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Mother-Child Relations in Adulthood:
Immigrant and Non-Immigrant Families
in the Netherlands

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Despite the current academic interest in intergenerational solidarity in European countries (for overviews see Moor & Komter, 2008; Nauck & Steinbach, 2009), studies that focused on immigrant families are sparse. The changing ethnic composition of Western European societies, however, has important implications for care arrangements and family relations. Individuals of immigrant origin constitute an unrecognized, but growing group of the ageing populations. At the same time, older immigrants are among the most deprived and excluded (Warnes, Friedrich, Kellaheer, & Torres, 2004).

Furthermore, it is far from obvious how intergenerational solidarity takes shape in immigrant families. Immigration frequently entails a change in socio-structural and cultural circumstances, especially for non-Western immigrants, who come from societies where state-based social arrangements are rare and collectivistic rather than individualistic ideals tend to be the norm (Inglehart & Baker 2000; Kagitçibasi, 1996; Todd 1985). Meanwhile, their children grow up in the host country and are socialized into cultural norms that prevail there.

The present paper addresses the question how relations between parents and adult children in non-Western immigrant and native families in Western European countries are characterized by patterns of intergenerational solidarity. Research on family relations has shown that considering multiple, rather than separate facets of intergenerational relations offers valuable insights into the meaning of relationships (Dykstra & Fokkema, 2011; van Gaalen & Dykstra, 2006; Silverstein & Bengtson, 1997). Immigrant groups, however, have not yet been studied from this perspective.

As a theoretical framework, we draw upon the Model of Family Change (MFC; Kagitçibasi, 1996), a theory which views family relations as shaped by contextual conditions.

The MFC has been used to explain variation across societies (Kagitcibasi, Ataca, & Diri, 2005; Keller et al. 2003; Nauck, 2010) as well as differences between immigrant and non-immigrant families in Western countries (Durgel, Leyendecker, Yagmurlu, & Harwood, 2009; Phalet & Güngör, 2009; de Valk & Schans, 2008; Yagmurlu & Sanson, 2009). However, no study has empirically reconstructed the expected relationship structures in the context of migration. Instead, the MFC has served as a general framework to interpret findings concerning separate features of family relations (e.g. Kagitcibasi et al., 2005; de Valk & Schans, 2008). In this paper, we use Latent Class Analysis to combine information about material and emotional bonds and construct a typology of mother-child relations. Rather than examining the MFC in terms of family values (e.g. Phalet & Güngör, 2009), moreover, our focus is on behaviors of intergenerational solidarity.

Data were used from the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study (NKPS; Dykstra et al., 2004) on the relation between Dutch and non-Western immigrant adult children and their mothers, as reported from the perspective of the child. The Netherlands is an appropriate context for studying the impact of migration on family ties, considering this country's history with diverse migration flows and growing number of second generation immigrants. We focus on the relationship with the mother, since across societies women are perceived as the main kin keepers (Gerstel & Gallagher, 2001) and father-child relationships are more susceptible to life-course transitions (Bengtson, Biblarz, & Roberts, 2002).

Theory and expectations

The Model of Family Change

According to theories of cultural differences in 'family systems', non-Western immigrants come from regions where kinship takes a more prominent place than in Western countries (Inglehart & Baker 2000; Todd 1985). The Model of Family Change (MFC;

Kagitçibasi, 1996) explains this variation in family relations by the influence of socio-structural and cultural circumstances. Since non-Western and Western regions differ systematically in conditions, these societies would bring forward family systems that vary in the extent to which family members rely on each other for material and emotional support.

In rural societies, low levels of affluence and an absence or unreliability of social welfare provisions means that family members need to depend on each other to ensure material wellbeing. Since children are an economic asset and old-age security for their parents (Fawcett, 1983; Trommsdorff & Nauck, 2005), their independence would threaten the family's material welfare. Parenting styles are therefore oriented towards child obedience (Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003) and children are socialized into life-long family obligatory norms (Hofstede, 2001). These conditions foster family relations that are close in both material and emotional respect: a family system of full-interdependence.

The situation of industrialized countries, on the other hand, promotes a family system of independence. Their prosperous economies and social welfare policies exempt family members from the need to depend on each other for material support. Rather than being a threat to family livelihood, autonomy and self-reliance of the child are actually useful to get ahead in society. Individual freedom therefore takes normative precedence over family obligations (Inglehart & Norris, 2003; Thornton & Young-DeMarco, 2001) and parents encourage children to become independent and self-sufficient (Keller, Borke, Yovsi, Lohaus, & Jensen, 2005).

In addition to full-interdependence and independence, the MFC distinguishes a third family system which is characterized by a primary importance of emotional bonds. This emotional-interdependent family model would have culminated from contextual developments. With the urbanization and economic advancement of non-Western societies, the economic contribution of the child is no longer needed for the family's material survival.

The value of children for parents turns into a psychological or emotional kind (Kagitçibasi, 1982) and achievement and autonomy gain importance over obedience and conformity as parenting goals (Kagitçibasi & Ataca, 2005). Emotional ties thereby become the core importance of family relations.

By connecting family relations to changing contextual conditions, the MFC offers a theoretical basis for characterizing contemporary family relations among non-Western immigrants and natives in the Netherlands. Since norms are acquired through early socialization (Burr & Mutchler, 1999), non-Western immigrant families would retain the features of a full-interdependent family system. Dutch natives rather, considering they grew up in an individualized, North-Western European society with an elaborate social welfare system, would predominantly maintain family relations that are characterized by independence.

In addition, the experience of migration affects family relations. By settling in the host country, the influence of the home culture generally decreases over time (Alba & Nee, 1997). A system of emotional-interdependence can help us understand how family relations develop as non-Western immigrants negotiate between the legacy of the home country and their current situation in the destination country. Since close family ties are not discouraged in Western European societies, the strong emotional importance of family relations would be retained. In addition, challenges that are related to the process of migration may even strengthen family ties, as a way to cope with insecurities (Herwartz-Emden, 2000, Nauck, 2007). Whereas the value of emotional bonds would endure, material reliance may diminish. Western European countries offer state-based forms of support that can take over some of the responsibility of families. Furthermore, processes of acculturation and the fact that individual autonomy is beneficial for the future of their children, may lead immigrant parents to

increasingly endorse their independence. The foregoing means that the situation of immigrant families, over time, fosters the development of emotional-interdependent relations.

Furthermore, emotional-interdependence may characterize intergenerational relations in Dutch families as well. The MFC proposes that cultural developments in Western societies have led to conditions that promote this type of family system (Kagitçibasi, 2005). Whereas individualistic ideals have become increasingly criticized, human relational values gained in importance (Inglehart, 1991; Young, 1992). This situation would encourage emotional-interdependent family relations, since values of relatedness are therein reconciled with a recognition of individual autonomy as essential personal quality.

Thus, based on the MFC, we can expect to find a difference between intergenerational relations among immigrant and native Dutch families in the sense that full-interdependence more strongly characterizes the former and independence the latter. Emotional-interdependence, on the other hand, would characterize family relations among immigrants as well as natives.

Empirical evidence

There is quite some research which indicates that traditional family values in non-Western immigrant families persist. In the Netherlands, for instance, immigrant (adult) children are found to abide more strongly to norms of filial obligation than their native Dutch counterparts (de Valk & Schans, 2008). Other studies similarly showed that family values and family-related attitudes remain important in parental socialization and are quite effectively passed on to the second generation (Nauck, 2001; Phalet & Schönplug, 2001; Schönplug 2001; de Valk & Liefbroer, 2007). At the same time, there is also empirical evidence which suggests that adjusted parenting socialization goals and styles foster emotional-interdependent relations between parents and children in immigrant families (Durgel et al., 2009; Pels & de

Haan, 2007; Yagmurlu & Sanson, 2009). The shift from full-interdependent to emotional-interdependent family relations across immigrant generations, moreover, has been documented by Phalet and Güngör (2009), who examined the degree to which Turkish immigrants in Germany adhere to values that reflect the different family models.

However, parenting goals and family values are not the same as behaviors. Compared to the attention for family values among immigrants, few research has addressed behavioral aspects of intergenerational solidarity. The findings up to now indicate, however, that differences in family behaviors between immigrant and non-immigrants are less pronounced than in values (Schans & Komter, 2010; Schans & de Valk, 2011). Thus, the question remains to what extent intergenerational relationships in immigrant families are actually characterized by full- and emotional-interdependence.

In the Netherlands, just as in Western countries more generally, processes of individualization and secularization have made family relations increasingly independent. Whereas the importance of traditional collectivistic institutions has diminished over the last half century, individual freedom of choice has become a more central value (Felling, Peters & Scheepers, 2000). With regard to intergenerational relations, this trend is amongst others reflected by the less strong authoritarian orientation of households and greater mutual respect for the autonomy of both parent and child (de Swaan, 1979).

More recently, these cultural processes and accompanying demographic trends such as rising divorce rates and increased participation of women in the labor force, have raised concerns about their possible negative effects on the quality of family life. Contrary to the concerns, however, empirical studies actually show a strength of intergenerational solidarity in Western European societies. Although variations across European countries exist, overall, parents and children maintain frequent contacts (Glaser, Tomassini & Grundy, 2004; Tomassini et al., 2004) and families are consistently involved in providing support to ageing

parents (Lowenstein, 1999). Also in the Netherlands, recent research has demonstrated the importance of affective ties in terms of relationship quality and feelings of cohesion (Dystra et al., 2006). These findings suggest that, despite of individualization processes, emotional bonds are of relevance in contemporary Dutch families.

Finally, apart from variation between families, previous studies indicated that there are important differences within families. Intergenerational relations have repeatedly been found to differ, for example, with the gender and age of parent and child. Research from the US (Atkinson, Kivett, & Campbell, 1986; Rossi & Rossi, 1990), as well as from European countries (Fokkema, ter Bekke, & Dyksytra, 2008; Komter & Vollebergh, 2002), showed that mothers and daughters are more engaged in contacts and providing help to kin, compared to fathers and sons. Studies that focus on family relations over the life-course, on the other hand, indicate that relationships tend to be more intensive when children are young adults, whereas contacts and support exchanges decline when they become middle-aged and involved with a family of their own (Dykstra et al., 2006). In older-adulthood, with their own children leaving the home and parents entering their last life-phase, the help that children provide their parents intensifies, a trend which is expected to become only more outspoken with the ageing of populations in Western countries (Rossi & Rossi, 1990). Thus, studies concerning gender and age suggest that, next to the origin of families, the prominence of material and emotional intergenerational interdependencies will differ depending on these demographic characteristics of family members.

Context of study

Our analyses focus on the native population and the four largest non-Western immigrant groups in the Netherlands. The Dutch statistical office registers people by the country of birth of their parents and assigns a non-Western background if at least one parent

was born in Africa, Latin-America or Asia, excluding the former Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) and Japan. In 2010, this was the case for about 11% of the Dutch population or 1.8 million individuals. The majority of these non-Western immigrants come from Turkey (21%), Morocco (19%), Suriname (18%) or the Dutch Antilles (7%) (Statistics Netherlands, 2010).

Most of the Turkish and Moroccan immigrants arrived during the 1960s and 1970s as recruited unskilled, male labor workers. They came predominantly from rural areas where families are organized traditionally and along patrilineal lines and almost all of the population is Muslim (van Tubergen, 2003; Vermeulen & Penninx, 2000). Although it was initially expected that the labor workers would return home, a majority stayed and settled in the Netherlands. When the recruitment process stopped in the 70s, immigration continued through family reunification and, in later years, through marriage formation. Arranged marriages with members of the same origin country and religion are still quite common among both immigrant groups (Esveldt and Schoorl, 1998), while intermarriage with the Dutch barely occurs (Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006).

People from Suriname and the Antilles have been arriving in the Netherlands since 1945, mostly for educational purposes (Vermeulen & Penninx, 2000). By originating from former Dutch colonies, these immigrants were already partly familiar with Dutch society before migration. In contrast to the Turks and Moroccans, for instance, virtually all Surinamese and Antillean immigrants were acquainted with the Dutch language. Rates of Dutch-intermarriage are also relatively high among Surinamese and Antillean immigrants (Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006). Furthermore, although the Surinamese and Antillean population is heterogeneous in religious composition, Christianity is the most important religion (van Tubergen, 2003). In terms of family organization, Surinamese and Antillean

immigrants come from societies where families are matrifocal (Otterbein, 1965) and single-motherhood is relatively common (Distelbrink, 2000).

Because of these regional differences in terms of historical ties, religion and family organization, individuals with a migration history from Turkey or Morocco will be referred to as Mediterranean migrants and those with an Antillean or Surinamese migration origin as Caribbean migrants.

Method

Data and participants

The data for the analyses come from the survey *Netherlands Kinship Panel Study* (NKPS; Dykstra et al., 2004), which addresses the behavioral, normative, and emotional dimensions of connectedness in family relationships in the Netherlands. We used the first wave of data, which were collected in 2002/2003. In collaboration with the survey *Social Position and Use of Facilities by Ethnic Minorities*, a representative cross-section of 8,161 individuals between 18 and 79 years of age was supplemented by a random stratified sample of 1,402 respondents with a Turkish, Moroccan, Antillean or Surinamese migration background. Since most immigrants live in one of the larger cities of the Netherlands, information on the immigrant groups was gathered in the 13 municipalities where half of the total immigrant population resides (Garssen, Nicolaas, & Sprangers, 2005). The addresses of respondents in the representative sample, in contrast, were not restricted to any region. For comparative purposes, only Dutch respondents who lived in those same 13 municipalities were included in our analyses (1,493 cases)¹.

¹ These municipalities are: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, Eindhoven, Enschede, Bergen op Zoom, Almere, Alphen aan de Rijn, Dordrecht, Tiel, Delft and Hoogezand-Sappemeer. Our respondent selection additionally included a small number of immigrants from the representative sample who lived in surrounding cities. Since excluding these 29 Mediterraneans and 28 Caribbeans did not substantially change the results (obtained by contacting the first author), these respondents were included in the analyses reported hereafter.

Turks and Moroccans on the one hand and Antilleans and Surinamese on the other were merged into a group of Mediterranean respectively Caribbean immigrants. Respondents with an immigration origin other than the mentioned four were excluded from the analysis (548 cases). In order to retain the largest sample sizes possible, we examined intergenerational relations from the perspective of the child. Naturally, no information was available for respondents whose mother is deceased (995 cases), which concerned mostly older individuals (the mean age of respondents whose mother is deceased is 55). We furthermore made a selection based on characteristics that affect the mother-child relationship in a way that may interfere with the analyses. Since living in the same household arguably changes the content of the relationship, these respondents were excluded from the analyses (113 cases). The same holds when the mother lives abroad, in which case opportunities to engage in face-to-face contact and exchanging practical support are obviously limited. This situation applied almost exclusively to immigrant respondents, of whom 33% have a mother residing abroad (546 cases), opposed to 1% of the Dutch (15 cases). After having taken into account the above criteria, sample sizes were further reduced by non-response on one or more of the items that made up our dependent variables. This non-response concerned four Dutch persons, but a more notable number of Mediterranean (105) and Caribbean immigrant respondents (98). Our final sample therefore consists out of 868 Dutch, 158 Mediterranean, and 242 Caribbean respondents.

Most of the immigrant respondents in our sample were born abroad themselves and are therefore, just as their parent(s), first generation migrants. The number of second generation migrants was somewhat higher among Caribbeans (24% compared to 14% of the Mediterraneans). Whereas face-to-face questionnaires were held completely or mainly in the Dutch language with the majority of all immigrant respondents, this was especially the case for Caribbeans (98% compared to 70% of the Mediterraneans). These differences probably

reflect the earlier timing of immigration among Caribbeans and their pre-migration familiarity with the Dutch language.

Measurements

We used Latent Class Analysis (LCA) to construct a typology of mother-child relationships. LCA combines information of a series of single items by linking response patterns to a set of latent variables (Collins & Lanza, 2010). We thereby tested whether an underlying class-structure can explain the associations between observed features of the mother-child relationship and used this structure to categorize people into subgroups. Since the input for LCA is a cross-classification of the item scores, indicators are commonly dichotomized to create a manageable number of cells and reduce sparseness (cf. Dykstra & Fokkema, 2011; van Gaalen & Dykstra, 2006; Silverstein & Bengtson, 1997). In this study, we used eight indicators of intergenerational solidarity: two items on the frequency of contact, four items concerning practical support (2x giving/receiving), and two items on emotional support (1x giving/receiving). The indicators are described in more detail below.

Contact frequency. Two items measured the frequency of contact the respondent had with his/her mother in the last year, inquiring into face-to-face contact and contact by phone, letter or e-mail. The initial answers rated on a seven point scale, with the options “Never”, “Once”, “A few times”, “At least monthly”, “At least weekly”, “Several times a week”, and “Daily”. Both items were converted into dichotomous measures. For face-to face contact, ‘At least monthly’ and higher incidences were coded 1 and any lesser frequencies were coded 0. In view of the comparative ease to keep in touch by phone, letter or email, ‘At least weekly’ and any more regular contact were coded 1 to indicate frequent contact by these means, with all categories indicating lower frequencies coded 0.

Practical support. Respondents were asked how many times in the last 3 months they had given and received help with housework and practical matters from their mother. Examples of housework were preparing meals, cleaning, fetching groceries or doing the laundry. Help with practical matters involved doing chores in and around the house or the lending, transporting, and moving of things. The initial ordinal answering options of “None”, “Once or twice” and “Several times” for both items were converted into dichotomous measures by collapsing ‘Once or twice’ and “Several times”. This resulted in four indicators of practical support that were coded 1 if the respondent had given/received housework help and given/received help with practical matters and coded 0 if this was not the case.

Emotional support. Two survey questions were used as indicators of emotional support. These concerned the number of times in the last 3 months that respondents showed an interest in their mothers’ personal life and how often the mother showed interest in theirs. The three ordinal answering options were converted into two, collapsing “Once or twice” and “Several times” in contrast to “None”. A coding of 1 was thereby assigned if the respondent had given/received emotional support and a coding of 0 if s/he had not.

Analysis

LCA was conducted by use of the statistical software package *Latent Gold 4.0* (Vermunt & Madigson, 2005). The first step and main objectives of our analyses were to find a well fitting class-structure and ascribe a theoretical meaning to each of the classes. To determine the optimal number of clusters, the likelihood ratio statistic and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) served as evaluative measures for model selection (Vermunt & Madigson, 2002). The likelihood ratio statistic tests the null hypothesis that the specified model matches the observed data. A non-significant result is thereby indicative of a satisfying model fit. The BIC takes into account parsimony, whereby the model with the lowest BIC is

the most desirable. Theoretical interpretations of the model were guided by an inspection of the conditional class probabilities, which reflect the likelihood that individuals within a particular class give a certain response on each observed indicator.

In addition, class prevalences were calculated by ascribing individuals, based on their response patterns, to the class for which their probability of classification was the highest. Prevalences were calculated for the total sample, as well as according to the origin, gender, and life-phase of the child. In a second step, these distributional patterns were analyzed to determine the main characteristics of each class.

Results

Descriptive findings

Table 1 gives an overview of the mean scores of the main demographic characteristics and solidarity indicators per origin group. The age of respondents in the total sample ranged from 18 to 69. Dutch and Caribbean were on average 38, respectively 37 years of age. Mediterranean respondents were somewhat younger, with a mean age of 33. In terms of gender, women were slightly overrepresented in all groups, as 57% of the Mediterraneans, 58% of the Dutch and 60% of the Caribbean immigrants were daughters.

A majority of all respondents, but especially immigrants, reported to have frequent contacts with their mother. The high average rates were more outspoken for face-to-face contact. Whereas 84% of the Dutch have seen their mother frequently, this is the case for 86% of the Caribbeans and 92% of the Mediterraneans. For frequent contact by phone, letter or email, proportions ranged from 67% among the Dutch, to 76% among Caribbeans and 82% among Mediterraneans.

Average scores for practical help were lower in all origin groups, especially in terms of receiving this type of support. Whereas housework help was given by 48% of the Dutch

and 59% of both immigrant groups, it was received by 32% of the Dutch, 38% of the Caribbeans and 42% of the Mediterraneans. Help in practical matters was given by 55% of the Dutch, 56% of the Caribbeans and 61% of the Mediterraneans, while receiving this support was reported by 32% of the Dutch, 32% of the Caribbeans and 29% of the Mediterranean immigrants.

In all origin groups, the average scores for emotional support were high and slightly more so among the Dutch (94% of the Dutch, compared to 90% respectively 86% of the Surinamese and Mediterraneans have given emotional support and 93% of the Dutch compared to 88% respectively 87% of the Surinamese and Mediterraneans have received this type of support).

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Model selection and class interpretation

When latent class models were estimated separately for the native Dutch, Mediterranean and Caribbean respondents, a similar class structure emerged in each of the three groups. This evidenced a general mother-child relationship typology that is highly robust across groups of different origins. We accordingly continue to report the latent models in which migratory background does not differentiate class-structure.

Goodness-of-fit statistics for one to six-cluster models (see Table A1 in the Appendix) revealed a preference for a model with five classes. In this model, the likelihood ratio statistic no longer reached the level of significance ($p = .18$) and the lowest BIC score was obtained. Furthermore, the conditional probability patterns of the five-class model showed clear internal class-structures. Table 2 below displays the conditional probabilities of the final model. To recapture, these measurements indicate how likely respondents within a certain class are to respond affirmatively to each of the solidarity indicators.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

The results revealed five types of mother-child relationships that represented the predicted family systems of the MFC, including three variations of full-interdependence. A first type of mother-child relationship was typified by high probabilities on all indicators (ranging from .71 to .99). Respondents who were assigned this class have a high likelihood of maintaining frequent contacts with their mother and giving as well as receiving housework, practical, and emotional support. In view of the overall intensity of the mother-child relationship and bidirectional nature of each form of help, we labeled this type 'reciprocal-interdependence'.

The second and third type of mother-child relationship differed from the first in terms of the involvement in practical help. In type 2, low probabilities to receive housework and practical help (.07 respectively .12) are paired with high probabilities for all other items (between .72 and .99). This suggests that while frequent contact and emotional as well as practical forms of support are important, practical help was only *given* to the mother. Type 2 was therefore labeled 'upward-interdependence'. In type 3, on the other hand, the likelihood for giving practical support was low (.32 respectively .13 for help with housework and practical matters), while the probabilities to receive these types of support were high (.74 respectively .55). In this case, help in practical kind was thus only *received* by the child. We referred to this third type of relationship as 'downward-interdependence'.

A fourth class was characterized by high probabilities for giving and receiving emotional support (.97 and .99). The likelihood to engage in practical support, on the contrary, whether giving or receiving, was noticeably low (probabilities between .01 and .09). Respondents in this class also have the tendency to maintain frequent contacts with their mother, although the probabilities were less outspoken compared to the foregoing relationship

types (.66 for frequent face-to-face contact and .53 for contact by other means). Since this relationship type was characterized by emotional support exchanges, but not by any form of practical help, it was labeled ‘emotional-interdependence’.

Finally, a fifth mother-child relationship was typified by overall low probabilities (between .34 and .00 and .44 for frequent face-to-face contact). Respondents that were assigned this relationship type tend to have infrequent contacts with their mother, especially by means other than face-to-face and are not likely to give or receive support, neither practical nor emotional. We therefore gave the label ‘independence’ to this mother-child relationship.

Class prevalences

In the next step, we considered the class prevalences in the total sample and according to the origin, gender, and life-phase of the child (see Table 3 below). The overall distribution showed that most prevalent were upward-interdependent (34%) and reciprocal-interdependent relations (24%), followed by emotional-interdependence (19%) and downward-interdependence (16%). Mother and child relationships characterized by independence, on the other hand, were overall quite rare (7% was involved in such a relation).

[Insert Table 3 about here]

When comparing relationship prevalences across origin groups, we found that upward- and reciprocal-interdependence were especially prevailing among immigrants (64% respectively 61% of the Mediterraneans and Caribbeans are typified as such). Compared to the Dutch, fewer immigrant respondents were characterized by downward-interdependence (16% respectively 17% of the Mediterraneans and Caribbeans against 20% of the Dutch). This means that whereas immigrant adult children more often received practical assistance on

a reciprocal basis, more of their Dutch counterparts were the single recipient of practical support. In addition, relationships that revolve predominantly around emotional, but not practical support were more common among Dutch (17% of the Dutch and 11% respectively 12% of the Mediterraneans and Caribbeans were assigned emotional-interdependence). Furthermore, the distributions across origin groups indicated that Mediterranean and Caribbean immigrants differed in similar ways from the Dutch. The divergences were slightly more marked for Mediterraneans, however, especially concerning the importance of reciprocal-interdependence.

These results confirm our expectation that full-interdependent mother-child relations are more characteristic for immigrant families. Less in line with what we expected were the findings concerning independent relationships. Not only did we find mother-child independence to be uncommon in general, but even somewhat more so among Dutch (6% of the Dutch, against 9% respectively 10% of the Mediterraneans and Caribbeans).

Finally, we considered how relationship types were distributed according to demographic characteristics of the child, namely gender and age. Whereas daughters were comparatively more often characterized by downward-interdependence and thus recipient of practical support, sons were more involved in upward-interdependence and therefore the provider of practical support. No strong gender differences appeared with respect to the remaining three relationship types: reciprocal- and emotional-interdependence were approximately equally common and independent mother-child relations about equally uncommon. Taking into account the life-phase of the child revealed a clear distributional trend. Whereas reciprocal mother-child relationships and being the recipient of practical support were more common among younger-adult children, the support provided to the mother was increasingly significant in later life, especially among children beyond 45 years of age. The prevalence of emotional-interdependence was less noticeably differentiated by age,

as such a relationship was relatively important among children in all life-phases, although more so beyond young-adulthood.

Discussion

In this paper, we set out to portray mother-child relationships among natives and non-Western immigrants in the Netherlands, using the Model of Family Change (MFC; Kagitçibasi, 1996) as a theoretical basis. By conducting Latent Class Analysis, we were able to empirically reconstruct the expected family systems. This study was thereby the first to examine MFC in terms of solidarity behaviors and analyze material and emotional aspects simultaneously. The results revealed three variations of full-interdependent mother-child relationships that were differentiated by the direction of practical support (reciprocal, upward or downward), an emotional-interdependent and independent mother-child relationship.

Whereas the same five relationship types were found among native Dutch and immigrants, the distribution differed across origin groups. Especially reciprocal-interdependent relationships were more prevalent among immigrants, conforming our expectation that the stronger orientation towards a mutual reliance for material wellbeing among non-Western families (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Hofstede, 2001; Todd, 1985) also differentiates, to some extent, immigrant and native families. Dutch adult children were more often characterized by downward-interdependence. Considering that traditional family norms prescribe children the filial duty to take care of their ageing parents (Kagitçibasi, 1996), this is the least 'traditional' form of full-interdependence.

Our typology did not include information about help with childcare, however, which is a typical form of support that parents provide their children (Hank & Buber, 2009). The reason was that our sample would be restricted to adult children who have children of their own. It should be held in mind, therefore, that our typology is less representative for that

specific group. Another aspect of that we did not consider is financial support. High rates of non-response on this item, particularly among immigrant respondents, indicated the sensitivity around reporting this topic and made interpretations of the results dubitable. However, research in France showed the reciprocal nature of financial transfers among immigrant families in contrast to the downward flow of financial resources in native French families (Attias-Donfut & Wolff, 2008) and therefore supports rather than challenges the distributional trends.

Our results furthermore confirmed the expectation that both immigrant and Dutch families are characterized by emotional-interdependence. Reconstructing a family system of emotional-interdependence provides empirical evidence for two important propositions of the MFC. On the one hand, the findings accommodate the claim that interdependence in immigrant families may diminish in material respect, while emotional ties remain important (Kagitçibasi, 1996). The lower prevalence of emotional-interdependence among immigrants compared to Dutch, moreover, indicates that the precedence of emotional bonds over practical support is less common in these families.

On the other hand, the finding that emotional-interdependence characterizes Dutch families offers evidence for the claim that contemporary conditions in Western societies also foster emotional-interdependent relations among natives (Kagitçibasi 1996; 2005). Our study does not provide information about whether this is a fairly recent development, following the resurgence of post-material values (Inglehart, 1991; Young, 1992) or whether emotional ties have always been important in Western families, supporting the suggestion of Kagitçibasi (2005) that independence might be a professed ideal, rather than reality.

We did indeed find, contrary to expectations, that independent mother-child relationships were quite rare among Dutch. Moreover, it could also be that the infrequent contacts and absence of intergenerational support which characterize this relationship

alternatively signify detachment. Scholars from the US who found a similar parent-child relationship structure indeed treated the relation as deviant and problematic, instead of natural (Silverstein & Bengtson, 1997). This would also explain why we found this relationship type to be somewhat less rare among immigrants, since the process of migration may also pose difficulties for families to maintain close relations (Kwak, 2003).

It remains possible, of course, that intergenerational relations among Dutch families are independent in respects that we did not consider. According to the MFC, independence also involves a psychological orientation, concerning individual autonomy, for instance (Kagitçibasi, 2005). In terms of maintaining contact and providing support, however, our findings cohere with other studies that showed the importance of affective ties and challenge the negative public view on intergenerational solidarity in Western families (Daatland & Herlofson, 2003; Dystra et al., 2006).

In terms of immigration origin, we distinguished between immigrants from Mediterranean and Caribbean descent and found that they differed in similar ways from the Dutch, but Mediterraneans slightly more so. This pattern is in line with the common assumption that Caribbean immigrants are culturally closer to the Dutch, as has been evidenced in less pronounced differences in family values and exchange behaviors (Komter & Schans, 2008; de Valk & Schans, 2008) and higher rates of Dutch-intermarriage among Surinamese and Antillean immigrants (Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006). In our study in particular, the typical traditional family structure in the region of origin of Mediterranean immigrants (Ataca, 2006) may have accounted for a stronger persistence of full-interdependent relations among this group.

An interesting question for the future is how these distributional variations are explained by individual and family characteristics. Examining the role of socio-structural features, for instance, can reveal whether the greater involvement of immigrants in full-

interdependent relations reflects their stronger adherence to family norms, fewer resources, or a combination of this. Furthermore, immigrant groups themselves differ in characteristics that are closely connected to family relations, such as household structure, socio-economic circumstances, religion (Heering, de Valk, Spaan, Huisman, & van der Erf, 2002; van Tubergen, 2003) and levels of acculturation (Berry, 1997). Taking these features into account would give an additional insight into the impact of migration on family ties.

At the same time, the differences across origin groups should not be overestimated. Perhaps more striking were the similarities we found in the characterization and distribution of relationships. This resemblance between non-Western immigrants and native Westerners in behavioral aspects of family relations stands in stark contrast with the reported differences concerning the adherence to family values (Nauck, 2001; Phalet & Schönplug, 2001; Schönpflug 2001; de Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; de Valk & Schans, 2008). The present study thereby accommodates the conclusion that family norms reflect 'core values' which are of lingering relevance in the context of migration, while practical behaviors are more readily adjusted to current circumstances (Schans & Komter, 2010; de Valk & Schans, 2008).

In addition, our study suggests that the maintenance of emotional bonds, on the other hand, is independent of socio-structural and cultural conditions. Overall, the results paint a picture of mother-child relations as being close, irrespective of the origin of families. Also the distribution of relationship types according to the gender and age of the child reflect the general value attached to emotional aspects of the mother-child relation. Sons and daughters mostly varied in practical aspects of the mother-child relationship. Likewise, the distribution of mother-child relationships varied over the life-course in the importance of practical support in a predictable way that reflects the needs of parent and child in different life-phases (Dykstra et al., 2006; Rossi & Rossi, 1990). Emotional support, on the other hand, was exchanged by an overwhelming majority of children in the Netherlands, whether native or

immigrant, son or daughter, young-adult, middle-aged or older-aged. These findings again suggest that cultural or socio-structural conditions differentiate practical, more than emotional aspects of family relations.

What may partly explain the emotionally close relations in this study is our focus on relationship with mothers, which tend to be more intensive than fathers-child relations (Fokkema et al., 2008). The question whether the same typology holds for fathers is interesting and particularly relevant for immigrant groups. Mediterranean parents, for instance, may adhere to more traditional, gendered parenting styles that prescribe a warm and indulgent mother, but distant and authoritarian father (Idema & Phalet, 2007). Among Caribbean immigrants, on the other hand, the relatively commonness for children to grow up in a single mother household (de Valk, 2010) raises questions about the role of fathers.

More insights into intergenerational relations in the culturally diverse societies of Western Europe, such as the Netherlands, are called for now public concerns about family solidarity are growing. This study contributed by providing a multi-dimensional portrayal of immigrant and native Dutch mother-child relations. Most importantly, our results revealed the importance of emotional intergenerational ties in adulthood across families of different origin. Future cross-country research should affirm the more general applicability of the typology for (North-)Western European countries in general and direct attention to the possible explanations of distributional variations.

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Appendix

Table A1

Model fit statistics for latent class models with one to six clusters (N=1,267)

Models	<i>df</i>	L^2	<i>p</i>	BIC
1-Cluster	247	1,536.51	.000	10,785
2-Cluster	238	648.27	.000	9962
3-Cluster	229	460.41	.000	9838
4-Cluster	220	299.49	.000	9742
5-Cluster	211	299.99	.18	9736
6-Cluster	202	193.10	.66	9764

Source = NKPS, wave 1, 2004.

Tables

Table 1

Descriptive information of the Dutch, Mediterranean, and Caribbean respondents

Variable	Range	Origin group		
		Dutch (n=868)	Mediterraneans (n= 158)	Caribbeans (n=241)
		Mean	Mean	Mean
Age (years)	18-69	38 (10.3)	33 (7.0)	37 (9.1)
Young adult (1=18-30)	0-1	.28	.44	.26
Middle age (1=31-45)	0-1	.48	.51	.56
Older adult (1=46-69)	0-1	.23	.04	.17
Gender (1=daughter)	0-1	.58	.57	.60
<i>Frequent contact (1=yes)</i>				
Face-to-face	0-1	.84	.92	.86
Phone, letter or email	0-1	.67	.82	.76
<i>Practical support (1=yes)</i>				
Housework help given	0-1	.48	.59	.59
Housework help received	0-1	.31	.42	.38
Practical help given	0-1	.55	.61	.56
Practical help received	0-1	.32	.29	.32
<i>Emotional support(1=yes)</i>				
Personal interest shown	0-1	.94	.86	.90
Personal interest received	0-1	.93	.87	.88

Note. Mean score of continuous measure of age indicates the average number of years; standard deviation

between brackets. Mean scores of age-groups, gender-groups and solidarity measurements indicate percentages.

Source = NKPS, wave 1, 2004.

Table 2

Conditional probabilities in the five-class model (N=1,267)

Indicator	Type of parent-child relationship				
	Type 1	Type2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5
	Reciprocal- interdependence	Upward- interdependence	Downward- interdependence	Emotional- interdependence	Independence
<i>Contact</i>					
Face-to-face	.98*	.94*	.91	.66*	.44*
Phone, (e)mail	.87*	.75*	.82*	.53*	.16*
<i>Housework help</i>					
Given	.82*	.72*	.32	.08*	.09*
Received	.82*	.07	.74*	.01	.00
<i>Practical help</i>					
Given	.99	.83*	.13	.08*	.08*
Received	.71*	.12	.55*	.09*	.02*
<i>Emotional support</i>					
Given	.98*	.99*	.95	.97	.34*
Received	.99	.94	.98	.99	.19*

* p-two sided < .05

Source = NKPS, wave 1, 2004.

Table 3

Prevalences of mother-child relationships (%) according to individual characteristics of the child (N=1,267)

	Type of parent-child relationship				
	Type 1	Type2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5
	Reciprocal- interdependence	Upward- interdependence	Downward- interdependence	Emotional- interdependence	Independence
Prevalence overall	24	34	16	19	8
Within groups					
Dutch	21	35	17	20	7
Mediterraneans	34	30	11	16	9
Caribbeans	30	31	12	16	10
Son	23	37	12	20	8
Daughter	25	32	18	18	7
Young-adult (18-30)	35	26	20	15	4
Middle-age (30-45)	24	32	15	20	8
Older-adult (45-69)	9	50	9	20	12

Source = NKPS, wave 1, 2004.