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# Personality, social values, and marital satisfaction as predictors of parents' rearing styles<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT.** Since parents' rearing styles may affect adolescents' behavior and socialization, it is relevant to know how some psychological variables are related to parent rearing styles. This study is aimed to explore this point by analysing altogether parents' rearing styles (EMBU-P), social values (social power, order, benevolence, and conservatism-liberalism), Big-five personality traits, and marital satisfaction (consensus, affection, satisfaction, and cohesion) in parents of adolescents. This is a prospective study based in correlational analysis method. It was found that rearing styles defined by warmth and acceptance are related to a responsible and emotionally stable personality profile, high marital satisfaction, and the preference for prosocial values. On the contrary, overprotected and favouring rearing styles are related to low friendliness, low emotional stability and low openness, poor marital adjustment with a lack of cohesion, and social values defined by a lack of benevolence, and the preference for social power.

**KEYWORDS.** Rearing styles. EMBU. Marital satisfaction. Dyadic adjustment. Big-five personality traits. Social values. Conservatism-liberalism. *Ex post facto* study.

**RESUMEN.** Los estilos de crianza parentales pueden afectar la conducta y socialización de los adolescentes, por lo que es de interés conocer cómo algunas variables

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psicológicas de los padres se relacionan con los estilos de crianza. Este estudio tiene el objetivo de analizar los estilos de crianza de los padres, valores sociales (prestigio social, orden, benevolencia, y conservadurismo-liberalismo), los cinco grandes factores de personalidad, y la satisfacción de pareja (acuerdo general, afecto, satisfacción, y cohesión) en los padres de adolescentes. Este es un estudio prospectivo basado en método de análisis correlacional. Se encontró que los estilos educativos definidos por el cariño y aceptación se relacionan con los rasgos de personalidad como responsabilidad y estabilidad emocional, alta satisfacción de pareja y preferencia por valores prosociales. Al contrario, los estilos de crianza de sobreprotección y favoritismo se relacionan con baja amabilidad y baja apertura el poco ajuste de pareja con falta de cohesión y valores sociales definidos por falta de benevolencia y preferencia por valores de prestigio social.

**PALABRAS CLAVE.** Estilos de crianza. *EMBU*. Satisfacción de pareja. Ajuste diádico. Cinco-grandes rasgos de personalidad. Valores sociales. Conservadurismo-liberalismo. Estudio *ex post facto*.

**RESUMO.** Os estilos de educação parental podem afectar o comportamento e socialização dos adolescentes, pelo que é de interesse conhecer como algumas variáveis psicológicas dos pais se relacionam com os estilos de educação parental. Este estudo tem como objectivo analisar os estilos de educação parental, valores sociais (prestígio social, ordem, benevolência, e conservadorismo – liberalismo), os cinco grandes factores de personalidade, e a satisfação com o cônjuge (acordo geral, satisfação e coesão) em pais de adolescentes. Encontrou-se que os estilos educativos definidos pelo carinho e aceitação se relacionam com os traços de personalidade como responsabilidade e estabilidade emocional, alta satisfação no casal e preferência por valores pró-sociais. Ao contrário, os estilos de educação parental de superprotecção e favoritismo se relacionam com baixa amabilidade e baixa abertura; o baixo ajustamento de casal com falta de coesão e valores sociais definidos por falta de benevolência e preferência por valores de prestígio social.

**PALAVRAS CHAVE.** Estilos de educação parental. *EMBU*. Satisfação de casal. Ajustamento diádico. Cinco grandes traços de personalidade. Valores sociais. Conservadorismo-liberalismo. Estudo *ex post facto*.

## Introduction

The socialization processes are affected by parents' rearing styles (Houston and Vavak, 1991; Smith, Pope, Sanders, Allred, and O'Keeffe, 1988). Thus, it has been shown that negative rearing practices are directly related to emotional and behavioural disorders in children and adolescents (Muris, Bögels, Meesters, Van der Kamp, and Van Oosten, 1996; Woodall and Mathews, 1993). Rearing styles are affected by many different variables like social or religious values (Knafo, 2003; Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, and Swank, 2001; Okagaki and Bevis, 1999; Pinquart and Silbereisen, 2004), marital satisfaction (Voydanoff and Donnelly, 1987), and personality traits (Kraft and Zuckerman,

1999). Personality traits are also related to marital satisfaction (Geist and Gilbert, 1996; Lester, Haig, and Monello, 1989; Russell and Wells, 1994), and social values (Aluja and García, 2004). In spite of these relationships, no study has ever included the four types of variables.

Research on social values began in the 30s. Allport and Vernon (1931) constructed a taxonomy of values with six categories: political, social, economic, theoretical, religious, and aesthetic. More recent empirical studies have identified ten categories of values: social power, achievement, hedonism, simulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security (Schwartz, 1992). In the Spanish context, Aluja and García (2004) developed a short measure of the social power, order, and benevolence values scales. A similar version is also available to measure social values in children and adolescent populations (Aluja, del Barrio, and García, 2005). Related to social values, the conservatism-liberalism construct has also been investigated. First studies appeared at the end of 60s (Wilson, 1968; Wilson and Patterson, 1968), and continued during the 70s (Ray, 1971; Wilson, 1973a, 1973b, 1973c). Wilson and Patterson (1968) developed a 50-item conservatism-liberalism scale (the C-Scale). This scale has been able to predict the tendency of the vote, the sexual behavior, and variables of socialized personality (Aluja, 1995a).

Marital satisfaction or adjustment is defined as «complex of factors such as amount of conflict, shared activities believed to be associated with the happiness or success of a given marriage» (Hoult, 1969; p. 192). An unsatisfactory marital relationship is related to emotional disorders and lack of social adaptation in children (Furstenberg and Teitler, 1994; Videon, 2002). Feldman, Wentzel, Weinberger, and Munson (1990) found that marital satisfaction and other child and family outcomes may be related to child-rearing characteristics such as overprotectiveness, enmeshment, role reversal or other parental characteristics such as flexibility *versus* rigidity. The marital satisfaction of each partner was negatively related to their own neuroticism and psychoticism scores and their partner's neuroticism and psychoticism scores (Eysenck and Wakefield, 1981). Besides, Lester *et al.* (1989) found that the partner's extraversion score was associated with one's own marital dissatisfaction, and partners of those with higher extraversion score were more dissatisfied with the marriage. Russell and Wells (1994) informed that neuroticism, extraversion, and conflict resolution were related with happiness in married couples. In this line, Geist and Gilbert (1996) found that neuroticism correlated with wives' feelings and expressed affects and with husbands' negative affects. In the same study, extraversion correlated with husbands' and wives' expressed anger, and with husband's self-reported anger. The sensation seeking trait, positively related to extraversion and psychoticism (Aluja, García, and García, 2004), is negatively related with marital satisfaction. High sensation seekers having a variety of interests outside of their primary relationships, and stronger tendencies for boredom and independence present lower marital satisfaction (Schroth, 1991; Thornquist, Zuckerman, and Exline, 1991).

Regarding personality and rearing styles, parents with high scores on neuroticism, and low scores on extraversion are more rejecting and less warm (Arrindell *et al.*, 1999). Moreover, mothers' psychoticism correlates negatively with emotional warmth, and mothers' impulsiveness and sensation seeking correlate with control (Kraft and

Zuckerman, 1999). Also, extraverted and sociable parents score higher on emotional warmth. Since parents' rearing styles may affect children behavior, it is relevant to know how some psychological variables are related to rearing styles. This correlational study (Montero and León, 2005; Ramos-Álvarez, Valdés-Conroy, and Catena, 2006) is aimed to explore this point by analysing altogether rearing styles (EMBU-P), social values (social power, order, benevolence, and conservatism-liberalism), Big-five personality traits, and marital satisfaction (consensus, affection, satisfaction, and cohesion) in parents of adolescents.

## Method

### Subjects

The participants in the present study were 134 couples of parents. Those couples have in common that one of their children assist to a Spanish High School. Mean ages were 45.20 and 42.44 for fathers and mothers, respectively (*SD*: 5.60 and 4.89). Mean ages of the sons ( $n = 70$ ) and daughters ( $n = 64$ ) were 14.04 and 14.09, respectively (*SD*: 1.10 and 1.08).

### Instruments

- The Spanish version for parents (EMBU-P) of the Egena Minnen av Barndoms Uppfostran-My memories of upbringing (EMBU; Perris, Jacobsson, Lindström, Von Knorring, and Perris, 1980) was administered. This version was developed by Castro, Toro, Van der Ende, Arrindell, and Puig (1990). It contains 52 items modified after the original questionnaire to be suitable for parents. Thus, verbal tense was changed from past to present and to past perfect, while trying not to change the meaning of the items. Items are answered on a 4-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*always*). The EMBU-P measures four scales (number of items between brackets): *Rejection* (13), *Emotional Warmth* (17), *Control Attempts* (19) and *Favouring Subject* (3). It should be remarked that the EMBU-P assess the present rearing style of parents, not past perceptions of rearing styles when parents were adolescents. Alpha reliabilities were .75, .84, .76 and .66 for Rejection, Emotional Warmth, Control Attempts, and Favouring Subject, respectively (Castro, de Pablo, Gómez, Arrindell, and Toro, 1997).
- The Spanish version of the Big Five Questionnaire (BFQ; Caprara, Barbaranelli, and Borgogni, 1995) is a 132 items questionnaire which comprises five domain scales, ten facets scales and a Lie scale. Domain scales are: *Energy*, *Friendliness*, *Conscientiousness*, *Emotional Stability* and *Openness*. In this study the facets and the Lie scale were not used. The respondent has a 5-choice answer format that ranges from 1 (*very false for me*) to 5 (*very true for me*). The alpha reliability coefficients in Spanish population were .75, .73, .79, .87, and .76 for Energy, Friendliness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness, respectively.

- The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) comprises 32 items developed by Spanier (1976) and adapted *ad hoc* for this study, to assess the quality of the relationship as perceived by married or cohabiting couples. This instrument measures four aspects of the relationship: *Dyadic satisfaction* (items 16-23, 31, 32), *Dyadic cohesion* (24-28), *Dyadic consensus* (1-3, 5, 7-15), and *Expression of affection* (4, 6, 29, 30). The DAS is a Likert-style questionnaire with 5 to 7-point response formats. Here are also two items that are answered either “yes” or “no”. The majority of items use the 6-point format, with options scored from 0 to 5 and ranging from either *always agree* to *always disagree*, or from *all the time* to *never*. Total score is the sum of all items, ranging from 0 to 152. Higher scores reflect better perceptions of the quality of the relationship. Married and divorced couples obtained a mean of 114.8 and 70.7, respectively. The alpha reliability was .96.
- The Social Values Inventory (SVI) is a list of 25 nouns<sup>3</sup> from a dictionary of the Spanish language that makes reference to different types of individual and collective human values constructed with rational criteria. Each subject assesses the level of real importance of each value in his/her life on a scale from 1 (*not important*) to 5 (*very important*). This inventory has shown good psychometric properties and factor structure in Spanish adult population. Three scales were obtained through factor analysis: *Social Power* (8 items), *Order* (8 items), and *Benevolence* (9 items). Alpha reliability coefficients were .82, .74, and .70 for Social Power, Order, and Benevolence, respectively (Aluja and García, 2004).
- Conservatism Scale (C-Scale; Wilson and Patterson, 1968). This measure contains 50 items with three answer options: “yes”, “?”, and “no”. Answers are scored from 0 to 2. In order to avoid the acquiescence effect, items are alternated. The maximum score is 100. Higher and lower scores on this scale are associated to conservatism and liberalism, respectively. Although this scale was developed three decades ago, most of the items are still present in the social, religious, and political discussions. In the Spanish socio-cultural context, the C-Scale presented acceptable psychometric properties, with a split-half reliability coefficient of .94 (Aluja, 1995b).

### Procedure

Prior to the administration of the protocol, parents' associations and academic authorities were contacted in order to get their written permission. Confidentiality of data was guaranteed. Parents were requested by ordinary mail and telephone to participate in the study. For those agreed to participate, protocols were delivered to their family home in a closed envelope. The necessity of answering them separately by fathers and

<sup>3</sup> Social Power: power, prestige, fame, competitiveness, money, aesthetics, leadership, ambition. Order: order, neatness, responsibility, perseverance, perfectionism, security, deference, culture. Benevolence: honesty, righteousness, solidarity, humility, faithfulness, justice, friendship, altruism, freedom.

mothers was emphasized. Protocols were picked up from their family home. Separated or divorced parents were excluded. Only 30% of the protocols (134 couples of parents) were correctly filled out and, therefore, analysed in the present study.

## Results

### *Descriptive, t-test differences, and alpha*

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and alphas separately for fathers and mothers, and *t*-test comparisons for genders of the EMBU-P, BFQ, SVI, C-Scale, and DAS. Mothers scored higher on control attempts, emotional warmth, order, and friendliness. Fathers scored higher on favouring subject. There were no differences on the C-Scale. Regarding marital satisfaction, no differences were found on the consensus variable, but mothers scored higher on affection (8.57 *vs.* 8.30,  $p < .05$ ), and cohesion (17.76 *vs.* 16.91,  $p < .01$ ), and fathers were more satisfied with the relationship (33.90 *vs.* 33.13,  $p < .01$ ). Fathers and mothers reported similar high rates of global marital satisfaction.

**TABLE 1.** Descriptives, alpha values, and *t*-test comparisons for fathers and mothers.

Scales	N° items	Fathers			Mothers			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Alpha	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Alpha		
Rejection	13	17.64	3.30	.73	17.54	3.093	.75	.34	.736
Emotion Warmth	17	51.99	8.31	.84	56.22	6.75	.79	-4.95	.001
Control Attempts	19	39.08	6.35	.69	40.84	5.70	.64	-3.22	.002
Favouring Subject	3	3.98	1.61	.58	3.64	1.13	.47	2.66	.009
Benevolence	7	30.04	3.32	.61	30.58	3.02	.60	-1.56	.121
Social Power	7	20.08	6.76	.60	19.01	4.30	.72	1.80	.074
Order	7	31.07	3.04	.67	32.38	2.31	.61	-4.66	.001
Conservatism Scale	50	36.39	9.96	.73	35.13	8.97	.70	1.32	.189
Consensus	13	52.59	7.10	.83	52.31	7.46	.86	.43	.668
Affection	4	8.30	1.74	.69	8.57	1.57	.69	-2.28	.024
Satisfaction	10	33.90	3.16	.73	33.13	3.51	.77	2.85	.005
Cohesion	5	16.91	4.10	.66	17.76	3.51	.51	-2.66	.009
Total DAS	32	111.60	12.54	.88	111.65	12.74	.89	-.06	.954
Energy	24	74.27	9.68	.71	72.46	8.95	.69	1.67	.098
Friendliness	24	79.44	8.03	.62	83.64	7.94	.66	-4.15	.001
Conscientiousness	24	81.08	7.16	.51	81.67	7.97	.67	-.68	.497
Emotional Stability	24	71.28	12.38	.83	69.65	11.21	.83	1.21	.229
Openness	24	79.70	10.63	.77	78.51	10.09	.72	1.02	.308

*Correlational analysis*

Table 2 shows the correlations of the EMBU-P scales with the DAS, BFQ, C-Scale, and the SVI, separately for fathers and mothers. Rejection correlated negatively with DAS scales. Emotional warmth correlated positively with the DAS scales, especially for fathers. Personality traits show a slightly different correlational pattern for fathers and mothers. Although conscientiousness was related with emotional warmth, and emotional stability with rejection and control attempts in both sexes, friendliness correlated negatively with rejection ( $-.23, p < .01$ ) and control attempts ( $-.29, p < .01$ ) for fathers only. Equally, openness was related to emotional warmth for fathers only ( $.25, p < .01$ ). On the contrary, energy presented significant correlations with control attempts and favouring subject for mothers only. Social values were also related to rearing styles. For fathers, benevolence correlated negatively with rejection and favouring subject, social power was related positively to control attempts, and order to emotional warmth ( $.46, p < .001$ ). For mothers, we found significant correlations of benevolence with rejection ( $-.32, p < .001$ ), and emotional warmth ( $.37, p < .001$ ), social power with favouring subject ( $.19, p < .05$ ), and order with emotional warmth ( $.19, p < .05$ ).

**TABLE 2.** Correlations between EMBU-P and DAS, BFQ, C-Scale and SVI for fathers and mothers.

Scale	Fathers				Mothers			
	RE	EW	CO	FA	RE	EW	CO	FA
Consensus	-.32***	.31***	.00	-.19*	-.21*	.14	-.01	-.25**
Affection	-.29***	.27***	.06	-.07	-.15	.16	.03	-.11
Satisfaction	-.27***	.32***	.17	-.05	-.22*	.03	-.08	.04
Cohesion	-.10	.48***	.28***	-.08	-.09	.22*	-.03	-.16
Total DAS	-.36***	.45***	.09	-.15	-.23*	.12	-.04	-.19
Energy	.17	-.03	.07	-.11	.01	.08	.23*	.18*
Friendliness	-.23**	.09	-.29***	-.10	-.07	.07	-.03	-.07
Conscientiousness	-.03	.23**	.06	-.05	-.12	.27***	.23**	.07
Emotional Stability	-.27***	.06	-.18*	.02	-.33***	-.08	-.24**	-.04
Openness	-.07	.25**	-.14	-.06	-.01	.14	.03	.00
Conservatism Scale	-.10	.13	.17	-.05	-.22*	.18*	.21*	.03
Benevolence	-.21*	.30***	.03	-.19*	-.32***	.37***	-.04	.04
Social Power	.16	.02	.20*	.00	-.12	-.02	.15	.19*
Order	-.16	.46***	.15	-.13	-.06	.19*	.09	.02

Note. RE: Rejection; EW: Emotional Warmth; CO: Control Attempts; FA: Favouring Subject.

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$

As it has been emphasized in the introduction, personality traits are related with marital satisfaction and social values. For those reasons, and in order to improve the comprehension of the relationships between the analysed variables, we have also computed correlations between personality traits and DAS, SVI, and C-Scale (see Table 3). Results showed that conscientiousness and emotional stability were specially related to marital adjustment. The C-Scale correlated negatively with openness for both fathers and mothers. For social values, a different pattern rose. For fathers, only social power correlated with conscientiousness (.30,  $p < .001$ ). For mothers, benevolence correlated with friendliness (.21,  $p < .05$ ) and conscientiousness (.22,  $p < .01$ ), social power with energy (.19,  $p < .05$ ), and order with friendliness (.17,  $p < .05$ ).

**TABLE 3.** Correlations between the Big-five personality traits and DAS, C-Scale and SVI for fathers and mothers.

Scale	Fathers					Mothers				
	E	F	C	ES	O	E	F	C	ES	O
Consensus	.00	.15	.26***	.24***	-.01	.05	.05	.24**	.16	-.04
Affection	.16	.18*	.05	.16	.11	-.03	-.08	.12	.16	-.11
Satisfaction	.06	-.03	.24**	.21*	.03	.01	-.06	.13	.27***	-.09
Cohesion	-.07	.16	.04	.05	.25**	-.09	.05	.01	.07	.10
Total DAS	.04	.20*	.26**	.25*	.12	-.02	.04	.24**	.19*	-.03
Conservatism	-.15	-.07	-.08	-.02	-.21*	.10	-.08	.12	.05	-.23**
Benevolence	-.01	.11	.02	.13	-.03	.15	.21*	.22**	-.06	.04
Social Power	.16	-.11	.30***	-.03	-.17	.19*	-.11	-.01	.04	-.10
Order	-.03	.02	.02	.00	-.02	.15	.17*	.10	-.10	.06

Note. E: Energy; F: Friendliness; C: Conscientiousness; ES: Emotional Stability; O: Openness. \* $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$

### Regression analyses

Table 4 shows the multiple regression analyses (stepwise method) separately for each EMBU scale for both parents. The BFQ, DAS, C-Scale and SVI were taken as independent variables. As can be seen, those variables were accounted for by between 5% and 38% of the variance. Rejection was predicted by emotional stability, and by affection for fathers, and benevolence for mothers. For emotional warmth, cohesion, order and conscientiousness entered into the equation for fathers, and affection and conscientiousness for mothers. In regard to control attempts, cohesion, friendliness, energy and openness were significant predictors for fathers, and emotional stability and conservatism for mothers. Finally, favouring subject was predicted by benevolence variable for fathers, and by social power, consensus, and marital satisfaction for mothers.

**TABLE 4.** Predictors of the EMBU-P scales after the BFQ, DAS, C-Scale and SVI for fathers and mothers.

<i>Fathers</i>				<i>Mothers</i>			
Rejection							
<i>R</i> : .43	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> :.19	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>R</i> :.54	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> :.28	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Beta</i>				<i>Beta</i>			
<i>Constant</i>		12.51	.001	<i>Constant</i>		9.84	.001
Emot. Stability.	-.28	-3.06	.003	Emot. Stability	-.38	-4.04	.001
Affection	-.31	-3.33	.001	Benevolence	-.37	-3.96	.001
Emotional Warmth							
<i>R</i> : .62	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> :.38	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>R</i> :.35	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> :.12	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Beta</i>				<i>Beta</i>			
<i>Constant</i>		-.36	.716	<i>Constant</i>		4.90	.001
Cohesion	.41	4.81	.001	Affection	.25	2.49	.010
Order	.26	3.00	.003	Conscientiousness	.21	2.14	.030
Conscientiousness	.22	2.81	.006				
Control Attempts							
<i>R</i> :.53	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> :.28	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>R</i> :.31	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> :.10	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Beta</i>				<i>Beta</i>			
<i>Constant</i>		6.38	.001	<i>Constant</i>		10.58	.001
Cohesion	-.42	-4.70	.001	Emo. Stability	-.24	-2.30	.012
Friendliness	-.32	-3.35	.001	Conservatism	.22	2.15	.013
Energy	.31	3.28	.001				
Openness	-.23	-2.35	.021				
Favouring Subject							
<i>R</i> :.21	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> :.05	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>R</i> :.49	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> :.24	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Beta</i>				<i>Beta</i>			
<i>Constant</i>		4.88	.001	<i>Constant</i>		3.06	.001
Benevolence	-.21	-2.18	.030	Social Power	.32	3.32	.001
				Consensus	-.47	-4.06	.001
				Satisfaction	-.25	-2.17	.030

## Discussion

The aim of the present study was to investigate the relationships between parents' rearing styles, and social values, conservatism, marital satisfaction (dyadic adjustment), and the Big-five personality traits. Main findings of the present study were the observed facts that parent's rearing styles are related with personality traits, marital satisfaction, and social values. In detail, the present study supports the idea that a well-adjusted couples present better rearing styles.

Marital satisfaction was strongly related to rejection (negatively) and emotional warmth (positively). emotional stability is the personality trait most related to rearing styles, especially rejection, emotional warmth, and control attempts (Arrindell *et al.*,

1999). Friendliness and conscientiousness also play a role on the rearing styles. In general, stable, responsible and friendly parents will present a disposition to favour children's socialization. Although less impact seems to have social values and the conservatism-liberalism construct, some relationships were found. Thus, less conservative mothers are less rejecting and more prone to be warm and controlled. Benevolent parents score lower on rejection and favouring subject, and more on emotional warmth (Aluja *et al.*, 2005).

On the other hand, personality traits were related to marital satisfaction and conservatism. The more they score on conscientiousness and emotional stability, the more they score on marital satisfaction. Those results support the negative relationships between neuroticism, and psychoticism with marital satisfaction (Eysenck and Wakefield, 1981). Also, the negative correlation between openness and conservatism (or related concepts like the religiousness) has been supported conceptual and empirically (*e.g.*, McCrae, 1996). Benevolence tended to correlate with friendliness and conscientiousness for mothers, but not for fathers. That evidence suggests a better socialization of the mothers. They would show a less aggressive and more prosocial behavioral pattern. On the other hand, fathers scored higher on social power and conscientiousness. It suggests that fathers prefer situations of competition and the possibilities of social ascendance more than mothers. Those relationships suppose an additional way of personality traits to influence rearing styles through their impact on such variables.

One important limitation of the present study is the fact that only 30% of the delivered protocols were correctly returned. Each member of the couple was expected to dedicate more than one hour to fill out the entire protocol, and this circumstance probably affected the participation rate. Besides, it is reasonable to think that our sample is composed of well-adjusted and collaborative parents. For instance, fathers and mothers obtain mean scores around 111 on the DAS. This value suggested a good marital adjustment in the original (Spanier, 1976), and in more recent studies (Fisiloglu and Demir, 2000; Gentili, Contreras, Cassaniti, and D'Arista, 2002; Rossier, Rigozzi, Charvoz, and Bodenmann, 2006; Vandeleur, Fenton, and Ferrero, 2003). However, although the low participation rate and the high mean scores on the DAS scale supposes a challenge to the generalizability of the results, usefulness of those findings could be also defended since means of the remaining instruments were strongly similar to those obtained by other samples from the same socio-cultural context for the rearing styles (Castro *et al.*, 1997), personality traits (Caprara *et al.*, 1995), and social values (Aluja and García, 2004). Moreover, alpha coefficients were generally satisfactory and range between .60 and .86. Another limitation of the study is its cross-sectional nature. A central study to this topic would be a longitudinal project that analyses the possible role of personality traits and social values on the development of rearing styles and marital satisfaction.

To sum up, rearing styles defined by warmth and acceptance are related to a responsible and emotionally stable personality profile, high marital satisfaction, and the preference for prosocial values. On the contrary, overprotected and favouring rearing styles are related to low friendliness, low emotional stability and low openness, poor marital adjustment with a lack of cohesion, and social values defined by a lack of benevolence, and the preference for social power.

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