

The upbringing in Armenian traditional family: What parenting styles are being used in Armenia
and how it affects children?

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Abstract

The purpose of this capstone was to analyze the upbringing in Armenian traditional families. This capstone mainly focuses on how the parenting practices influence the psychology and value system of a child. This capstone includes theories of child development described by famous psychologists such as Sigmund Freud and Eric Erikson. For the research three interviews were done. First was conducted with Ani, mother of two children. The second interview was conducted with Susanna, mother of six children. The third interview was done as a small discussion with three fathers who asked to be anonymous. All these families have been living in Armenia since they were born, so their experience is valuable in the sense of studying Armenian upbringing values. Also, focus groups were conducted with thirty students who are studying at Anton Chekhov Basic School No.55, Tchaikovsky Music School, Alexander Pushkin Basic School No.8. Moreover, both Susanna and Ani are graduates of these schools and their children also are studying in those schools. Additionally, a survey was conducted. The results of the interviews, survey and focus groups converged on the same themes.

Introduction

What are the forces that influence the development of a child? Do parents play a significant role in influencing child development? How are parent's values and beliefs shaped? Are these values transferred from parents to children, if so, how does the process occur? All these questions arise curiosity among all cultures and tend to raise a necessity to study the features of the surrounding environment. Simultaneously, taking into account the major factors that shape children during their life cycle starting from their childhood to youth years. In this sense, a key element of a healthy personality development is an authentic, humane, affirmative emotional connection between the parents and the child. Parents are able to influence children as minimum in three diverse ways. These mechanisms will be discussed more detailed later in the research. Meanwhile, it should be stated that the way parents choose to bring up children plays a decisive role "in the child's socialization process" and they are the most significant socialization elements to be examined (Loudová & Lašek, 2015, pp. 1248-1249). It is supposed that the values which are personally essential for parents are most likely to be transferred to the coming generation (Rohan, 1996). Despite the fact that personal values act as primary notions in comprehending individuals, still not enough research evidence exists demonstrating their connection to particular parenting practices. For this specific purpose, in the scope of this project a research was conducted to identify the value system of Armenian parents, what factors influence the formation of these values and if the parents intend to impart their beliefs to their children. In this sense, firstly, one must try to understand the culture of a specific group of people in order to have the opportunity to comprehend central concepts of the target and be able to examine their value system and behavior insightfully. From this viewpoint, culture doesn't characterize an individual, yet legitimately impacts the person's outlook. As Helen Spencer-

Oatey says “Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioral conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member’s behavior and his/her interpretations of the ‘meaning’ of other people’s behavior” (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p.3). That is, a people group's way of life is associated with the goals it sees as "the lifestyle"; in this way, culture can incorporate morals, ethical quality, way of life, and convictions. Living in such a situation would impact a person to live by these beliefs and view them as the standard.

Literature Review

Middle childhood is a significant phase in the life of every individual, as during that period her/his social world expands resulting in shaping behavior and values. In this sense, it is extremely important to understand the concept of middle childhood in the words of Sigmund Freud and Eric Ericson . These people are famous psychologists. Freud called middle childhood a latent stage. He believed that for most children, ages 6 to 12 are a time when their jealousy and envy (as well as sexual impulses) recede into the background. Therefore, most children can redirect their emotional energy to relationships with peers, creativity and the fulfillment of culturally prescribed responsibilities in school or society. Freud talked about the latent period (and the adolescence or genital stage coming after it) much less than about the first 6 or 7 years of life. The child learns and shows his/her creative abilities greatly. In the period from 6-7 years to the onset of the teenage period, the libido of the child through sublimation (reorientation to social activity) is sent outside. During this period, the child is interested in various intellectual activities, sports, communication with peers. The latent period can be considered as the time of preparation for growing up, which will come in the last psychosexual stage. Structures like ego,

superego and id appear in the child's personality. The superego is a system of norms, values, in other words, a person's conscience. It is formed during the interaction of the child with significant figures, primarily with parents. Ego - is responsible for direct contact with the outside world. This is perception, thinking, learning. And the last stage is Eid. Eid is our drive, instinctive, innate, unconscious. Thus, by the age of 6-7 years the child has already formed all those personality qualities and response options that he will use throughout his life. And during the latent period there is a "hone" and strengthening of his views, beliefs, worldview (Freud, Strachey & Alexander, 1965).

Erikson put the main emphasis on the psychosocial factors of personality development. Erikson became convinced that the central event of middle childhood was a psychosocial conflict - hard work against a sense of inferiority. In middle childhood, thanks to school and other forms of learning, a significant part of the time and energy of children is spent on the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Now they are more able to concentrate their forces on study, solving their problems and achievements. In cases where children are able to succeed, they include hard work in their image of I - they understand that hard work leads to the achievement of the desired results, and continue to try to master the environment. Conversely, children who are not doing well at school may feel inferior to their peers. This sense of inferiority can continue to have a negative impact on a person's personality throughout life, if later it is not offset by continued success in other activities that are valuable for them and for the others, such as sports, music or art. As Erikson stated, skill and inferiority is the fourth stage. It is the age of six to eleven years, the years of primary school. Here, teachers and schools become significant adults. Depending on the atmosphere prevailing in the school and methods of upbringing, the child develops a taste for work or, conversely, a sense of inferiority. In the first case, industriousness, a sense of duty, the

desire to achieve success are formed, and skills and abilities are developed. In the case of abnormal development, avoidance of difficult tasks, situations of competition with other children, conformism, a sense of futility of the efforts made, doom to remain mediocre for life. The child will sharpen interest in how things are arranged, how they can be mastered, adapted to something. When children are encouraged to craft anything, build huts and aircraft models, cook, when they are allowed to finish the job they have begun, they praise and reward for the results, then the child develops skill and ability for technical creativity. On the contrary, parents who see in the labor activity of children the same "pampering" and "dirty tricks" contribute to the development of their sense of inferiority. In this sense, parental encouragement is a decisive factor in shaping successful students. The responsibility of shaping students who are able to meet challenges and acquiring values such as resilience, aspiration, determination lies on the shoulders of parents (Erikson, 1950). This study was chosen as a basis for the online survey creation in order to find out the approach of Armenian parents in regards to the education of their children and whether they take part in the shaping of certain values.

In 2007 Christian Garbis conducted a research project "Armenian Cultural Values and the Issue of European Integration." In his study, Christian Garbis wrote about Armenia's cultural values and the struggle between European and Soviet Union cultural values in Armenian society. In his research, Christian Garbis tried to show that it is not an easy thing to state what are exact Armenian values. The reason for that was the life through which Armenia and Armenians passed. Armenia at first got through the Genocide and after the Cold War and even during that periods there were contrasts in different districts of Armenia and its community but it was not as difference as it is nowadays. According to it, Armenians' perception on what social values they should have are coming from family and church. So, the roots of Armenian cultural values are

coming from the family, church and also from the historical path through which they got through (Garbis,2008). This research project, in turn, represents that “cultural values have been based in the family unit and the church.” The findings below, conducted for this capstone, act as a supportive evidence for the above-mentioned concept.

While Baumrind analyzed the parenting styles and separated four kinds of them. She established that by analyzing how demanding and responsive parents are. The four kinds of the styles are Uninvolved, Authoritative, Authoritarian and Indulgent. As Baumrind described them, Uninvolved style is when parents are not involved in their child’s life and such parents mostly are considered to have personal problems when they were child such as abuse. This type of parent is demanding from their children and responding to their children less. The next type of parents are Indulgent parents. That style of parents is more responsive and less demandive. That means they are not strict to their child, they always want to say “YES” to their child to see him happy, and that shapes the personality of the child. Because of such an attitude a child is becoming uncontrollable, he or she is not following the rules and etc. The next style of a parent is Authoritarian parents. In this case, parents are more demanding from the child and less responsive. This type of parent is already strict and they make children do what they want them to do. And, as they are not responsive to their children, children by the age become unhappy, they feel insecure and also it influences their education and mental health. The fourth type is Authoritative parents. This kind of parent is waiting to get from children as much as they give to them. So, they are both demanding and responsive. This kind of upbringing affects children in a good way. Usually children of such parents are more happy, independent, their mental health is better and they are achieving success in education (Aavik & K rgesaar, 2006).

A study conducted in 1990, found out that growth in the level of education coexisted with prominent self-reliant values such as self-fulfillment while the importance of material well-being lowered. The results also showed that there are strong facts that personal values have an effect on action choices (Feather, 1995), thus – they may have indirect influence on parenting practices as well.

Baumrind's categorization of parenting styles has considerably impacted study on parenting behavior and its influence on children. The four-piece categorization structure has been discovered to be interconnected to school productivity, delinquency, (Steinberg, 1994) and behavior tending to cause disruption (Hart,1992). Accompanied by Baumrind's work, some scholars noticed that a lack of parental psychological support can be a ground for the process of developing antisocial actions (Carlo et al 1998, Stice, Gonzales 1998, Engels et al 2002). Darling and Steinberg recognized the difference between parenting practices and parenting styles in 1993. Parenting practices could be interpreted as "specific, goal-directed behaviors through which parents perform their duties" (p. 488). Both of the above-mentioned partially are an outcome of the goals defined by parents for themselves and the values they believe in (Aavik & Kõrgesaar, 2006).

The fundamental stipulation of a preferable personality development is an authentic and reliable connection in the family. Kendler suggested three contributors identified as “warmth, protectiveness and authoritarianism” (Hudson & Raape, 2005, p.23). Rohner developed the Parental acceptance-rejection theory. This, in turn, is an assumption, trying to interpret and estimate the principal results of acceptance or rejection from the side of the parents. Parents who reveal their love both physically and verbally, the achievable and desired purpose being to make the child experience positive feelings and feel accepted, are described as accepting parents. On

the contrary, rejecting parents puts their children into comparison with other peers in a negative way; they treat the child as a burden and are usually upset with their attitude. Often the outcome of the rejection is expressed in two forms of attitude: the first is described by violent behavior and enmity, the second by ignorance and contempt. The parents may assault the child, neglect him/her, do not show assistance to him/her, ignore meeting his/her emotional needs and do not pay enough attention to the significance of the child's welfare. They usually do not keep their promises and do not allocate enough time to the child (Rohner, Ronald & Khaleque, Abdul, 2012).

From the 1920s to 1960s, behaviorist education theories had a huge power, highlighting the “blank slate” conditions of the kids and parents' power to tell them what they must learn. Parents were considered to be the ones responsible for being teachers to their kids and educating them. Children were naturally endowed with the psychological drive states, and these were also included in the learning process. Their education was a fine mixture of nature and nurture, but the main accent was put on the inspection of studying activities utilized by environmentalist inputs. Psychoanalytic studies of the period considered it important to have an in-family experience in resolving inner battles and protective techniques. A few decades past, when cognitive revolution rose and learning theory (as it related to socialization) was changed to cognitive social learning theory, the role of children who already had a voice in their own socialization became important. As determiners of parents' and children's influence upon one another, the role of their mutual perceptions and understandings about each other's characters has a huge importance nowadays. But none of these shifts in theories have changed the assumption that parents are the ones responsible for the choices kids make during their lives. In

this sense, parents are responsible for transferring such values as discipline, determination, justice etc.

The next article that I used is research conducted by UNICEF in 2003 in Armenia. It is titled “Violence against children in the Republic of Armenia.”. The aim of the research was to study violence against children. Overall, 2147 people were interviewed for the research. According to surveys mostly in lower class families, where parents have problems with economic factors, unemployment and standards of living mostly were being violent. Moreover, mostly conflicts happen in the family because of the difference of interests, which is followed by psychological abuse. This survey helped me analyze the bad habits of families’ in Armenia (UNICEF, 2003).

In sum, research conducted for studying the influence of parents on their children, shows that there is a direct connection between the child’s well-being and the parenting style implemented by the parents.

Research question

The major question for the research is next: **How do parenting practices influence the psychology and value system of children?** However, as the question is broad itself, sub-questions were also be asked: “What is considered to be Armenian upbringing values?”, “Must children acquire the values that parents’ possess?”, “What are important standards of behavior?”, “Does religion influence the upbringing values of Armenian parents?”, “Is it true that violence against children is considered as a part of upbringing Armenia?”

Methodology

The purpose of the research was to identify and examine the culture of upbringing in Armenia and how it affects children's psychology. Furthermore, it investigated the causes and effects the culture and values have on generational and intergenerational behavior. For this paper, to have a deeper understanding, qualitative research interviews was chosen as a research method. This method allowed asking open-ended questions, which open doors for interviewees to feel free and give full answers. The interviews gave an opportunity to ask new questions after listening to interviewees' answers and make the research deeper. The two female interviewees gave the permission to use their names in the paper. But the male interviewees did not want their names to be announced. This method also provided an overall understanding not only about what the interviewee tells, but also about how they react to the questions and in what way they answer the questions. Moreover, focus groups were conducted with thirty representatives of three middle schools in Yerevan. As participants were minors, a permission was asked from their parents to talk with their children and use the results. Besides that, a survey was done through social media.

Research findings and analysis

Survey conducted for the purpose of this project represents that the family proceeds to be an influential cultural symbol and is viewed as one of the most significant organizations in the people's collective narrative. The 'family element' has an essential role in every aspect of life from politics to schooling, matrimony, ambitions and even leisure. So, the environment in which children grow determines their healthy behavior and value formation. In this sense, in order to understand the value formation of Armenian children, one must examine the value system and

parenting practices of Armenian parents. For this specific purpose, a survey was conducted among 100 participants, the main target being Armenian parents of middle age. The survey presented four features that stand for authoritative parenting style: ‘Diligence’, ‘Thrift’, ‘Politeness’, ‘Religious Faith’. While ‘Independence’, ‘Feeling of Responsibility’, ‘Fantasy’, ‘Resoluteness, ‘Persistence’ stands for autonomy. Parents commonly considered 'good' parenting equivalent with warmth and support, while expecting responsiveness and maintenance of clearly defined discipline. This complies to a pattern of ‘authoritative' parenting considered to support healthy growth and wellbeing. Parenting practices that encourage autonomy contribute to positive identity creation, while in contrast parenting practices demonstrating strict psychological control interfere with the formation of children’s identity.

Interestingly, when it comes to the question “How have Armenian institutions influenced the development of culture and values?”, Armenian church has a decisive role. Besides family, which performed as a powerful element for preserving Armenian identity, the Armenian Apostolic Church, Evangelical Church of Armenia, Armenian Catholic Church should be viewed as major institutions in charge of preserving Armenian culture and value system over years. In this sense, religion has the capacity to affect various features of parenting style. The focus group of the research, that is Armenian parents, viewed transference of religious beliefs as a method of securing a direction for the young people and forming a solid ground on which children could frame their future life. 40.9 percent of respondents agreed that they hope to impart their religious beliefs and values to their children. Moving forward, parents associated religious values not only with Christianity but patriotism as well. The conducted online survey showed that values which are preferred to transfer from generation to generation are considered to be celebration of church holidays with the family, being proud of their national identity. From the viewpoint of young

children, as revealed during the focus group, most of them agreed that whether consciously or unconsciously, their decisions do get influenced by the values their parents imparted in them when it comes to religion or any religious issue. Interestingly, there were some people aged 16-18 stating that, though they recognized the full worth of their parents' value system and respected it, they may ultimately prefer to hold beliefs that are dissimilar to those of their parents.

For a long time, values have been seen as a powerful tool for explaining behavior (Rokeach 1973). Parents differ in the characteristics they value in their lives and these differences could contribute to differences in parenting behavior too. For instance, the parent, who attaches greater importance to self-realization, emphasizes supportive rearing practices with regard to the child. Kohn in 1977 argued that all parents want certain things for their children – that they would do well at school, be happy, etc. Most values are learned from parents; therefore, the parents of adolescents are among the most important socialization agents to be studied. We assume that the values that are personally important to them are most probably also transferred to their children.

Interview No. 1 with Ani Movsisyan

Ani Movsisyan is the mother of two children. She works in Yerevan State Medical University as a head secretary of the medical faculty of year 4 students. I asked Ani if she thinks that her children must acquire the same values that she currently possesses. She answered: “I think it is not necessary for children to adopt the value system of their parents. Though, values acquired during childhood play a vital role in formation to discover his or her personal core values in the process of self-realization. In this case, we will have independent individuals who

are able to create a distinctive value system based on their own preferences,” (See Appendix A).

Next, I asked how she would describe her parenting style. Ani said that she could describe her parenting style in one word: friendly. She tries her best to maintain a warm relationship with her children, but there also must be boundaries between parents and children. She says she tries to maintain a calm approach by always listening to what her children think and to understand them in a passive way instead of immediately choosing to show that she is the dominant figure in their relationship. She values conversations between children and parents because this is most effective in coming to mutual understandings.

Then, I viewed her parenting style in relation to her parents’ parenting style, asking if she saw any similarities in the two. To this, she answered: “When making comparisons, I realize that my parents’ upbringing is much different from my own parenting method, although there are some tricks I use that I have adopted from my parents. I think there are universal beliefs about upbringing in Armenian families, which are passed down from generation to generation and always keep their relevance, because they are built on humanitarian norms. I would like to add that it is important not to repeat the mistakes of the parents towards their own children, if they were like that,” (See Appendix A).

Finally, I asked what are a few important standards of behavior that she would like for her children to acquire. Ani mentioned that children are very different in nature, but at their root, it is important that they are humane and honest with everything around them during their lives. This relates to other people, animals, and nature. The child must learn to be honest and sincere, especially with his or her closest relatives and friends. Additionally, the sense of responsibility is also important. As Baumrind stated there were four parenting styles. This interview revealed that

from those four styles, Ani Movsisyan is using the Authoritative style which is in almost all cases influencing children in a good way.

Interview No. 2 with Susanna Harutyunyan

Susanna Harutyunyan is the mother of six children. She has two daughters and four sons. As she is very overloaded at home with her children, she does not work, but as Susanna said, “My work is at home.” To start, I asked Susanna the following question, “Do your children understand the expectations that you have for their behavior, and are these expectations reasonable?” Every parent wants their child to be disciplined and responsible, but according to Susanna, being strict is not the best way to achieve these expectations. She values high academic achievement for her children, but she does not punish them for low grades. Instead, she considers the reasons for the grade in order to determine how she can support her child to do better next time. Immediately scolding the child for a low grade will impact his/her confidence and motivation later on, which is simply ineffective. (See Appendix B).

Then, I asked Susanna about the choices she allows her children to make regarding their individual lives. To this, Susanna explained the following: “We as parents tend to consider ourselves to be cleverer and more experienced, thus, trying to put our children on the right track with our advice. In the crazy process of attempting to help, we need to line a border between imparting our beliefs and helping. In this sense, I always give my children the chance to make decisions on their own. However, it is my obligation as a parent to explain the possible outcomes of their decisions and give them the opportunity to choose. They should be able to bear responsibility for their actions, but even if they make a mistake I am always there to help. So, I think, it is all about keeping the balance between independence and rationality,” (See Appendix B).

After, I asked what she does in the case that her children disagree with her. She mentioned that she attempted her best to be considerate of her children's perspective as well. She does not want to force her children to think and act in a certain way simply because she told them to. This is important for the child to understand the reasoning behind everything instead of viewing the parent as a dominant force or enemy who is not acting with the best interest of the child in mind. Lastly, I asked Susanna: "What are some values that you consider to be important to teach your children?". Similar to Ani's answer, Susanna also valued honesty and respect towards others as valuable qualities for her children. Another similarity was the value of family and having trust and respect towards them.

The interview with Susanna Harutyunyan again showed us that parents are mostly prone to have Authoritative parenting style. Moreover, Susanna also thinks that it is very important for a child to have such values like honesty and respect for others. It is very widespread in Armenia for parents to teach exactly that value to their children, as it was also revealed in the survey.

Male Perspective

As the father-child relationship also plays a crucial role in the social and cognitive development of a child, an interview with three male fathers was conducted over Zoom. The participants preferred to maintain confidentiality, their names will not be revealed. The overall outcome of the interview showed that discipline was an important aspect of child upbringing for the fathers. To the question whether they use violence in order to punish an unwanted behavior, the answer was that it is important for the child to feel that you are their friend not a policeman. Violence creates a huge gap between the child and a parent. However, they stated that if a certain rule is violated, children must bear responsibility for their actions. For instance, the punishment

can include not letting the child play video games for a day or not playing outside with their friends. Some of the expectations they had for their children included good academic standing and sleeping early. One of the values that fathers appreciated highly was loyalty to family and friends. Participant 1 gave importance to the existence of decisiveness and respect for elders. Participant 2 emphasized that communication is vital in the upbringing process of the child. Overall, the results showed that parents are inclined to have an authoritative parenting style.

Focus Group

I also conducted focus groups which took place on April 29 and May 15. As all over the country there was a pandemic situation and people were quarantined, the meetings of the focus groups were done by Zoom. Three separate focus groups were conducted among the following schools: No. 55 after A.P. Chekhov, school No. 8 after A.S. Pushkin and Tchaikovsky Special Music School. From each school, 10 students aged 13-15 were gathered in order to find out about their upbringing experiences. The meetings lasted from 45 to 60 minutes. All the members of the focus groups were given open-ended questions regarding their understanding on parenting style and about how they feel. The result of the focus groups indicated that Baumrind's Authoritative style of parenting is the most applied among the families of those three schools. Only three participant's answers revealed that the parents' parenting style is Permissive. Almost all students had a strong sense of self-worth. Today's parents are prone to have an open-minded mentality. They try to discuss the disagreements and accept if they find out they are wrong. This situation can be explained because of the transitions of the generation and the parenting styles. After the

focus group meeting it is discerned that every student whose parents have an Authoritative style of parenting are very confident. Only three of the participants were not fulfilled with their self-esteem and exactly that participant's parents have a Permissive style of parenting.

Conclusion

This capstone tried to find out what parenting styles are being used in Armenia and how it affects children's psychology. To narrow the research, three basic schools were chosen from Armenia and it was mainly focused on their students and parents.

To summarize, the interviews and focus group showed that most percent of interviewed students have parents with an Authoritative style of parenting and students themselves are experiencing higher self-esteem. The possibility of having lower self-esteem is higher among those whose parents have a permissive style of parenting. Moreover, the results of the survey showed that violence towards children is very low in the scope of this research. These results may not be accurate if it is conducted in scope of different schools, universities etc. However, according to the survey, which was done more widely, again most of the parents implemented authoritative parenting style. As a result of this, children feel confident and have high self-esteem. Also, this type of parenting style itself is not meant to use violence. Furthermore, the values that are important for parents, in most cases are being transferred to their children.

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Appendix A

SG: Do you think your children must acquire the values that you possess?

AM: I think it is not necessary for children to adopt the value system of their parents. Though values acquired during childhood play a vital role in formation to discover his or her personal

core values in the process of self-realization. In this case, we will have independent individuals who are able to create a distinctive value system based on their own preferences.

SG: How would you describe your parenting style?

AM: My upbringing method can be named “friendly”, which, if necessary, puts boundaries between parents’ and children’ relationship. As a parent I always try to have warm relationships with my children, listen to their viewpoints, understand them, but there are certain requirements that are expected to be met by the children. I always try to smooth over the disagreements and limitations by explaining and sustaining. I think calm relationships with children are formed as a result of conversations.

SG: Is it similar to your parents’ style?

AM: When making comparisons, I realize that my parents’ upbringing is much different from my own parenting method, although there are some tricks I use that I have adopted from my parents. I think there are universal beliefs about upbringing in Armenian families, which are passed down from generation to generation and always keep their relevance, because they are built on humanitarian norms. I would like to add that it is important not to repeat the mistakes of the parents towards their own children, if they were like that.

SG: What are important standards of behavior for you?

AM: In my opinion, no matter how complex or different a child’s character may be, in any situation he should be humane and honest with the world around him, people, animals, nature, be honest, first with his parents, then with friends or relatives, despite that a child’s sincerity often comes from the parent or from the people who surround the child. At the same time, it is preferable and primary for the child to have a sense of responsibility, around which one must work and maximize what is expressed by being punctual, fulfilling responsibilities, and so on.

Appendix B

SG: Do your children understand the expectations that you have for their behavior, and are these expectations reasonable?

SH: To be honest, I don't support strict parenting as it creates the opposite values of what you want to form in the children. For example, you define strict rules to create self-discipline, but it works in the reverse way, forming a behavior resulting in fear of punishment. But, for sure, I provide certain expectations for the children. One of them is high academic achievement. I would like to stress that I never punish them in case of receiving a low grade. In this case, it is important to consider the reason for getting a low grade and make sure the child doesn't lose her/his confidence. Afterwards, I would make sure she understands the topic and gets a higher grade. They know that good academic achievement is one of their responsibilities, and my responsibility is to support them and help them go through hard times.

SG: Do you give your children few choices and decisions about their own life?

SH: We as parents tend to consider ourselves to be cleverer and more experienced, thus, trying to put our children on the right track with our advice. In the crazy process of attempting to help, we need to line a border between imparting our beliefs and helping. In this sense, I always give my children the chance to make decisions on their own. However, it is my obligation as a parent to explain the possible outcomes of their decisions and give them the opportunity to choose. They should be able to bear responsibility for their actions, but even if they make a mistake I am always there to help. So, I think, it is all about keeping the balance between independence and rationality.

SG: What happens if your children disagree with you?

SH: Of course, at first you should try to understand children's thoughts. I never tell my children you should choose to do it that way because I said so, and I think that you always have to find common ground with your children. In parent-child relationships, I think compromises play a key role. Even if it is not rational to compromise, I always explain the reasons behind my policies. This shows children that you are not their enemy but rather a friend who wants to help.

SG: What are some values that you consider to be important to teach your children?

SH: The most important values to teach children are always to be honest and respect others. Another value that I consider to be very important is to teach them to never forget where they came from and that family is always first. It is not just words, throughout their lives they saw that whether right or wrong, me and my husband stood next to them. We did criticize them but at the same time showed support and love. This is how they were raised.

Appendix C

SG: How important is it that your child is disciplined and what measures do you take to ensure that your child is raised with discipline?

Participant 1: Well, for me personally, discipline is very important and it must be established from the early ages of the child so that they grow up with certain standards already. It will become difficult to establish disciplined behavior later on.

Participant 2: Having a disciplined child is important, sure, but the parents must have a non-violent tactic in my opinion. If my child looks at me as if I am their enemy they will continue to do so the rest of their life, and that is not something I want.

Participant 3: I agree with the other fathers, me and my wife also practice punishing bad behavior and discipline our children in a way which is not hostile.

Participant 1: To add, being too casual or friendly in such situations is not effective either. There has to be a middle ground between harsh punishment and letting them do whatever they want without consequences.

Participant 3: Yes, I agree. A great method is limiting their playing time, especially with video games, for them to understand the lesson that everything is not a game.

SG: What are some values or expectations you have for your children that are valuable for you?

Participant 2: My wife and I value all the basic things: loyalty, respect, and trust, but we also want to raise a child who is smart and does well in school as well. This might be a common thing, but we try our best to make sure they read and are informed of as much as possible.

Participant 1: Adding to these values, I also like when children are on a schedule since we are very busy parents. We try our best to make sure they sleep on time and have a sense of an organized lifestyle.

Participant 3: For me, I want my child to value his or her family and friends as a priority. It is important to establish healthy and strong relationships from a young age.

Appendix D

Questions:

Do you think your children must acquire the values that you possess?

How would you describe your parenting style?

Is your parenting style similar to your parents' style?

What are important standards of behavior for you?

Do your children understand the expectations that you have for their behavior, and are these expectations reasonable?

Do you give your children few choices and decisions about their own life?

What happens if your children disagree with you?

What are some values that you consider to be important to teach your children?

How important is it that your child is disciplined and what measures do you take to ensure that your child is raised with discipline?

What are some values or expectations you have for your children that are valuable for you?

Do you want to impart your religious beliefs and values to your children?

What characteristics are you valuing?

Appendix E

Interviews:

CONSENT FORM

Consent to participate in a capstone project conducted at the American University of Armenia (AUA). This is to state that I agree to participate in the capstone project conducted by Samvel Ghazaryan The capstone director is Dr. Hourig Attarian of the College of Humanities & Social Sciences at AUA (tel.: 060 612769, email: hourig.attarian@aua.am).

PURPOSE: I have been informed that the purpose of the project is to research the culture of upbringing, the parenting styles and do the social values transmit . Within the bigger context of

the project, the interview conducted by Samvel Ghazaryan is meant to focus on parenting practices in Armenia.

PROCEDURES: I understand that the interview will be conducted in participants' homes or another appropriate place, and might be recorded on video. As a participant, I will be asked to explore what I think about transmitting social values through parenting. The interview will last from one to two hours, however, as a participant I am free to stop at any time, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the project at any given point. I understand that if I wish to extend the focus group for more than two hours, I will be provided that opportunity.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: I understand that the interview involves the sharing of my personal views and opinions, which will be treated with the utmost care and consideration. I have been informed that I am free to stop, take a break or discontinue at any time. There are no risks involved in partaking in this interview.

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION: As a participant, I will have access to all the recorded material for verification purposes. Throughout the project, if and when the material produced is in Armenian, I will have the opportunity to review and verify the English translations.

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time without negative consequences.

I understand that the data from this project may be published in print or digital format for academic purposes.

In terms of **identification and reproduction** of my participation:

I agree to **disclose my identity**. I understand that my identity may be revealed in any publications or presentations that may result from this interview.

I agree to the reproduction of sound and images from this interview by any method and in any media for academic purposes (which may include webpages, documentary clips, etc..)

OR

I understand that my participation in this study is **confidential**. My identity will be concealed. I will be given a pseudonym in any publications or presentations that may result from this interview.

I agree that while data from my interview may be published, no sound or images from it may be reproduced.

When photographs, artifacts or documents are scanned or photographed

I agree to let the student researcher copy family photographs and documents for use in the student project only.

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT.
I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.
INTERVIEWEE:

NAME (please print) _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

INTERVIEWER:

NAME (please print) _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

If at any time you have questions about your rights as a capstone project participant, please contact Dr. Hourig Attarian of the College of Humanities & Social Sciences at AUA (tel.: 060 612769, email: hourig.attarian@aua.am).

Focus Group:

CONSENT FORM

Consent to participate in a capstone project conducted at the American University of Armenia (AUA). This is to state that I agree to participate in the capstone project conducted by Samvel Ghazaryan. The capstone director is Dr. Hourig Attarian of the College of Humanities & Social Sciences at AUA (tel.: 060 612769, email: hourig.attarian@aua.am).

PURPOSE: I have been informed that the purpose of the project is to research the culture of upbringing, the parenting styles and do the social values transmit . Within the bigger context of the project, the focus group conducted by Samvel Ghazaryan is meant to focus on parenting practices in Armenia.

PROCEDURES: I understand that the focus group will be conducted in participants' homes or another appropriate place, and might be recorded on video. As a participant, I will be asked to explore what I think about transmitting social values through parenting. The focus group will last from one to two hours, however, the participants are free to stop at any time, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the project at any given point. I understand that if I wish to extend the focus group for more than two hours, I will be provided that opportunity.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: I understand that this focus group involves the sharing of my personal views and opinions, which will be treated with the utmost care and consideration. I have been informed that I am free to stop, take a break or discontinue at any time. There are no risks involved in partaking in this focus group.

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION: As a participant, I will have access to all the recorded material for verification purposes. Throughout the project, if and when the material produced is in Armenian, I will have the opportunity to review and verify the English translations.

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time without negative consequences.

I understand that the data from this project may be published in print or digital format for academic purposes.

In terms of **identification and reproduction** of my participation:

I agree to **disclose my identity**. I understand that my identity may be revealed in any publications or presentations that may result from this focus group.

I agree to the reproduction of sound and images from this focus group by any method and in any media for academic purposes (which may include webpages, documentary clips, etc..)

OR

I understand that my participation in this study is **confidential**. My identity will be concealed. I will be given a pseudonym in any publications or presentations that may result from this focus group.

I agree that while data from my interview may be published, no sound or images from it may be reproduced.

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT:

NAME (please print) _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

FOCUS GROUP ORGANIZER:

NAME (please print) _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

If at any time you have questions about your rights as a capstone project participant, please contact Dr. Hourig Attarian of the College of Humanities & Social Sciences at AUA (tel.: 060 612769, email: hourig.attarian@aua.am).