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Publication date

2009

Document Version

Final published version

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Huijbregts, S. K. (2009). *Cultural diversity in center-based child care: differences and similarities in caregivers' cultural beliefs*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam]. SCO-Kohnstamm Instituut.

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*Cultural diversity in
center-based child care:*

*differences and similarities in
caregivers' cultural beliefs*

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus
prof. dr. D.C. van den Boom
ten overstaan van een door het college voor promoties
ingestelde commissie
in het openbaar te verdedigen in de Aula der Universiteit
op woensdag 30 september 2009 te 12.00 uur

door

Sanneke Katrien Huijbregts

geboren te Heemstede

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CIP-GEGEVENS KONINKLIJKE BIBLIOTHEEK, DEN HAAG

Huijbregts, S.K.

Cultural diversity in center-based child care: differences and similarities in caregivers' cultural beliefs.

S.K. Huijbregts, Amsterdam: SCO-Kohnstamm Instituut van de Faculteit der Maatschappij- en Gedragwetenschappen, Universiteit van Amsterdam. (Proefschriftenreeks nr. 15).

ISBN/EAN 978-90-68138-87-0

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1. General introduction

The last decades in the Netherlands can be characterized by two important demographical and economical changes. First, for economic and emancipatory reasons there is a pressure on women to become part of the work force. This has caused a rapid growth of child care provisions for young children. In 2007 nearly 300.000 children under age 4 were enrolled in child daycare centers, 40.000 more than in 2006 (CBS, 2008). A second important demographic change is the increasing cultural diversity of the Dutch society, as is the case in many countries in Western Europe. Nowadays about 1.7 million inhabitants, 11 % of the total population, are first- or second-generation immigrants from non-Western countries (CBS, 2008). In the main urban areas of the Netherlands one third of the population and even half of the youth are first- or second generation non-Western immigrants (CBS, 2006).

As a consequence of the increased numbers of young children spending a substantial part of the week in the care of professional caregivers, the quality of center-based child care has become an important issue for parents, researchers, and politicians alike (Gevers Deynoot-Schaub & Riksen-Walraven, 2005; De Kruif, Vermeer, Fukkink, Riksen-Walraven, Tavecchio, Van IJzendoorn, & Van Zeijl, 2007; Riksen-Walraven, 2004). Another consequence of the rapidly increased use of child care, was the demand of staff. Over the past 15 years many young females from the immigrant communities entered the child care workforce. This process was paralleled by a steadily rising number of children with immigrant backgrounds in early child care provisions. The diversifying of staff and children presents further challenges to the field of center-based child care. In particular, to the standards and images of the interactional quality between a caregiver and a child, the so-called process quality. From a large body of research it is known that beliefs about children and childrearing vary substantially across cultural communities (for overviews, see Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Kağıtçibasi, 1997; Rubin & Chung, 2006). Can these cultural differences in beliefs about children and childrearing also be found among child care professionals of different cultural com-

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munities? Are there differences in the importance these caregivers attach to the various core concepts in child care? As concepts such as 'high quality care' are based on beliefs and values (Moss & Pence, 1994), we hypothesize that the increasing cultural diversity among staff and families may result in less consensus about what constitutes quality, and especially process quality.

1.1 Cultural childrearing beliefs

Cultural belief systems on childrearing can be defined as a set of cognitions that parents and other educators personally hold about the nature of children and their development, about themselves as educators, and about their own and children's functioning in social groups, such as the peer group, the family, the community, and the society at large. These are often implicit, taken-for-granted beliefs about the right or natural way of childrearing (Harkness & Super, 1999; McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Subramanian, 1996). As such, belief systems include values and norms regarding children's personal and social development, and specify strategies to socialize these values and norms (Harkness & Super, 1999; McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Subramanian, 1996). Studying educators' childrearing beliefs is important because these are assumed to be an important source for childrearing practices (Harkness & Super, 1996), and, following from this notion, affect the interaction quality between caregivers and children (Abbott-Shim, Lambert, & McCarty, 2000; Maxwell, McWilliam, Hemmeter, Jones Ault, & Schuster, 2001; Phillips, Mekos, Scarr, McCartney, & Abbott-Shim, 2000; Scott-Little & Holloway, 1992).

Following Harkness and Super (1999; 2006), we propose that personal childrearing beliefs basically stem from two sources: everyday experiences with childrearing in particular contexts, such as the child care center, and socially shared cultural beliefs of childrearing within particular communities, such as a team of caregivers or the cultural community. Through processes of cognitive construction and the negotiation of childrearing values, personal experiences are combined into new general ideas that are shared with fellow members of the cultural community (Bugental & Johnston, 2000). In turn, childrearing beliefs are transformed from shared and general into personal and situation-specific through processes of cognitive reconstruction (Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). In periods of

change or disequilibrium - as may be the case in situations of increasing cultural diversity - social networks outside the family are especially important as a source for childrearing beliefs (Bugental & Johnston, 2000). Through these recurrent dynamics of caregivers' reasoning, cultural belief systems are both organizing experience as well as adapting to experience, providing caregivers with guidelines and reassurance while changing to meet new challenges.

Beliefs about children and childrearing differ substantially between cultures. Educators in different cultural communities have different ideas about ideal childrearing goals and practices. Furthermore, these 'best ways' are associated with what is regarded normal and abnormal behavior in a given culture, as beliefs are functionally attuned to the social and economical circumstances, and geographical conditions of a particular society (for overviews see Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Harkness & Super, 1996; Kagitçibasi, 1997; Rubin & Chung, 2006). Cultural diversity within child care centers may imply a variety in childrearing beliefs and socialization goals, and varying strategies to socialize these values and norms (Harkness & Super, 1996; McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Subramanian, 1996). The frequency with which certain beliefs are expressed in words or practices affirms cultural beliefs and keeps them prominent in the mind of cultural members (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Martinez, 2000). Therefore, beliefs of caregivers from different cultural groups who share the ecology of the workplace are influenced by both their cultures of origin and their exposure to the cultures of the workplace, that is, of both colleagues and children (Suizzo, 2007; Rosenthal, 1991). This makes the investigation of beliefs of caregivers with a minority background especially interesting.

1.2 Individualism and collectivism

Nowadays, in many studies, cultural differences are examined using frameworks based on the individualism-collectivism distinction. This distinction refers to belief systems stressing individuality, competition, and independent selfhood versus relatedness, cooperation, and interdependent selfhood (cf. Triandis, 1995). The distinction has proven to be of heuristic value in ordering and qualifying clusters of beliefs of different cultures, in particular Western and non-Western communities (Bornstein & Cote, 2004; Cote & Bornstein, 2003; Harkness, Super, & van

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Tijen, 2000; Kemmelmeier et al., 2003; Raeff, 2000), and in interpreting differences in childrearing practices (Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003; Keller, Borke, Yovsi, Lohaus, & Jensen, 2005; Rudy & Grusec, 2001). According to current understanding, individualism and collectivism are not simply opposites on a single dimension, but represent different dimensions that can co-exist in the individual mind as well as in the community at large. Likewise, individualistic and collectivistic ideas are found to co-exist in many cultures (Harwood, Schölmerich, & Schulze, 2000; Harkness et al., 2000; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005; Killen & Wainryb, 2000; Raeff, 2000; Suizzo, 2007; Tamis-LeMonda, Way, Hughes, Yoshikawa, Kalman, & Niwa, 2008), yet different cultures may emphasize different constellations of ideas (Greenfield et al., 2003; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). Independence or autonomy and interdependence or relatedness – considered core values in individualistic or collectivistic socialization – are both important themes in children's development. The balance between the two is an important issue in the rearing of young children in every society (Greenfield et al., 2003; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997). Cultural differences in the solutions caregivers reach may depend on their particular belief systems. Striking a balance between fostering individuality and independence on the one hand, and participation in the group and interdependence on the other, is a particularly critical issue for center-based child care in predominantly individualistic Western countries (Singer, 1993). The official childrearing beliefs and quality standards in child care match the individualistic child-centered model best (cf. Rosenthal 1999), however, an important question is whether these are compatible with the characteristics of the setting, where young children are in the presence of at least a dozen peers most of the day.

1.3 Thesis outline

The central goal of this thesis was to gain insight into the issue of cultural diversity in center-based care, a theme which has received surprisingly little scientific attention before this project started. The present thesis comprises three empirical studies, which are described in three separate chapters. Data on which these studies are based were collected in the fall of 2004 and winter and spring of the year 2005. In total, 61 female caregivers working with toddlers in 22 different child

daycare centers in two major cities in the Netherlands participated in this study. The sample represents three cultural groups; 20 caregivers had a Dutch background, 20 caregivers were of Surinamese-Dutch or Antillean-Dutch origin, and 21 were originally from Morocco or Turkey. The Surinamese, Antilleans, Moroccans and Turks are nowadays the largest immigrant groups in the Netherlands (CBS, 2008). Each caregiver was visited while at work. All caregivers were personally interviewed on their beliefs on children and childrearing, and all caregivers were observed in their groups at the child daycare center. After the visit, all caregivers received a questionnaire. Next to these 61 caregivers, a larger sample of caregivers was approached to participate in the survey part of the study, resulting in a total group of 116 caregivers. The study is unique because of the multi-method approach that was used. As the three empirical chapters are based on this same set of data, there is overlap in the method sections of those chapters. For a more detailed description of the sample, the procedures, and the measures, the reader is referred to the separate studies.

The focus of the first empirical study (chapter 2) is to investigate, by means of a survey, whether there are cultural differences in caregivers' beliefs, in spite of the professional education all caregivers have received within the Netherlands. Furthermore, we examine whether caregivers' childrearing beliefs can be explained by their cultural backgrounds, or whether their beliefs are also determined by the professional training they have received, and by the context of the child care centers, including their years of experience, and the beliefs of their colleagues. In this chapter, we differentiate between caregivers' general and daycare specific beliefs. General beliefs are thought to reflect the fundamental ideological orientation regarding general issues of child development of the cultural communities the caregivers belong to, whereas daycare specific beliefs intend to capture childrearing beliefs, socialization goals and particular constraints of daycare. This distinction is assumed relevant because these more specific beliefs are expected to be influenced by caregivers' professional training and by the shared experiences with colleagues. Furthermore, these more specific beliefs are expected to be more closely related to actual behavior (Harkness & Super, 2006).

The second empirical study, described in chapter 3, examines the cultural childrearing beliefs of caregivers in more detail, by means of semi-open interviews. The main goal of this chapter is to examine the cultural differences and similarities in caregivers' reasoning about children's independence and autonomy, child-

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ren's social development and group related issues, and caregivers' authority. These themes are often considered as typical individualistic and collectivistic childrearing beliefs (cf. Triandis, 1995), and therefore of particular interest in studying the beliefs of caregivers with different cultural backgrounds living and working in an individualistic society such as the Netherlands. Furthermore, we focus on the question whether differences in caregivers' reasoning can be accounted for primarily by caregivers' cultural background, or whether other factors, such as training, should be considered as well. And finally, we investigate the influence of the cultural context of the child care center - that is, the cultural background of colleagues and children, and the overall quality of the child care center - on caregivers' childrearing beliefs.

In the third empirical study, presented in chapter 4, we relate caregivers' beliefs to observed childrearing practices. The relation between beliefs and actual behavior is a topic of much debate. Evidence for such a relation is still far from conclusive. While in studies in early childhood settings a relation between educators' beliefs about education and teaching and actual classroom practices is often demonstrated (Abbott-Shim, Lambert, & McCarty, 2000; Charlesworth, Hart, Burts, Thomasson, Mosley, & Fleege, 1993; Maxwell, McWilliam, Hemmeter, Ault, & Schuster, 2001; Scott-Little & Holloway, 1992; 1994; Solomon & Battistich, 1996; Stipek & Byler, 1997; Vartuli, 1999), studies focusing on parental attitudes and cognitions as determinants of their childrearing behavior found only weak evidence for such a relation (for overviews see Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Holden & Edwards, 1989; Sigel, 1992). Following Ajzen (1996), who stated that the difficulty in finding relevant and consistent relations between beliefs and behavior in childrearing arises from several methodological and conceptual problems, we improved our research design by measuring caregivers' beliefs and behaviors on similar levels of specificity, by using open interviews to address both general and specific beliefs on concrete childrearing issues, and by relating beliefs, thus assessed, to observations of concrete childrearing behavior in representative situations in the child daycare centers (Ajzen, 1996).

2. Cultural diversity in center-based childcare: Childrearing beliefs of professional caregivers from different cultural communities.

Abstract

The present study investigated the cultural childrearing beliefs of 116 caregivers from different cultural communities in the Netherlands (Dutch, Caribbean-Dutch, and Mediterranean-Dutch), working with two- to four-year-olds in day-care centers. Cultural childrearing beliefs were assessed with standard questionnaires, focusing on general and daycare-specific individualistic and collectivistic childrearing beliefs. Cultural differences were evident regarding general individualistic and collectivistic beliefs. Both immigrant groups agreed more with collectivistic ideas and less with individualistic ideas than Dutch caregivers. Regarding caregivers' daycare-specific beliefs, much smaller cultural differences were found. This indicates consensus among caregivers from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds on core issues of childrearing in day-care settings. Results further showed that caregivers' individualistic ideas were best predicted by their cultural community, whereas collectivistic ideas were also predicted by the diversity of caregivers' close colleagues and their years of experience. These findings demonstrate that caregivers' childrearing belief systems are in part determined through a prolonged socialization process by the belief systems of their cultural and religious communities, and in part by their professional experience and their colleagues. Discussing childrearing beliefs should therefore become customary both in day-care centers as in caregivers' professional preparation, to make caregivers more aware of their own and their colleagues' cultural beliefs. Once aware of their childrearing beliefs, caregivers can make a start in actively discussing pedagogical guidelines, in order to reach a shared approach to childrearing.

Huijbregts, S.K., Leseman, P.P.M., & Tavecchio, L.W.C. (2008). Cultural diversity in center-based childcare: Childrearing beliefs of professional caregivers from different cultural communities in the Netherlands. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 23, 233-244.

2.1 Introduction

Childcare centers in Western countries face increasing cultural diversity both among the staff and the children and families that are served (Burchinal & Cryer, 2003; Leseman, 2002; Rosenthal, 1999). Despite this increased cultural diversity, little research is available on the challenges childcare workers face everyday to match socialization goals and childrearing practices optimally, and to resolve possible cultural conflicts (cf. Bernhard & Freire, 1999; Gonzalez-Mena & Bhavnagri, 2000; Greenfield, Quiroz, & Raeff, 2000). Several studies in preschool settings have demonstrated the importance of teachers' educational and developmental beliefs as determinants of process quality (Abbott-Shim, Lambert, & McCarty, 2000; Maxwell, McWilliam, Hemmeter, Jones Ault, & Schuster, 2001; Phillips, Mekos, Scarr, McCartney, & Abott-Shim, 2000; Scott-Little & Holloway, 1992). However, little is known about the educational and developmental beliefs of teachers from non-mainstream cultural communities.

The present study addresses cultural diversity in day-care by examining the childrearing beliefs of professional caregivers from Western and non-Western cultural communities in the Netherlands, working within one day-care system with two to four year olds. An interesting area of tension related to cultural diversity in day-care, is that official childrearing beliefs and quality standards in day-care match the individualistic child-centered model best (cf. Rosenthal, 1999), whereas the characteristics of the setting seem at least compatible with a more collectivistic orientation on part of the caregivers. Although the present research pertains to the Dutch day-care system, the broad issues studied here – individualism and collectivism in culturally diverse day-care – have more general significance.

Cultural belief systems on childrearing can be defined as a set of cognitions that parents and other caregivers personally hold about the nature of children and their development, and about their functioning in social groups, such as the peer group, the family, the community, and society at large. Belief systems include values and norms regarding children's personal and social development, and specify appropriate strategies to socialize these values and norms (Harkness & Super, 1999; McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Subramanian, 1996). Following Harkness and Super (1999), we propose that the personal childrearing beliefs of caregivers basically stem from two sources: everyday personal experiences with childrearing in par-

ticular contexts, and socially shared cultural beliefs on childrearing within particular communities. Furthermore, we propose that these sources are dynamically terrelated (cf. Bornstein & Cote, 2003; Raeff, 2000; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). Socially shared cultural beliefs provide the schemes for interpreting and evaluating particular events in situations of childrearing, for defining action goals and deciding upon action strategies to obtain these goals. Psychologically, processes of cognitive reconstruction, or deduction, are involved, which transform cognitions from shared and general into personal and situation-specific. In turn, personal experiences are, through processes of cognitive construction, or induction, combined into new general ideas that are shared with fellow members of the cultural community (Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). Through these recurrent dynamics of caregivers' reasoning, cultural childrearing belief systems are both organizing experience as well as adapting to experience, providing caregivers with guidelines and reassurance while changing to meet new challenges.

Cultural belief systems on childrearing differ between cultural communities, as has been demonstrated in numerous studies in the past decades (for overviews, see Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997; Rubin & Chung, 2006). A convenient way, adopted in many studies, to address cultural differences is the individualism-collectivism distinction, that refers to belief systems stressing individuality, competition, and independent selfhood versus relatedness, cooperation, and interdependent selfhood (cf. Triandis, 1995). The distinction has proven to be of heuristic value to order and qualify clusters of beliefs of different cultures, in particular Western and non-Western communities (Cote & Bornstein, 2003; Kemmelmeier et al., 2003), and to interpret differences in childrearing practices (Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003; Rudy & Grusec, 2001). According to current understanding, individualism and collectivism should neither be conceived as a dichotomy, nor as mutually exclusive and opposing systems of ideas, but as graded, interrelated, and multi-dimensional instead. Individualistic and collectivistic ideas are found to coexist in many cultures (Harkness, Super, & van Tijen, 2000; Harwood, Schölmerich, & Schulze, 2000; Killen & Wainryb, 2000; Raeff, 2006). Yet, different cultures may emphasize or focus on different constellations of ideas (Greenfield et al., 2003; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996).

In many studies, different terminologies have been used for the same or related concepts. For example, Schaefer and Edgerton (1985) and Palacios and Moreno (1996) used the terms modern and traditional to address individualistic and col-

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lectivistic beliefs respectively (see also Patel-Amin & Power, 2002; Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003), whereas, for instance, Raeff (2006) coined the terms independence and interdependence in issues of separateness and connectedness in human development and socialization. The focus in studies of collectivism or traditionalism on childrearing goals and strategies that foster respect for authorities, obedience, conformity, and social responsibility (Schaefer & Edgerton, 1985) is consistent with a basic underlying goal of subordinating the individual's concerns to that of the social unit of the family and community.

Research on the role of childrearing beliefs and socialization goals of caregivers in childcare centers is scarce. A notable exception is the study by Killen, Ardila-Rey, Barrakatz, and Wang (2000). This study compared the beliefs of preschool teachers in the United States, Colombia, El Salvador, and Taiwan on a number of typical issues of group-based care and education, such as the importance of allowing individual freedom of choice and the necessity of maintaining group rules. The results indicated profound cultural differences. Compared to US teachers, Colombian, El Salvadorian, and Taiwanese teachers put more emphasis on submitting to the group and obedience to the teachers, but attached considerably less value to individual choice and initiative, which are considered important elements of developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood care and education (Bredenkamp, 1985).

A recent study by Burchinal and Cryer (2003), concerning secondary analyses of the data from the Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study and NICHD Study of Early Child Care, addressed cultural diversity in day-care for children up to 36 months of age. The main aim of this study was to examine whether quality of care had the same effect on developmental outcomes for white and ethnic minority children. The results confirmed the presupposition that all ethnic groups benefited about equally from 'positive parenting,' that is, sensitive and stimulating care. Furthermore, the role of caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs was addressed in the Burchinal and Cryer study. The results indicated that the extent to which professional caregivers endorsed traditional, authoritarian beliefs was negatively related with development in the cognitive and social-emotional domains for all groups of children. Unfortunately for the present purpose, Burchinal and Cryer (2003) did not report on the relationship between endorsed childrearing beliefs and caregivers' ethnic/cultural background. Nevertheless, we expect that caregivers from ethnic minority communities - who in general were raised in collectivis-

tic communities, either in the Netherlands, or in their countries of origin (sens, Pels, Deković, & Nijsten, 1999; Mayo, 2004) - more often subscribe to additional beliefs than caregivers from mainstream white communities. Therefore, Burchinal and Cryer's results, and indirectly also Killen et al.'s (2000) findings, may cause worry in the context of increasing diversity in day-care.

In addition to the distinction between individualism and collectivism, we differentiate between general and daycare-specific childrearing beliefs in this study. General childrearing beliefs are the underlying, implicit, and taken for granted ideas about the nature of children and their development. As these general beliefs are often not consciously held, they are less likely to be actively discussed by caregivers (cf. Harkness & Super, 1999). We expect that the cultural beliefs of caregivers' particular communities are an important source for their general childrearing beliefs. Daycare-specific beliefs, on the other hand, are those ideas directly linked with childrearing in a day-care center. These ideas are solutions to everyday problems and therefore closely tied to ideas about best practices (Harkness & Super, 2006). As caregivers share the responsibility for a group of children together with one or two colleagues, they continuously need to attune to and discuss each other's childrearing approach. As shared beliefs are transformed into new, personal beliefs (Harkness & Super, 1999; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996), we expect that this constant discourse with colleagues provides an important source for caregivers' daycare-specific beliefs (cf. Rosenthal, 1991).

A core issue in the rearing of young children concerns finding a balance between promoting independence, or autonomy, and promoting interdependence, or relatedness, as primary goals of socialization (Greenfield et al., 2003; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005, 1997). For center-based day-care in predominantly individualistic Western countries, striking a balance between fostering individuality and independence on the one hand, and participation in the group and interdependence on the other hand, is a particularly critical issue (Singer, 1993). The reason is that center day-care is group-based, with, in most countries, one caregiver being involved with an age-heterogeneous group of up to six to eight children (OECD, 2001). Many of the daily activities are group activities, requiring observation of group rules and sociocentric attitudes. In addition to caregivers' interactions with individual children, collaborative peer interactions in group activities are considered important vehicles of cognitive and social development. In this context, the issue of cultural diversity in day-care is particularly interesting.

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In the Netherlands about 1.7 million inhabitants, 11 % of the total population, are first- or second-generation immigrants from non-Western countries. The largest immigrant groups living in the Netherlands nowadays are the Surinamese (333.500), the Antilleans (130.000), the Turkish (368.600), and the Moroccans (329.500) (CBS, 2007). Over the past 15 years, as a response to the high demand for staff in the rapidly growing Dutch day-care system, many young females from these immigrant communities have entered the day-care workforce (Bekker et al., 2005). Given the increased cultural diversity of the Dutch day-care workforce, questions arise about caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs. The present study was set up to provide the first answers to these questions.

For the purpose of the study, we pooled immigrant caregivers into two broad groups on the basis of their immigration history, and their cultural and religious roots, and compared them with a group of Dutch caregivers working in the same day-care centers. The Caribbean group in this study consists of Surinamese and Antillean caregivers. Surinam and the Dutch Antilles are located in the Caribbean region in South-America, and have been Dutch colonies for several centuries. Both countries have a school system modeled on the Dutch system, and Dutch is the main language in schools and other official institutions. Most Surinamese and Antilleans are descendants of former African slaves and Indian and Indonesian contract laborers, who were employed on colonial plantations. Surinam and the Dutch Antilles can be characterized as predominantly collectivistic societies, characterized by extended families, close family ties and matrifocality, with a mixture of religious orientations (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Islamic, and Hindu). Research on parental beliefs of Surinamese and Antillean parents in the Netherlands shows that respect for authorities, conformity to rules of conduct, obedience to parents and sociability are still highly valued childrearing goals, whereas personal autonomy is valued only by the higher educated (Janssens et al., 1999; Mayo, 2004).

The Mediterranean group in this study consists of caregivers with a Moroccan or Turkish background. They are the descendants of the guest workers who in the 1960s and 1970s were recruited from poor rural regions in Morocco and Turkey. In the 1970s and 1980s of the previous century, many of them decided to stay permanently in the Netherlands and had their wives and families come over (CBS, 2000). Rural Turkey and Morocco can be characterized as predominantly collectivistic societies as well, but they differ from Caribbean societies in several

respects. The extended family type in these countries is strongly patrifocal and the religious orientation is rather homogeneously Islamic, predominantly of the Sunnite branch. Furthermore, there was no previous contact with the Dutch culture and education system. Moroccans and Turks living in the Netherlands still value their traditional religion and culture highly, including its collectivistic childrearing goals, such as respect for authorities, conformity to rules, and relational values, whereas the development of an autonomous self is much less valued (Janssens et al., 1999).

The focus of this study is to give insight into the issue of cultural diversity in day-care, it is the first study in the Netherlands to address cultural diversity in day-care. First we investigate whether there are cultural differences in professional caregivers' childrearing beliefs. Even though all caregivers have a Dutch professional education and all work within the same day-care system, we expect to find cultural differences in childrearing beliefs. We expect Dutch caregivers to value general individualistic metaphors, socialization goals, and socialization strategies more than Caribbean-Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch caregivers do, whereas both non-Dutch groups are expected to value collectivistic ideas, goals, and strategies more than Dutch caregivers do. Second, we investigate if caregivers' childrearing beliefs are a typical ethnic/cultural phenomenon, or whether their beliefs are also determined by professional training and by the context of the day-care center, including years of experience and colleagues' beliefs (cf. Rosenthal, 1991; Smith & Sheppard, 1988). General childrearing beliefs are presupposed to reflect the fundamental ideological orientation regarding general issues of child development of the cultural communities to which caregivers belong. Daycare-specific childrearing beliefs are presupposed to reflect the particular childrearing beliefs, socialization goals and practical constraints of day-care, and are expected to be influenced by professional training and shared experiences with colleagues.

2.2 Method

2.2.1 Subjects and Procedures

A list of child care centers in three major cities in the Netherlands was composed using municipal sources and the yellow pages. In order to get a culturally diverse caregiver sample, mainly inner city childcare centers were selected. Letters de-

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scribing the purpose and requirements of the study were sent to 141 childcare centers. The center managers were contacted by phone two weeks after receiving the letter, and asked to participate. Of these childcare centers 95 met our inclusion criteria (they provided fulltime day care for two to four-year-olds and employed several caregivers with a non-Dutch cultural background), of which 58 (61%) agreed to participate. The main reason for refusing participation was the expected workload. Caregivers eligible for the study were identified by the center managers. In total, 178 questionnaires, together with post-paid return envelopes, were mailed to the 58 childcare centers. After three weeks, targeted caregivers who had not yet returned the questionnaire were reminded by phone. Eventually, 116 questionnaires were returned, a return rate of 65%.

Participants in this study were 116 female caregivers, working in licensed day-care centers with two- to four-year old children. Of these caregivers, 59 were Dutch; 27 were first- or second-generation immigrants from the Caribbean countries of Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles, and 30 were first- or second-generation immigrants from the Mediterranean countries of Morocco and Turkey. Respondents' cultural background was assessed by self-ascription and controlled for by asking their country of birth and the country of birth of their parents. Of the immigrant caregivers, 68% were born in another country than the Netherlands, 97% had parents who both were born in another country, and 100 % had a least one parent who was born in another country.

2.2.2 Measures

Childrearing beliefs were assessed with two structured questionnaires; Schaefer and Edgerton's Parental Modernity Scale (PMS, 1985), and Killen and Smetana's Autonomy and the Group Questionnaire (AGQ, 1999). Both questionnaires were originally developed for English-speaking respondents. For the PMS, a Dutch translation was available (Leseman, Sijssling, Jap-A-Joe, & Şahin, 1995), which was checked and updated by a Dutch-American bilingual psychologist. She also assisted the first author in translating the AGQ into Dutch. Both questionnaires were slightly adjusted, whenever convenient, to fit the context of childrearing in day-care centers, for instance, by replacing the word 'parent' by 'caregiver,' and 'school' by 'day-care center.' The complete beliefs questionnaire consisted of 69 statements. Each statement required an evaluation on a five-point Likert answer-

ing scale, with scale points ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

The PMS was originally developed to measure modern and traditional parental childrearing beliefs. In previous research among parents of three- and four-year-olds from Dutch, Caribbean-Dutch, and Mediterranean-Dutch communities, the PMS proved to be a sensitive instrument to determine the degree of individualistic and collectivistic orientations in childrearing, revealing strong differences between these cultural communities and high predictive validity with respect to differences in observed parent-child interactions (Leseman et al., 1995; Leseman & van Tuijl, 2005; Mayo, 2004). This led us to conclude that, although not perfect for measuring caregivers' individualistic and collectivistic childrearing beliefs, for this purpose, the PMS was the best available instrument.

Based on item content, two scales were defined. One, Individualistic Ideas ($\alpha = .72$, with $k = 8$ items) reflected the degree to which subjects expressed an individualistic orientation with respect to root metaphors of children's development and learning, and preferred socialization goals and socialization strategies. Cronbach's alpha's were sufficiently equivalent across the three cultural groups (Dutch $\alpha = .75$, Surinamese-Dutch $\alpha = .75$, and Mediterranean-Dutch $\alpha = .60$). Examples of individualistic statements were '*Children should be allowed to disagree with their caregiver if they feel their own ideas are better*' and '*Children learn best by doing things themselves rather than listening to others.*' The second, Collectivistic Ideas ($\alpha = .85$, $k = 25$), represented the degree to which subjects reported a collectivistic orientation. Cronbach's alpha's did not differ between the three groups (Dutch $\alpha = .83$, Caribbean-Dutch $\alpha = .85$, Mediterranean-Dutch $\alpha = .85$). Examples of collectivistic statements are '*The most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to caregivers*' and '*Children like to teach other children.*' The inter-correlation of both scales was $r = -.02$ ($p = .85$).

The AGQ addresses individualistic and collectivistic issues within the context of day-care, by striking a balance between children's individual concerns, such as autonomy, and group concerns, such as loyalty and conformity to the group. It was included to assess caregivers' daycare-specific beliefs. Based on item content, three scales were derived. The scale, Individual Choices ($\alpha = .67$; $k = 4$), measures the importance caregivers attach to letting children make their own choices and take their own decisions in the day-care setting, and the reasons teachers value for providing these choices. Sample items are '*Children should*

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learn to make choices to foster their autonomy, 'Children should learn to make choices to encourage their independence,' 'Children should learn to make choices to enhance their self-esteem.' Alpha's per group were comparable (Dutch $\alpha = .67$; Caribbean-Dutch $\alpha = .68$; Mediterranean-Dutch $\alpha = .65$). The scale, Rules and Order ($\alpha = .83$; $k = 12$), represents caregivers' views on the importance of conformity to rules and order in day-care for children's own good. Cronbach's alpha's between the groups were equivalent ($\alpha = .79$; $\alpha = .87$; and $\alpha = .78$ for Dutch, Caribbean-Dutch, and Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers respectively). Sample items are 'Children should follow rules to develop social competence,' 'Children should follow rules to learn self control,' and 'Children should follow rules to learn manners.' The third scale, Group for the Individual ($\alpha = .85$; $k = 4$), assesses to what extent caregivers see participation in the group as a positive choice of the individual child and as benefiting his or her individual development. Cronbach's alpha's did not differ between the three groups (Dutch $\alpha = .84$; Caribbean-Dutch $\alpha = .85$, and Mediterranean-Dutch $\alpha = .88$). Typical items are 'How important is it for a child to stay with the group during circle time?' 'A child can leave the group during circle time and learn that group participation is voluntary,' 'A child can leave the group during circle time in order to learn that he can make choices,' and 'A child can leave the group during circle time and learn that his decisions will be respected.'

Table 1 presents the intercorrelations between caregivers' general and daycare-specific beliefs. Caregivers' general individualistic and collectivistic beliefs about children and childrearing, derived from the PMS, were not related to each other. Intercorrelations between the three scales used to determine daycare-specific instances of individualism and collectivism, derived from the AGQ, showed a similar pattern. The correlations between the two scales representing individualistic ideas, i.e. 'Individual Choices' and 'Group for individual,' on the one hand, and collectivistic ideas, i.e. 'Rules and order,' on the other hand, were small and not significant. The two individualism scales of the AGQ correlated weakly with the individualism scale of the PMS, whereas the collectivism scales of AGQ and PMS were moderately correlated.

Table 1 Intercorrelations of the PMS and AGQ belief scales (N=116)

	Individualistic Ideas	Individual Choices	Rules and Order	Group for Individual
Collectivistic Ideas	-.02	-.04	.34**	-.15
Individualistic Ideas	1	-.04	-.06	.17
Individual Choices		1	.05	.28**
Rules and Order			1	-.05
Group for Individual				1

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

In addition, caregivers were asked to indicate the level of professional training they had completed on a six point scale ranging from 1 (junior vocational training) to 6 (completed university training), the number of years working as a professional caregiver in day-care, the number of working hours per week, their age in years, and the importance of religion in daily life, which was rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (not religious / not at all important) to 5 (very important). Furthermore, caregivers were asked to indicate the ethnic background of the two colleagues with whom they were working most closely together. The index, Cultural Diversity of Close Colleagues, was computed as the number of non-Dutch close colleagues, ranging from 0 (both close colleagues were Dutch) to 2 (both close colleagues were first or second-generation immigrants).

2.3 Results

The results are presented in four parts. First, we describe the background characteristics of the caregivers. Then, we compare the childrearing beliefs of the three cultural groups. Next, we present the results of a correlation analysis, relating caregivers' childrearing beliefs to their background characteristics. Finally, the results of multiple regression analyses are presented with general and daycare-specific beliefs as dependent variables, and center and caregiver characteristics as predictors.

Table 2 presents the mean scores and standard deviations of a number of background characteristics of the caregivers involved in this study. There were no big

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statistically significant differences in level of training, years of experience as day-care worker and working hours. Due to Dutch legislation on caregivers' educational level, the vast majority of caregivers were trained at the senior vocational training level (value 3); few were trained at a higher (college or university) level, and very few were trained at a lower level (junior vocational training). The groups did differ in mean age (the Caribbean caregivers were older, the Mediterranean caregivers were younger than the Dutch caregivers), importance of religion in daily life (both non-Dutch groups reported religion to be much more important for them than the Dutch caregivers did), and cultural diversity among colleagues (both Dutch and Mediterranean caregivers more often had close colleagues who were first- or second-generation immigrants than Caribbean caregivers).

Table 2 Caregivers' background characteristics broken down by group

	Range	Means and SD's			$F_{(2, 114)}$	p
		Dutch (N=59)	Caribbean (N=27)	Mediterranean (N=30)		
Level of training	1-6	3.31 (.84)	3.22 (.42)	3.03 (.18)	1.80	.17
Years of experience	1-18	6.27 (4.67)	6.11 (3.83)	4.92 (4.05)	1.02	.36
Working hours per week	3-40	27.39 (8.09)	30.93 (6.92)	28.55 (5.90)	2.16	.12
Age in years	19-59	31.43 (8.93)	34.78 (7.29)	28.80 (7.22)	3.83*	.03
Importance of religion	1-5	1.83 (1.37)	3.56 (1.12)	4.20 (.96)	43.59*	.00
Cultural diversity colleagues	0-2	1.31 (.73)	.74 (.71)	1.10 (.66)	5.93*	.00

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 3 presents the mean scores of the three groups of caregivers on the cultural childrearing beliefs scales. Analyses of variance revealed statistically significant differences between the Dutch and both Caribbean-Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch caregivers on the Individualistic Ideas ($F_{(2, 114)} = 5.57, p < .01, d = .73$ and $d = .72$ respectively) and Collectivistic Ideas scales of the PMS ($F_{(2, 114)} = 7.82, p < .01, d = .86$ and $d = .85$ respectively). The differences were considerable. As was ex-

pected, Dutch caregivers valued general individualistic metaphors, socialization goals, and socialization strategies more than Caribbean-Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch caregivers did, whereas both Caribbean-Dutch and Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers valued collectivistic ideas, goals, and strategies more than Dutch caregivers did. Tukey post-hoc tests indicated statistically significant differences between the Dutch and both non-Dutch groups (p 's < .01) on the Individualistic and Collectivistic Ideas scales. No statistically significant differences between the Caribbean and Mediterranean groups were found. Overall, the majority of the caregivers in all three cultural groups tended to agree more with individualistic than with collectivistic ideas. Remarkably, only one of the scales based on the AGQ, representing daycare-specific childrearing beliefs, revealed statistically significant differences between the three groups at the p < .05 level. With Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers valuing ideas concerning 'Rules and Order' in the day-care group more than Dutch caregivers did ($F_{(2, 114)} = 3.36, p < .05, d = .56$).

Table 3 Caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs broken down by group

Childrearing Beliefs	Means (SD's)			$F_{(2, 114)}$	p	Contrasts
	Dutch (N=59)	Caribbean (N=27)	Mediterranean (N=30)			
Individualistic Ideas	4.11 (.60)	3.65 (.85)	3.75 (.58)	5.57*	.00	C, M < D
Collectivistic Ideas	2.38 (.63)	2.87 (.73)	2.84 (.64)	7.82*	.00	D < C, M
Individual Choices	4.39 (.55)	4.54 (.76)	4.46 (.78)	.47	.65	
Rules and Order	3.64 (.79)	3.95 (.59)	3.98 (.43)	3.36*	.04	D < M
Group for Individual	3.97 (.98)	4.03 (.89)	3.88 (.82)	.21	.81	

Note. * p < .05; ** p < .01

Because no statistically significant differences were observed between the Caribbean-Dutch and the Mediterranean-Dutch group, the groups were pooled. A dummy-variable, Immigrant Background, was computed with values 1 (caregiver is from Caribbean or Mediterranean origin) and 0 (caregiver is from indigenous

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Dutch origin) and was used in subsequent analyses.

Table 4 presents the Pearson correlations of caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs with their background characteristics. The pattern of correlations confirmed the rather big differences between Dutch and immigrant caregivers when general childrearing beliefs - referring to root metaphors of child development, socialization goals, and socialization strategies - are concerned. Regarding daycare-specific beliefs, Immigrant Background was positively related to beliefs concerning rules and order in the day-care group. However, there were no relationships between Immigrant Background and both the individualistic-orientated belief scales. Similarly, Importance of Religion correlated positively with Collectivistic Ideas and with ideas about Rules and Order, and negatively with Individualistic Ideas. This means that the more important religion is in daily life, the less individualistic is caregivers' orientation with respect to general childrearing issues. However, Importance of Religion was not associated with both individualistic scales on daycare-specific childrearing beliefs. Interestingly, the degree of cultural diversity among close colleagues appeared to be related to both general collectivistic ideas (but not to general individualistic ideas) and specific ideas about rules and order in day-care settings (but not to the other daycare-specific ideas). Caregivers' Years of Experience were found to be related negatively with Collectivistic Ideas, while a positive relation was found between experience and caregivers' ideas about group participation as a positive choice of an individual child. Caregivers' age was found to be positively related with ideas about Individual Choices and the scale Group for Individual. More working hours per week seemed to be positively related to general collectivistic childrearing beliefs. With respect to caregivers' level of training, no relations were found with any of the belief scales.

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Table 4 Pearson correlations of caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs and their background characteristics (N=116)

Childrearing Beliefs	Immigrant background	Importance of religion	Diversity of colleagues	Training	Experience	Working hours	Age
Collectivistic Ideas	.34**	.34**	.28**	-.08	-.27**	.23*	-.13
Individualistic Ideas	-.30**	-.33**	.03	-.00	-.07	.00	-.15
Individual Choices	.14	-.06	.05	.02	.17	-.13	.19*
Rules and Order	.23**	.21*	.35**	-.05	-.10	.04	-.06
Group for Individual	.00	-.15	.03	.15	.24**	-.09	.20*

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Finally, five multiple regression analyses were performed to determine the multivariate relationships of caregivers' background characteristics, and their cultural childrearing beliefs. The five scales Individualistic ideas; Collectivistic ideas; Individual Choices; Rules and order, and Group for the individual were the dependent variables. Proximal variables as cultural Diversity of close Colleagues, caregivers' Years of Experience, caregivers' Age, and Working Hours per week, and more distal variables as Immigrant Background, and Importance of Religion, were entered as predictors. The proximal variables are situated in the day-care center, therefore we refer to these predictors as 'context variables.' As both caregivers' cultural background and their value of religion are connected with the larger society, we refer to these predictors as 'community variables.' For the three daycare-specific belief scales, also general individualistic and collectivistic beliefs were entered as predictors. Caregivers' level of education was not included as a predictor because no correlations with the dependent variables were found, probably due to minimal variance in caregivers' educational level. The results are presented in Tables 5 and 6.

Individualism was weakly predicted ($R^2 = .18, p < .01$), by the more distal variables Immigrant Background and Importance of Religion. Collectivism was better predicted ($R^2 = .24, p < .01$), with the proximal variables Diversity of close Colleagues and Years of Experience, and the distal variable Immigrant Background, as statistically significant predictors. The degree to which caregivers worked with immigrant caregivers was associated with a stronger orientation towards Collectivism, as were less years of experience, suggesting influence of colleagues on personal beliefs. Furthermore, first- and second-generation Caribbean-

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Dutch and Mediterranean-Dutch immigrant caregivers subscribed more to the broad dimension of Collectivism than indigenous Dutch caregivers.

Table 5 Regression analysis with General childrearing beliefs as dependents and caregiver background characteristics, and child care center characteristics as predictors (N=116)

Predictors:	Individualism		Collectivism	
	Final β	ΔR^2	Final β	ΔR^2
Step 1 'Context'		.02		.15**
Diversity of close colleagues	.02		.21*	
Years of experience	-.07		-.22*	
Age	-.17		.03	
Working hours	.00		.16	
Step 2 'Community'		.16**		.09**
Immigrant background	-.24†		.25*	
Importance of religion	-.21		.08	
R^2 Total		.18		.24

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 6 presents the results of regression analyses with daycare-specific childrearing beliefs as dependent variables. The scale Rules and Order was predicted best ($R^2 = .20, p < .00$), with the proximal variable Diversity of close Colleagues, and caregivers' general collectivistic beliefs, as significant predictors. The degree in which caregivers work with immigrant caregivers was associated with a stronger valuation of Rules and Order, as was a higher subscription to general collectivistic beliefs, suggesting influence of colleagues as well as of caregivers' general beliefs, on their personal daycare-specific beliefs. The individualistic orientated belief scale, Group for Individual, was weakly predicted ($R^2 = .15, p < .05$), with caregivers' general individualistic beliefs as a significant predictor. Caregivers who subscribed more to the dimension of Individualism, saw more benefits for children's personal development in participating in the group. The Individual Choices belief scale, could not be predicted by either context variables, general beliefs, or community variables.

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Table 6 Regression analysis with daycare-specific childrearing beliefs as dependents, and caregiver background characteristics, and child care center characteristics as predictors (N=116)

Predictors:	Individual Choices		Rules and Order		Group for individual	
	Final β	ΔR^2	Final β	ΔR^2	Final β	ΔR^2
Step 1 'Context'		.06		.13**		.07*
Diversity of colleagues	.10		.37**		.10	
Years of experience	.10		.02		.22†	
Age	.12		-.06		.07	
Working hours	-.13		-.02		-.07	
Step 2 'General beliefs'		.00		.07*		.04†
Individualistic beliefs	-.02		-.09		.19*	
Collectivistic beliefs	.02		.25**		-.08	
Step 3 'Community'		.01		.01		.02
Immigrant background	.16		.07		.23†	
Importance of religion	-.13		.04		-.14	
<i>R</i> ² Total		.07		.20		.15

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

2.4 Discussion

The increasing cultural diversity of staff and children in center-based day-care in Western countries presents the challenge of how to reconcile beliefs on child development and childrearing stemming from different cultural traditions. Theoretical models underscore the dynamic and adaptive nature of cultural beliefs through recurrent processes of deduction and induction (Bornstein & Cote, 2003; Raeff, 2000; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996), but evidence of these processes regarding childrearing in day-care is scarce. The present study contributes to this issue in several ways. First, it was revealed that Dutch and immigrant caregivers working in Dutch day-care centers differ strongly with respect to general ideas on childrearing, despite similar professional training. Differences between caregivers

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were found on two separate dimensions, one broadly reflecting collectivistic ideas and the other broadly reflecting individualistic ideas. These differences between the groups indicate strong influences from the cultural communities to which the caregivers belong.

Second, there appears to be a high degree of consensus among caregivers about some of the core issues of childrearing in day-care settings, despite otherwise differing views. Regarding daycare-specific issues, hardly any differences between Dutch and immigrant caregivers were found. Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers were found to differ only slightly from Dutch caregivers in valuing the need to observe group rules and maintaining order, both seen as instances of collectivism. No differences between Dutch and immigrant caregivers' beliefs were found regarding the individualistic daycare-specific themes such as the importance of allowing individual choice and the benefits for personal development of group participation. These results largely contradict previous findings by Killen et al. (2000), who compared daycare-specific beliefs of caregivers in different – Western-individualistic and non-Western-collectivistic – countries and found several significant cultural differences. Our study differs from that by Killen et al. in that we compared caregivers with different cultural backgrounds within one society and one day-care system. Our results therefore, shed further light on the multidimensional issue of cultural diversity in day-care.

Third, our findings confirm that caregivers' childrearing belief systems are in part determined through a prolonged socialization process by the belief systems of their cultural and religious communities, and in part by their professional experience and their colleagues. Correlation and regression analyses with background characteristics provided information on the factors affecting caregivers' childrearing beliefs. That is, the social context of the day-care center (cultural diversity among close colleagues and caregivers' years of experience), and caregivers' cultural community (belonging to the Dutch or to immigrant communities) predicted caregivers' general childrearing beliefs. These general childrearing beliefs further predicted caregivers' daycare-specific beliefs. We interpret these findings as indicating that the presumed continuous discourse with colleagues on issues that rise in the day-care setting - as caregivers always work in pairs or threesomes - creates a situation where individuals' cognitions are transformed into shared beliefs (cf. Harkness & Super, 1999; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996) and thus leads to more consensus among caregivers. Even though most available research on this matter

applies to parents, we assume that this holds true also for caregivers who are jointly involved in childrearing issues. The latter is consistent with previous research showing that early childhood teachers construct shared situation-specific beliefs (cf. Smith & Shepard, 1988).

Our results show that the vast majority of caregivers in all cultural groups tended to agree more with individualistic than with collectivistic ideas, but that immigrant caregivers were on average more balanced in this respect. This offers new perspectives on the issue of increasing cultural diversity in day-care, changing the starting point from worry (cf. Burchinal & Cryer, 2003) into possible promise. Ideas about relatedness and cooperation, as can be found in collectivistic communities (cf. Triandis, 1995), present an important addition to current day-care quality standards. According to critics, present day-care quality standards are based on Western models of dyadic adult-child relationships within an individualistic socialization frame and, therefore, not particularly suited for regulating the quality of group-based care (cf. Rosenthal, 1999; Singer, 1993). An important implication of this study is, therefore, that it may enhance awareness of cultural biases in conceptualizing and evaluating quality of day-care.

An interesting question for future research on cultural diversity in day-care arises from the finding that the vast majority of caregivers in all cultural groups tended to agree more with individualistic than with collectivistic ideas, but that immigrant caregivers were on average more balanced in this respect. Can we expect that caregivers who, by virtue of their own socialization, have access to more elaborated and situation-appropriate collectivistic ideas - for instance, about organizing and regulating group processes, or about promoting empathy and collaboration among children - have an advantage over other caregivers in adapting to the demands of group-based day-care?

Also, the indication that caregivers construct shared situation-specific beliefs through continuous discourse with colleagues, offers new perspectives on regulating day-care quality processes. Discussing childrearing beliefs – the nature of children and their development, children's functioning in social groups, values and norms regarding children's development – should become customary in day-care centers and in caregivers' professional preparation, in order to make caregivers more aware of their own and their colleagues' cultural beliefs. A method that can be used to provoke caregivers' beliefs about childrearing practices is the use of picture cards or short video episodes (cf. Kärtner et al., 2007). Such a method

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could easily be implemented in professional meetings. Once aware of their own childrearing beliefs, (future) caregivers can make a start in actively discussing pedagogical guidelines, and how they feel their beliefs affect their childrearing behaviors, in order to reach a shared understanding of what day-care quality is and how it can be achieved. Center directors, considering the cultural differences in childrearing beliefs, can guide these processes by reflecting upon official childrearing beliefs and desirable developmental goals. A way to accomplish this goal is through organizing short courses on certain themes - for instance on children's independence - or theories - for instance on Gordon's or Freinet's, on whose theories many (Dutch) day-care centers' pedagogical guidelines are based. A strength of this study concerns the relationship between the different aspects of caregivers' belief systems, as studied here. The correlations between the individualism and collectivism scales derived from the PMS (Schaefer & Edgerton, 1985), as well as the individualism and collectivism scales derived from the AGQ (Killen & Smetana, 1999), were small and non significant. These results support the idea that collectivism and individualism represent different belief systems - not two opposing poles of a continuum - that can co-exist, not only within societies, but even within persons (Harkness et al., 2000; Mayo, 2004; Raeff, 2000). Interestingly, the two individualism scales of the AGQ were only weakly related to the individualism scale of the PMS, whereas the collectivism scales of AGQ and PMS were moderately related, suggesting less coherence in the system of individualistic beliefs compared to the system of collectivistic beliefs (cf. Bornstein & Cote, 2003). An explanation is that the 'ideal' notions of individualism in general fit in less well with the 'real' situation in day-care settings, whereas the 'ideal' notions of collectivism in general provide caregivers with more useful cognitions for adapting to the 'real' situational demands of group-based care. Finally, the current study should be considered in the context of its limitations. First, we used structured questionnaires in printed form to assess caregivers' belief systems. Structured questionnaires are useful to determine childrearing cognitions in a global way, to evaluate differences between groups, and to collect indirect evidence of a dynamic-adaptive model of cultural beliefs. However, a more direct and fine-grained examination of childrearing beliefs and the dynamics of the continuous reconstruction of beliefs, is highly desirable. Also, somewhat higher return rates would have been preferable. A further limitation concerns the AGQ; the possible sub-optimal translation could be an explanation for the lack of

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results found with the AGQ. Also the bipartite formulation of the questions could have influenced the results found with this questionnaire. In this study the focus was on day-care caregivers only. A limited set of possible determinants of caregivers' beliefs was included. Future research should include in particular measures of cultural diversity among the children and should also focus on the influence of parental childrearing beliefs. Despite these limitations, the present study offers valuable insights into the issue of cultural diversity in center-based day-care. This is an important issue in western societies where immigration has resulted in culturally and ethnically diverse communities, which nevertheless remains an underrepresented topic in current research.

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3. Childrearing in a group setting: Beliefs of Dutch, Caribbean-Dutch, and Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers in center-based child care

Abstract

Child care centers in Western countries are becoming increasingly culturally diverse, regarding both professional caregivers, and children and their parents. Childrearing beliefs, which differ between cultures, are found to affect process quality and children's developmental outcomes. The first aim of this study was to investigate cultural differences in caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs through a semi-structured interview. The second aim was to explore the relation between the centers' cultural context and caregivers' beliefs. Participants were 61 caregivers (20 Dutch, 20 Caribbean-Dutch and 21 Mediterranean-Dutch) working in Dutch child care centers with 2-4-year olds. Cultural differences between Dutch and immigrant caregivers were evident. Dutch caregivers mentioned independence as a socialization goal most, while Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers stressed collectivistic childrearing goals most. More years of experience and a positive orientation towards the Dutch society made caregivers value individualistic childrearing goals more. Working in an ethnically diverse context made both immigrant and Dutch caregivers express collectivistic beliefs more. The results further demonstrated that all cultural groups valued dimensions of both individualism and collectivism, providing further support for the multidimensionality of childrearing beliefs.

Huijbregts, S.K., Tavecchio, L.W.C., Leseman, P.P.M., & Hoffenaar, P. (in press).
Childrearing in a group setting: Beliefs of Dutch, Caribbean-Dutch, and
Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers in center-based care.
Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology

3.1 Introduction

Child care centers in Western countries are becoming multicultural settings, with culturally diverse teams serving culturally diverse families (Burchinal & Cryer, 2003; Leseman, 2002; Rosenthal, 1999). It is widely known that childrearing beliefs differ between cultures (for overviews see Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Kagitçibasi, 1997; Rubin & Chung, 2006). Cultural diversity within child care centers, therefore, implies a variety in childrearing beliefs and socialization goals, and varying strategies to socialize these values and norms (Harkness & Super, 1996; McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Subramanian, 1996). However, little is known about the possible consequences of this diversity on caregivers or children. It is important to study caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs, because beliefs have an impact on process quality (Abbott-Shim, Lambert, & McCarty, 2000; Maxwell, McWilliam, Hemmeter, Jones Ault, & Schuster, 2001; Phillips, Mekos, Scarr, McCartney, & Abbott-Shim, 2000; Scott-Little & Holloway, 1992), and on children's developmental outcomes (Burchinal & Cryer, 2003). The extent to which caregivers' endorsed traditional, authoritarian childrearing beliefs was found to be negatively related to children's cognitive outcomes. In contrast, sensitive and stimulating caregiving were positively related to children's cognitive and social-emotional development (Burchinal & Cryer, 2003). However, little is known about the educational and developmental beliefs of caregivers from non-mainstream cultural communities. Preparing culturally diverse caregivers to educate and nurture children with diverse cultural backgrounds requires a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of how cultural childrearing beliefs are both similar and different across cultural groups.

The individualism – collectivism distinction (cf. Triandis, 1995) has proven to be of heuristic value when ordering and qualifying clusters of childrearing beliefs of different cultures, in particular Western and non-Western communities (Bornstein & Cote, 2004; Cote & Bornstein, 2003; Harkness, Super, & van Tijen, 2000; Huijbregts, Leseman, & Tavecchio, 2008; Kimmelmeier, et al., 2003; Raeff, 2000), and interpreting differences in childrearing practices (Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003; Keller, Borke, Yovsi, Lohaus, & Jensen, 2005; Rudy & Crusec, 2001). There is consensus in cross-cultural literature that individualism and collectivism are not simply opposites on a single dimension, but represent different dimensions that can co-exist together in the individual mind as well as in

the community at large. Likewise, individualistic and collectivistic ideas are found to coexist in many cultures (Harwood, Schölmerich, & Schulze, 2000; Harkness et al., 2000; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005; Killen & Wainryb, 2000; Raeff, 2000; Suizzo, 2007; Tamis-LeMonda, Way, Hughes, Yoshikawa, Kalman, & Niwa, 2008), yet different cultures may emphasize on different constellations of ideas (Greenfield et al., 2003; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). Independence or autonomy and interdependence or relatedness - often used as examples of individualistic or collectivistic childrearing goals - are both important themes in children's development. The balance between the two is an important issue in the rearing of young children in every society (Greenfield et al., 2003; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997). Cultural differences in the solutions caregivers reach may depend on their particular belief systems. Striking a balance between fostering individuality and independence on the one hand, and participation in the group and interdependence on the other, is a particularly critical issue for center-based child care in predominantly individualistic Western countries (Singer, 1993). Although the official childrearing beliefs and quality standards in child care match the individualistic child-centered model best (cf. Rosenthal 1999), the characteristics of the setting seem at least compatible with a more collectivistic orientation on the part of the caregivers.

Cultural belief systems are the interconnected cognitions that parents and other educators personally hold about the nature of children, children's development, and their functioning in social groups. Furthermore, belief systems contain ideas on preferred strategies to achieve ideal socialization goals. These ideologies and values guide educators' interpretations of children's behaviour and motivate their daily actions. In this way belief systems affect the organization of children's learning environments (Harkness & Super, 1996; 1999). Following Harkness and Super (1999), we propose that personal childrearing beliefs basically stem from two sources: everyday experiences with childrearing in particular contexts, such as the child care center, and socially shared cultural beliefs of childrearing within particular communities, such as a team of caregivers or the cultural community. Personal experiences are, through processes of cognitive construction (induction) and the negotiation of childrearing values, combined into new general ideas that are shared with fellow members of the cultural community (Bugental & Johnston, 2000). In turn, through processes of cognitive reconstruction (deduction), cognitions are transformed from shared and general into personal and situation-specific

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(Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). In periods of change or disequilibrium - as may be the case in situations of increasing cultural diversity - social networks outside the family are especially important as a source for childrearing beliefs (Bugental & Johnston, 2000). Through these recurrent dynamics of caregivers' reasoning, cultural belief systems are both organizing experience as well as adapting to experience, providing caregivers with guidelines and reassurance while changing to meet new challenges.

Childrearing beliefs differ between cultural communities (for overviews, see Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Kagitçibasi, 1997; Rubin & Chung, 2006). Therefore, cultural diversity within child care centers implies a variety in childrearing beliefs and socialization goals, and varying strategies to socialize these values and norms (Harkness & Super, 1996; McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Subramanian, 1996). The frequency with which certain beliefs are expressed affirms cultural beliefs and keeps them prominent in the mind of cultural members (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Martinez, 2000). The childrearing beliefs of caregivers from different cultural groups who share the ecology of the workplace are therefore influenced by both their cultures of origin and their exposure to the cultures of the workplace, that is, of both colleagues and children (Suizzo, 2007; Rosenthal, 1991). This makes the beliefs reconstruction of caregivers with a minority background especially interesting.

As cultural models can be adopted or acquired differently, depending upon the particular situations caregivers face (Killen & Wainryb, 2000) and according to their specific life circumstances (Greenfield et al., 2003), cultural models should not be seen as static or even internally consistent structures (cf. Bornstein & Cote, 2003; Raeff, 2000; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). To reach a comprehensive understanding of caregivers' childrearing beliefs, a fine-grained research method is needed. Qualitative research methods, particularly in-depth interviews, have proven to be useful in order to understand the multi-dimensional character of the beliefs of caregivers with different cultural backgrounds (cf. Harkness et al., 2000; Raeff, 2000). Harkness and colleagues compared American and Dutch parents' descriptors of their child as related to being either individualistic or socio-centric. Raeff's study concerned European-American parents talking about their toddlers' independence and interdependence. Both these studies stress that in individualistic societies parents value individualistic as well as sociocentric socialization goals for their children.

In this study, cultural diversity is addressed by including caregivers with Western

and non-Western backgrounds, working within the Dutch child care system. The Surinamese, Antilleans, Moroccans and Turks are nowadays the largest migrant groups in the Netherlands (CBS, 2007), therefore our focus is on caregivers from these cultural groups. Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles are located in the Caribbean region in South-America, and have been Dutch colonies for several centuries. Both countries have a school system modeled on the Dutch system, and Dutch is the main language in schools and other official institutions. Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles can be characterized as predominantly collectivistic societies, with a mixture of religious orientations (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Islamic, and Hindu). Research on parental beliefs of Surinamese and Antillean parents in the Netherlands shows that collectivistic childrearing goals such as respect for authorities, conformity to rules of conduct, obedience to parents, and sociability are still very important, whereas personal autonomy is valued only by the more highly educated (Janssens et al., 1999; Mayo, 2004).

The Moroccan and Turkish caregivers are the descendants of guest workers who in the 1960s and 1970s were recruited from poor rural regions in Morocco and Turkey. Rural Turkey and Morocco can be characterized as predominantly collectivistic societies as well, but they differ from the Caribbean societies in several respects. The extended family type in these countries is strongly patrifocal and the religious orientation is rather homogeneously Islamic. Furthermore, there was no previous contact with the Dutch culture and education system. Moroccans and Turks living in the Netherlands value their traditional religion and culture highly, including its collectivistic childrearing goals such as respect for authorities, conformity to rules and relational values, whereas the development of an autonomous self is much less valued (Janssens et al., 1999; Phalet & Schönplflug, 2001).

The current study is part of a larger research program aimed at exploring and comparing professional caregivers' childrearing beliefs and childrearing behaviors across these ethnic-cultural groups in the Netherlands. In a previous study on caregivers' childrearing beliefs, measured with standard questionnaires, we found considerable cultural differences between caregivers. Caregivers with an immigrant background agreed more with general collectivistic childrearing ideas, and less with general individualistic ideas than Dutch caregivers, while much smaller cultural differences between caregivers were found regarding childcare-specific childrearing beliefs (Huijbregts et al., 2008). The central goal of this paper is to examine the cultural differences and similarities in caregivers' reasoning

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about children's independence and autonomy, children's social development and group related issues, and caregivers' authority, often considered as typical individualistic and collectivistic childrearing beliefs (cf. Triandis, 1995). Another goal of the present study is to determine whether differences in caregivers' reasoning about child rearing issues can be accounted for solely by caregivers' cultural background, or whether other factors should be considered as well. The broad categories of individualism and collectivism are broken down into several sub-dimensions, to gain insight into the multidimensionality of these broad concepts, and to guarantee a comprehensive understanding of caregivers' reasoning. A third goal is to investigate the influence of the cultural context of the child care center on caregivers' childrearing beliefs. A child care center's cultural context is defined as the cultural background of colleagues and children, and overall child care quality. In doing so, we intend to provide further evidence of the interaction processes between personal beliefs and contextual factors.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Sample and procedures

Initially 63 child care centers in two major cities in the Netherlands were contacted, of which 44 met our inclusion criteria (they provided fulltime child care for 2-4-years-olds and employed a culturally diverse staff); of these child care centers 22 agreed to participate (50%). The main reason for refusing participation was the expected workload. The center managers identified caregivers eligible for the study. Participants were 61 female caregivers, working with two- to four-year olds in 22 different child care centers, divided over 33 different groups. Caregivers represented three ethnic groups; 20 were Dutch, 20 Caribbean-Dutch, and 21 Mediterranean-Dutch. Respondents' cultural background was assessed by self-asciption and controlled for by asking their country of birth and the country of birth of their parents. The Caribbean-Dutch sample consisted of Surinamese and Antillean respondents, and the Mediterranean-Dutch group included Moroccan or Turkish caregivers. These two broad groups were composed on the basis of caregivers' migration history, their previous contact with the Dutch school system, and their cultural and religious roots. There were no demographic differences (age, education, experience, acculturation, religiousness) within the Mediterra-

nean-Dutch group between the Moroccan and Turkish caregivers. In the Caribbean-Dutch group only a small difference in level of education was found between the Surinamese and the Antillean caregivers, with the Surinamese being slightly higher educated ($M = 3.3$, $SD = .05$ versus $M = 3$, $SD = 0$), $t(18) = 2.6$, $p = .02$, $d = 1.2$. Furthermore, both the Surinamese and Antillean caregivers, as well as the Moroccan and Turkish respondents were found to be very similar in their childrearing beliefs, whereas the beliefs held by the Caribbean group differed from those of the Mediterranean group.

Half of the immigrant-Dutch caregiver sample (52%) was born outside the Netherlands, of almost all caregivers (97%) both parents were born outside the Netherlands. Caregivers' mean age was 32 (range 20-58). Experience in the child care field ranged from 0 to 18 years ($M = 5.9$). The vast majority (79 %) had completed studies at secondary vocational level, 21 % had completed an education at higher vocational level. Dutch caregivers were slightly higher educated than Mediterranean caregivers, with the Caribbean group taking an intermediate position. This represents educational levels among the broader population in the Netherlands.

3.2.2 Measures

3.2.2.1 Semi-structured Interview

To explore the multiple dimensions of caregivers' childrearing beliefs, an open interview methodology was used. All caregivers were interviewed by trained researchers. Because interviews were held at the caregivers' workplaces during working hours, interview time was restricted to one hour maximum. All interviews were audiotaped. The interview, developed for the present research, aimed at exploring caregivers' beliefs concerning four central themes; stimulating children's development, children's autonomy, group processes, rules and disciplining. To ensure accurate understanding, interviewers probed caregivers' responses using questions as "What makes this goal important to you?". Children's autonomy and independence, and stimulating children's personal development were chosen as interview subjects because these are typical individualistic childrearing goals (cf. Triandis 1995), moreover, they are official childrearing goals in Dutch child care centers (Riksen-Walraven, 2000). Children's social development and group processes, as well as rules and disciplining, were chosen as interview subjects because these are important aspects of every day childrearing in child care, and they

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are central themes in childrearing in collectivistic societies (cf. Triandis 1995). Although individualism and collectivism are independent concepts and should not be seen as each other's opposites (cf. Triandis 1995), these sets of individualistic and collectivistic childrearing goals can lead to contradictory cognitions and confusions about how to implement these goals (cf. Greenfield et al., 2000), especially to caregivers of diverse cultural backgrounds.

3.2.2.2 Interview Coding

All interviews were transcribed verbatim and were coded with MAXqda, a computer program for qualitative data analysis (VERBI software, 2005). Intercoder reliability for this coding system was calculated in terms of Kappa coefficients between two judges on 20% of the interview transcripts. Interrater reliability, using kappa, was determined for all specific codes (about 150 in all), revealing satisfactory to very high interrater agreement. For reasons of convenience, only the average kappa is presented here, being .91. Coders were unaware of the respondents' cultural background. In research on parenting beliefs it is assumed that the frequency of mentioning a particular idea or theme reflects its importance to the parent or, in this case, the caregiver (cf. Harkness et al., 2000; Raef, 2000). The raw frequencies were divided by the total number of codes in each interview and multiplied by 100, resulting in percentages.

Caregivers' responses were coded for the occurrence of spontaneously expressed childrearing beliefs and ideas about best childrearing practices, which could be categorized as individualistic or collectivistic. Codes were given at the level of concepts, which could be represented by single words, or sometimes phrases or full statements, as is shown in the following examples. In the sentence '*I want them to become friends*', we coded the concept '*friendship*', whereas in the sentence '*Children want to try things by themselves, they want to do things by themselves, learn things by themselves*', the concept of an '*individualistic view on learning*' was embedded in the statement. With this coding procedure multiple codes could be given to one sentence. For example, in the interview excerpt '*At least they have to be polite, and listen to us, and be nice*', both '*politeness*' and '*listening to the caregiver*' were coded as '*obedience*', while '*niceness*' was coded as '*sociable*'. This way of coding enabled us to gain insight into caregivers' reasoning, as combinations of codes could be investigated. The coding sys-

tem and coding procedure used in this study, that is, starting with a large number of inductively obtained micro-analytic codes that together are used to compose several theory based belief constructs, are in accordance with the coding system and procedures of Harkness et al. (2000) and Raeff (2000). An important difference with the current study is that we interviewed professional caregivers, while the studies by Harkness and colleagues (2000) and Raeff (2000) involved parents. Therefore, we added codes that refer to the context of childrearing in child care, the construct 'togetherness' refers to those codes. A second difference, is that our study is a cross-cultural comparison of different cultural groups - with either individualistic or collectivistic backgrounds - living in one society and working in the same or a similar center for child day care.

In coding the interviews we drew a distinction between childrearing beliefs that can be considered individualistic or collectivistic. We further differentiated between beliefs about best childrearing practices to accomplish the mentioned childrearing goals. The individualistic codes all refer to the individual as distinct from the social environment. Within collectivistic beliefs we differentiate between social themes as sociability and social development, which are central to a collectivistic orientation toward the group, and an emphasis on obedience and authoritarian childrearing, frequently noted as typical of collectivistic societies. In Table 1 an overview of the coding categories is provided, together with excerpts from the interviews.

Table 1 Specification of the interview codes and constructs, together with interview excerpts

Childrearing Beliefs – Interview constructs

Individualistic beliefs

Independence	i.e. autonomy, verbal assertiveness, children's own opinion <i>'Every child is different; they all have their own way of being. One child can be very introvert, while the other is extravert'. (respondent 21, Moroccan-Dutch)</i>
Self-confidence	i.e. self-esteem, feeling proud of oneself, individual expression <i>'I love it when children learn or do something that makes them feel good. When you see them beam, that they accomplished something all by themselves.'</i> (respondent 46, Dutch)
Cognitive achievement	i.e. language development, school readiness, cognitive development <i>'When entering school, children should know their colors and they should be able to count.'</i> (respondent 32, Mediterranean-Dutch)
Individualistic view on learning	i.e. development is a cognitive constructive process, children have an active role in their own development <i>'Children want to try things by themselves, they want to do thing by themselves, learn things by themselves.'</i> (respondent 46, Dutch)

Individualistic ideas about practices

Actively stimulating	i.e. offering choices, dyadic interaction, explaining and talking <i>'I try to offer them al kinds of activities, so they learn a whole range of things.'</i> (respondent 37, Dutch)
Creating opportunities	i.e. facilitating activities, observing children, facilitating exploration <i>'I always prepare the day by getting al kinds of things ready for them, so they can choose their own activities.'</i> (respondent 22, Dutch)

Collectivistic beliefs

Sociable	i.e. sharing, friendship, social skills <i>'I want them to be nice to each other, to share and help each other. (respondent 30, Caribbean-Dutch)</i>
Obedience	i.e. being polite, having respect for adults <i>'I want them to address us politely; I don't want them to be bigmouths. Respect is very important to me.' (respondent 65, Caribbean-Dutch)</i>
Togetherness	i.e. playing together, having fun together, working together, learning from each other, especially in the context of child care <i>'It is important that they play together, do things together. I can make them do a jigsaw, but that is so individual. Yeah, together is important.' (respondent 48, Mediterranean-Dutch)</i>
Collectivistic view on learning	I.e. development as a process of maturation, learning through observation, imitation and direct instruction. <i>'You have to repeat it, repeat it and repeat it. You have to tell them exactly what they have to do, in doing so they'll learn.' (respondent 100, Mediterranean-Dutch)</i>

Collectivistic ideas about practices

Stimulating social dev.	i.e. stimulating social behaviour, stimulating playing together <i>'By offering certain toys, certain games, I stimulate them to do things together and play together.' (respondent 21, Mediterranean-Dutch)</i>
Authoritarian caregiving	i.e. punishing, stressing caregiver's authority, being harsh <i>'I tell them that when they break my rules I don't want them in this group anymore, they can stay at home. That works fine actually.' (respondent 47, Caribbean-Dutch)</i>
Group management	i.e. group activities, involving a child in an activity with other children, dividing children in sub-groups <i>'Well, what I want is them to make friends. So I offer group activities, make them work together.' (respondent 48, Mediterranean-Dutch)</i>

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3.2.2.3 Background characteristics of caregivers and child care centers

Caregivers received a questionnaire on demographic variables. They were asked to indicate the level of professional training they had completed on a six point scale ranging from 1 (high school) to 6 (a masters degree), their age in years, the number of years working as a professional caregiver in child care, and the number of working hours per week. Furthermore, caregivers indicated the importance of religion in daily life, ranging from 1 (not religious / not at all important) to 5 (very important). As all caregivers shared responsibility for a group of children with at most two other caregivers, they were asked to indicate the ethnic-cultural background of these two colleagues. The index Cultural Diversity of Staff was computed as the number of immigrant-Dutch close colleagues, ranging from 0 (both close colleagues were Dutch) to 2 (both close colleagues were first- or second-generation immigrants). The variable Diversity of the Caregiver Team was based on the percentage of caregivers with an immigrant-Dutch background working in the center and ranged from 1 (0-33 % caregivers with a migrant background) to 3 (67-100% of the caregivers had an immigrant-Dutch background). Caregivers further indicated whether their group of children consisted of mainly native Dutch (score 1), whether there was a mix of cultural backgrounds (2), or whether the group mainly consisted of immigrant children (3).

Global classroom quality was measured by the revised Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 1998). Each classroom was observed for approximately 4 hours in a single visit. The ECERS-R contains 37 items which are rated on a 1-7 scale from inadequate to excellent. The total score was computed as the mean of 35 items ($\alpha = .89$). Two items were left out (item 27 *use of TV, video and or computers* and item 37 *provisions for children with disabilities*), because both were non-applicable to the Dutch child care setting.

All immigrant caregivers (N = 39) filled out the Psychological Acculturation Scale (PAS) (Tropp, Erkut, García Coll, Alarcón, & Vázquez García, 1999). The PAS was developed to assess an individual's sense of emotional attachment to, belonging within, and understanding of the Anglo American and Latino-Hispanic cultures. For our study the PAS was translated into Dutch. Items, like for example *'With which group(s) of people do you feel you share most of your beliefs and values?'*, were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (only Moroccan / Turkish or Surinamese / Antillean) to 5 (only Dutch), with a bicultural orientation defining its midpoint. A Dutch translation was used for all respondents, as all res-

pondents were fluent in Dutch. Cronbach's alpha was .77 in the Caribbean-Dutch sample, and .90 in the Mediterranean-Dutch sample.

3.3 Results

Results are presented as follows; first, the background characteristics of the caregivers are described. Next, analyses of variance are carried out to explore cultural differences in caregivers' beliefs. Third, we predicted category membership based on the interview data. Caregivers who were incorrectly classified were subjected to closer examination by comparing them with the correctly classified caregivers as to years of experience, age, level of education, importance attached to religion, psychological acculturation, and center context variables. Finally, the results of correlation analyses, relating caregivers' childrearing beliefs to the micro-cultural context of the child care center and to caregivers' macro-cultural context are presented.

There were no statistically significant differences between caregivers in age, years of experience, working hours, center quality, or the children's cultural diversity (see Table 2). The groups differed in level of education, $F_{(2,59)} = 5.04$, $p = .01$, Dutch caregivers were slightly higher educated than Mediterranean caregivers. Further differences between the groups were found for the importance caregivers attached to religion $F_{(2,59)} = 17.67$, $p = .00$, with both immigrant groups reporting religion to be much more important to them than the Dutch caregivers did. Concerning the micro-cultural context of the child care center, we found group differences for diversity of close colleagues, $F_{(2,59)} = 4.51$, $p = .02$, and the diversity of the total caregiver team $F_{(2,59)} = 7.1$, $p = .00$. Caribbean-Dutch caregivers were most likely to have two close colleagues with an immigrant-Dutch background, they also worked in centers with the highest percentages of immigrant-Dutch caregivers, while Dutch caregivers tended to work in the centers with the smallest percentages of migrant caregivers on the work floor. Correspondingly, the cultural diversity of the total caregiver team was significantly related to children's cultural diversity, $r(53) = .55$, $p = .00$. This means that, in this sample, caregivers with an immigrant background tended to work in child care centers with high percentages of immigrant caregivers and with culturally diverse children's groups. To exclude the possibility that immigrant caregivers work in low-

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quality child care centers, correlations were computed between ECERS-R scores and caregivers' demographic and center variables. Having an immigrant background, years of experience, cultural diversity of either close colleagues or the total team were not related to child care quality.

Table 2 Caregivers' background characteristics broken down by group

	Range	Means and SD's			$F_{(2,59)}$	p
		Dutch (N=20)	Caribbean (N=20)	Mediterranean (N=21)		
Level of training	3-6	3.5 (.76)	3.3 (.44)	3 (0)	5.04	.01
Years of experience	0-18	7 (5.14)	6 (4.20)	4.6 (3.95)	1.5	.23
Working hours per week	3-40	28.4 (7.04)	31.5 (7.11)	29 (5.75)	1.14	.33
Age in years	19-59	32.16 (9.65)	35.16 (7.9)	30 (7.08)	1.9	.16
Importance of religion	1-5	1.95 (1.31)	3.63 (1.21)	4.14 (1.11)	17.67	.00
ECERS	1.7 – 4.4	3.6 (.48)	3.3 (.54)	3.5 (.60)	.92	.41
Cultural diversity close colleagues	0-2	.89 (.66)	1.16 (.60)	.57 (.59)	4.51	.02
Cultural diversity caregiver team	1-3	1.79 (.54)	2.44 (.51)	2.11 (.47)	7.1	.00
Cultural diversity children	1-3	1.74 (.65)	2.19 (.911)	1.89 (.90)	1.33	.28

In Table 3 the percentages of expressed childrearing goals are presented per cultural group. Analyses of variance with Tukey post-hoc comparisons were carried out to further explore cultural differences in caregivers' reasoning about children's nature and childrearing issues. Dutch caregivers valued independence as a childrearing goal most, 18.2% of their expressed beliefs were related to independence. As such, Dutch caregivers valued independence more than the Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers, $F_{(2,59)} = 8.95$, $p = .00$. While Caribbean-Dutch caregivers stressed children's obedience, $F_{(2,59)} = 5.29$, $p = .00$, and correspondingly, an au-

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thoritarian childrearing style, $F_{(2,59)} = 4.86, p = .01$, Dutch caregivers mentioned these themes least often. Caribbean-Dutch caregivers were further found to talk, more often than Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers, about children's learning and development from a collectivistic perspective, $F_{(2,59)} = 4.47, p < .02$. No differences between the groups were found in the frequencies with which they spoke of individualistic childrearing goals as children's self-confidence, cognitive development or an individualistic view on learning and development. Further, caregivers mentioned actively stimulating children and creating opportunities for their development about equally often. Furthermore, no cultural differences between the caregivers were found for the frequencies with which they mentioned collectivistic themes as children's sociability, togetherness, social development, or strategies to manage the group.

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Table 3 Caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs in percentages, broken down by cultural group

	Ranges, Means and SD's						<i>F</i> _(2,59)	<i>p</i>	Contrasts
	Dutch		Caribbean		Mediterranean				
	(N=20)	(N=20)	(N=20)	(N=20)	(N=21)	(N=21)			
Independence	7 - 33	18.2 (.06)	6 - 25	14.9 (.05)	3 - 17	11.5 (.04)	8.95*	.00	D > M
Self-confidence	0 - 8	4.6 (.02)	0 - 9	3.3 (.03)	0 - 9	3.2 (.03)	1.68	.20	
Cognitive development	0 - 4	1.6 (.01)	0 - 6	2.7 (.02)	0 - 8	2.7 (.02)	2.58	.08	
Learning – individualistic perspective	0 - 5	1.9 (.02)	0 - 5	1.3 (.02)	0 - 3	1.3 (1.2)	1.06	.35	
Actively stimulating development	5 - 29	16.5 (.06)	5 - 25	12.5 (.05)	4 - 26	14.3 (.06)	2.4	.10	
Creating opportunities for development	2 - 15	8.4 (.04)	1 - 18	6.9 (.04)	2 - 17	7.1 (.03)	.89	.42	
Obedience	2 - 11	5.8 (.03)	2 - 24	10.8 (.06)	1 - 23	9 (.05)	5.29*	.00	C > D
Sociable	3 - 24	14.3 (.06)	6 - 21	14.6 (.04)	9 - 26	16.8 (.05)	1.58	.21	
Togetherness	5 - 23	12.4 (.05)	4 - 20	10.9 (.04)	9 - 27	14.2 (.05)	2.43	.09	
Learning – Collectivistic perspective	0 - 7	2.9 (.02)	0 - 12	4.7 (.03)	0 - 7	2.6 (.02)	4.47*	.02	C > M
Authoritarian childrearing	2 - 15	7.7 (.04)	4 - 22	12.2 (.06)	4 - 16	9.7 (.04)	4.86*	.01	C > D
Stimulating social development	0 - 5	2.4 (.02)	0 -13	3.4 (.03)	2 - 15	3.9 (.03)	2.4	.10	
Group management	1 - 9	4.3 (.02)	1 - 12	3.9 (.02)	1 - 7	4.1 (.01)	.28	.76	

Next, we attempted to predict group membership based on caregivers' beliefs. Caregivers' cultural group membership was entered in the discriminant analysis as the dependent variable and the belief constructs as predictor variables (see Table 3). The first discriminant function accounted for 70.9% of the between-group variance ($p = .00$). A second discriminant function accounted for an additional 29.1%, but this function was not statistically significant ($p = .21$) and, therefore, is not considered here further. The first predictor maximally separated the three groups of caregivers. As shown in Table 4, the best indicators (loading .25 and above) for this discriminant function were 'independence', 'sociable' and 'togetherness'. Dutch caregivers mentioned the theme 'independence' most, followed by the Caribbean-Dutch caregivers, while Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers spoke least often about this topic. Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers emphasized the collectivistic themes, they mentioned 'togetherness' and being 'sociable' most. Surprisingly, Caribbean-Dutch caregivers mentioned 'togetherness' less often than Dutch caregivers. Children being 'sociable' was mentioned about equally often by Dutch and Caribbean-Dutch caregivers. As the second discriminant function was non-significant, it is not further discussed.

Overall, the discriminant function made accurate predictions for 65% of the Dutch caregivers, for 55% of the Caribbean-Dutch caregivers and for 95.2% of the Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers (compared to 33.3% by chance). Four Dutch caregivers (20%) were incorrectly classified as Caribbean-Dutch and three (15%) were classified as Mediterranean-Dutch. Of the Caribbean-Dutch sample, six caregivers (30%) were incorrectly classified as Dutch and three (15%) as Mediterranean-Dutch.

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Table 4 Discriminant function analyses of Dutch, Caribbean-Dutch and Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers' childrearing beliefs

	Correlations of predictor variables with discriminant functions			
	1	2	Univariate F	<i>p</i>
Predictor variables				
Individualistic beliefs				
Independence	-.56**	-.33	9	.00
Self-confidence	-.17	-.31	1.7	
Cognitive development	.22	.38	2.6	.08
Learning – individualistic perspective	-.12	-.26	1.1	
Individualistic practices				
Actively stimulating development	-.06	-.48	2.4	.10
Creating opportunities for development	-.10	-.25	0.9	
Collectivistic beliefs				
Obedience	.14	.69**	5.3	.01
Sociable	.25	-.02	1.6	
Togetherness	.26	-.27	2.4	.10
Learning – Collectivistic perspective	-.21	.58*	4.5	.02
Collectivistic practices				
Authoritarian childrearing	.04	.69**	4.9	.01
Stimulating social development	.23	.22	1.7	
Group management	.00	-.17	0.3	

Caregivers, whose predicted category membership did not correspond with their cultural background, were subjected to closer examination. We wanted to know whether these caregivers differed from the correctly classified caregivers based on their expressed beliefs, or whether these caregivers also differed demographically, that is, in years of experience, age, level of education, importance attached to religion, psychological acculturation, or the center's micro-cultural context factors. T-tests revealed statistically significant differences between the Dutch caregivers who were classified as having an immigrant background ($N = 7$) and the ones that were correctly classified as Dutch ($N = 13$). Dutch caregivers classified as Dutch mentioned actively stimulating children's development as an adequate childrearing practice more often than Dutch caregivers who were classified as having an immigrant background ($M = 18.6\%$, $SD = .05$ and $M = 12.6\%$, $SD = .07$ respectively), $t(18) = 2.2$, $p = .04$, $d = 1.00$. Concerning children's obedience, of Dutch caregivers classified as Dutch 4.8% of their expressed beliefs were related to obedience ($SD = .02$), compared to 7.5% ($SD = .03$) of the expressed beliefs of Dutch caregivers classified as immigrant-Dutch, $t(18) = -2.1$, $p = .05$, $d = 1.06$. Furthermore, Dutch caregivers classified as Dutch had been working in a child care setting for on average 8.8 years ($SD = 5.3$), versus 4 years ($SD = 3.2$) for the Dutch caregivers who were incorrectly classified, $t(18) = 2.2$, $p = .04$, $d = 1.09$. No significant differences between these two groups of Dutch caregivers were found for their age, level of education, working hours per week, the importance they attached to religion in daily life, or the micro-cultural context variables.

Caribbean-Dutch caregivers classified as Dutch ($N = 6$) were compared with the Caribbean-Dutch caregivers who were classified as having a migrant background, that is, either as Caribbean-Dutch or as Mediterranean-Dutch ($N = 14$). Caribbean-Dutch caregivers classified as Dutch attached more importance to children's independence ($M = 19$, $SD = .05$ and $M = 13.2$, $SD = .04$ respectively), $t(18) = -2.6$, $p = .02$, $d = 1.19$, and to children's self-confidence ($M = 6.3$, $SD = .03$ and $M = 2$, $SD = .01$ respectively) than their Caribbean-Dutch colleagues classified as immigrant-Dutch, $t(18) = -4.8$, $p = .00$, $d = 1.97$. The differences were considerable. Furthermore, Caribbean-Dutch caregivers who were classified as Dutch differed from the Caribbean-Dutch caregivers that were classified as having an immigrant background, in that they attached less significance to children's obedience ($M = 5.3$, $SD = .04$ vs. $M = 13.1$, $SD = .06$), $t(18) = 2.9$, $p = .01$, $d = 1.55$, to authoritarian childrearing strategies ($M = 6.7$, $SD = .03$ vs. $M = 14.5$, $SD = .06$),

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$t(18) = 4.3, p = .00, d = 1.81$, and to children's cognitive development ($M = 1.2, SD = .01$ vs. $M = 3.3, SD = .02$), $t(18) = 2.8, p = .01, d = 1.46$. Concerning their years of experience, significant differences between these two groups of Caribbean-Dutch caregivers were found. Whereas Caribbean-Dutch caregivers classified as Dutch had on average 9,7 years of experience in the child care field ($SD = 2.3$), the correctly classified Caribbean-Dutch caregivers had on average only 4.4 years of experience ($SD = 3.8$), $t(18) = -3.1, p = .01, d = 1.68$. No significant differences between these two groups of Caribbean-Dutch caregivers were found for their age, level of education, the importance they attached to religion in daily life, or the micro-cultural context variables. However, a near significant difference between these two groups was found for caregivers' scores on the PAS. This indicates that the Caribbean-Dutch caregivers classified as Dutch felt more bicultural ($M = 2.9, SD = .52$) than the other Caribbean-Dutch caregivers ($M = 2.5, SD = .40$), $t(18) = -1.7, p = .10, d = .86$.

Table 5 presents partial correlations of caregivers' childrearing beliefs with child care center context variables, controlling for caregivers' cultural background with a dummy variable immigrant vs. Dutch background. Whenever caregivers had more close colleagues with a immigrant-Dutch background, they mentioned individualistic views on learning less, $r(59) = -.28, p = .03$, and spoke less often about actively stimulating children's individual development, $r(59) = -.39, p = .00$, while they brought up collectivistic views on children's learning and development more often, $r(59) = .29, p = .03$. Furthermore, caregivers with more close colleagues with a immigrant-Dutch background more often mentioned children's obedience, $r(59) = .28, p = .03$, and, relatedly, they spoke approvingly of authoritarian childrearing methods more often, $r(59) = .27, p = .045$. The more diverse the total caregiver team, the more caregivers talked about obedience, $r(53) = .40, p = .00$, and children's learning and development in a collectivistic way, $r(53) = .33, p = .02$. Correspondingly, in child care centers with a very diverse child population, caregivers talked about obedience, $r(53) = .34, p = .02$, and collectivistic views on learning more often, $r(53) = .31, p = .02$. Finally, correlations between immigrant caregivers' beliefs and their psychological acculturation, show that caregivers with lower PAS scores - caregivers who identify more or solely with their own cultural group - spoke more about children's obedience, $r(39) = -.34, p = .03$. Whereas caregivers scoring higher on the PAS - caregivers with a bicultural identity - talked more about actively stimulating children's indi-

vidual development, $r(39) = .38, p = .02$.

Table 5 Pearson correlations between caregivers' childrearing ideas and the micro-cultural context of the child care center after controlling for caregivers' cultural background

Childrearing Beliefs	Diversity close colleagues (N = 59)	Team's diversity (N = 53)	Children's diversity (N = 53)	PAS (N = 39)
Individualistic beliefs				
Independence	-.04	-.08	-.09	.12
Self-confidence	-.17	-.16	-.01	-.14
Cognitive development	.03	.09	.18	.08
Individualistic view on learning	-.28*	-.11	-.14	.10
Individualistic practices				
Actively stimulating	-.39*	-.14	-.06	.38*
Creating opportunities	-.21	-.19	-.24	.28
Collectivistic beliefs				
Obedience	.28*	.40**	.34*	-.34*
Togetherness	.05	-.19	-.10	-.04
Sociable	.13	-.05	.05	-.21
Collectivistic view on learning	.29*	.33*	.31*	-.14
Collectivistic practices				
Stimulating social dev.	.16	.09	-.07	.23
Authoritarian caregiving	.27*	.27	-.02	-.23
Group management	-.12	-.22	-.24	.00

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

3.4 Discussion

The increased cultural diversity in child care centers presents caregivers, parents and educators with the challenge of bringing together beliefs on child development and childrearing stemming from different cultural communities. This cross-cultural comparative study focused on differences and similarities in the childrearing beliefs of caregivers with different cultural backgrounds, working in Dutch child care centers. A central aim was to investigate whether differences in caregivers' reasoning could be accounted for solely by caregivers' cultural background, or whether other factors, such as experience, age, level of education, psychological acculturation, or the micro cultural context of the child care center, could explain these differences as well, as personal beliefs are influenced by socially shared beliefs within particular communities (Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Harkness & Super, 1999; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). The present study contributes to these issues in several ways. First, cultural differences between Dutch and immigrant caregivers' childrearing beliefs were found evident, despite similar professional training. These findings are in agreement with the results of our previous study (Huijbregts et al., 2008). Dutch caregivers mentioned independence as a childrearing goal most, whereas Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers stressed the importance of collectivistic childrearing goals. These differences between the groups indicate strong influences from the cultural communities to which the caregivers belong (cf. Suizzo, 2007). However, Caribbean-Dutch caregivers were less pronounced in their focus on collectivistic themes than the Mediterranean-Dutch caregivers. These caregivers appear to be more familiar with individualistic childrearing beliefs, supposedly because there has been contact between the Dutch and the Caribbean societies for centuries. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that all three groups value dimensions of both individualism and collectivism, providing further support for the multidimensionality of childrearing beliefs (Harwood, Schölmerich, & Schulze, 2000; Harkness et al., 2000; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005; Killen & Wainryb, 2000; Raeff, 2000; Suizzo, 2007).

Cultural differences in caregivers' beliefs about children and children's development were more profound than differences in preferred childrearing strategies (cf. Huijbregts et al., 2008). No cultural differences were found for ideas about creating opportunities for individual development, nor for ideas about stimulating social development, or for beliefs about group management. We believe that

preferred childrearing practices, being much more concrete, are more actively discussed, and therefore likely to be influenced by the ideas of colleagues (cf. Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Harkness & Super, 1999; Hong et al., 2000; Suizzo, 2007; Rosenthal, 1991). Furthermore, childrearing strategies are actively discussed and practiced in caregivers' education, making caregivers more alike in their beliefs about best childrearing methods.

The differences between caregivers' childrearing beliefs could not be explained exclusively by caregivers' cultural background. Marked differences were found for the effect of experience in the child care field on immigrant caregivers' beliefs. More experienced caregivers held more individualistic childrearing beliefs. It seems that working in a Western, individualistic child care context influences caregivers' beliefs. Also, individualistic childrearing goals seemed to be stressed by Caribbean-Dutch caregivers who were emotionally oriented towards the Dutch society.

Finally, an important contribution of this study concerns the influence of contextual factors on caregivers' beliefs. Having two immigrant-Dutch close colleagues, working in an ethnically diverse caregiver team and with an ethnically diverse children's group, made caregivers stress collectivistic childrearing goals – in particular obedience –, and collectivistic views on children's learning and development. That is, they expressed the belief that children's learning is mainly a process of maturation, and that development and learning occur through direct instruction and imitation, while the child's role is a passive one. Furthermore, caregivers whose direct colleagues were immigrant-Dutch attached less importance to the idea of children's learning and development as a cognitive constructive process in which the child plays an active role. Correspondingly, these caregivers did not attach much value to actively stimulating children's development. What is especially interesting is that this applied to all caregivers, also to the native Dutch. The data suggest that working in an ethnically diverse context not only reinforced collectivistic childrearing beliefs (Hong et al., 2000), but made Dutch caregivers, reared in an individualistic society, adopt collectivistic childrearing beliefs as well.

Implications

An important implication of this study is that it may enhance awareness of cultural biases in conceptualizing and evaluating quality of child care. According to

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critics, present child care quality standards are based on Western models of dyadic adult-child relationships within an individualistic socialization frame and, therefore, not particularly suited for regulating the quality of group-based care (cf. Rosenthal, 1999; Singer, 1993). Furthermore, the finding that caregivers influence each others' beliefs through continuous discourse, offers new perspectives on regulating child care quality processes. Making sure that child care centers employ at least one caregiver with a higher education in child psychology could bring the discussion about best child care practices at a higher level (cf. Early, Maxwell, Burchinal, Alva, Bender, Bryant et al., 2007). Ideas about optimally organizing and managing groups present an important addition to current child care quality standards. Whereas the finding that caregivers construct a shared understanding offers an entry to implement and discuss these child care quality standards. A second implication is the necessity of integrating the issue of cultural diversity in caregivers' education. Discussing childrearing beliefs – the nature of children and their development, children's functioning in social groups, values and norms regarding children's' development – should become customary in child care centers and in caregivers' professional preparation and training, in order to make caregivers more aware of their own and their colleagues' cultural beliefs.

Limitations of the study

The current study has several limitations that should be considered in future studies. In this study the focus was on professional care caregivers only. A limited set of possible determinants of caregivers' beliefs was included. Future research should also include the influence of parental childrearing beliefs, and examine the possible discrepancies in the beliefs of caregivers and parents. Despite these limitations, the present study offers valuable insights into the issue of cultural diversity in center-based child care. This is an important issue in western societies where immigration has resulted in culturally and ethnically diverse communities.

Conclusion

The present study investigated previously found cultural differences in caregivers' beliefs, by means of in depth interviews. Furthermore, the influence of the center's micro-cultural context on caregivers' beliefs was examined. The current study provided interesting insights into the processes of belief construction, as both colleagues and children were found to influence caregivers' childrearing be-

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liefs. The focus of the study was on belief systems, no attempt was made to relate caregivers' beliefs to actual childrearing behaviour. Even though we found differences in childrearing beliefs between caregivers, it is not yet clear whether this matters for actual care quality, or for children's developmental outcomes.

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4. Caregivers' beliefs and behavior in culturally diverse center-based child daycare: Are they related?

Abstract

The present study examined the relations between caregivers' beliefs and behaviors, and second, investigated the consequences of differing cultural beliefs for caregivers' childrearing behaviors considered to be crucial for process quality in center-based daycare. Participants were 57 caregivers with various cultural backgrounds, working with toddlers in center-based daycare. A semi-structured interview method was combined with detailed observations of caregivers' childrearing behaviors in the childcare center. Doing so, we attempted to measure caregivers' beliefs and childrearing behavior on similar levels of specificity and concreteness. Several statistically significant relations between caregivers' expressed beliefs and their observed behavior were found. The pattern of correlations revealed dissociation between individualistic and collectivistic beliefs regarding behavior. Beliefs ranged among an individualistic orientation were positively related to almost all observation scales, whereas more collectivistic beliefs were mostly *not* or *negatively* related to the observation scales. We discuss the observation scales' possible cultural bias towards individualistic beliefs and behavior, as well as the possible relevance of collectivistic beliefs and practices for the group-based character of center-based daycare.

Huijbregts, S.K., Leseman, P.P.M., Tavecchio, L.W.C., & Hoffenaar, P. (submitted).

Caregivers' beliefs and behavior in culturally diverse center-based child care: Are they related?

4.1 Introduction

The increasing cultural diversity of Western societies presents new challenges to the field of center-based child daycare, in particular to its standards of process quality, a term coined to refer to the everyday practices of care, interaction, and socialization (cf. Howes, Phillips, & Whitebook, 1992). Increasing numbers of children with a non-mainstream immigrant background are enrolling in child daycare centers and related early childhood provisions, today (OECD, 2003), while, parallel to this development, the numbers of caregivers in the child care workforce with similar immigrant backgrounds are steadily rising too. With the increasing cultural diversity among staff and families served, core ideas about childrearing and, more in particular, the consensus about what constitutes process quality in center-based child care, may become less obvious.

Beliefs about what is important in child rearing and, thus, what constitutes *quality*, are known to vary vastly across cultural communities (for overviews, see Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997; Rubin & Chung, 2006). For instance, parents in Western middleclass communities have been found to emphasize childrearing goals such as autonomous selfhood, or independence, to value authoritative and child-centered socialization strategies, and to endorse models of child development that depict the young child as an intentional being, who is capable of self-regulated learning and development – an orientation conveniently referred to as *individualistic*. Parents in non-Western communities, in contrast, have been found to emphasize social-relatedness goals, or interdependence, to value respect for authorities, conformity to social and moral rules, and obedience, and to see modeling and direct instruction as ways of learning valuable things to children – an orientation conveniently referred to as *collectivistic* (cf. Bornstein & Cote, 2004; Cote & Bornstein, 2003; Greenfield, et al, 2003; Harkness, Super, & van Tijen, 2000; Keller, Borke, Yovsi, Lohaus, & Jensen, 2005; Kimmelmeier et al., 2003; Raeff, 2000; Rudy & Grusec, 2001; Triandis, 1995).

In previous research among professional caregivers from different cultural communities, working in the same daycare centers and sharing the same professional training, profound cultural differences in childrearing beliefs were found with respect to themes such as autonomy and relatedness (Huijbregts, Leseman, & Tavecchio, 2008; Huijbregts, Tavecchio, Leseman, & Hoffenaar, in press). The present study examined the consequences of differing cultural beliefs for child

rearing behaviors believed to be crucial for process quality in center-based child care, in particular sensitive and autonomy stimulating caregiver–child interactions (Lamb, 1998; Vandell & Wolfe, 2000).

The topic of this article touches upon an interesting issue that, despite its obviousness (Singer, 1993), hasn't received much attention in previous research. Caregivers in center-based child care are faced with the often difficult task of finding a good balance between the needs and concerns of each individual child, requiring a child-centered orientation, and the needs and concerns of the child care group, requiring a group-centered orientation and skills to manage groups. Whereas the official quality standards in the daycare systems in many countries match the individualistic, child-centered model best, reflecting current Western consensus on what constitutes process quality, the characteristics of the setting itself, in particular the fact that children are cared for in groups, seem at least also compatible with a more collectivistic orientation on part of the caregivers (Rosenthal, 1999; Singer, 1993). Thus, an interesting question is what kind of beliefs, individualistic or collectivistic, or perhaps a balanced mixture, support caregivers best in dealing with this task.

Several authors have suggested that cultural differences in beliefs among caregivers could lead to cross-cultural value conflicts that could have consequences for the process quality in child daycare (Burchinal & Cryer, 2003; Greenfield, Flores, Davis, & Salimkhan, 2008; Greenfield, Quiroz, & Raeff, 2000). However, to date, direct evidence pertaining to this issue is scarce. A few studies addressed caregivers' and teachers' beliefs about children's personal-social development and their views on appropriate socialization strategies, in particular regarding the use of control strategies (Rosenthal, 1991; Scott-Little & Holloway, 1992; Scott-Little & Holloway, 1994; Vandemplas-Holper, 1996). A consistent finding in these studies was that caregivers who subscribed to authoritarian beliefs, more often used authoritarian childrearing methods. The study by Rosenthal (1991) further demonstrated that caregivers, who expected children to develop independence at an early age, were found to impose fewer restrictions on children's behavior. The scarce findings underscore the relevance of the present topic.

If cultural childrearing beliefs are important for process quality in child daycare, there must be a relevant connection between caregivers' beliefs and their behavior. However, the evidence for such a connection is still far from conclusive. In three reviews of studies focusing on parental attitudes and cognitions as determi-

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nants of their child rearing behavior only weak evidence for such a relation was found (Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Holden & Edwards, 1989; Sigel, 1992). With respect to early childhood care and education settings, several studies indeed confirmed that caregivers' and teachers' beliefs about education and teaching influence actual classroom practices (Abbott-Shim, Lambert, & McCarty, 2000; Charlesworth, Hart, Burts, Thomasson, Mosley, & Fleege, 1993; Maxwell, McWilliam, Hemmeter, Ault, & Schuster, 2001; Scott-Little & Holloway, 1992; 1994; Solomon & Battistich, 1996; Stipek & Byler, 1997; Vartuli, 1999), but how ideas about children and children's development, important socialisation goals, and appropriate childrearing strategies influence practices in early childhood education and care settings, is an understudied topic. Moreover, several recent studies reported no (Wilcox-Herzog, 2002) or theoretically unexpected relations between beliefs and behaviors (Wen, Elicker, & McMullen, submitted). We presuppose that the difficulty in many studies to find relevant and consistent relations between beliefs and behavior in childrearing arises from methodological and conceptual problems. A first methodological problem concerns the frequent mismatch of the levels of specificity and concreteness. Whereas in many studies childrearing beliefs are assessed with regard to rather general, broad ranging, and abstract themes, the behavior observations to which these beliefs are subsequently related, are much more specific, context-dependent, and concrete. Put differently, the two constructs – beliefs and behavior - are seldom measured at the same level of specificity and concreteness, which is likely to result in weaker correlations (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Ajzen, 1996; Lorenz, Melby, Conger, & Xu, 2007). A second methodological problem concerns the cultural homogeneity of the samples that were involved in most studies. As culture was found to strongly influence beliefs in many studies (Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Kagitçibasi, 1997; Rubin & Chung, 2006), a probable consequence of studying culturally homogeneous samples is (severely) restricted variance in the independent variable, that is, cultural beliefs, which may have resulted in an underestimation of the strength of the beliefs-behavior relationship. In the current study, we attempted to improve on these methodological flaws by examining the childrearing beliefs and practices of a culturally diverse sample of professional caregivers, by using open interviews to address both general and specific beliefs on concrete childrearing issues, and by relating the beliefs, thus assessed, to observations of concrete childrearing behavior in representative situations in the child daycare centers, in order to increase

the probability of finding a firm relation between beliefs and behavior.

Finally, a conceptual problem that may explain a weak belief–behavior connection is the, often tacit, assumption that childrearing beliefs should relate consistently to actual childrearing behavior across various contexts, regardless context factors that may moderate the relationship. According to current theorizing, however, cultural childrearing beliefs should be considered dynamic structures that are adapted to the opportunities and constraints prevailing in the actual context, including social factors such as the views of colleagues and parents (Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Harkness & Super, 1999; Kontos, Burchinal, Howes, Wisseh, & Galinsky, 2002; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2008). Particularly interesting, therefore, and an understudied topic, are the possible moderator effects of contextual factors on the beliefs-behavior connection. Recent evidence for a moderating role of context factors was found by Wen et al. (submitted). These researchers found in the entire sample only a weak relationship between early childhood teachers' beliefs and their behavior, but a much stronger relationship in the subsample of teachers with a higher educational level, more specialized professional training, and more professional experience, compared to a much weaker one in the subsample of teachers who were lower educated and less experienced. A possible explanation might be that the higher educated, more experienced teachers were better able to put their beliefs into practice.

In view of the issues of the current study, a similar moderator effect, leading to different strengths of the beliefs-behavior relationship, may result from the micro-cultural context of the daycare center (Gerber et al., 2007; Kontos, Burchinal, Howes, Wisseh, & Galinsky, 2002; Solomon & Battistich, 1996). In a previous study, we found that the child care center's micro-cultural context, indicated by the degree of cultural diversity among staff and children cared for, influenced individual caregivers' beliefs in addition to, and independent of, the effect of their own cultural background (Huijbregts et al., in press). Caregivers working with colleagues with predominantly collectivistic beliefs in culturally diverse centers, tended to subscribe more to collectivistic beliefs themselves, regardless their own cultural background, whereas caregivers working with colleagues with predominantly individualistic beliefs in centers that served mainly mainstream middle-class families, tended to subscribe more to individualistic beliefs. Extending this finding, the question arises whether the opportunities for caregivers to put their beliefs into practice differ with the compatibility of their beliefs with the predo-

minant cultural orientation of the child care center in which they are employed. To provide a first answer, we will explore whether the beliefs-behavior relationship is stronger when caregivers' beliefs are more compatible with the micro-cultural characteristics of the setting than when they are less compatible.

In sum, the aims of this study were twofold. The first aim was to investigate whether caregivers' cultural beliefs were indeed related to their observed practice. The second aim was to explore the possible moderator effect of the center's micro-cultural context on the belief-behavior relationship.

4.2 Method

4.2.1 Participants

Participants were 57 female caregivers, working with two- to four-year-olds in 22 different child care centers, divided over 33 different groups. Caregivers' mean age was 32 (range 20-52). The vast majority (78 %) had completed studies at secondary vocational level, 22 % had completed education at the higher vocational level. Duration of employment in child care ranged from 0 to 18 years with a mean of 5.6 years. The sample consists of 20 Dutch caregivers, 13 Surinamese-Dutch caregivers, 13 Moroccan-Dutch, 5 Antillean-Dutch and 6 Turkish-Dutch caregivers. The Surinamese, Turks, Moroccans and Antilleans are nowadays the largest non-western migrant groups in the Netherlands (CBS, 2007). Respondents' cultural background was assessed by self-ascription and controlled for by asking their country of birth and the country of birth of their parents. About half of the immigrant-Dutch caregiver sample (56%) was born outside the Netherlands, of the majority of these caregivers (98%), both parents were born outside the Netherlands.

Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles are located in the Caribbean region in South-America, and have been Dutch colonies for several centuries. The Moroccan and Turkish caregivers are the descendants of guest workers who migrated to the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s. The countries of origin can be characterized as predominantly collectivistic. Research on parental beliefs of Surinamese and Antillean parents in the Netherlands shows both continuity with the goals and practices of their own upbringing, and adaptations to the Dutch context. Collectivistic childrearing goals such as respect for authorities, conformity to rules of

conduct, obedience to parents, and sociability are still very important, whereas personal autonomy is becoming a valued goal for the higher educated (Distelbrink, 1998; Janssens et al., 1999; Mayo, 2004). The Moroccans and Turks living in the Netherlands value their religion and culture highly, including its collectivistic childrearing goals such as respect for authorities, conformity to rules and relational values, whereas the development of an autonomous self is much less valued (Janssens et al., 1999; Phalet & Schönplug, 2001). In the first years of life, childrearing in Moroccan families in the Netherlands is characterized by an emphasis on physical closeness, caring and pampering. Moroccan mothers show a permissive style of parenting towards babies and toddlers, changing toward more discipline as children grow older (Pels & de Haan, 2004).

4.2.2 Procedures

Caregivers were recruited via child care centers in two major cities in the Netherlands. Of a list of 63 centers, 44 centers met our inclusion criteria (they provided full-time child care for two- to four-years-olds and employed a culturally diverse staff), of which 22 centers (50%) agreed to participate. The center managers identified caregivers eligible for the study. The main reason for refusing participation was the expected workload. A few caregivers refused to participate due to objections to being filmed.

A trained researcher visited each of the caregivers while they were working with their usual groups of two- to four-year-olds. Each group was observed for approximately 4 to 5 hours in a single visit; the visits lasted all morning, and included lunch time. When two caregivers worked with the same group, the group was visited twice so that observations and other types of data could be collected separately for each caregiver. Each caregiver was filmed during two 15-minute episodes of guided play, involving creative activity and construction play respectively. The creative activity and constructive play situation were part of the regular program of all centers. We expected to be able to observe both individual and group stimulating behaviors by the caregivers, and to evaluate caregivers' sensitive-responsiveness to the children, and their competence in organizing and structuring task situations and to give clear instructions and explanations to the children. We also filmed lunchtime, a typical care situation in all centers in which all children are involved. Together, these situations provided a representative

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sample of the caregiver's childrearing behaviors during a normal day in child care. For each observation session, caregivers were encouraged to act as they would normally do. As a consequence, there was some variation in how the situations were set up. Also the number of children involved in each of the situations varied per caregiver.

4.2.3 Measures

4.2.3.1 Caregivers' childrearing beliefs

Caregivers' childrearing beliefs were explored in a semi-structured, largely open interview. The interview focused on three central themes; autonomy and independence, children's social development, and rules and disciplining. Stimulating children's autonomy and independence, and stimulating children's self-development are currently official childrearing goals in Dutch child care centers (Riksen-Walraven, 2000); moreover they represent typical individualistic socialization goals (cf. Triandis 1995). Children's social development and group processes, as well as the use of rules and disciplining, were chosen as interview topics because they refer to important aspects of every day childrearing in child care; moreover they represent core themes of childrearing in collectivistic societies (cf. Triandis 1995). Caregivers were encouraged to express their ideas on these themes in a specific and concrete way by relating them to everyday experiences in their own work situation.

All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. Using MAXQDA software, caregivers' responses were coded for the occurrence of spontaneously expressed childrearing beliefs that could be considered individualistic or collectivistic (for a more extensive description of the coding procedure, see Huijbregts et al., in press). In research on parenting beliefs it is assumed that the frequency of mentioning a particular idea or theme reflects its importance to the interviewee (cf. Harkness et al., 2000; Raeff, 2000). The raw frequencies were divided by the total number of codes in each interview and multiplied by 100, resulting in percentages. The coding procedure and coding system used in this study (see Table 1), closely corresponds to the coding schemes and procedures of Harkness and colleagues (2000) and Raeff (2000), with one notable exception. Harkness et al. and Raeff range beliefs on cognitive development among an individualistic orientation. In the current study, however, the importance attached to children's cognitive development and school readiness, and to instructing skills

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appeared to be related to a collectivistic orientation. Toddlers' cognitive development was not an issue for Dutch caregivers, in the same way that it is not an issue for Dutch parents (cf. Janssens et al., 1999; Harkness et al., 2000). In contrast, the immigrant caregivers in this study appeared to attach much more importance to issues relating to children's cognitive development. For instance, they stressed the value of learning the Dutch language properly, and the need to foster school readiness skills such as counting, coloring within lines, and knowing the names of the colors. This emphasis probably stems from worries about the persistent educational disadvantages of immigrant children in Dutch society (cf. Leseman & van Tuijl, 2006). In a previous article we extensively described the cultural differences in Dutch and immigrant caregivers' childrearing beliefs (Huijbregts et al., in press). While Dutch caregivers mentioned independence as a socialization goal most, immigrant caregivers stressed collectivistic childrearing goals, such as the importance of children's obedience. The results further demonstrated that all caregivers valued aspects of both individualism and collectivism in childrearing, providing further support for the multidimensionality of childrearing beliefs (Burgental & Johnston, 2000; Harkness & Super, 1999; Kontos, Burchinal, Howes, Wisseh, & Galinsky, 2002; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2008).

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Table 1 Specification of the interview codes and constructs

Childrearing Beliefs – Interview constructs

Individualistic beliefs	
Independence	i.e. autonomy, verbal assertiveness, children's own opinion
Self-confidence	i.e. self-esteem, feeling proud of oneself, individual expression
Individualistic view on learning	i.e. development is a cognitive constructive process, children have an active role in their own development
Actively stimulating	i.e. offering choices, dyadic interaction, explaining and talking
Creating opportunities	i.e. facilitating activities, observing children, facilitating exploration
Collectivistic beliefs	
Sociable	i.e. sharing, friendship, social skills
Obedience	i.e. being polite, having respect for adults
Cognitive achievement	i.e. focus on language development, school readiness, cognitive development
Togetherness	i.e. playing together, having fun together, working together, learning from each other, especially in the context of child care
Collectivistic view on learning	i.e. development as a process of maturation, learning through observation, imitation and direct instruction.
Stimulating social dev.	i.e. stimulating social behavior, stimulating playing together
Authoritarian caregiving	i.e. punishing, stressing caregiver's authority, being harsh
Group management	i.e. group activities, involving a child in an activity with other children, dividing children in sub-groups

4.2.3.2 *Caregivers' behavior*

To evaluate caregivers' behavior we used a set of six rating scales that was recently developed by a consortium of researchers specialized in child care quality as part of a larger project commissioned by the Dutch government to evaluate child care quality in the Netherlands (Dutch Consortium for Child Care Research, NCKO; De Kruif, Vermeer, Fukkink, Riksen-Walraven, Tavecchio, van IJzendoorn, & van Zeijl, 2007; De Kruif et al., submitted). The rating scales *Sensitive Responsiveness*, *Respecting children's Autonomy*, *Structuring and Limit setting*, *Talking / Elaborating*, *Stimulating children's development*, and *Facilitating interactions*, with scale points ranging from 1, inadequate, to 7, excellent, were based on the well-known and widely used Caregiver Interaction Scale (CIS, Arnett, 1989), the scales developed by Erikson, Sroufe, and Egeland (1985), and the NICHD's Observational Record of the Caregiving Environment (ORCE; see NICHD ECCRN, 1996), but adapted to the Dutch child daycare system. The scales, moreover, reflected current consensus about developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood care in Western societies (cf. Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). The scale *Facilitating interactions* was new and specifically added to do justice to the fact that center-based child daycare involves groups of children. Below, we will briefly describe the scales; for a more extensive description, see De Kruif et al. (2007).

The scale *Sensitive responsiveness* refers to the ability to timely and appropriately respond to children's signals and needs, and to provide emotional support when needed. A high score (5 – 7) is given to a caregiver who provides emotional support when needed, and who recognizes children's signals and responds to these signals in a timely and effective manner. A low score (1 – 3) is given to a caregiver who doesn't succeed in giving children emotional support when needed. Such a caregiver either doesn't recognize children's signals, or responds inadequately or too late.

The scale *Respecting children's autonomy* refers to the caregivers' ability to interact non-intrusively, to promote independence, and to encourage children to make choices. A caregiver scoring high on this scale (5 – 7) offers children the opportunity to experiment and to solve their own problems, she respects and follows children's initiatives. A caregiver scoring low on this scale (1 – 3) is intrusive, she doesn't consider children's intentions to act or think independently, in stead, she is negative and may use physical discipline.

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The scale *Structuring and limit setting* refers to a caregiver's ability to, sensitively and timely, organize children's environment and activities so that the children know exactly what is expected from them. A high score (5 – 7) is given to a caregiver who structures activities, sets limits to children's behavior if necessary, and who does this timely, effectively, and consistently. A low score (1 – 3) is given to a caregiver who either fails to set limits to children's behavior and to structure activities, or who excessively tries to control children's behavior. For the present study, we made two minor adjustments in the scoring procedure of this scale. First, we added that, to obtain a score of four or higher, a caregiver had to be authoritative, that is, she should structure the activity by explaining the rules and by negotiating with the children. A caregiver who structured the situation by physical or verbal disciplining, by raising her voice or giving orders, could not receive a score above three. A second amendment we made, was that always the middle score of four was given when the observed situation was considered quite well structured, but apparently without the necessity to structure the activity or to set limits to children's behavior explicitly. In these situations the children seemed to have internalized the rules and procedures.

The scale *Talking and elaborating* refers to the caregivers' ability to provide frequent and developmentally appropriate verbal interactions to promote children's language development, and their cognitive and social development. A caregiver who receives a high score on this scale (5 – 7) talks a lot with the children, stimulates them to put their feelings and intentions into words, and adapts the timing and content of her words to the children's cognitive level and current activities. A low score (1 – 3) is given to a caregiver who fails to talk or respond to children, and who doesn't stimulate children to use language. Low scores were further given when a caregiver mainly talks in a negative manner, or solely to correct children's behavior.

The scale *Stimulating development* refers to the caregivers' ability to offer children activities aimed at promoting their cognitive, language, motor or social development, within or as an addition to the normal curriculum. A caregiver who scores high on this scale (5 – 7) sees stimulating children's development as a goal of her interaction with the children. She uses everyday situations to stimulate children's development, for instance, counting the tableware when setting the table at lunch time. Low scores (1 – 3) are given to caregivers for whom stimulating children's development does not seem to have priority. Also, caregivers who

restrict children's exploration score low on this scale.

Finally, the scale *Facilitating interactions among children* refers to the caregivers' ability to take advantage of the social environment in child care centers, by acknowledging and encouraging positive interactions between children. Caregivers scoring high on this scale are aware of spontaneous positive interactions between children and name these or compliment children for interacting positively with each other. Furthermore, caregivers scoring high on this scale create situations to encourage such positive interactions. On the other hand, caregivers receiving low scores on this scale do not pay attention to children's positive interactions and do not stimulate such interactions. For all scales, middle scores (4) are given when a caregiver shows one of the above mentioned abilities in an inconsistent manner, or not with the majority of the children.

The three videotaped episodes were rated by a trained observer who was blind to the research hypotheses and the other data collected in the present study. Ten videotapes, roughly 20% of the data, were double coded by a member of the Dutch Consortium for Child Care Research. Inter-observer agreement was satisfactory, on average 89,6% and ranging from 70% to 100% . The ratings for the three situations were averaged to obtain a single score for each scale. Alpha's for the six observation scales ranged from .56 (Stimulating Development) to .81 (Talking/Elaborating). Caregiver's stimulating behaviors and actions to facilitate interactions seemed to vary across situations, caregiver's childrearing behaviors associated with the other four scales were more balanced across the three situations.

4.2.3.3 Caregivers' characteristics

Caregivers received a questionnaire on demographic variables. They were asked to indicate their educational level on a six point scale ranging from 1 (junior vocational training) to 6 (university level), their age in years, the number of years working as a professional caregiver in child care, and the number of working hours per week.

4.2.3.4 Micro-cultural context factors

As almost all caregivers shared responsibility for a group of children with two other caregivers, they were asked to indicate the cultural background of these two colleagues. The variable Cultural Diversity of Staff was computed as the number of close colleagues with an immigrant background, ranging from 1 (both close

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colleagues were Dutch) to 3 (both close colleagues were first- or second-generation immigrants). The variable Diversity of the Caregiver Team was computed as the number of caregivers with an immigrant background working in the center, ranging from 1 (0-33 % caregivers with an immigrant background) to 3 (67-100% of the caregivers had an immigrant background). Caregivers further indicated whether their group of children consisted of mainly native Dutch (scored 1), whether there was a mix in cultural backgrounds (scored 2) or whether the group consisted of mainly immigrant children (scored 3). To obtain an overall index *Cultural diversity of the child care center* the three cultural-context variables were pooled after Z-transformation (inter-correlations were sufficient, ranging from .30 to .55). Unfortunately, information on the cultural background of close colleagues was missing for two caregivers and eight caregivers did not fill out the questions about the cultural diversity of the team and the children's group. In constructing the index, missing values were replaced by the mean.

4.3 Results

First, the descriptives of caregivers' belief and behavior scores are presented in Table 2. The table shows that caregivers mentioned individualistic as well as collectivistic beliefs in the interviews. Children's independence and actively stimulating children's individuality were the most frequently mentioned individualistic themes. Among the collectivistic themes, children being sociable and developing a sense of togetherness were the most frequently mentioned. Table 2 further shows that caregivers, on average, were observed to be quite sensitive and responsive to children's needs and concerns, and that they respected and promoted children's autonomy fairly well. On average, caregivers also showed adequate structuring and limit setting. However, there was a considerable range in caregivers' behaviors in these respects. A striking finding, furthermore, was that, on average, caregivers received quite low scores for social, cognitive, motor, and language stimulation.

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Table 2 Descriptives of caregivers' beliefs in percentages and practices on a 1 – 7 Likert scale (N = 57)

Caregivers' beliefs & practices	Means	SD	min	max
Individualistic beliefs				
Independence	14.9	5.7	3	33
Self confidence	3.8	2.5	0	9
Individualistic view on learning	1.5	1.4	0	5
Actively stimulating individuality	14.9	6.1	4	29
Creating opportunities	7.4	4.1	1	18
Collectivistic beliefs				
Sociable	15.1	5.2	3	26
Obedience	8.3	5.2	1	24
Cognitive development	2.3	1.6	0	6
Togetherness	12.4	5.1	4	27
Collectivistic view on learning	3.5	2.5	0	12
Stimulating social development	3.2	2.7	0	15
Authoritarian caregiving	9.5	4.6	2	21
Group management	4	1.9	1	12
Sensitive Responsivity				
Respecting Autonomy	4.9	.71	3.7	6.7
Structuring & Limit setting	4	.99	1.3	5.7
Stimulating Development	2.7	.85	1.3	4.3
Talking Elaborating	3.5	.93	1.7	5.7
Facilitating interactions	1.9	.86	1	4

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Next, we examined whether caregiver's cultural childrearing beliefs were related to their actual childrearing practices. As is shown in Table 3, a number of statistically significant correlations between caregivers' expressed beliefs and observed behaviors as evaluated with the six observation scales were found, with some of the correlations corresponding to medium effect sizes (Cohen, 1988). The percentages of expressed beliefs that indicated the importance attached to actively stimulating children's development and creating developmental opportunities for children were positively related to caregivers' observed sensitive responsiveness, their ability to respect and promote children's autonomy, caregivers' ability to structure and set limits authoritatively, and their competence in stimulating children's development and in talking with and giving explanations to children. The percentages of beliefs mentioned in the interviews that indicated a collectivistic orientation, such as the emphasis put on children's obedience, the expressed approval of authoritarian childrearing strategies, and a view on learning and development as based on modeling and direct instruction, were found to be negatively related to caregivers' sensitive responsiveness, ability to structure and set limits in an authoritative manner, and ability to respect and promote children's autonomy. Also the emphasis on the development of cognitive school readiness skills was negatively related to most of the behavior ratings. Interestingly, there is an indication in the Table that the group management component in collectivistic childrearing beliefs, represented by the percentage of references made by the caregivers in the interview to group activities, involving a child in an activity with other children, dividing children in sub-groups and a few other concepts, is related to the observed competence of the caregivers to respect children's autonomy and to structure the – group – situation effectively and authoritatively. The correlations, however, are small. Finally, note that individualistic and collectivistic beliefs that address broad and abstract themes such as independence, self-confidence, sociability and togetherness were not or hardly correlated with behavior, whereas, in contrast, the more specific beliefs that refer to concrete actions in the daycare setting, did show the expected associations with most of the assessed behaviors.

Table 3 Correlations between caregivers' childrearing beliefs and their caregiving behavior

Childrearing Beliefs	Sensitive Responsivity	Respecting Autonomy	Structuring & Limit setting	Stimulating Development	Talking Elaborating	Facilitating interactions
Individualistic beliefs						
Independence	.02	.11	.25†	-.04	-.10	-.11
Self confidence	.10	.19	.12	.01	.07	.00
Individualistic view on learning	-.06	-.08	.09	-.09	.04	.24†
Actively stimulating individuality	.38**	.27*	.27*	.22†	.20	.08
Creating opportunities	.15	.13	-.04	.33*	.39**	.20
Collectivistic beliefs						
Sociable	-.01	-.07	.02	-.21	-.22	-.02
Obedience	-.28*	-.28*	-.29*	-.19	-.23†	-.21
Cognitive development	-.22	-.32*	-.36**	-.20	-.09	-.07
Togetherness	-.07	.00	.11	-.06	-.02	.07
Collectivistic view on learning	-.33*	-.31*	-.54**	-.07	-.13	-.17
Stimulating social development	.10	.03	.03	.24†	.18	.21
Authoritarian caregiving	-.22	-.18	-.40**	.00	-.11	-.01
Group management	.15	.25†	.33*	-.04	.13	-.09

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

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A series of stepwise multiple regression analyses was conducted to determine the degree in which caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs accounted for the variance in the observation scales. The stepwise method of selecting the smallest set of statistically significant predictors was used because of the relatively small sample size relative to the number of possible predictors. The results are presented in Table 4 (only significant predictors are included). Caregivers' cultural beliefs predicted their scores on the observation scale Structuring and Limit setting considerably, with 45% of the variance explained. Significant predictors with negative regression weights were caregivers' beliefs about children's learning as occurring through modeling and direct instruction, and caregivers' emphasis on children's cognitive development and school readiness skills. Significant predictors with positive regression weights were caregivers' emphasis on aspects of group management and actively stimulating children's development. Interestingly, beliefs related to children's obedience and authoritarian caregiving did not add significantly to the prediction, despite the moderate correlations found with structuring and limit setting behavior and the obvious conceptual relation of the two. Sensitive Responsiveness of the caregivers was also substantially predicted by caregivers' beliefs as expressed in the interviews. A significant positive contribution was found for beliefs about actively stimulating children's development, referring to the importance of explaining and talking with children and stimulation through dyadic interaction, and a significant negative contribution for expressing a collectivistic view on learning and development, together explaining 19% of the variance. Similarly, the observed Respect for autonomy of the caregivers was positively predicted by the expressed value of actively stimulating children's development and caregivers' focus on group management strategies and negatively by the importance attached to stimulating children's cognitive development and school readiness skills, explaining 20% of the variance. Again, beliefs related to children's obedience did not add significantly to the prediction of both measures, despite moderate correlations.

The remaining behavior measures, representing caregivers' competences in promoting social, cognitive and language development were less well predicted. Both Stimulating cognitive development and Talking and elaborating were best (and positively) predicted by beliefs that emphasized the value of creating opportunities for development as a means to stimulate development. Remarkably, none of the beliefs constructs predicted significantly caregivers' ability to facilitate

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positive interactions between children (therefore, this scale is not included in Table 4).

Table 4 Stepwise regression analyses with caregivers' cultural beliefs predicting observed caregivers' behavior

	Sensitive responsiveness	Respect for autonomy	Structuring & Limit setting	Stimulating Development	Talking / Elaborating
Predictors:	β	β	β	β	β
Cognitive development		-.31*	-.25*		
Collectivistic view on learning	-.28*		-.43**		
Individualistic view on learning					
Actively stimulating development	.33*	.28*	.22*		
Creating opportunities				.35**	.39**
Stimulating social development				.26*	
Group management		.26*	.30**		
Total R^2	.19**	.20**	.45**	.15*	.14**

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

The second aim of this study was to determine the influence of caregiver characteristics and the childcare center's micro-cultural context on caregivers' behavior and to explore possible moderator effects of the context. Table 5, first, presents the correlations of caregiver and center characteristics with observed caregiver behavior. Modest, but statistically significant correlations were found for the Cultural diversity index. Cultural diversity of the center was negatively related to caregivers' scores on respecting and promoting children's autonomy, structuring tasks and setting limits authoritatively. Note that in the current sample caregivers

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with an immigrant background were roughly equally distributed over centers, regardless the center's cultural diversity; immigrant background of the caregiver was not correlated with the cultural diversity index ($r(57) = .17, p = .20$). Neither caregivers' age, educational level, working hours, nor years of experience revealed correlations with observed behavior that were significant at $p < .05$.

Table 5 Correlations between caregiver and center characteristics and caregivers' childrearing behavior

Center and caregiver characteristics	Sensitive Responsivity	Respecting Autonomy	Structuring & Limit setting	Stimulating Development	Talking Elaborating	Facilitating interactions
Cultural diversity of the center	-.21	-.27*	-.35**	.05	-.09	-.05
Age	-.24†	-.21	-.25†	-.05	.12	.03
Educational level	.17	.17	.17	.20	.23†	.03
Experience	-.00	.08	.23†	-.07	-.04	.10
Working hours	-.12	-.24†	-.10	-.09	-.04	.05

Note. † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

To explore whether the micro-cultural context of the child care centers moderated the strength of the beliefs-behavior relationships examined above, the index Cultural diversity of the child care center was divided into two levels by median split, creating a group of caregivers working in centers low in cultural diversity, that is, with predominantly native Dutch colleagues and caring for mainly native Dutch children, ($n = 29$) and a group of caregivers working in centers high in cultural diversity, that is, with a higher number of caregivers with immigrant background and a bigger share of immigrant children ($n = 28$). Correlations of beliefs and behavior were recomputed separately for both groups. We focused on the more specific and concrete beliefs (nine in all) and examined the differences in correlations with the six observation scales. With a Fisher Z test we examined the 54 belief –

behavior correlations, to test whether these differed statistically significant between the child care centers that were either culturally diverse, or had a little culturally diverse team and child population. In 30 cases a difference of $r \geq .25$ (weak to medium effect size) between the correlations in the two groups was found, 11 of these differences were $r \geq .50$ (strong effect, significant group differences at $p < .10$), of these six were $\geq .50$ (strong to very strong effect, significant group differences at $p < .05$). In Figures 1 to 6 the two lines illustrate how in the six significant cases the relations between particular beliefs and behaviors differed for the two groups. In centers high in cultural diversity, caregivers' emphasis on cognitive development and school readiness skills was negatively related to the observed quality of their child-centered development stimulating behavior ($r(28) = -.52, p < .00$), whereas in centers low in cultural diversity no such relation between beliefs on children's cognitive development and developmentally stimulating behaviors was found ($r(29) = .08, p = .68$; Fisher's $Z = 2.28, p = .02$; see Figure 1).

In centers high in cultural diversity, beliefs of caregivers on emphasizing the importance of actively stimulating children's personal development by offering them choices, involving them in dyadic interactions, and explaining rules to them, were not related to observed authoritative structuring and limit setting ($r(28) = .04, p = .83$), but in centers low in cultural diversity this correlation was strong and positive ($r(29) = .55, p = .00$; Fisher's $Z = -2.0, p < .05$; see Figure 2). In centers with little cultural diversity, a strong and positive correlation was further found between caregiver's beliefs on actively stimulating children's personal development and caregivers' observed ability to interact non-intrusively, promote independence, and encourage children to make choices ($r(29) = .51, p = .00$), while in centers that were culturally diverse, no such relation was found at all ($r(28) = .00, p = .98$; Fisher's $Z = -1.99, p < .05$; see Figure 3). Furthermore, in centers with little cultural diversity, caregiver's beliefs on stimulating children's personal development were positively related to their observed ability to facilitate interactions between children ($r(29) = .34, p = .08$), while in centers that were culturally diverse, a negative relation was found between beliefs on stimulating children's personal development and caregivers qualities in facilitating interactions between children ($r(28) = -.21, p = .29$; Fisher's $Z = -1.99, p < .05$; see Figure 4).

In centers high in cultural diversity, the importance caregivers attached to stimu-

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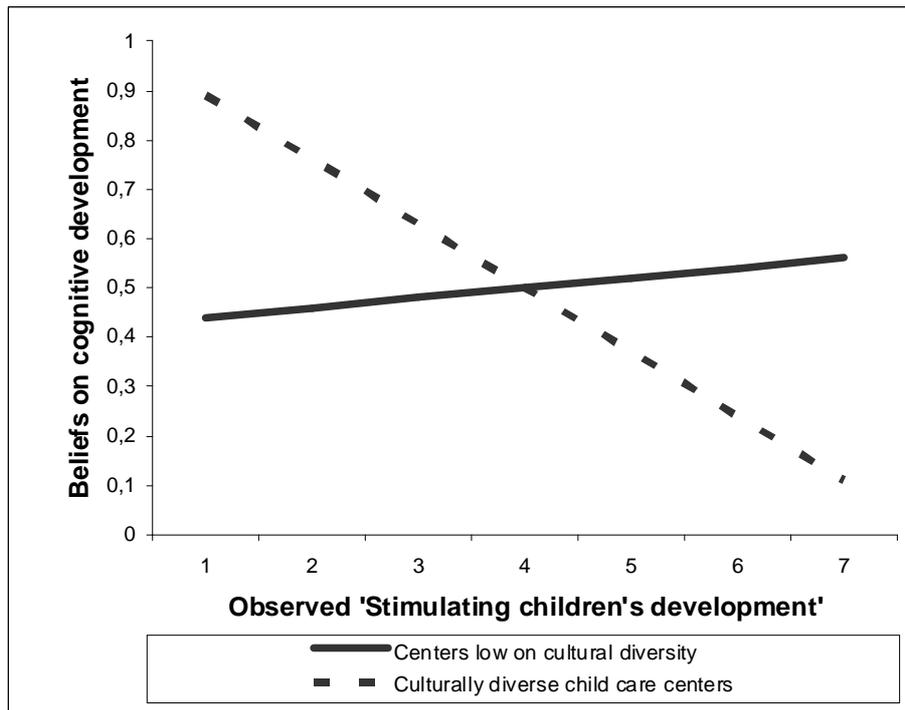
lating children's social development, for instance, by promoting that children play together, was positively correlated with the observed quality of their structuring and limit setting ($r(28) = .29, p = .13$), but in centers low in cultural diversity this correlation was negative ($r(29) = -.42, p = .03$; Fisher's $Z = 2.57, p = .01$; see Figure 5). Finally, in centers high in cultural diversity, caregivers' emphasis on stimulating children's social development was positively related to their observed competence to facilitate positive and cooperative interactions between children ($r(28) = .52, p = .01$), whereas no such relation was found in centers low in cultural diversity ($r(29) = -.11, p = .56$; Fisher's $Z = 2.37, p = .02$; see Figure 6).

The overall picture that arises from these results is suggestive and provides tentative support for the idea that compatibility of caregivers' beliefs with the wider cultural context of the center enables them to put their beliefs more effectively into practice. Beliefs classified as collectivistic, e.g., referring to the importance of cognitive development and school readiness, and valuing social development, were stronger related to observed behavior in the expected direction in centers high in cultural diversity, that is, with more colleagues and children with an immigrant background, than in centers with predominantly Dutch colleagues and Dutch children. Reversely, beliefs classified as individualistic, e.g. in this case, child-centered stimulation of children's personal development, were stronger related to practice in centers low in cultural diversity than in centers high in cultural diversity. However, caution is warranted in interpreting these results, because only six out of 54 possible beliefs-behavior connections that were examined, showed the moderator effect.

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Figure 1

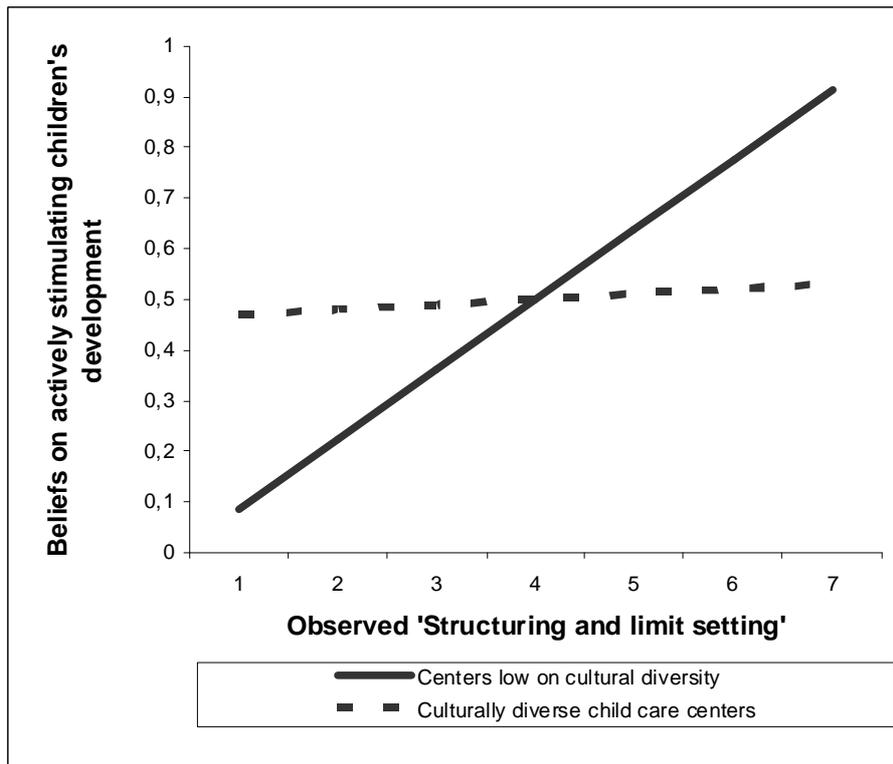
Correlations between caregivers' beliefs on children's cognitive development and school readiness and observed developmental stimulation in child care centers high (N = 28) and low (N = 29) in cultural diversity



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Figure 2

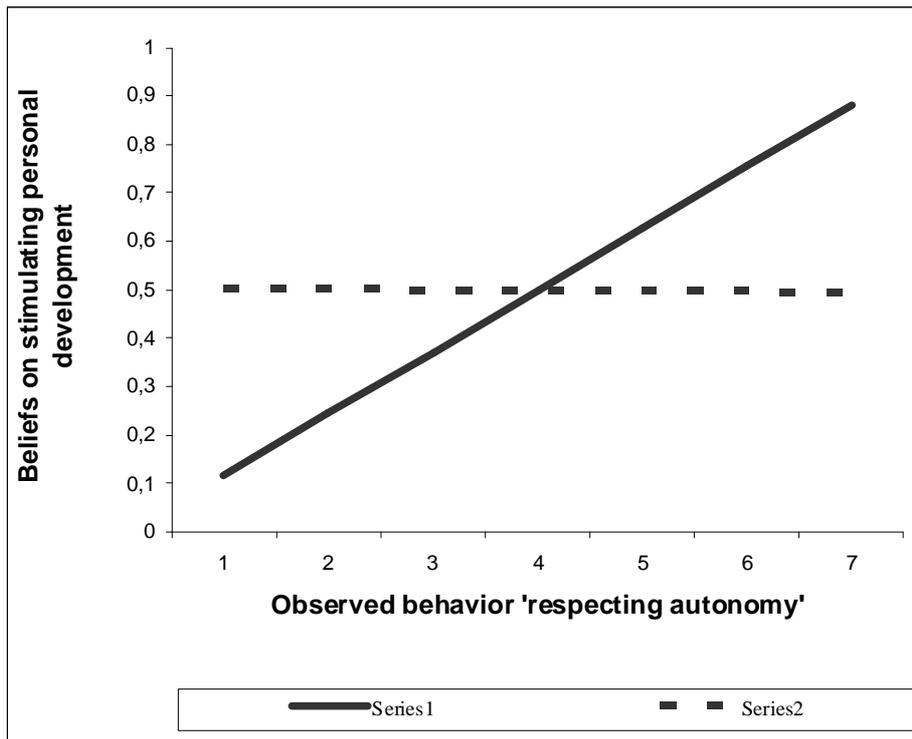
Correlations between caregivers' beliefs on actively stimulating children's personal development and observed non-intrusiveness and encouraging children's independence in child care centers high ($N = 28$) and low in cultural diversity ($N = 29$)



Caregivers' beliefs and behavior in culturally diverse center-based child daycare

Figure 3

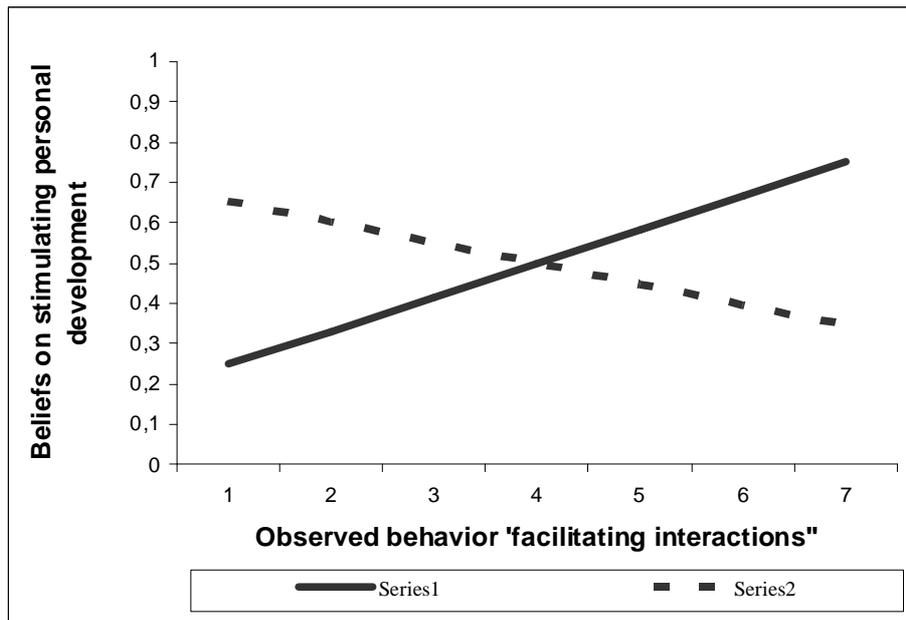
Correlations between caregivers' beliefs on actively stimulating children's personal development and observed behaviors in structuring and organizing activities authoritatively in child care centers high (N = 28) and low in cultural diversity (N = 29)



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Figure 4

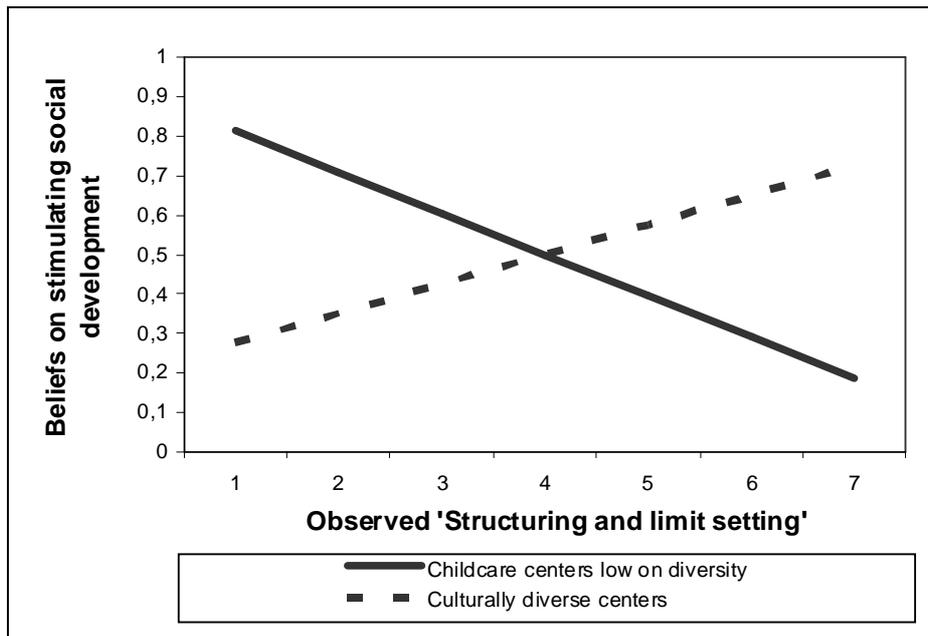
Correlations between caregivers' beliefs on actively stimulating children's personal development and observed behaviors in facilitating interactions between children in child care centers high (N = 28) and low in cultural diversity (N = 29)



Caregivers' beliefs and behavior in culturally diverse center-based child daycare

Figure 5

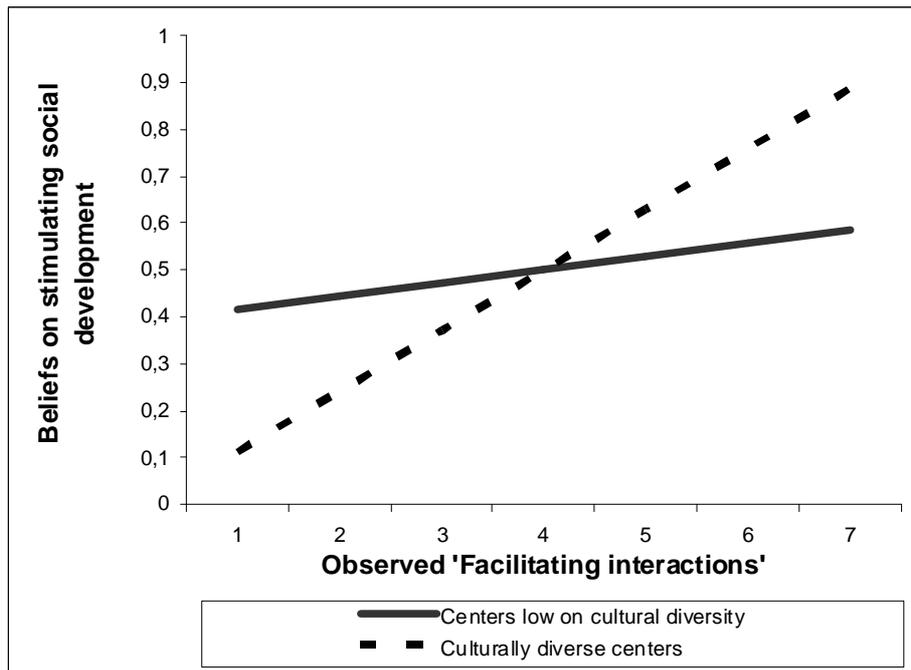
Correlations between caregivers' beliefs on stimulating children's social development and observed behaviors in structuring and organizing activities authoritatively, in childcare centers high (N = 28) and low in cultural diversity (N = 29)



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Figure 6

Correlations between caregivers' beliefs on stimulating children's social development and observed behaviors in facilitating interactions between children in child care centers high (N = 28) and low in cultural diversity (N = 29)



4.4 Discussion & conclusion

The present study examined the consequences of differing cultural beliefs for child rearing behaviors considered to be crucial for process quality in center-based child care. Evaluated were the sensitive-responsiveness and non-intrusiveness of caregivers towards children, their competence in authoritatively structuring and limit setting, and their competence in stimulating development and social interaction. In examining the belief-behavior relationships in child daycare, we attempted to improve on a number of methodological and conceptual flaws in previous research. By using a semi-structured interview method, caregivers were encouraged to express their beliefs on a similar level of specificity and concreteness as their observed behaviors (cf. Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Ajzen, 1996; Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Lorenz et al., 2007; Rubin & Chung, 2006). Moreover, the behavior observations were conducted in three typical childcare situations that, pooled together, provided us with a representative overview of caregivers' childrearing behaviors in the childcare center. In addition, by involving a multicultural sample of caregivers who were working in the same centers, we increased the variance of the independent variable, i.e., cultural beliefs. Finally, we explored moderator effects of the center's micro-cultural context on the belief – behavior relation.

Several statistically significant relations between caregivers' expressed beliefs and their observed behavior were found. In multivariate analyses, caregivers' beliefs proved to be moderate to strong predictors of caregiving practice. An interesting pattern of relations was found. First, beliefs with a more specific and concrete (behavioral) content were, overall, stronger related to the behavior ratings than beliefs with a more general and abstract meaning. Thus, neither the value attributed by caregivers to children's independence and self-confidence (individualistic beliefs), nor the importance attached by them to children's sociability and togetherness (collectivistic beliefs), appeared to be correlated with the observed behaviors. A possible explanation is that these general ideas reflect the official, taken-for-granted and widely shared educational goals of child daycare (e.g. independence, self-confidence, sociability), however, apparently without clear consequences for behavior. Another explanation is that they were defined on a too general and abstract level to have direct (observable) behavioral consequences (cf. Ajzen, 1996). In contrast, beliefs that addressed specific childrearing

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strategies and situated childrearing behaviors, such as providing choices to children, explaining rules of conduct verbally, and the (appreciation of the) use of punishment and other forms of disciplining behavior, were moderately to strongly related to the observed behaviors.

Second, the pattern of correlations revealed dissociation between individualistic and collectivistic beliefs regarding behavior. Beliefs ranged among an individualistic orientation, such as the value attached by caregivers to actively stimulating children's autonomy and to creating opportunities for children's self-directed development, were positively related to almost all observation scales. Note that these scales were developed for the purpose of evaluating the process quality of Dutch daycare and reflected the current international consensus about developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood care (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). Thus, our results indicate that the extent to which caregivers in center-based daycare are committed to individualistic childrearing beliefs is conducive to process quality as it is currently conceived, in particular to sensitive responsive, non-intrusive, authoritative, and development stimulating childrearing. In contrast, beliefs classified as more collectivistic, such as the importance attached to respecting hierarchic adult-child relations, the appreciation of authoritarian childrearing strategies, the emphasis put on children's cognitive development and school readiness, and a traditional view on learning and development, were mostly not or negatively related to the observation scales. Thus, our results seem to indicate that collectivistic child rearing beliefs, overall, are not compatible with current process quality standards in child daycare. In sum, a consequence of the increasing cultural diversity of child daycare might be that the current consensus about process quality will become less obvious and that increasing diversity, indeed, might even pose a threat to quality (Cryer & Burchinal, 2003).

However, before concluding this, we should consider the following exceptions to the pattern described above. First, we found that caregivers' group related beliefs, emphasizing the importance of group activities, group values (e.g., good cooperation), and certain group management strategies, which we ranged among a collectivistic childrearing orientation, were positively related to caregivers' observed competence in organizing children's activities in an authoritative way and in stimulating children's autonomy development in the group setting. Thus, at least some of caregivers' collectivistic ideas, i.e., those pertaining to group management, do seem to be compatible with current notions of process quality. Second,

and in striking contrast, we found virtually no relationships between caregivers' beliefs of whatever orientation and the behaviors that were thought to facilitate social interactions between children. Note that the scale Facilitating interactions was specifically developed to do justice to the group-based character of child daycare. Therefore, positive relationships with, in particular, the group management and social development beliefs were expected, which, however, were not found. On closer examination, the definition of the scale appeared to direct the observer's attention to caregiver's notice of and reaction to positive interactions between children, caregiver's response to negative interactions between children was not the focus of this scale. Furthermore, because of this focus on positive interactions between children, the observer's attention was directed to separate (dyadic) child-to-child interactions, which is not the same as a focus on the group (Dawes & Sams, 2004; Rogoff, 1998). Appropriate guidance of (dyadic) child-to-child interaction can be seen as an extension of the individualistic adult-child dyadic model underlying current process quality standards. Groups, however, involve multiple, often polyadic interactions, thus constitute far more complex social systems (cf. Rogoff, 1998). Adequate guidance of group processes can be captured to some extent by evaluating caregivers' structuring and limit setting, as we found, but ideally should be evaluated with separate, tailor-made evaluation instruments.

The results of the present study are in agreement with recent findings by Ahnert, Pinquart, and Lamb (2006), suggesting that the dyadic model is less applicable to group-based care. Based on a meta-analysis of 40 studies into the security of attachment relations of young children with parents and professional caregivers, these researchers found that the dyadic model of sensitive caregiving was a predictor of secure child-adult attachment in the family context, but not in the context of the daycare center. Group sensitivity, on the other hand, indicated by caregivers' observed attentiveness to the group as a whole and positive involvement in the group's activities, did significantly predict attachment security in center-based daycare. We may add that the availability of cognitions that support group sensitivity and suggest strategies of dealing with groups to caregivers is likely to enhance child care quality and to positively affect child outcomes.

The contrasting findings described above point to a fundamental problem. Observation scales based on the dyadic caregiver-child attachment model risk to be positively biased towards individualistic and negatively towards collectivistic

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childrearing beliefs. However, given the group setting of child daycare, they may be less useful for assessing aspects of process quality in center-based daycare regarding social interaction and group management (Ahnert et al., 2006; Rosenthal, 1999; Singer, 1993). So, at least one other conclusion that can be drawn from the present results is that collectivistic beliefs and practices are easily classified as developmentally inappropriate and of low process quality, given current standards and evaluation instruments, although collectivistic ideas pertaining to how to deal with groups of children and how to promote cooperation, social cohesion, and social development may be very conducive for these aspects of process quality.

In addition to direct relations between caregivers' beliefs and practices, we explored possible moderator effects of the centers' cultural context on the belief-behavior relationship. Partly based on a conceptual analysis of the often problematic belief-behavior link, and partly based on indications from recent research (Wen et al., submitted), we expected that the opportunities for caregivers to put their beliefs into practice would crucially depend on the compatibility of their beliefs with the child care center's micro-cultural context, leading to differences in the strengths of the belief-behavior relationships as a function of that compatibility. Comparing belief-behavior correlations between caregivers working in centers that differed in cultural diversity, revealed an interesting pattern that confirmed our expectations. In child care centers that were rated as low in cultural diversity, with presumably a predominant individualistic orientation (see Huijbregts et al., in press), stronger relations were found between caregivers' individualistic beliefs and practices than in settings rated as high in cultural diversity, with presumably a stronger collectivistic orientation. Furthermore, in culturally more diverse centers considerable relations were found between caregivers' collectivistic beliefs and their behaviors, while no relations were found in culturally less diverse centers. A likely interpretation is that caregivers' beliefs are indeed more consistently expressed in behavior when they are attuned to the centers' cultural context.

The results, furthermore, suggest that caregivers may experience more support from their mental system of goals, values, and knowledge in dealing with the concrete everyday tasks in childrearing situations when working in a culturally compatible situation. Reversely, the lack of clear and consistent beliefs-behavior relationships in situations of less cultural compatibility suggests a state of disharmony and a lack of cognitive-motivational support. A consequence of a disharmonious situation could be that caregivers are more open to new ideas and new

childrearing strategies, thus more willing to adjust their beliefs and behavior. However, the incompatibility of beliefs and context could also lead to feelings of uncertainty and to inconsistent childrearing behaviors, lowering overall process quality, and to conflicts with colleagues or parents. Therefore, in view of the increasing cultural diversity in center based child care, findings like these deserve more attention in future research as well as in teacher education and in child care policy.

Several questions regarding the influence of the cultural context on caregiver' beliefs and practices remain. Unfortunately, the influence of the cultural context could not be investigated more thoroughly in this study. We do not know, for instance, how the process of influencing each other's beliefs and practices works. Possibly caregiver or center characteristics, such as, for instance, the availability of supervision and coaching, are decisive factors in this process. It also remains unknown at what ratio of caregivers with a particular cultural view or at what ratio of children with a particular cultural background, caregivers will adjust their beliefs and consequently their behavior or only adjust their behavior without changing their beliefs. In future research, it would be interesting to explore these questions in more detail, for instance, by studying the beliefs and practices of several caregivers working in the same center or in a similar context.

The sample size appeared to be a limitation in this study. Due to the limited sample size only six out of the 54 possible moderator effects were found to be statistically significant. It is not unlikely that future studies will fail to replicate the present findings. A further limitation concerns the observation scales. Despite the study's aim of measuring beliefs and behavior on similar levels of specificity and concreteness (cf. Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Ajzen, 1996; Lorenz, Melby, Conger, & Xu, 2007), the correspondence between the belief constructs and the behavior scales was still far from perfect. However, the fact that statistically significant (including moderate to strong) beliefs-behavior correlations were found for the more specific and concrete, but not for the more general and abstract beliefs, suggests that we were at least partly successful in measuring beliefs and behavior on the appropriate levels.

Implications & Conclusion

Understanding the role of cultural belief systems and their relationship to behavior is a key to improving caregivers' competences in child rearing and, thus, the

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quality of caregiving (Kuhn & Udell, 2001). The results of this study emphasize the importance of taking the increased cultural diversity among caregivers and children into account in regulating the process quality of center based care, a highly valued goal among parents, educators, and policymakers alike. Ideas and practices from collectivistic cultures challenge established standards of quality that are based on the Western individualistic model. Thus, at least some reconciliation and adjustment is needed to reduce the tensions between different belief systems that became obvious in this study. Open-minded research that examines the effects of beliefs and practices from different cultural orientations on child outcomes will be essential to support this adjustment process in order to avoid cultural bias. On beforehand, given the present results, we expect ideas and practices from collectivistic cultures to enrich current views on process quality in child daycare especially regarding group management and social interaction.

The results of this study indicate that process quality in child care centers relevantly depends on caregivers' beliefs, thus can be enhanced by changing these beliefs. The main impetus for a change in beliefs may come from encounters with viewpoints that differ from one's own (Huijbregts et al., in press), especially when these encounters involve higher educated caregivers or managers, and are embedded in a system of supervision and in-service training (cf. Bugental & Johnston, 2000, Early, Maxwell, Burchinal, Alva, Bender, Bryant, et al., 2007; Sylva, Sammons, Melhuish, Siraj-Blatchford, Taggart, & Barreau, 2008). However, the moderator effect demonstrated in this study suggests that too big a discrepancy between particular caregivers' beliefs and the centers' orientation is a risk for quality and probably also for the caregiver's well-being and motivation. So, a change of beliefs through confrontation should be embedded in secure, respectful, and reciprocal staff and staff-to-parents communication (Kuhn & Udell, 2001). The study, furthermore, demonstrated that the more explicit event and context dependent beliefs were most relevant for behavior and most sensitive to the micro-cultural context. Therefore, the potential for professional training programs to improve reflective thinking among caregivers on the why's behind their practices, is more likely to be realized if they focus on the more specific and concrete childrearing beliefs of caregivers.

To conclude, cultural childrearing beliefs of caregivers in center-based daycare correlate moderately to strongly with behavior evaluations based on Western process quality standards, if the cultural beliefs of the caregivers are assessed with

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respect to specific and concrete issues in everyday childrearing and related to similar specific and concrete behaviors, and if the cultural beliefs of the caregivers are compatible with the overall cultural orientation of the center. Individualistic beliefs are most compatible with the predominant Western view on process quality. However, individualistic beliefs are not related to, thus apparently not relevant for, caregivers' group management competence, whereas collectivist beliefs on group management clearly are. Examining caregivers' behavior exclusively from a Western, individualistic point of view, risks overlooking particular collectivistic childrearing practices, such as group management behaviors, that are probably also relevant for process quality and, ultimately, for child outcomes (cf. Ahnert et al., 2006). We propose to reconsider current consensus on the elements of process quality in child daycare in view of the central role played by group processes, that cannot be sufficiently captured by a dyadic child-to-child model of interaction, and to open up current thinking on quality in child daycare to collectivistic themes such as, in particular, group management.

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5. General discussion and conclusions

In this dissertation we focused on the issue of cultural diversity in center-based child care in the Netherlands. The general goal was to study the childrearing beliefs of caregivers of various cultural backgrounds working with toddlers in the Dutch child care context. To gain more insight in this subject, we applied three different measurement approaches. First, we used questionnaire data to investigate whether cultural differences in caregivers' general and daycare specific beliefs could be found, and whether caregivers' cultural background or their professional training and the micro-cultural context of the child care centers were important factors in explaining cultural differences in caregivers' beliefs. Second, we used semi-open interviews to examine caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs in more detail. The main goal here was to investigate the cultural differences and similarities in caregivers' reasoning about children's independence and autonomy, children's social development and group related issues, and caregivers' authority. In addition, we investigated the influence of the cultural context and the overall quality of the child care center on caregivers' reasoning. Third, caregivers were observed while working in the child care center. Doing so, we were able to relate caregivers' beliefs to their actual childrearing practices. If, as we proposed, cultural childrearing beliefs were indeed important for process quality in child daycare, there had to be a relevant connection between caregivers' beliefs and their behavior. So far, research presents mixed evidence for such a relation. Whereas in studies in which parental beliefs were related to childrearing practices often only little or even no relation between beliefs and behavior was found, in studies that investigated the relation between (kindergarten) teachers' beliefs and practices, often a much more coherent pattern between the two was revealed. Researchers have suggested several explanations for the often weak belief – behavior connections. First, due to the dynamic nature of beliefs systems that adjust to specific circumstances, it may be difficult to find coherent relations with behavior in different contexts. Second, several methodological restraints may explain the often weak belief – behavior relations (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Ajzen, 1996; Lorenz, Melby, Conger, & Xu, 2007). In this dissertation, we aimed at improving on

these methodological flaws, thus increasing the probability of finding belief behavior connections. In order to map caregivers' beliefs onto practices, observations were made of specific situations that triggered goal directed behavior (the creative activity), peer-cooperation (the construction task), as well as group management behaviors (lunch time). As such, we could link these behaviors to caregivers' collectivistic and individualistic childrearing beliefs. Furthermore, as direct belief – behavior relations may often not be found due to the dynamics of belief systems, we followed up on the findings of Wen, Elicker and McMullen (submitted), who found a moderating effect of context factors, in particular caregivers' educational level, on the relation between beliefs and behavior. Whenever caregivers were higher educated a stronger relation was found between their beliefs and actual practices. As in our sample there was very limited variance in caregivers' educational level, we did not explore such an effect. However, as the micro-cultural context of the center seemed to affect caregivers' beliefs substantially, we explored possible moderator effects of micro-cultural contextual factors of the child care center on the relationship between beliefs and behavior.

5.1 Caregivers' cultural beliefs

The studies in this dissertation demonstrate that both Dutch and immigrant caregivers valued individualistic as well as collectivistic childrearing beliefs and that there was considerable overlap in the beliefs they valued. For instance, all caregivers attached importance to children's sociability and a feeling of belonging, and, despite the cultural differences in beliefs on this theme, all caregivers underlined the importance of children's developing individuality. However, cultural differences in caregivers' beliefs were found as well. Caregivers differed in the significance they attached to beliefs from either the individualistic or the collectivistic category. As we had expected, Dutch caregivers especially emphasized individualistic childrearing goals such as, for instance, children's independence. The caregivers with a migrant background especially emphasized collectivistic goals such as, for instance, children's obedience to adults, however they did not differ from the Dutch caregivers in their appreciation of individualistic goals as children's self-confidence or their own role in actively stimulating children's development and creating the opportunities for development. Moreover, this finding

demonstrates that the individualism – collectivism distinction can indeed be used when investigating the beliefs of educators of different cultural heritage living in one and the same society. The fact that individualistic as well as collectivistic themes were mentioned by caregivers of all backgrounds underlines, first, the notion of the coexistence of the two in many cultures (Greenfield et al., 2003; Harkness, Super, & van Tijen, 2000; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). Second, it confirms the multidimensionality of both childrearing beliefs and the constructs of individualism and collectivism (Greenfield et al., 2003; Harwood, Schölmerich, & Schulze, 2000; Harkness, Super, & van Tijen, 2000; Kagitçibasi, 2005; Killen & Wainryb, 2000; Raeff, 2005; Suizzo, 2007; Tamis-LeMonda, Way, Hughes, Yoshikawa, Kalman, & Niwa, 2008; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). However, when investigating differences between and within cultural groups in more detail, the distinction may be too general and may carry the risk of oversimplifying cultural patterns.

5.2 The child care center's micro-cultural context

The micro-cultural context of the child care center, defined as the cultural background of close colleagues, and of the total team, as well as the cultural backgrounds of the children in their groups, indeed affected caregivers' childrearing beliefs (cf. Harkness & Super, 1996). Caregivers who worked in a culturally diverse setting stressed collectivistic childrearing goals – in particular obedience –, and collectivistic views on children's learning and development. Furthermore, caregivers whose direct colleagues were immigrant-Dutch attached less importance to more individualistic notions of learning and development. Interestingly, these findings not only applied to caregivers with immigrant backgrounds but also to the native Dutch. These results not only underline the importance of the cultural context in understanding caregivers' beliefs, they also support the idea that beliefs are constructed and reconstructed in response to everyday experiences with childrearing in particular contexts, and in social interaction with others, such as a team of caregivers or the cultural community (Harkness & Super, 1996).

In studying the relation between caregivers' beliefs and their actual behavior, we found that beliefs with a more specific and concrete, that is, a more behavioral content were moderately to strongly related to the behavior ratings, while little re-

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lations with behavior were found for the beliefs with a more general and abstract meaning. Beliefs are considered dynamic structures that are adapted to the opportunities and constraints prevailing in the actual context, including social factors such as the views of colleagues and parents (Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Harkness & Super, 1999; Kontos, Burchinal, Howes, Wisseh, & Galinsky, 2002; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2008). Consequently, consistent belief - behavior relations across contexts may just not exist. This notion lead us to investigate the possible moderator effects in the relations between beliefs and behavior. A second reason for exploring moderator effects on belief – behavior relations was that in a recent study stronger belief – behavior relations were found when teachers were higher educated and more experienced (Wen, Elicker, & McMullen, submitted). Although in our study educational level did not seem to have an impact on caregivers' beliefs, due to little variance in educational level, we did find many indications for the influence of the child care center's micro-cultural context.

An interesting pattern was revealed when comparing the belief-behavior relations between caregivers working in centers that differed in cultural diversity. We had expected that the likelihood for caregivers to put their beliefs into practice would depend on the compatibility of their beliefs with the child care center's micro-cultural context, leading to differences in the strengths of the belief-behavior relationships as a function of that compatibility. The findings support this expectation. However, they do not provide conclusive evidence due to the methodological limitations of the study. Stronger relations between collectivistic beliefs and behaviors were found in centers high in cultural diversity, than in centers with predominantly Dutch colleagues and Dutch children. Conversely, beliefs classified as individualistic were stronger related to practice in centers low in cultural diversity than in culturally diverse centers. We believe that these findings underline the expectation that caregivers' beliefs are more consistently expressed in behavior when they are in tune with the centers' cultural context.

To conclude, these data confirm that caregivers' childrearing belief systems are in part determined through a prolonged socialization process by the belief systems of their cultural and religious communities, and in part by their professional experience and their colleagues (cf. Harkness & Super, 1996, Rosenthal, 1991). The results further suggest that working in an ethnically diverse context not only reinforces collectivistic childrearing beliefs, but seems to make Dutch caregivers, reared in an individualistic society, adopt collectivistic childrearing beliefs as

well, in spite of the individualistic childrearing goals articulated in the center's educational policy (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Matinez, 2000).

5.3 Quality issues in child care, and practical implications

How can we interpret these findings and transfer them to the discussion on child care quality? We believe that the increasing cultural diversity raises the question whether the idea of what constitutes child care quality is still commonly shared among practitioners in child care. Quality criteria in child care centers are closely linked to beliefs about the functions and goals of these centers. These beliefs, in turn, are shaped by perspectives on childhood, by cultural patterns and personal values, which may strongly differ between cultural communities (Pence & Moss, 1994; Woodhead, 1996). In discussions on what constitutes quality in center-based care and in studies that aim to measure it, the constructs of 'developmentally appropriate beliefs' and 'developmentally appropriate practices' (DAP, Bredekamp, 1987; Bredekamp & Copple, 1997) are used as points of reference in many countries. Founded on child development knowledge, mostly generated by Western psychologists, such as Piaget, Dewey, Erickson, and many others, guidelines are provided for allegedly universal childrearing practices that serve to 'foster the development of an isolated being with the end goal of being an autonomous individual' (Lubeck, 1996: 156). This dichotomy between appropriate and inappropriate leaves little room for alternative ideas or further views on caregivers' interactional qualities (Lubeck, 1996; Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999). There is a distinct risk that beliefs and practices that do not match with the principles of developmentally appropriateness are easily characterized as developmentally inappropriate. Based on the findings in this study, we argue that there is a cultural bias in the discussion on child care quality, as well as in research on this issue, that seems to favor Western, individualistic childrearing beliefs and practices (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999; McMullen, Elicker, Wang, Erdiller, Lee, Lin, Sun, 2005; Rosenthal, 1999; Singer, 1993). For instance, the currently available instruments for measuring the process quality in center care, that are used worldwide, almost unchanged, such as the Caregiver Interaction Scale (CIS) by Arnett (1989), the Observational Record of the Caregiving Environment (ORCE) developed by the United States' National Institute of Child Health and Human Devel-

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opment (NICHD, 1996), the Infant Toddler and Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales (ITERS and ECERS, (Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 1998) tend to focus almost exclusively on child-centered models of dyadic adult-child relationships. The influence of Western psychological theories, especially attachment theory, as well as the emphasis on individualistic childrearing ideals, is obvious (Rosenthal, 1999; Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999). The observation scale 'facilitating interactions', recently developed by the Dutch Consortium for Child Care Research (NCKO), is an important addition to the earlier mentioned scales where the focus is more on positive interactions between dyads of children and to the caregivers' capacity to stimulate positive interactions between two children than on peer-cooperation and instilling a sense of togetherness. However, we argue that a mainly individualistic orientation on what constitutes child care quality does not match the group-based character of center-based child care (Rosenthal, 1999; Singer; 1993). Beliefs and practices more common in collectivistic societies, such as clear ideas on childrearing in groups, stimulating collaborative interaction and social play, may constitute very important aspects of child care quality that have until now been frequently overlooked (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999).

Although the child care setting itself, due to the group-based character of child care, raises the importance of good group dynamics, these processes are an understudied topic. An exception is the recent meta-analysis by Ahnert, Pinquart and Lamb (2006). Their study presented that caregivers' group sensitivity, other than the sensitivity to individual children, was an important condition for the quality of the relationship between the caregiver and the child. Our results are in agreement with this finding. Interestingly, Ahnert et al. did not find such relations for caregivers' sensitivity to individual children and the quality of caregivers' relation with the child. On the other hand, negative peer interactions, resulting from failing group management, were reported as a major cause of children's low well-being and lack of involvement in center-based child care (Gevers Deynoot-Schaub & Riksen-Walraven, 2005). Thus, managing group processes cannot be reduced to merely stimulating positive interactions between children. To skilfully manage group processes, caregivers should stimulate a sense of togetherness among the whole group of children, by stressing the importance of listening to each other, by setting helping each other as a ground rule, and by making sure all children are involved in the group process (Dawes & Sams, 2004; De Haan & Singer, 2001; Wegerif, Littleton, Dawes, Mercer, & Rowe, 2004). We propose to

reconsider current consensus on the elements of process quality in child care in view of the central role played by group processes and to open up current thinking on quality in child care to collectivistic themes as group management.

5.4 Considerations regarding the study

The aim of this study was to explore caregivers' cultural childrearing beliefs and related practices in culturally diverse child care centers. The interviews and the system and strategy of coding the interviews we used in this dissertation correspond closely to the coding schemes and procedures of Harkness, Super and Van Tijen (2000), but differs in a few aspects. In our study, we identified several individualistic codes as well as several collectivistic codes, to get a well balanced picture of caregivers' beliefs. In the study by Harkness et al. (2000) only two collectivistic themes were identified, viz. being sociable and being obedient, while in the individualistic category several themes were identified. This is probably because they interviewed American and Dutch parents, both from individualistic societies, who were probably more outspoken concerning the individualistic childrearing goals. However, collectivistic or sociocentric childrearing probably consists of many more important themes than just these two. In the present study, involving caregivers with an immigrant background, we identified several additional beliefs that could be ranged among collectivistic beliefs. This further differentiation of collectivistic child rearing beliefs can be seen as a strength of this study. However, as the coding category of 'being sociable' still was among the most frequently mentioned socialization goals for all caregivers, the code probably still is not specific enough and deserves more fine tuning in future studies on collectivistic or sociocentric beliefs among educators of different cultural backgrounds living in an individualistic society.

In collecting and analyzing the data we used both quantitative and qualitative methods, in order to optimize our understanding of such a complex theme. Where the use of interviews and observations provided us with a good understanding of caregivers' beliefs, quantitative analyses enabled us to explore group differences and similarities in beliefs and practices, and to relate caregivers' childrearing beliefs to observed practices. This mixed method approach should be considered a major strength of our study (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007).

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A third strength of the study is our aim of measuring beliefs and behavior on similar levels of specificity and concreteness (cf. Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Ajzen, 1996; Lorenz, Melby, Conger, & Xu, 2007), in order to increase the sensitivity of finding belief – behavior relations. Combining interview data with observations in the child care center, resulted in moderate to strong belief – behavior relations. Relations with behavior were especially found for the more specific and concrete beliefs, but not for the more general and abstract root metaphors of development. Although the relation between the belief constructs and the behavior scales was still far from perfect, our findings suggest that we were at least partly successful in measuring beliefs and behavior on similar levels.

The current study also has limitations that should be considered in future studies. The focus in this study was on professional caregivers only, and included a limited set of possible determinants of caregivers' beliefs. Future research should also include the influence of parental childrearing beliefs, and examine the possible discrepancies in the beliefs of caregivers and parents. This could provide us with a better understanding of the dynamics of beliefs reconstruction, as parents and caregivers' possibly influence each other's beliefs in the frequent encounters they have. This would also give us insight into how parents and caregivers create a shared meaning when educating a child together.

A further concern was the study's sample size which appeared to be a limitation in the statistical analyses. The four cultural groups were too small to study within-group differences, and to control for these differences in the analyses. Despite these limitations, the present studies offer valuable insight the issue of cultural diversity in center-based child care. This is an important issue in western societies where immigration has resulted in culturally and ethnically diverse communities.

5.5 Future research

In spite of the results presented in this dissertation, there are still many questions to be answered. Whereas we confirmed the notion that childrearing beliefs are dynamic and are influenced by the context in which people work and live (Harkness & Super, 1996, Rosenthal, 1991; Suizzo, 2007), several questions remain. We do not know, for instance, how this process of belief reconstruction and its relation to practices actually works. Possibly caregiver or center characteristics such

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as, for instance, the availability of supervision and coaching, are decisive factors in this process. It also remains unknown at what ratio of caregivers with a particular cultural view or at what ratio of children with a particular cultural background, caregivers will adjust their beliefs and consequently their behavior. In future research, it would be interesting to explore these questions in more detail, for instance, by studying the beliefs and practices of several caregivers working in the same center or in a similar context over a certain period.

A second theme that deserves more attention in future research is the validity of the concepts and instruments that are used in child care research, as the population of children and parents as well as caregivers becomes more diverse every year. Most of these instruments are developed in and calibrated to Western populations. Therefore, it is important to examine whether these instruments are indeed culturally biased and fail to address care giving quality in a culturally sensitive and fair way in western as well as non-western contexts. The current changes in Dutch society, such as the increasing numbers of working mothers and, consequently, increasing numbers of young children attending center-based care, as well as the culturally diversifying of the population further underscore the relevance of this argument.

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6. Appendix

Combining individualistic and collectivistic ideas

As the studies in this dissertation show, all caregivers' valued both individualistic as collectivistic sets of beliefs. On the work floor, in interaction with colleagues and children, caregivers experience new childrearing situations and meet other beliefs on children and their own role as educators, leading to a constant reconstruction of beliefs. Some of the 'new' ideas, often the official childrearing goals of the child care center, are possibly at odds with the beliefs of the cultural group the caregivers originate from. In this final section of the dissertation we would like to give insight into the difficulties some caregivers seem to experience in the process of beliefs reconstruction. To do so, we performed some additional qualitative analyses of the interview texts. Maxqda offers the possibility to retrieve text fragments in which several codes are overlapping. We selected interview paragraphs containing one train of thoughts on the nature of children or about socialization goals to which an individualistic as well as a collectivistic code was attached. Fragments in which caregivers referred to their ideas about best practices in childrearing were not selected for this analysis, as cultural differences in beliefs were more pronounced in general beliefs rather than in beliefs about best practices (Huijbregts et al., 2008; Huijbregts et al., in press).

In 47 text fragments combinations of individualistic with collectivistic codes were found. Caregivers of all backgrounds seemed to make these combinations, however, especially the immigrant caregivers made several combinations within one interview. Caregivers who combined individualistic and collectivistic codes seemed to work in the same child care centers; these were all culturally diverse centers, both among caregivers and children. Probably in these centers finding a balance between children's individual needs and the group needs are the order of the day.

Although the number of text fragments in which individualistic beliefs were combined with collectivistic ideas was small ($N = 47$), compared to the overall number of codes ($N = 2714$ for collectivistic beliefs, of which 1171 fragments on children's 'sociability' and $N = 1903$ for individualistic beliefs). Although this

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may seem a small sample, the retrieved segments are powerful in illustrating the sometimes difficult considerations caregivers made. Note that the interviews were transcribed verbally, and were literally translated to English, and are thus not always grammatically correct.

Combinations of the collectivistic notion of obedience with the individualistic childrearing goals of independence were found in 11 text fragments, next to four combinations of obedience with being strong-willed. Within these fragments, beliefs about children's individual needs seemed to collide with caregivers' ideas about children being obedient and respectful to adults. This is demonstrated in the interview excerpts below.

'We are very open here in this group; we talk freely with the children. Sure, they are allowed to have their own opinion. But, if they want something or say something, it has to be realistic [within reasonable limits of what is appropriate]. Consequently, whether they like it or not, they have to listen to us.' R. 76, Turkish-Dutch

Similarly, another Turkish-Dutch caregiver commented on children stating their opinions:

'On some topics children can definitely have their own opinion. But if I, as a caregiver, do not agree with what they say, I'll tell them 'no, that's not how it's going to happen'. So sometimes, they are not actually allowed to have their own opinion. They sometimes say very strange things too. Then I tell them 'you shouldn't talk like that, that's not appropriate'. R. 64, Turkish-Dutch caregiver

From these fragments, it becomes clear that the caregivers recognize that stating an opinion is important for children's development. This is considered an important socialization goal in Dutch childrearing (Deković & Pels, 2006) and thus in Dutch child care centers. Furthermore, it can be seen as an individualistic quality, attuned to socialization in the Dutch society. At the same time, however, caregivers feel that they as adults know best, and should have the final say. In the second fragment above, the caregiver emphasizes that what children say has to be neat and respectful. This theme was stressed by several immigrant-Dutch caregivers.

'The most important things I would like to teach them before they go to school are social skills and independence. Playing together is very impor-

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tant, here in the child care center, and in the future, at school. Verbal assertiveness and stating their own opinion are things I also find important for children. However, the way some of these children talk to their parents... Stating your opinion is one thing, but it has to be neat and polite; after all, a child has to be respectful to adults.' R. 48, Moroccan-Dutch

All these caregivers talk about verbal assertiveness and children having their own opinions in a social context, and refer to social norms. The following fragment is of a Dutch caregiver, who also speaks of assertiveness in a group setting, however, the emphasis she places is rather different from that in the fragments above.

'To stand up for oneself, to dare to state your own opinion, these are things I find very important. When they stand up for themselves, for instance, when an other child takes away a toy, that is good for their self-confidence. I think that is something they have to learn, especially in a group. You have to dare to offer resistance; otherwise you will have a problem in a group setting [as an individual]. It is very important that they [the children] learn to stand up for themselves, because they are in groups [here].' R. 37, Dutch caregiver

From the excerpt above it is quite remarkable that the Dutch caregiver seems to experience the group context as a possible threat to children's individuality. None of the immigrant caregivers mentioned the group with such negativity. On the contrary, they stressed the group context as offering children opportunities for learning important social skills as sharing toys, making friends and being sociable persons.

'I find it very important for the children to become independent persons. Independent [persons] with enough self-confidence, well-balanced. That they treat other people well, and take good care of themselves. And are nice to each other. Yes, their independence should be expressed in caring for themselves and for others. I mean in the group, we play together, we clear up together, and we have a shared responsibility that all goes well. That is most important to me, that we have a fine day together [here at the center].' R. 30, Surinamese-Dutch

Furthermore, the collectivistic theme of children's sociability was combined 22 times with the individualistic theme of children's independence. In addition, being sociable was combined six times with being strong willed, four times with

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children's self-confidence and two times with children's cognitive development. In these fragments, caregivers often spoke about individual children and their personal needs while being in a group setting. However, caregivers did not seem to consider situations where a balance has to be found between children's sociability and conformity on the one hand and individualistic themes as children's autonomy on the other as possibly conflicting. Children's sociability is an important socialization goals in all cultures, especially for toddlers, this may explain why none of the caregivers experienced this theme as conflicting to the more individualistic socialization goals. The three excerpts below illustrate this.

'It is important that they learn to share, not only sharing, but also knowing that others are allowed to play with the toys as well. That they should take turns. That's important. Some children are quiet, they think 'let it go', but we stimulate them to say 'now I want to have a go'. R. 65, Surinamese-Dutch

'I like it when the children go around well with each other, when they all play together and are nice to each other. Of course subgroups develop, individuals..., the older kids form a group as well as the younger ones. That's why we make the older kids help the young children, so they get into contact with each other'. R. 62, Moroccan-Dutch

'We are together here [in the group], we have a nice day together and everybody is included. Whether you're 8 months or 8 weeks and are in the playpen all day, or whether you're nearly four years old and ready to go to kindergarten. Everybody belongs, because we are all unique, but still they all belong to the group. Because they are with that group. That's important to me'. R 90, Dutch

The above presented interview lines served to illustrate the findings of this dissertation that caregivers' with different cultural backgrounds value both individualistic and collectivistic socialization goals, and that a specific emphasis on certain beliefs can be recognized for each cultural group (Greenfield et al., 2003; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). The text fragments further fit the notion that caregivers' childrearing beliefs are adapting to the everyday experiences with childrearing in particular contexts, and become dynamically interwoven with the beliefs of a cultural community (Bornstein & Cote, 2003; Harkness & Super, 1999; Raeff, 2000; Valsiner & Litvinovic, 1996). They further illustrate that some situations can

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evoke quite contradicting emotions. Such inner conflict may lead to feelings of uncertainty and perhaps even to inconsistent childrearing, possibly lowering overall process quality. Therefore, findings like these deserve more attention in future research, as well as in the education and training of teachers.

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Summary

The last decades in the Netherlands can be characterized by two important demographical and economical changes. First, child care provisions for young children have rapidly grown as more women have entered the work force. A second important demographic change is the increasing cultural diversity of the Dutch society. Many young females from these immigrant communities entered the child care workforce as a response to the high demand for staff in the expanding child care system. The diversifying of staff and children presents challenges to the field of center-based child care. In particular, to the standards and images of the interaction quality between a caregiver and a child, the so-called process quality of child day care.

Cultural beliefs systems on childrearing are the often implicit, taken-for-granted ideas about the right or natural way of childrearing. Belief systems include values and norms regarding children's personal and social development and specify strategies to socialize these values and norms. Cultural childrearing beliefs are constructed and reconstructed both in everyday experiences with childrearing in particular contexts and by the socially shared cultural beliefs within a particular community, such as a cultural community or the team of caregivers. From a large body of research it is known that these cultural beliefs vary substantially across cultural communities. The main goal of this thesis was to explore whether these cultural differences in beliefs about children and childrearing can also be found among child care professionals of different cultural communities. Studying educators' childrearing beliefs is important because these are assumed to be an important source for childrearing practices, and, following from this notion, affect the interaction quality between caregivers and children.

In many studies, cultural differences are examined using frameworks based on the individualism-collectivism distinction. This distinction refers to belief systems stressing individuality, competition, and independent selfhood versus relatedness, cooperation, and interdependent selfhood. According to current understanding, individualism and collectivism are not simply opposites on a single dimension, but represent different dimensions that can co-exist in the individual mind as well

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as in the community at large, yet different cultures may emphasize different constellations of ideas. Balancing independence or autonomy and interdependence or relatedness is an important issue in the rearing of young children in every society. However, in center based child care in predominantly individualistic Western countries this is a particularly critical issue. The official childrearing beliefs and quality standards in child care match the individualistic child-centered model best, whereas the characteristics of the setting – where young children are in the presences of at least a dozen peers most of the day – may be more compatible with a more collectivistic orientation on child development and socialization.

The central goal of this thesis was to gain insight into the issue of cultural diversity in center-based care, a theme which has received surprisingly little scientific attention before this project started. The present thesis comprises three empirical studies, which are described in three separate chapters. Data on which these studies are based were collected in the fall of 2004 and winter and spring of the year 2005. In total, 61 female caregivers working with toddlers in 22 different child care centers in two major cities in the Netherlands participated in the main study. The sample represents three cultural groups; 20 caregivers had a Dutch background, 20 caregivers were of Surinamese-Dutch or Antillean-Dutch origin, and 21 were first and second generation immigrants from Morocco or Turkey. The Surinamese, Antilleans, Moroccans and Turks are nowadays the largest immigrant groups in the Netherlands. Each caregiver was visited while at work. All caregivers were personally interviewed about their beliefs on children and childrearing, and all caregivers were observed in their groups at the child care center. After the visit, all caregivers received a questionnaire. Next to these 61 caregivers, a larger sample of caregivers was approached to participate in the survey part of the study, resulting in a total group of 116 caregivers.

The aim of the first two empirical studies was to investigate whether there are cultural differences in caregivers' beliefs, in spite of the professional education all caregivers have received within the Netherlands. Next to caregivers' cultural background and professional education, we investigated the influence of the cultural context of the child care center on caregivers' childrearing beliefs. This was done both by means of a survey (chapter 2, N=116), as well as through semi-open interviews (chapter 3, N=61). Both Dutch and immigrant caregivers valued individualistic as well as collectivistic childrearing beliefs and that there was considerable overlap in the beliefs they valued. However, cultural differences in

caregivers' beliefs were found as well. Caregivers differed in the significance they attached to beliefs from either the individualistic or the collectivistic category. Dutch caregivers especially emphasized individualistic childrearing goals such as, for instance, children's independence. The caregivers with an immigrant background especially emphasized collectivistic goals such as, for instance, children's obedience to adults, however they did not differ from the Dutch caregivers in their appreciation of individualistic goals as children's self-confidence or their own role in actively stimulating children's development and creating the opportunities for development. This finding, first, supports the notion that individualism and collectivism can co-exist, both in individuals and in societies, and second, it confirms the multidimensionality of individualistic and collectivistic childrearing beliefs. However, when investigating differences between and within cultural groups in more detail, the distinction may be too general and may carry the risk of oversimplifying cultural patterns.

In the third empirical study, presented in chapter 4, we related caregivers' beliefs to observed childrearing practices. If, as we proposed, cultural childrearing beliefs were indeed important for process quality in child daycare, there had to be a relevant connection between caregivers' beliefs and their behavior. Beliefs that referred directly to concrete behavior were moderately to strongly related to the observed behavior, while very few substantial relations with behavior were found for the beliefs with a general and abstract meaning. In search for contextual moderator effects, we found stronger relations between collectivistic beliefs and behaviors were found in centers high in cultural diversity, than in centers with predominantly Dutch colleagues and Dutch children. Conversely, beliefs classified as individualistic were stronger related to practice in centers low in cultural diversity than in culturally diverse centers. Interestingly, these findings not only applied to caregivers with immigrant backgrounds but also to the native Dutch. These results not only underline the importance of the cultural context in understanding caregivers' beliefs, they also support the idea that beliefs are constructed and reconstructed in response to everyday experiences with childrearing in particular contexts, and in social interaction with others, such as a team of caregivers or the cultural community.

The current study also has limitations that should be considered in future studies. The study's sample size appeared to be a limitation in the statistical analyses. The four cultural groups were too small to study within-group differences, and to con-

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control for these differences in the analyses. Furthermore, the focus in this study was on professional caregivers only, and included a limited set of possible determinants of caregivers' beliefs. Future research should also include parental childrearing beliefs and examine the possible discrepancies in the beliefs of caregivers and parents. This could provide us with a better understanding of the dynamics of beliefs reconstruction, as parents and caregivers' possibly influence each other's beliefs in the frequent encounters they have. This would also give us insight into how parents and caregivers create a shared meaning when educating a child together.

This study has implications for the discussion on child care quality. We argue that there is a cultural bias in the discussion on child care quality, as well as in research on this issue, that seems to favor Western, individualistic childrearing beliefs and practices, while beliefs and practices more common in collectivistic societies, such as clear ideas on childrearing in groups, stimulating collaborative interaction and social play, may constitute very important, nevertheless understudied, aspects of center-based child care. We propose to reconsider current consensus on the elements of process quality in child care in view of the central role played by group processes and to open up current thinking on quality in child care to collectivistic themes as group management.

Samenvatting (summary in Dutch)

De laatste decennia in Nederland worden gekarakteriseerd door twee belangrijke demografische en economische veranderingen. Ten eerste zijn meer vrouwen toegetroten tot de arbeidsmarkt waardoor het aantal jonge kinderen dat gebruik maakt van een vorm van kinderopvang, evenals het aantal kinderopvang instellingen hard is gegroeid. Zo bezochten in 2007 bijna 300.000 kinderen onder de vier een kinderopvanginstelling, dat zijn er 40.000 meer dan in 2006. Een tweede belangrijke demografische verandering is de toenemende culturele diversiteit van de Nederlandse samenleving, met name in de grote steden. Met de roep om meer personeel in de kinderopvang vonden de laatste jaren veel jonge vrouwen uit deze migranten gemeenschappen hun weg als pedagogisch medewerker in de kinderopvang. De toenemende diversiteit van zowel medewerkers als kinderen biedt de kinderopvang sector extra uitdagingen. In het bijzonder voor het beeld van en de ideeën over de kwaliteit van de interactie tussen pedagogisch medewerkers en kinderen en de gehanteerde standaard voor deze zogenaamde proceskwaliteit.

Culturele opvoedingsideeën zijn de vaak impliciete ideeën over de juiste of natuurlijke manier van opvoeden. Opvoedingsideeën omvatten ook waarden en normen ten aanzien van de persoonlijke en sociale ontwikkeling van kinderen en bieden een handvat bij het realiseren van deze waarden en normen in de opvoeding. Culturele opvoedingsideeën worden continu gevormd zowel door de dagelijkse ervaringen met het opvoeden van kinderen in diverse situaties, als ook door de binnen een bepaalde gemeenschap gedeelde kijk op opvoeding en ontwikkeling van kinderen. Die gemeenschap kan zowel een culturele gemeenschap zijn als ook een team van collega's van bijvoorbeeld een kinderdagverblijf.

Uit onderzoek weten we dat deze opvoedingsideeën per culturele gemeenschap sterk kunnen verschillen. Het doel van dit onderzoek was om na te gaan of deze culturele verschillen in de kijk op kinderen en opvoeding ook te herkennen is onder professioneel geschoolde pedagogisch medewerkers met verschillende culturele achtergronden die allen in de kinderopvang sector werkzaam zijn. Het onderzoeken van de opvoedingsideeën van opvoeders is belangrijk omdat verondersteld wordt dat deze een rijke bron zijn voor het opvoedend handelen, en hier-

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uitvolgend, voor de kwaliteit van de interactie tussen de pedagogisch medewerker en kinderen.

Aan vele studies die gericht zijn op het onderzoeken van cultuur verschillen ligt de individualisme-collectivisme dimensie ten grondslag. Deze dimensie verwijst naar opvoedingsideeën waarin de nadruk ligt op individualiteit, competitie, en een onafhankelijk zelfbeeld, versus opvoedingsideeën waarin vooral belang wordt gehecht aan verbondenheid, samenwerking en een interdependent zelfbeeld. Individualisme en collectivisme moeten niet beschouwd worden als simpele tegenovergestelden op een zelfde dimensie. Zij vertegenwoordigen verschillende dimensies die naast elkaar kunnen bestaan, zowel in een gemeenschap als binnen een individu. Het vinden van een goede balans tussen autonomie - een individualistisch opvoedingsdoel - en verbondenheid - een collectivistisch opvoedingsdoel - is over de hele wereld een belangrijk thema in de opvoeding van kinderen. In de individualistisch georiënteerde kinderopvang in de Westerse landen, waaronder Nederland, is het vinden van een juiste balans tussen autonomie en verbondenheid in het bijzonder een uitdaging. Gesteld kan worden dat officiële opvoedingsdoelen en kwaliteitsstandaarden het beste afgestemd zijn op een individualistische kind-gerichte kijk op opvoeding, terwijl het unieke karakter van kinderdagopvang, waar jonge kinderen het grootste deel van de dag doorbrengen in het gezelschap van tenminste een dozijn leeftijdsgenootjes, wellicht beter aansluit bij een meer collectivistische oriëntatie op kinderen, hun ontwikkeling en opvoeding.

Inzicht krijgen in de culturele diversiteit in opvoedingsideeën van pedagogisch medewerkers in de kinderopvang was het centrale doel van dit promotie onderzoek. Een thema dat tot die tijd verrassend genoeg nog weinig wetenschappelijke aandacht had gekregen. Dit proefschrift bestaat uit drie empirische studies, die zijn beschreven in verschillende hoofdstukken. De gegevens waarop deze studies zijn gebaseerd werden in het najaar van 2004 en het voorjaar van 2005 verzameld. In totaal hebben 61 pedagogisch medewerkers, allemaal vrouwen, van 22 verschillende kinderdagverblijven in twee grote steden in Nederland meegewerkt aan dit onderzoeksproject. Drie culturele groepen zijn vertegenwoordigd in de onderzoeksgroep; 20 pedagogisch medewerkers hadden een autochtoon Nederlandse achtergrond, 20 pedagogisch medewerkers hadden een Surinaams-Nederlandse of Antilliaans-Nederlandse culturele achtergrond, en van 21 pedagogisch medewerkers was een van de ouders of waren beide ouders geboren in Marokko of Turkije. Al deze pedagogisch medewerkers werden op het kinderdagverblijf bezocht.

Samenvatting (summary in Dutch)

Iedere pedagogisch medewerker is persoonlijk geïnterviewd over haar kijk op kinderen en op opvoeding, en alle pedagogisch medewerkers werden op hun groep in het kdv gedurende een ochtend geobserveerd. Ook hebben alle pedagogisch medewerkers na het bezoek nog een uitgebreide vragenlijst ingevuld. Naast deze 61 pedagogisch medewerkers is een grotere onderzoekspopulatie benaderd om mee te werken aan het vragenlijstonderzoek. In totaal hebben 116 pedagogisch medewerkers aan dit deel van het onderzoek deelgenomen.

In de eerste twee empirische studies werd onderzocht of er culturele verschillen waren te vinden in de opvoedingsideeën van pedagogisch medewerkers, ondanks de opleiding die zij allen in Nederland hadden gevolgd. Naast de invloed van de culturele achtergrond en het opleidingsniveau van de pedagogisch medewerker, onderzochten we de relatie tussen de culturele context van het kinderdagverblijf en de opvoedingsideeën van de pedagogisch medewerkers. De culturele context van het kinderdagverblijf omvat de culturele achtergrond van de naaste collega's, het team, en van de kinderen op het dagverblijf. Dit werd zowel door middel van vragenlijsten onderzocht (hoofdstuk 2, N=116), als door middel van semi-open interviews (hoofdstuk 3, N=61). Zowel autochtone pedagogisch medewerkers als medewerkers met een Caribische of Mediterrane achtergrond hechtten waarde aan zowel individualistische opvoedingswaarden als aan collectivistische opvoedingsideeën. Er bestond aanzienlijke overlap in de opvoedingsideeën van de verschillende groepen. Toch werden er ook culturele verschillen in opvoedingsideeën gevonden. Zo verschilden de pedagogisch medewerkers in het belang dat zij hechtten aan opvoedingswaarden uit de individualistische dan wel de collectivistische categorie. Autochtoon Nederlandse pedagogisch medewerkers hechtten in het bijzonder aan individualistische opvoedingsdoelen, zoals bijvoorbeeld de zelfstandigheid en autonomie van kinderen. Terwijl allochtone pedagogisch medewerkers collectivistische opvoedingsdoelen benadrukten, zo hechtten zij bijvoorbeeld een groter belang aan de gehoorzaamheid van kinderen. Er werden geen culturele verschillen gevonden in het belang dat pedagogisch medewerkers hechtten aan individualistische opvoedingsdoelen als het stimuleren van zelfvertrouwen bij kinderen, of met betrekking tot de rol die pedagogisch medewerkers voor zichzelf zagen in het stimuleren van de individuele ontwikkeling van kinderen of in het creëren van ontwikkelingsmogelijkheden. Deze bevinding toont in de eerste plaats aan dat individualistische en collectivistische waarden in vele culturen naast elkaar bestaan, zowel allochtone als autochtone medewerkers hechten

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belang aan individualistische als collectivistische opvoedingsdoelen. Ten tweede wordt met deze bevinding de multidimensionaliteit van zowel opvoedingsideeën als van de constructen individualisme en collectivisme bevestigd. Hierbij moet evenwel opgemerkt worden dat de constructen individualisme en collectivisme te algemeen kunnen zijn bij het gedetailleerd bestuderen van verschillen binnen en tussen culturen, waarbij geriskeerd wordt dat een oversimplificatie van culturele patronen ontstaat.

In de derde empirische studie, die beschreven staat in hoofdstuk 4, werden de opvoedingsideeën van pedagogisch medewerkers gerelateerd aan hun opvoedend handelen. Wanneer opvoedingsideeën inderdaad belangrijk zouden zijn voor de proceskwaliteit in de kinderopvang, zoals we veronderstelden, zou er een relevante verbinding tussen de opvoedingsideeën en het opvoedingsgedrag van pedagogisch medewerkers gevonden moeten worden. Opvoedingsideeën met een meer gedragsmatige component bleken matig tot sterk samen te hangen met de observatie schalen. Zo vonden we een samenhang in de ideeën die pedagogisch medewerkers bijvoorbeeld hadden over het actief stimuleren van de individuele ontwikkeling van kinderen en de mate van sensitieve responsiviteit en het respecteren van de autonomie van kinderen. Dit terwijl er bijna geen relaties werden gevonden tussen opvoedingsgedrag en de meer abstracte en algemene opvoedingsideeën, zoals de ideeën over autonomie of zelfvertrouwen van kinderen. Een belangrijke bevinding was dat de culturele diversiteit van het kinderdagverblijf - een al of niet cultureel gemixt team en dito - de relatie tussen opvoedingsideeën en opvoedingsgedrag beïnvloedde. Zo bleken collectivistische opvoedingsideeën sterker samen te hangen met gedragingen die gekenmerkt worden als meer collectivistisch wanneer de kinderdagverblijven in grote mate cultureel divers waren. Deze relaties tussen collectivistische waarden en gedragingen werden niet gevonden op kinderdagverblijven met voornamelijk autochtone pedagogisch medewerkers en kinderen. Daarentegen werd op deze dagverblijven juist een sterkere relatie gevonden tussen individualistische opvoedingswaarden en gedragingen. Interessant genoeg betreffen deze bevindingen niet alleen de pedagogisch medewerkers met een allochtone achtergrond maar gelden zij net zo goed voor de autochtoon Nederlandse pedagogisch medewerkers. Deze bevindingen tonen niet alleen het belang aan van de culturele context bij het bestuderen en begrijpen van opvoedingsideeën, de resultaten laten ook vooral zien dat opvoedingsideeën continu worden gevormd in interactie met de dagelijkse opvoedings-

Samenvatting (summary in Dutch)

ervaringen in verschillende contexten, en in interactie met andere volwassenen zoals hier de collega's of de grotere culturele gemeenschap.

Dit onderzoek heeft ook beperkingen waaraan in vervolgonderzoek extra aandacht besteed zal moeten worden. Zo leverde de grootte van de onderzoeksgroep beperkingen op voor de analysemogelijkheden. De verschillende culturele groepen waren te klein om verschillen binnen de groepen te bestuderen, of om voor deze verschillen te controleren in de uitgevoerde analyses. Verder was dit onderzoek uitsluitend gericht op de opvoedingsideeën van pedagogisch medewerkers, ook werd slechts een beperkte set determinanten voor opvoedingsideeën meegenomen. Vervolgonderzoek zou zich ook moeten richten op de opvoedingsideeën van ouders om daarbij na te gaan welke mogelijke discrepanties er bestaan tussen de ideeën van ouders en die van pedagogisch medewerkers. Omdat ouders en pedagogisch medewerkers elkaars opvoedingsideeën mogelijk beïnvloeden in het frequente contact dat zij hebben, zal dergelijke informatie verder inzicht opleveren in hoe de constructie van opvoedingsideeën precies in zijn werk gaat. Ook kan hiermee een beeld ontstaan van hoe ouders en pedagogisch medewerkers een gezamenlijk denkbeeld creëren bij de gedeelde verantwoordelijkheid in de opvoeding van een kind.

Dit onderzoek heeft belangrijke implicaties voor de discussie rondom de kwaliteit van de kinderopvang. Wij betogen dat er een culturele bias bestaat, zowel in de discussie rondom kwaliteit, als in het onderzoek hiernaar, in het voordeel van Westerse, individualistische ideeën en gedragingen. Dit terwijl meer collectivistische opvoedingsideeën en gedragingen, zoals meer concrete ideeën over het opvoeden van kinderen in groepsverband, het stimuleren van samenwerkend en sociaal spel, juist zeer belangrijke, en toch weinig bestudeerde, aspecten vormen van de kinderopvang. Wij willen hier voorstellen de huidige consensus over de elementen van proceskwaliteit in de kinderopvang te heroverwegen in het licht van de centrale rol die groepsprocessen spelen, en daarbij bijzondere aandacht te hebben voor collectivistische opvoedingsideeën zoals bijvoorbeeld de ideeën over het stimuleren van groepssamenwerking.

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Dankwoord (acknowledgements)

Een groot aantal mensen heeft bijgedragen aan de totstandkoming van dit proefschrift. Allereerst wil ik alle kinderdagverblijven, leidinggevenden en pedagogisch medewerkers (leidsters heetten ze toen) bedanken voor hun interesse in het onderzoek en hun bijdrage eraan. Ikzelf of een van mijn studenten of student-assistenten was steeds bijna een hele dag op het kinderdagverblijf aanwezig om de pedagogisch medewerkers te observeren en te interviewen. Ik wil jullie bedanken voor je bijdragen en de gastvrijheid om ons in jullie groepen over de vloer te hebben.

De leden van de promotiecommissie wil ik graag bedanken voor de tijd en moeite die zij in het lezen en beoordelen van dit proefschrift gestoken hebben. I would like to say a special thanks to Sara. Some years ago you gave me a warm welcome at the University of Connecticut when I came over to make a start in coding my interview data. Over the years I kept you informed on my project at the ISSBD meetings in Gent in 2004 and Wurzburg in 2008. I really appreciate it that you are here today as a member of the doctorate committee!

Ook mijn promotoren ben ik dankbaar voor hun begeleiding. Louis, dank je wel voor jouw steun en aanhoudende vertrouwen in de goede afloop van deze onderneming. Bij de start van het project was dit onderwerp en ook de wijze van data verzameling en verwerking deels nieuw voor jou. Je reageerde altijd enthousiast als ik mijn data of andere artikelen met je wilde doorspreken. Ik vond het leuk te merken dat jouw interesse voor het onderwerp zo groeide. Ook mijn co-promotor Paul wil ik graag bedanken. Na je vertrek naar de Universiteit Utrecht bleef je betrokkenheid bij het onderwerp groot, al richtte je je daar op heel andere onderzoeksterreinen. Je was een eigenzinnige begeleider, je stelde hoge eisen, was inspirerend, streng en altijd kritisch. Ook kon je ervoor zorgen dat ik wat vertwijfeld van de Uithof in de bus stapte, bijvoorbeeld wanneer je na een uitgebreide bespreking ineens uitriep dat pedagogiek eigenlijk helemaal niet bestaat!

Veel studenten hebben in verschillende fasen van het project hun belangrijke bijdrage geleverd. Zonder de hulp van Iris Hartong, Rena Duyn, Anneke Hoekstra en Marjolein Lensink was het mij nooit gelukt alle kinderdagverblijven en alle

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respondenten te bezoeken, te observeren en te interviewen, laat staan deze interviews te transcriberen en te coderen. Meike Kruithof en Saskia van Schaik speelden in een latere fase van het onderzoek een belangrijke rol bij het coderen van het video-materiaal, dank voor jullie bijdrage! Ik wil in het bijzonder mijn beide studentassistenten Mieke Boekhoorn en Eva Smallegange bedanken voor hun inzet voor het project. Tijdens mijn beide zwangerschapsverloven zagen jullie erop toe dat het proces door kon blijven gaan, zodat ik mij met een gerust hart op andere dingen kon concentreren.

Ook wil ik mijn collega's en oud-collega's bedanken, zij waren een bron van gezelligheid, wijze raad en steun tijdens mijn promotie tijd. Floor, na onze studie startten we bijna gelijktijdig met een promotie traject, we hebben daarin veel gedeeld, dank je wel dat je hier nu ook als paranimf naast me wil staan! Peter, jij hielp me na de geboorte van Maisa over een grote drempel en stimuleerde me toch vooral door te gaan met schrijven. Dank voor je altijd snelle feedback en hulp bij de analyses. Esther, Roos, Femke, Mascha, Jessica, alle dames uit de 'ballroom' en aangrenzende kamers dank voor alle gezelligheid, kopjes thee, en andere aio-geneugten! Aziza als betrokkene vanaf het eerste uur maakte jij vooral de start van mijn project mee, dank voor alle tips en steun. Reinoud wil ik graag bedanken voor zijn hulp en tips bij de analyses. Ook dank ik Ruben voor onze samenwerking, door de jaren heen volgde je mijn project en was altijd bereid mijn vragen te beantwoorden en me allerlei tips en trucs te geven. Mijn kamergenoten Marlies en Renée wil ik ook bijzonder bedanken. Marlies, we begonnen ongeveer tegelijkertijd en hebben menig middagje zitten brainstormen over de opzet van onze onderzoeken en hoe we toch in hemelsnaam alle data binnen moesten krijgen. Later werd Renée mijn kamergenoot, erg leuk dat we samen zo inhoudelijk het kinderopvangonderzoek konden bespreken. Ook mijn kamergenoten van na de verhuizing naar het Roeterseiland wil ik bedanken, Henny voor haar altijd aanwezige interesse en enthousiasme, Anne en Lotte vooral voor de gezelligheid! Ook dank ik Frank en de andere OOS collega's en kijk ik met plezier terug op onze SRIP congressen in Engeland. Verder alle andere aio's, medewerkers en pow'ers dank! Ook mijn nieuwe collega's van de HvA wil ik hier bedanken voor hun flexibele opstelling waardoor ik het afgelopen jaar af en toe tijd kon vrijmaken om mijn proefschrift te voltooien.

Mijn vriendinnen en familie wil ik ook graag bedanken voor alle steun en vertrouwen die ze mij gaven. Susanne, jij staat hier vandaag als paranimf, ik vind het

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erg leuk om te zien dat je je taak met zoveel trots uitvoert! Anna en Fieke, van de studievriendinnen van het eerste uur bleef ik het langste plakken aan de universiteit, dank dat jullie zo met me hebben meegeleefd! Lieve Paul en Marlies, jullie waren een grote steun deze jaren. Jullie volgden geïnteresseerd mijn vorderingen en haperingen in het project. Na de komst van Otis en Maisa hebben jullie ook praktisch heel veel ingesprongen en het mede mogelijk gemaakt dat ik me op het proefschrift kon blijven richten. Lieve Maud en Harry, dank voor jullie vertrouwen in mij, voor jullie steun en voor jullie grote liefde voor Otis en Maisa en bereidheid om vaak voor hen te komen zorgen. Lieve broers, zwager en schoonzusjes, bedankt dat jullie er zijn!

Lieve Otis en Maisa, jullie komst bracht naast veel vreugde ook een aangename verdieping tijdens het project, jullie zorgden ervoor dat ik ook ervaringsdeskundige werd op het gebied van de kinderopvang! Tot slot wil ik Soemitro bedanken. Het was een 'bumpy ride' de laatste jaren. Ik ben blij en trots dat je hier vandaag naast me staat!

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Curriculum Vitae

Sanne Huijbregts, born in Heemstede on September 27th 1976, graduated from high school (Stedelijk Gymnasium Haarlem) in 1995. After studying Italian language and culture at the Università per Stranieri in Perugia (Italy, 1996), she studied educational sciences at the University of Amsterdam. During her studies she participated as a research assistant in various research projects at the department of educational sciences. Her master thesis focused on the interactions of toddlers and their caregivers in center-based child care. In 2002 she obtained her Masters degree in Educational Sciences.

In January 2003 she entered a PhD program at the University of Amsterdam. She conducted a research project on the childrearing beliefs of caregivers with diverse cultural backgrounds working with toddlers in center-based child care in the region of Amsterdam. Since August 2008 she is at the University of Amsterdam of Applied Sciences (Hogeschool van Amsterdam) as a researcher and teacher. She participates in a research group studying education in the metropolitan area, she holds responsibility for the departments' minor on 'Childcare: policy and management' (Minor kinderopvang: beleid en management), and she teaches various courses in educational sciences.