

Emotion Socialization by Early Childhood Educators: Conceptual Models from Psychology

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Abstract

Early childhood educators play an important role in helping children to understand and to express emotions. In this paper we highlight the small number of studies in the U.S. concerning the goals and strategies of early childhood educators with respect to emotion socialization, and provide personal observations of emotion socialization practices in two preschools in Hong Kong (PRC) and Memphis (USA). We then propose a conceptual model that integrates LeVine's work in cultural anthropology with psychological research on emotion socialization. In this model, adults share a universal goal that children develop emotional competence (i.e., skills for emotion expression, knowledge, and regulation), and this goal is achieved through universal processes (namely, through adults' responses to emotions, modeling, emotion conversations, and meta-emotion philosophies). However, these universal processes are enacted through practices that are culture-specific. This conceptual model provides a useful heuristic for examining early childhood educators' emotion socialization practices across cultural contexts.¹⁾²⁾

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Early childhood educators play a critical role in the transmission of cultural values and practices. In the United States, there has been a focus since the 1930s on teachers as agents of “social education,” influencing “characteristics and abilities central to children’s future roles as citizens and workers, including those related to being socially responsible and responsive to group goals, and to behaving in prosocial, cooperative ways with peers” (Wentzel & Looney, 2007, p.382). In many countries, “best practices” with regard to socialization have been an important focus of policy-making.

There has been considerable research on teachers’ roles in the socialization of children, particularly with regard to academic achievement and general social competence. However, there has been relatively little focus on teachers’ roles in socializing children’s emotional competence. This lack of research stands in stark contrast to early educators’ obvious interest in fostering children’s emotional competence and in developing curricula that reflect this priority (Hyson, 1994, 2002).

This paper examines a small body of literature on early childhood educators as agents of emotion socialization—that is, early childhood educators’ roles in helping children acquire emotion-related skills to function within social groups and society. The focus here is not on socialization as a whole, but rather the specific processes that are most closely tied to emotion, with the assumption that emotional competence is a key component of overall social competence. Specifically, emotion socialization is understood to be the process by which children develop emotion competence, with emotion competence in turn influencing social competence. In other words, emotion socialization can be viewed as influencing children’s development of social competence indirectly through its effect on emotion competence. These processes have been outlined by Eisenberg, Cumberland, and Spinrad’s (1998) heuristic model, which proposes that emotion-related parenting practices impact children’s social competence through their effect on emotion competence. Emotion competence can thus be seen as an important educational goal, both for its important role in social

competence, which has been found to be an important educational goal (Ladd, 2007), and because of the association with other emotion-related outcomes (i.e., emotion problems and disorders; Denham, Bassett, & Wyatt, 2007). In reviewing the literature in this area, it should be noted that many U.S. researchers refer to three- and four-year old children as “preschoolers” and five-year-olds as “kindergarteners,” although the term “kindergartner” would be used more generically in other countries to describe children from ages 3 through 5.

Components of Emotional Competence

Early childhood teachers are keenly aware of which children are emotionally competent and which are not, but it may be difficult to articulate the set of skills shown by the emotionally competent child. Saarni (1999) provided a general definition of emotional competence as adaptive emotional responses that help the child reach goals, cope with challenges, and engage effectively in social interaction. In psychological research on the development of emotional competence, this large set of skills is commonly organized into three categories, summarized as emotion expression, emotion knowledge, and emotion regulation (Denham et al., 2007).

First, emotionally competent children *experience* a full range of positive and negative emotions and *express* these emotions in ways that are appropriate to the context and culture (Denham, 1998; Saarni, 1999). Thus, emotion expression consists of children’s experience and expression of emotion. Emotional expression necessarily varies across development. Compared to younger children, preschoolers express less negative emotion and are better able to express emotions that are appropriate for the situation (Cole, Michel, & Teti, 1994). Skills for emotion expression in preschool have also been found to predict teacher and peer ratings of social competence in kindergarten (Denham et al., 2003).

Second, emotionally competent children *understand* their own emotions and understand other people’s emotions. They recognize specific emotions and are able to

label these emotions, explain their cause, and understand when they are appropriate to express. In other words, emotion knowledge consists of recognizing and understanding emotions, including the details and circumstances surrounding these emotions. Several studies of preschool children in the U.S. have found this aspect of emotional competence to be correlated with greater social competence (Garner & Waajid, 2008), fewer social problems and lower social withdrawal (Schultz, Izard, Ackerman, & Youngstrom, 2001), and higher levels of pretend play with same-sex peers (Lindsey & Colwell, 2003).

Finally, emotionally competent children are able to *regulate* their experience and expression of emotions in socially appropriate ways. When the experience of emotion becomes too intense, children find ways to reduce the emotional arousal to a more manageable level so that they can continue to engage in the activities of daily life. Children also learn to regulate the expression of emotion, modulating emotional behaviors so that they are socially appropriate for the context. Thus, emotion regulation refers to the management of emotional arousal and behaviors. Research in the U.S. has shown that skills for regulating emotion in socially appropriate ways are correlated with preschoolers' adjustment (Shields et al., 2001) and kindergartners' academic success and productivity in the classroom (Graziano, Reavis, Keane, & Calkins, 2007). Longitudinal research has shown that preschoolers' emotion regulation skills predict behavioral self-regulation in kindergarten, which in turn predicts greater academic achievement in kindergarten (Howse, Calkins, Anastopoulos, Keane, & Shelton, 2003).

Although these three components of emotional competence – emotion expression, emotion knowledge, and emotion regulation – are sometimes considered separately, they are interrelated skills and are likely inter-dependent both in terms of their development and their effects. Denham et al. (2003) provided perhaps the strongest demonstration of these inter-relations in their longitudinal study of preschoolers' emotional and social competence. Emotional expressiveness, emotion

knowledge, and emotion regulation were assessed in a sample of 143 three- and four-year-old children. Social competence was measured by sociometric likability and teacher ratings both concurrently and later in kindergarten (age 5). Latent variable modeling documented that in preschool, children who expressed more positive emotions were also more knowledgeable about emotions and better able to regulate emotions. However, these different aspects of emotional competence did not show the same patterns of association with social competence measured at the two time points. Emotion regulation emerged as a significant predictor of social competence in preschool, especially for children who expressed low levels of negative emotion. By contrast, preschoolers' general emotion expressiveness and emotion knowledge were important for social competence one year later, in kindergarten. These findings, together with the other results mentioned in this section, suggest that emotional competence in preschool represents several inter-related skills that lay the foundation for social competence in subsequent years.

Processes of Emotion Socialization

There are many ways that an adult (such as a teacher) might influence children's emotional competence. In the psychological literature, these have been conceptualized in terms of three key processes: (1) immediate responses to the child's emotions; (2) modeling of emotion-relevant behaviors; and (3) discussions with the child about emotions; recent psychological literature has drawn attention to a fourth process: (4) the indirect effect of the adult's "meta-emotion philosophy" or beliefs and feelings about emotions. Some of these processes involve deliberate attempts by the adult to foster the child's emotional competence. However, many of these processes can be considered implicit in that adults teach children about emotions naturally in day-to-day interactions, without a conscious focus on shaping emotional competence (Denham et al., 2007).

One process of emotion socialization occurs through adults' immediate responses

to children's expressions of emotion. Generally, adults' responses to children's emotions have been characterized as supportive or nonsupportive; in some respects these categories can be thought of as reinforcing or punishing further expression of emotion. Supportive responses are those that convey that it is all right to have emotions, that the child can cope with the emotion, and that the adult is interested, concerned, and not overwhelmed by the child's emotion. Supportive responses also help children address, cope with and manage their emotions. By contrast, nonsupportive responses are those that discourage the child from experiencing and expressing emotions, and thus are unhelpful in teaching the child to cope with and manage emotions. These include being critical or punitive, becoming even more upset than the child, or ignoring the emotion altogether. A rare example of research on this process in the context of early childhood education (Ahn, 2005b) found that U.S. daycare teachers tended to verbally reinforce (or encourage) children's expressions of positive emotions, such as smiles and laughter, more often than expressions of negative emotions.

A second process of emotion socialization occurs through modeling. Adults' expressions of emotion, reactions to their own and others' emotions, and ways of coping with emotion provide important models of emotional behavior that the child may then imitate. There has been little research on this topic in the context of early childhood education; however, research on teachers' socialization of social competence supports teachers' use of modeling as a socialization strategy (Rhee, 2007). Although preschool and elementary school teachers do appear to make active efforts to regulate their own emotions in the classroom, their reasons for doing so appear to be related more to the benefits for classroom management and teacher-student relationships than to an effort to shape children's emotional competence (Sutton, Mudrey-Camino, & Knight, 2009).

A third mechanism of emotion socialization occurs through discussions with children about emotion-relevant topics. Adults deliberately and inadvertently socialize children's emotional competence in the context of these discussions. For example,

Ahn (2005a) found that daycare providers in the U.S. commonly initiated discussions with children to help them label and understand the causes of emotions. However, systematic research on this topic has not been reported in the education literature in the U.S.

Some researchers, most notably John Gottman and colleagues (Gottman, Katz, & Hooven, 1997), have added a fourth factor that may be an overarching influence on the three emotion socialization processes described so far. Specifically, Gottman and colleagues have pointed to the importance of the adult's "meta-emotion philosophy," namely the adult's "emotions about emotions," as an influence on emotion socialization practices. Adults' comfort with their own and others' emotions, their beliefs about acceptable ways to express and cope with emotions, and their goals for helping their children to be emotionally competent are all thought to contribute to emotion socialization. Hyson and Molinaro (2001) have discussed similar factors as an influence on early childhood educators, including teachers' beliefs about children's emotional development and about how adults influence that development.

The meta-emotion model assumes that adults' beliefs and feelings about emotion do not affect children directly, but are translated into emotion socialization practices that can foster or hinder children's emotional competence. Adults who are averse to emotional experience and expression may convey this aversion through critical, punitive, and dismissive reactions to children's emotions, through modeling avoidance, and through teaching the importance of emotion suppression. In this example, the adult's meta-emotion philosophy, as expressed through the adult's behavior, thus creates a similarly problematic model of emotions in the child. On the other hand, adults who are very open to emotional experience and expression are likely to encourage this aspect of human life in children as well.

To summarize, multiple emotion socialization processes are thought to influence children's emotional competence. Importantly, however, these processes may be enacted in different ways depending on the context. One context is interpersonal, in

that socialization will “look different” when it is enacted by peers, siblings, parents, or teachers. For our purposes, the distinction between teacher-child and parent-child interactions is quite salient. Although most research on emotion socialization in the U.S. has focused on parents, the findings from this literature do not necessarily generalize to teachers, who interact with children under very different social and structural constraints. At this point, however, the research on parents as agents of emotion socialization far outnumbers the research on teachers in this same role.

The Cultural Context of Emotion Socialization

So far our focus has been on psychological models of emotional competence and the processes of emotion socialization, acknowledging the paucity of research on emotion socialization by teachers (relative to research on parents). An even bigger gap in our understanding of emotion socialization concerns cultural variation in how adults socialize children to be emotionally competent, what Cole and Tan (2007, p. 517) called the “enculturation of emotions.” Although there has been cultural research on certain aspects of children’s emotional competence (such as reading others’ emotions), there is little cultural research on emotion socialization by parents and even less on emotion socialization by teachers. This lack of research is due perhaps to the lack of a comprehensive model of culture’s role in emotion socialization. Nevertheless there are clear reasons to expect both between-culture and within-culture variation in teachers’ emotion socialization practices, reflected in variation in the focus of adults’ conversations about emotions (Wang, 2003), parents’ reliance on practices such as shaming to promote socialization (Fung, 1999), varying expectations of what children of different ages can do, the relative degree to which adults express positive and negative emotions, and adults’ reasons for engaging in various socialization practices (Cole & Tan, 2007).

Although there is a greater focus on culture and emotion socialization now than in the past, there is still a great deal of work to do in order to map out common and

specific processes across and within cultures. A study by Hyson and Lee (1996) provides one example of research on this topic in early childhood education. These researchers developed a measure called the Caregivers' Beliefs About Feelings scale, to assess early childhood practitioners' beliefs about emotions. Interestingly, they found a similar factor structure in U.S. and Korean samples, suggesting thematic commonalities. Not surprisingly, they also found cultural differences at the item level, reflecting distinct differences in beliefs about specific emotions and socialization practices.

A Mother's Experience in Hong Kong and Memphis

To this point we have worn our academic hats to examine the research literature on emotion socialization by early childhood educators, and to consider the relevance of culture in understanding teachers' influence on children's emotional competence. Now we examine these topics from a more personal perspective. In 2009 the first author (KMK) spent a sabbatical semester at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Following is a first-person account of her experiences at her daughter's preschool in Hong Kong.

During my family's four months in Hong Kong, my daughter, who was two at the time, attended the Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC). This school was similar in many important respects to the school she had been attending in Memphis, the Barbara K. Lipman Early Childhood School and Research Institute. Both were "lab schools" that were affiliated with teacher training programs and that afforded opportunities for research. Both served about 100 children, with a similar teacher-student ratio. Families in both schools were mostly middle class; some were affiliated with the institute or university and others came from the community. Both schools charged tuition. Both endorsed a constructivist model of early childhood education.

Despite the similarities between my daughter's two preschools that year, there were inevitably many differences, and here I will focus on differences related to the children's emotional responsiveness and expression. Things that surprised me in Hong Kong were informative not so much because they represented Hong Kong culture, but because they helped me identify my own assumptions about emotional competence and the socialization practices that help children to attain it.

The first example occurred on my daughter's first day at the ECLC. She had just picked up a toy when a classmate came over to play and gently took the toy out of my daughter's hands. My daughter burst into tears, and her distress quickly became a group event as a small group of children clustered around her to see what was going on and to comfort her. My observations of the U.S. classroom had highlighted something different. Children would tend to respond to each other's distress on an individual basis, often showing the same level of concern and interest but more in the context of a dyadic rather than group interaction.

The second example may have something to do with the first. This example also has to do with crying, although of course crying is not the only indicator of children's emotional functioning in the classroom. This example reflects something I realized only over time. The two-year-olds in the ECLC rarely cried. My daughter, by contrast, cried rather frequently in Hong Kong. Some of the crying could be attributed to the stress of a new environment, one that entailed significant language barriers. But crying was not unusual for her, nor for her classmates in Memphis.

A third example was something I experienced every afternoon when I picked my daughter up from the ECLC. The parents would wait outside as a group. When my daughter and I saw each other, we both lit up with big smiles; she ran to me and I grabbed her in my arms, kissing and hugging her. This behavior stood out in stark contrast to that of almost all of the other parents and children, and I felt self-conscious about our rowdy behavior. Finally, one day it dawned on me: My daughter and I were Americans.

These observations raised many questions for me about how the children in the two schools, already by age two, had learned to behave so differently. What were their parents and teachers doing to socialize them to these different expressions of emotional competence? Inspired by Margaret Wong's (2008) study of preschoolers' learning in Hong Kong and Canada, I began to develop plans to design and conduct a study in each school, tracking teachers' reactions to children's crying. Then a colleague pointed out that there would be little to observe in the Chinese classroom, because the children so rarely cried!

How can we best understand the different patterns of emotion expression seen in these examples from Hong Kong and Memphis? In analyses of differences, a common starting point is to focus on the distinction between "eastern" and "western" societies. Descriptions such as "collectivistic" for eastern societies and "individualistic" for western societies may provide a useful heuristic or starting point, but a categorical framework falls short when we attend to within-culture variability and the overlap between cultures (Rogoff, 2003). Instead, we must use our observations to generate hypotheses about the specific processes of emotion socialization within each culture.

It is commonly observed that many adults in the U.S. promote children's emotional expression, whereas adults in China tend to prefer that children show emotional reserve. Indeed, cross-cultural differences in children's emotional expression are apparent even in infancy (Cole & Tan, 2007). Importantly, however, the key distinction may not be adults' promotion of emotional expression or restraint, but rather a more specific process such as how children are socialized to be interpersonally sensitive. In China, for example, children are often taught that emotional displays are disruptive to the group (Bond, 1991); this socialization practice may promote a lessened focus on one's emotions and a greater focus on interpersonal process. This possibility is consistent with the finding that 4- to 8-year-old Chinese children were more accurate than Australian children in recognizing facial emotions (Markham & Wang, 1996). In this example we see that rather than relying on a gen-

eral heuristic of “east vs. west,” it would be more fruitful to pursue research on the extent to which parents in either culture promote a focus on self vs. others. What is important is not so much the group differences but rather the connection between specific practices and specific outcomes, regardless of group.

LeVine’s Model: Commonalities and Specifics

Robert LeVine’s work in the field of anthropology provides a helpful conceptual frame for understanding similarities and differences in socialization across cultural contexts. In several noteworthy studies of the cultural aspects of parenthood and child development in African, Asian, Latin American and other societies, LeVine noted that different cultures have common parenting goals: to protect the child, to provide for the child, and to prepare the child to be an adult member of the society. However, different cultures engage in different parenting practices as a means to reach these goals. These practices are shaped by the immediate cultural conditions. Importantly, practices that are useful in one culture may make no sense in another culture (LeVine, 1988).

LeVine’s general model of universal parenting goals and culture-specific parenting practices is a useful heuristic for conceptualizing more specific processes related to emotional socialization. Thus we suggest that the logic of LeVine’s model can help organize the literature on emotion socialization and emotional competence, particularly as it pertains to culture. This conceptual framework allows us to maintain the important distinction between universal goals and culture-specific practices but also to incorporate the psychological models that are the basis of much emotion socialization research.

First, LeVine notes that the *general goals* of parenting are similar across cultures, and we would expect the same to be true of the goals of emotion socialization. These universal goals would be helping the child to acquire general skills in emotion expression, emotion knowledge, and emotion regulation. Second, in LeVine’s model

parenting *practices* vary by culture similarly, emotion socialization practices reflect culturally based emotion-related values and beliefs (Eisenberg et al., 1998). In these two respects LeVine's model of parenting provides a very useful way to conceptualize the psychological research on emotion socialization.

However, the psychological literature offers an additional perspective that also may be useful in organizing future research on emotion socialization and culture. This perspective focuses on the *processes* (or mechanisms) by which adults' goals and practices shape child competence; in the case of emotion socialization, these processes, as reviewed earlier, would include adults' responses to emotion, modeling, teaching, and the influence of meta-emotion philosophies. We would argue that these are universal emotion socialization processes that influence children's emotional competence. That is, the world over, children's emotional competence (as defined in any particular culture) is shaped by how adults respond to children's emotions, model emotion-related behaviors, teach children emotion-related skills, and express their own attitudes about emotion.

One way to integrate this perspective with LeVine's model is to consider the processes of influence as an intermediary between universal goals and culture-specific practices (see Figure 1 for this model). That is, the goal of emotional competence is universal, and the processes that shape emotional competence are universal, but these processes are enacted through socialization practices that are suited for the culture. For example, emotional competence (a universal goal) may be influenced through the mechanism of modeling (a universal process), and what is modeled are culturally-specific practices such as emotional expressiveness or emotional reserve. Adding this intermediary level can provide a useful way to organize what we know and what we want to learn about a large number of specific socialization practices.

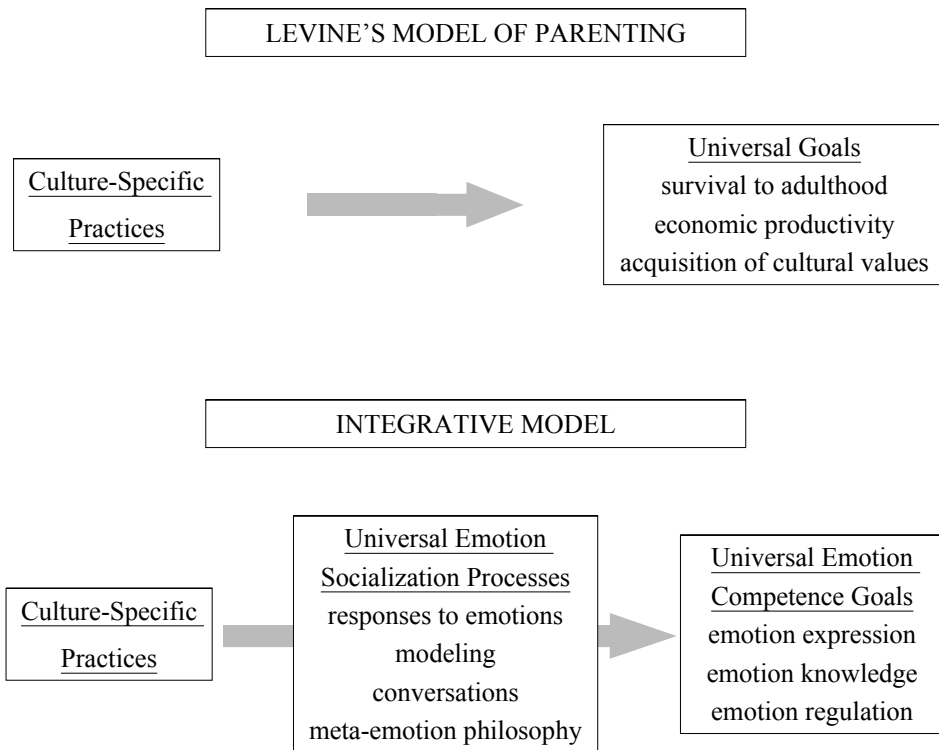


Figure 1. Integration of Levine's model of parenting and the psychological literature on emotion socialization by parents.

Future Work on Emotion Socialization and Early Childhood Education

We have covered a lot of territory here, and unfortunately the paucity of research on emotion socialization in early childhood education means that only a small part of this territory has been directly related to education. In addition, the work we have cited was almost entirely from the U.S. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that the conceptual models and research we have reviewed may be helpful to early childhood educators in future research and application.

One important gap in the literature on emotion socialization by early childhood educators is a conceptual model that builds on current research and would guide future research. For example, studies in education often examine the teacher-child

relationship as an important predictor of children's social competence and academic achievement. A representative study in this area is Garner and Waajid's (2008) work showing that *teacher-child closeness* predicted preschoolers' emotion knowledge, which in turn predicted children's social competence in the classroom. However, teacher-child relationship quality is not captured in the list of four processes discussed earlier (responses, modeling, teaching, and meta-emotion philosophy). The teacher-child relationship may overlap with some of these processes, may be an overarching construct (similar to meta-emotion), or may be an independent construct. A conceptual model that delineates hypothesized associations among important constructs will be helpful in furthering research on emotion socialization in the context of early childhood education.

One conceptual model that has been influential in education for many decades is Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives, a holistic approach that emphasized cognitive, emotional and psychomotor skills relevant for educational attainment. This model may have limited value for studying emotion socialization in early childhood, however. First, the cognitive component of this model has received the most attention, with relatively less attention to the emotional objectives of education (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964). Second, the focus is clearly on the child as a learner, rather than on adults' strategies for shaping children's emotional competence in the promotion of learning.

Measurement provides another avenue for future research. Teachers would benefit from an efficient method of assessing children's skills for emotion expression, emotion knowledge, and emotion regulation, similar to the Social Attributes Checklist used to assess general social competence (which includes some aspects of emotional competence) in early childhood (McClellan & Katz, 1992). A simple checklist could help teachers specify children's emotion skills and generate ideas for helping the child in the classroom. A more thorough measure, based on rating scales or behavior observations, could be useful in comparing a child's scores to norms for same-sex

and same-age children. This type of measure would be useful both for practitioners and researchers. However, what is missing here is a measure of early childhood teachers' strategies for emotion socialization; although information on these strategies has been gathered through qualitative research, there is no quick checklist with which teachers can evaluate their own and others' responses to emotion, modeling, and emotion-related discussions.

Research on emotion socialization in early childhood education has clear implications for intervention in classroom settings. Evaluation of one small-scale intervention in the U.S. attests to the potential impact of interventions designed to shape teachers' emotion socialization practices. In this program, early childhood teachers were trained to introduce activities focused on relationship building, emotion understanding, and social problem solving. Children's social and emotional competence was assessed through observation and teacher questionnaires after the 32 week program. Compared to children whose teachers did not participate in the program, children in the treatment condition showed lower negative emotion, were more socially engaged, took more initiative in positive peer activities, and showed more improvement in social competence (Denham, 1996). A similar study was conducted by researchers from the Baoshan District Kindergarten Research Group in Shanghai (Qiu & Liu, 2004), who implemented and evaluated an emotion-centered early childhood education curriculum. Videotaped observations, interviews, and parent and teacher reports showed improvements in the quality of children's emotional expression, emotional behavior, and emotional language during the course of the school year.

In the U.S., the PATHS curriculum (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) is used in many preschool and elementary school classrooms to promote social and emotional competence. This program has been implemented in both rural and urban schools, in both general and special education classrooms. The results of multiple randomized trials over a 20 year period indicate program-related increases in emotion knowledge and social competence, decreases in internalizing and externalizing prob-

lems, and more harmonious classrooms (Greenberg & Kusché, 2006). Finally, Zippy's Friends is an internationally recognized and extensively evaluated program that has been shown to foster the social and emotional competence of preschool and elementary school children (Bale & Mishara, 2004). This program is endorsed by the World Health Organization and has been implemented in 19 countries, including Singapore and China (Partnership for Children, 2010).

Teacher training was a critical component of all the interventions just mentioned. In addition to formal training in the context of intervention programs, another important area of applied focus would be ongoing teacher training (Ahn & Stifter, 2006), focused on practical skills for promoting children's emotional competence. In the field of family psychology, parents' active strategies for teaching emotion skills and promoting children's emotional wellbeing are called "emotion coaching" (Gottman & Declaire, 1997) these strategies are assumed to be "teachable" to parents, and teachers may also benefit from learning to be "emotion coaches." In the field of education, Hyson (1994, 2002) has provided many insights into building an "emotion-centered" curriculum in early childhood education, for example by encouraging teachers to model genuine appropriate emotions, honoring children's expressive styles, and using positive emotion in the service of learning.

In this section we have outlined avenues for future research on emotion socialization in early childhood education, focusing on conceptualization, measurement, and intervention. We have also highlighted the value of teacher education in this area. In both research and practice, there appears to be the familiar "figure and ground" problem. That is, much of our focus is on the child's emotional competence as a characteristic or outcome, and there is not enough focus on the interpersonal context and processes that shape this competence. A shift in focus would mean more attention on teachers as agents of emotion socialization.

Conclusion

In this paper we have examined conceptual models and empirical research on the socialization of children's emotional competence. Most of this work has come from fields other than education, and much research remains to be done in order to understand how teachers socialize emotions, how teachers can socialize emotions more effectively, and how teachers can be encouraged to use new socialization strategies. This paper offers a conceptual model that integrates LeVine's work in cultural anthropology with psychological research on emotion socialization to guide future research. In this model, adults share a universal goal that children develop emotional competence, a goal which is achieved through universal emotion socialization processes; however, these universal processes are enacted through culture-specific practices.

This model can thus help children's emotional competence by organizing this literature and guiding how past research can be applied across cultural contexts, in addition to guiding future research on children's emotion socialization in early childhood education. A conceptual model such as this will help address gaps in research that will be useful for understanding the role that teachers already play in children's emotional development, as well as how they can play a role in interventions for children's emotional difficulties. Because early intervention is preferable, early childhood educators must be at the forefront of this new wave of research.

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