see a transition not towards an autonomous-related model in the case of Romania, but to an independent model. These predictions are in contradiction with those of Hofstede et al.'s (2010) model. Hofstede et al.'s (2010) model predicts that there will be a focus on obedience, heteronomy and relatedness in the case of parents from Romania.

In the following, we will review studies that will help us assess if there is an association between socio-economic developments and

changes in the Romanian culture and prevalent parental beliefs and practices. This assessment will also help us in finding out which of the models is better supported by the data.

As we shall see, most studies that have focused on the association between the Romanian culture and prevalent parental beliefs and practices support Kagitcibasi's (2017) model. As such, a mixed method study realized by Mone et al., (2014), with a sample of 72 mothers for a quantitative analysis of mother's cultural models and parenting beliefs and 11 mothers for the qualitative analysis of parenting beliefs showed that, at least in the case of middle-class mothers of infants from Romania, we see an autonomous-related cultural model. More specifically, mothers in this sample placed an emphasis on socialization goals associated with both autonomy (e.g., independence, being able to decide on one's own) and relatedness (e.g., being able to harmoniously interact with others, being cooperative). Also, mothers valued parental practices that have been shown to be conducive to both relatedness (e.g., body contact, maintaining physical proximity to the child; Keller & Kartner, 2013) and autonomy of the child (e.g., focusing and adjusting to the child's needs, face-to-face interaction; Keller, 2018).

The shift towards a model of autonomy and relatedness is also supported by evidence provided by a study realized by Gavreliuc and Ciobota (2013) with a sample of undergraduates from Timisoara, a large developed city and university center from Western Romania. The results of this study show that these undergraduates' self-construal presented a mix between autonomy, with high scores for self-reliance and uniqueness, and relatedness, with high scores for inclusion (Gavreliuc & Ciobota, 2013). Participants in this study were not parents, yet this study is indicative of how recent socio-economic developments are associated with changes in the Romanian culture.

A study submitted to publication by Mansour, Summers, Mone, Kathuria, Sanders, and Friedlmeier (2018) compared the conception of child competence in the case of mothers of preschoolers from Romania, India, USA and Israel, and investigated if observed differences were associated with maternal cultural self-construal. The results of the study showed that there was no difference regarding the focus on autonomy at the self-construal level between cultures, but that there was a difference regarding relatedness, with Romanian mothers somewhere between USA

mothers, who scored the lowest on relatedness, and Israeli Arab mothers, who scored the highest. These results suggest that Romanian mothers have a cultural self-construal with a focus on autonomy equal to that of mothers from more individualistic cultures. The results also suggest that Romanian mothers have a focus on relatedness that is higher than that of mothers from individualistic cultures. These findings suggest that Romanian mothers have an autonomous-related cultural model, with a focus on both autonomy and relatedness. Regarding the skills that are essential for a competent child, mothers from all groups placed the most emphasis on social skills. Israeli-Arab and Indian mothers placed more emphasis on proper demeanor, suggesting a focus on heteronomy. Romanian and Israeli Jew mothers placed more emphasis on the development of child's autonomy than on the development of interrelatedness. This suggests that, although Romanian mothers had an autonomous-related model, autonomy had a higher importance at least for this age range. Regarding the association between mother's self-construal and conceptions regarding child competence, the results suggest that there was an association only in the case of Romanian mothers. More specifically, in the case of Romanian mothers, a higher focus on relatedness in one's self-construal was associated with a higher focus on the child's autonomy and less on his cognitive skills. Also, in the case of Romanian mothers, a higher focus on relatedness in one's self-construal was related to a higher emphasis put on the social and physical skills of the child. The fact that a mother's focus on relatedness in her self-construal was associated with a focus on the child's autonomy and on his social skills offers more evidence that there is a coupling of autonomy and relatedness in maternal cultural models. Thus, these results suggest the existence of an autonomous-related cultural model in the case of Romanian mothers.

A study by Wege, Gonzalez, Friedlmeier, Mihalca, Goodrich, and Corapci (2014) investigated which types of emotions are most often depicted in American, Romanian, and Turkish storybooks. The results suggest that in Turkish and Romanian storybooks, as compared to American storybooks, negative powerless emotions (i.e., negative emotions that do not interfere with social interaction - sadness or fear) were more frequently displayed than negative powerful emotions (i.e., negative emotions that interfere with social interaction - anger). Also, the emotional

intensity of the expressions presented in Turkish and Romanian storybooks was lower. This underlines the fact that in the Romanian culture, similar to the Turkish one, there was a higher focus on interpersonal harmony and relatedness, as both a lower intensity of emotional expressions and a more frequent focus on powerless negative emotions facilitate harmonious interpersonal interactions. Interestingly, in the case of Romanian storybooks, powerful emotions were more frequently manifested towards out-group members. This underlines a focus on the need for interpersonal harmony in the in-group context, as this is the context in which the expression of powerful negative emotions was avoided. The results also suggest that negative emotions, and especially powerful ones were more highly devalued in Romanian storybooks than in Turkish storybook, indicating a higher focus on relatedness in this culture.

Another study that suggests individuals from Romania have an autonomous-related model was conducted by Corapci, Friedlmeier, Benga, Strauss, Pitica and Susa (2017). The authors conducted a study in which they examined how mothers of 2-year-old children foster emotional competence in USA, Romania, and Turkey. The authors measured the self-construal of the mothers, to check if their categorization of the mothers from USA as being independent and of the mothers from Romania and Turkey as being autonomous-related was correct. The analysis of the self-construal data confirmed that mothers from Romania had a self-construal that focused on both relatedness and autonomy. Consistent with a focus on relatedness, mothers from Turkey and Romania focused on using reasoning by offering explanations and referring to social norms and empathic understanding of others when the child had an anger episode. Mothers also had a high focus on teaching problem solving skills as a response to anger in each sample, which suggests an underlying focus on autonomy and developing the child's ability to handle situations that he/she faces. In Turkey and Romania, as compared to the USA, there was also a greater focus on comforting and reassuring the child when having an anger episode and less on using time-out and behavioral discipline. This also suggest a focus on relatedness and on close affectionate ties as mechanisms through which the child's emotion is regulated. Regarding sadness eliciting episodes, mothers from all countries similarly endorsed using problem-focused coping strategies and emotion-focused strategies

to alleviate sadness, with a priority on emotion-focused strategies. This suggests the fact that in the case of mothers from all cultures there was a focus on supportively socializing self-reliance. In conformity with another research (Denham, Caal, Bassett, Benga, & Geangu, 2014) that shows the fact that Romanian mothers consider sadness as a sign of weakness, Romanian mothers most frequently showed dismissive responses to sadness. Congruent with this interpretation is the fact that Romanian mothers also showed lower emotion-focused responses and more reasoning in response to sadness than Turkish mothers. This suggests the need to control the expression of sadness, as it is perceived as weakness. In response to the child's fear, all mothers prioritized emotion-focused responses, as a sign that at this age, children are in need of comfort primarily when experiencing fear. Mothers from all samples also manifested problem-focused responses with a low frequency, thus emphasizing the fact that comforting is the primary need they perceive for children of this age when experiencing fear. Another relevant finding for our discussion is that Turkish and Romanian mothers more frequently endorsed reasoning in the context of fear responses. This is important given the fact that the vignettes regarding fear involved the presence of others and thus attempts at reasoning to diminish the response might reflect an emphasis on relatedness and interpersonal harmony. Altogether, the results of the study suggested that mothers from Turkey and Romania emphasized both the autonomy and relatedness of the child while managing his or her negative emotions. Regarding positive emotions, the authors evaluated how mothers respond to the happiness of the child. In accordance with studies that show happiness is more frequent in individualistic cultures, USA mothers more frequently validated and promoted the child's happiness (Corapci et al., 2017). Interestingly, Turkish mothers showed the tendency to upregulate and increase the intensity of happiness more than Romanian mothers and USA mothers, probably reflecting the focus on relatedness coupled with the norm of openly expressing emotion, characteristic for Turkey.

Another study that brings support for Kagitcibasi's (2017) model is the one developed by Friedlmeier and Trommsdorff (2011) in which the authors compared Romanian and USA dyads of mothers and teenage

children regarding similarities in value orientations. They also investigated if parenting practices influenced this similarity. They started from the idea that the value dissimilarity should be greater in the case of Romanian dyads, as Romania has been going through more economic, political, and social changes than the USA in the last period. The results suggested that mothers and teenage children were similar regarding collectivistic values in both cultures. Similarity regarding individualistic values was found only in the case of mothers from the USA. This is supportive of the assumption that Romania is a collectivistic culture in which economic, political, and social changes that have taken place affected individual's focus on heteronomy or obedience, switching it to a focus on autonomy, but did not affect their focus on relatedness.

Other studies bring support for Kagitcibasi's (2017) model, by showing that the cultural model of Romanian mothers has shifted more towards an autonomous-related one and not an independent one, through suggesting that there is still a focus on interdependence in the Romanian culture, despite economic and social advances. These studies show that close family relationships and emotional interdependence are still highly valued in Romania and children have a psychological value for the family (Robila & Krishnakumar, 2004). Other studies show that, as compared to mothers from individualistic cultures, Romanian mothers place a higher emphasis on interdependence. More specifically, a study by Moscardino, Bertelli, and Altoè, (2011) showed that mothers from Romania placed a higher emphasis on interdependence as compared to mothers from Italy.

There are other studies that indicate a higher focus on autonomy in younger generation, but they do not conclusively offer support for Kagitcibasi's (2018) or Greenfield's (2018) model, as they do not investigate if the focus on relatedness is different between generations. An example is the study conducted by Marici (2015), who investigated the effect of parental behaviors on the development of internalizing and externalizing problems, in the case of Romanian adolescents. The study showed that parental control had the most detrimental effect on the development of the child. Parental control has more detrimental effects in cultures in which autonomy is valued and socialized and control is perceived as an illegitimate strategy (Chao, 1994) and as such this study

might suggest that the Romanian culture places an emphasis on autonomy, and control is not perceived as legitimate. These results of Marici (2015) are complemented and supported by those of Marici and Turliuc (2011), who showed that parental punitive discipline was one of the strongest predictors of teenager deviance.

There is also a study conducted by Negru-Subtirica, Damian and Friedlmeier (2015), which showed that younger generations had a higher focus on autonomy. The study was a qualitative one, which investigated what are the differences between emerging adults, born after the communist regime fell, and their parents, born during the communist regime, regarding the factors that are considered important for personal success. Parents considered that characteristics, behaviors, goals influence financial success, but they also mentioned that luck or fate is important. The emerging adults focused only on the influence of personal traits, behaviors, and goals. This shows that, in the case of the emerging adults, there was a higher focus on autonomy and a lower focus on heteronomy, because their personal characteristics and ambitions were considered as being factors that drive financial success, but there was no mentioning of fate or luck, factors external to oneself, as determinants of success.

There are also lines of research that showed the fact that Romanian individuals value autonomy more than those from individualistic cultures. These studies run contrary to both Kagitcibasi's (2018) and Greenfield's (2017) model, as we would expect that individualistic cultures with higher economic development (e.g., USA) would place more focus on independent cultural models than countries with lower economic development. As an example, Frost and Frost (2000) compared 217 Romanian undergraduates with 201 American undergraduates and found that the Romanian undergraduates valued conformity and tradition less than American undergraduates, but wisdom, beauty, peace, social justice, and environmental safety more. Another study by Moza, Lawrie, Gavreliuc, and Kim (2018), that compared the structure of the self-construals of 251 American and 243 Romanian undergraduate students, showed that there was indeed a higher focus on independent self-construals and less on interdependent self-construals. The study also pointed out the fact that the structure of independent and interdependent cultural models differed as a function of culture. For example, there

was a higher connectivity between scores on scales that measure independence and interdependence in the case of American undergraduates than in the case of Romanian undergraduates. Also, vertical interdependent self-construal (i.e., interdependence and focus on hierarchy) included the degree of inclusion of the family in the self only in the case of Romanian undergraduates.

There is also another line of research that suggests the fact that there was no transition towards an autonomous-related model or an independent model with economic development. A survey conducted by Gavreliuc (2012), which included samples from both urban and rural areas, belonging to 3 age cohorts (20 years old, 35 years old, and 50 years old) showed that, across generations, there was a pattern regarding individual's attitudes that suggested the presence of low self-determination, dominant externalism, high interdependence, moderate independence, and high self-esteem (Gavreliuc, 2012). What's more important though is that the younger cohorts were the most dependent and the least self-reliant. This runs counter to the expectation that, with higher educational levels and higher wealth, generations become more independent (Greenfield, 2018) or develop a combination between autonomy and relatedness (Kagitcibasi, 2017). The results of the study also suggest intergenerational stability regarding cultural orientation, despite economic and social progress. The results of the study by Gavreliuc (2012) are congruent with the results of the study by Gavreliuc and Gavreliuc (2012), which showed that, in the case of a sample of 522 secondary school teachers and university teachers from Timisoara, the younger generations had the highest scores of social cynicism, fate control, religiosity, power distance, and external locus of control. This again suggests that, in the case of younger cohorts, contrary to what we would expect to see in a country where there have been economic and social developments, there was lower self-determination, more fatalism, and higher desire and acceptance of hierarchy. Another study by Gavreliuc and Gavreliuc (2014) with 253 secondary school teachers and 269 University teachers from Timișoara showed that university teachers, as compared to secondary school teachers, had higher power distance and higher social cynicism. This suggests that in Romania, increased social capital, educational level, and wealth might be associated not with an increased focus on equality,

self-determination, and acceptance of others, but with an increased focus on hierarchy, obedience, and mistrusts of others. This is again contrary to both the predictions of Greenfield's (2009) model and to the predictions of Kagitcibasi (2017).

David (2015) analyzed data from the European Social Survey (2016) and the World Values Survey (2010-2014) and showed that individuals from Romania have a high need for power, conformism, and achievement. The data also suggested that individuals from Romania manifest low scores for self-determination, benevolence (i.e., a goal of improving the wellbeing of those with whom we interact; Schwartz, 2012), hedonism (i.e., seeking pleasure and gratification; Schwartz, 2012), stimulation (i.e., seeking novelty and challenge; Schwartz, 2010), and universalism (i.e., protection, appreciation, tolerance of individual's and nature's welfare; Schwartz, 2012). This suggests the fact that individuals from Romania have high conformism and low autonomy and, as such, neither Kagitcibasi's (2017) nor Greenfield's (2018) predictions are confirmed by these data. But more interestingly, David (2015) also presented data indicating that individuals from Romania have low trust in others and higher interpersonal distance with regard to strangers and acquaintances than individuals from 42 other countries, but lower interpersonal distance with regard to people that are close to them. This suggests that Romanian individuals' relatedness is manifested and centered on those with whom they have close relationships. On the other hand, there is a high level of mistrusting others and inferring that others have malevolent intentions towards oneself (David, 2015). David (2015) also analyzed Romanian individual's socialization goals based on data obtained from the World Values Survey (2010-2014) and showed that in Romania, compared to the other 9 countries (i.e., China, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine, Russia, USA, Japan, Poland, Germany), individuals mentioned less frequently the need of the child to develop a sense of responsibility, thrift, determination, altruism, obedience, independence. In exchange, individuals from Romania mentioned more frequently the need for the child to develop creativity, religious beliefs, and more hard work. This data suggests that there is a low focus on heteronomy in child socialization, but also a low focus on independence.

Bond and Lun (2014) also presented Romania as a country characterized by heterodetermination (i.e., focus on religion and obedience; Jing & Bond, 2015), not autodetermination (i.e., focus on autonomy and independence; Jing & Bond, 2015).

Friedlmeier and Gavreliuc (2013) discussed evidence that suggests the fact that Romania is rather a traditionalistic society, with an increased importance of family. The study also showed that parents from this culture more frequently mentioned socialization goals related to hard work and religious faith, rather than independence and creativity, as is the case of other European countries. These results were based on European Values survey data from 1993, 1999 and 2005. Another interesting finding was that the proportion of individuals who had post-materialistic values (i.e., a focus on self-expression and autonomy rather than materialistic values) remained practically unchanged from 1993 to 2005. This finding is interesting, because we would expect that with economic development individuals would move from materialistic values to post-materialistic values (Inglehart, 2008). There was also a high degree of faith in the Church as a provider of solutions for family and moral issues, again suggestive of a traditionalistic culture. As a possible and surprising sign of a focus on self-determination, the participants also manifested self-direction, with two thirds of them suggesting that they can plan and manage their own lives.

Other evidence that supports the fact that there hasn't been a transition towards an increased focus on autonomy and an increased prevalence of independent or autonomous-related models comes from a study conducted in Romania named "Transylvania Adolescent Identity Development Study" (Negru-Subtirica & Pop, 2016; Pop, Negru-Subtirica, & Opre, 2015). The Transylvania Adolescent Identity Development Study is a three-wave longitudinal study that spanned the length of an academic year and that focused on adolescent identity development and its correlates. Negru-Subtirica, Pop, and Crocetti (2015) reported the results of this study that focused on the associations between adolescent career adaptability (i.e., general adaptive resources and strategies that individuals use when engaging with critical situations) and vocational identity. Pop, Negru-Subtirica, Crocetti, Opre and Meeus (2016) reported the results of this study that focused on the associations between identity

processes and academic achievement. Negru-Subtirica, Pop, Luyckx, Dezutter, and Steger (2016) reported the results of this study that focused on associations between identity processes regarding global future plans and meaning in life. As Negru-Subtirica and Damian (2018) point out, there are several results presented in these research papers that highlight interesting patterns regarding adolescent identity development, that are relevant for our present discussion. Firstly, the studies showed that identity commitment, as reflected in educational commitment (i.e., enduring choices made in the educational domain and the self-confidence associated with these choices; Crocetti et al., 2015; Pop et al., 2016) and identification with vocational commitments (i.e., the process through which the adolescent devotes himself/herself to a vocational choice that has been taken; Porfeli, Lee, Vondracek, & Weigold, 2001; Negru-Subtirica et al., 2015), decreased over the school year. Commitment making and identification with commitment related to general future plans also decreased (Negru-Subtirica et al., 2016). Negru-Subtirica and Damian (2018) suggest that this happens because the vocational and educational choices and commitments of the teenagers are guided by external factors, due to a rigid educational system, in which personal interests have a small influence on the academic subjects to which the student is exposed or due to guidance from parents. The results of the Transylvanian Identity Development study suggest that identity exploration processes also decline over the academic year, with a decrease in in-depth exploration (i.e., process by which adolescents monitor and think about their current commitments; Meeus, 2011) of vocational (Negru-Subtirica et al., 2015) and educational options (Pop et al., 2016) and in in-breadth exploration of options related to future plans (i.e., process by which adolescents actively explore different paths for future development; Luyckx, Goosens, & Soenens, 2006; Negru-Subtirica et al., 2016). The findings of the study show that there was also an increase in ruminative exploration (i.e., the appearance of doubts regarding the possibility of making mistakes while choosing, Luyckx et al., 2006) of options related to future plans (Negru-Subtirica et al., 2016). These results underline the fact that Romanian adolescents have a low focus on autonomy and independence and they have difficulties in exploring their choices as a function of their goals, desires and motivations. The results also suggest

that there is a high rate of adolescents that question their identity commitments regarding the educational and vocational domain as the year continues. This profile of an adolescent whose identity commitments are weakened during the academic year and who doesn't explore identity options, and reconsiders the educational and vocational commitments he/she made is suggestive of an adolescent that has a low sense of personal agency and autonomy and who lives in a rigid environment which constrains his/her actions. This suggests that the new generations have a low focus on autonomy and live in an environment that is not conducive to the development of a sense of personal agency, but rather to the development of obedience and conformism.

5. Concluding remarks

To summarize, we would like to point out that most studies that have focused on the association between recent socio-economic changes in the case of Romania, Romanian culture and prevalent parental beliefs and practices have concluded that there has been a shift towards an autonomous-relational model. Other studies suggest that there has been an increase in autonomy, but provide us with no evidence regarding how the focus on relatedness has changed. This underlines the need of future studies to assess the impact of socio-economic change on both autonomy and relatedness. Yet, other studies suggest that there is still a focus on heteronomy and relatedness in the Romanian culture and that the effect of socio-economic change, at least in Romania, isn't towards a greater emphasis on an independent or an autonomous relational model. These divergent sets of results suggest that the effects of socio-economic changes aren't as straightforward or linear as current models would suggest. They also indicate the need for more research that identifies reasons or moderating variables responsible for the divergent results.

One of the reasons for the divergent results might be the fact that socio-economic change might differentially impact a society, based on the structure of its culture. For example, Mone, Benga and Opre (2016) provide evidence that indicates the fact that a country's standing on Power Distance moderates the relationship between the educational

level of individuals from that country and the socialization goals they endorse. The results of the study showed that the difference between those with high versus low education in valuing obedience and self-expression was smaller in high Power Distance cultures, than in low Power Distance cultures. As such, this might imply that an increase in the level of education in high power distance cultures such as Romania might lead to small modifications in the degree to which parents endorse obedience.

Interpreting the divergent results of these lines of research must also be based on the fact that economic and social development differentially impacts different communities from a society or country. As such, in rural communities from Romania, where education level and wealth are still lower and extended families with many children and young age at childbirth are still frequent, we still expect to observe interdependent cultural models with associated parenting strategies (Keller, 2018). This assertion is backed up by a study realized by Neculaesei and Tatarusanu (2008), which showed that there are differences between historical regions of Romania (i.e., Transylvania, Moldova, and Walachia) regarding their standing on Hofstede et al (2010) cultural dimensions. As such, although all three regions were high on Power Distance, Moldova was the highest and Transylvania the lowest. Also, although the level of Individualism was low overall, the results of the study suggested that there were differences between historical regions, with Transylvania being the most Individualistic and Moldova the least. The study also showed that although all three regions were characterized by low Masculinity, Walachia was the least Masculine and Moldova the most. Regarding Uncertainty Avoidance, we observe that Moldova and Walachia were high on this dimension, while Transylvania was characterized by low Uncertainty Avoidance. Regarding Long-Term orientation, Moldova and Walachia were the most Short-Term oriented, while Transylvania was the least. Regarding Indulgence, the authors observed that Walachia and Transylvania were characterized by high Indulgence, while Moldova was characterized by low Indulgence. These regional variations might be a product of the fact that there are variations in the history, ethnic compositions, religious structure, and economical as well as social development of the dif-

ferent regions. The study by Neculaesei and Tatarusanu (2008) corresponds with the prediction of Greenfield's theory (2009), as Transylvania, the region with the highest Individualism, lowest Power Distance, highest Indulgence, and lowest Uncertainty Avoidance, highest Long-Term orientation also has a high level of economic development (INSE, 2017). The assertion that the divergent results are caused by a differential impact of socio-economic change on different communities from a society is also supported by the fact that the studies which supported Kagitcbasi's (2018) claim were mostly conducted with samples of individuals from the middle or upper class, while studies that didn't provide evidence of a shift towards increased autonomy used more diverse samples. Future studies should investigate different communities from Romania and investigate how economic, social, and political change differentially impact their cultural values and prevalent parental beliefs and practices.

Another reason for the divergent results might be that economic and social changes also differentially affect individuals of different ages. Friedlmeier (2006) compared how adolescents and their parents from 100 families perceive the changes that are taking place in Romania. More specifically, it was evaluated whether they perceived their future as being uncertain along with their trust in others. Older samples perceived the future as being more uncertain and they had lower trust in others. Mothers and daughters perceived the future as being more uncertain than fathers and sons. This might be influenced by a more traditional distribution of gender roles and more difficulties in employment in the case of women (Friedlmeier & Gavreliuc, 2013). This suggests that economic, social, and political changes influence individuals differently, as a function of their age and even of their gender.

The discrepant findings might also be explained by the diverging methodologies used by different researchers. It is important that future studies will be conducted on a nationally representative sample, comprised of individuals from different communities, followed longitudinally. This type of design would allow us to longitudinally trace how socio-economic change is associated with variations in the Romanian culture and prevalent parental beliefs and practices, and to compare the impact these changes have on different communities. Other types of designs

that would be useful are studies that employ cohorts from different historical epochs, to have a more direct test of how the Romanian society and prevalent parenting beliefs and practices have been modified by socio-economic and political change.

In conclusion, the present review brings important contributions, as it is the first synthesis of studies that have investigated Romanian culture and its impact on parental beliefs and practices. In addition, it specifically emphasizes the fact that current models of cultural and family change need to be nuanced.

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