

The influence that Albanian parents extrinsic versus intrinsic goal promotion has on the increase of adolescents' prejudice

Dr. Mimoza Çarka

Faculty of Social Sciences
University "Eqrem Çabej", Gjirokaster, Albania

Dr. Joana Taçi

Faculty of Social Sciences
University "Eqrem Çabej"
Gjirokaster, Albania

Abstract

The aim of this article and more precisely of the research is to examine the emphasis parents put on extrinsic or intrinsic goal promotion during childrearing. Further more in the following article is, as well, examined the co-relation between the above E/I goal promotion with the increased racial prejudice. The above effect is accounted for by adolescents' RWA (right-wing authoritarianism) and SDO (social dominance orientation) levels, which, in turn represent two individual difference dimensions identified as independent predictors of prejudice. To fulfill the research we have focused on high school students' parents and we have asked them to complete a questionnaire. The study confirmed what we really feared that both maternal and paternal questionnaires put a great importance on the promotion of extrinsic versus intrinsic goals, generalizing the fact that we are raising materialistic children.

Keywords: *e/i goal promotion, racial prejudice, right-wing authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, childrearing.*

Introduction

Nowadays most of the Albanian adolescents tend to adopt a prejudiced attitude towards their companions, which, in fact has an important effect on their lives and the lives of their discriminated companions. Therefore, in such colored black behavioral attitudes our duty is to explore the antecedents of such racial prejudice. The results of certain studies indicated two individual difference dimensions as important independent predictors of prejudice, that are, Right - wing Authoritarianism (RWA) and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO).

More specifically:

The concept of **Right - wing Authoritarianism (RWA)** was introduced in (1981) by the Canadian-American psychologist Bob Altemeyer as a refinement of the authoritarian personality. RWA is a personality and ideological variable studied in political, social and personality psychology. Right-wing Authoritarians are people who have a high degree of willingness to submit to authorities they perceive as legitimate, who adhere to societal conventions and norms, and who are hostile and punitive in their attitudes towards people who don't adhere to them.

In other words RWA is defined as the co-variation of an adherence to conventional norms and values, an uncritical subjection to authority and feelings of aggression towards norm violators (Altemeyer, 1981).

Whereas **Social Dominance Orientation (SDO)** is a personality trait which predicts social and political attitudes, and is a widely used social psychological scale. SDO is conceptualized as a measure of individual differences in levels of group-based discrimination; that is, it is a measure of an individual's preference for hierarchy within any social system and the domination over lower-status groups.

Individuals who score high in SDO desire to maintain and, in many cases, increase the differences between social statuses of different groups, as well as individual group members. Typically, they are dominant, driven, tough, and relatively uncaring seekers of power. People high in SDO also prefer hierarchical group orientations. Often, people who score high in SDO adhere strongly to belief in a "dog-eat-dog" world. It has also been found that men are generally higher than women in SDO measures

According to *Protto, Sidomus, Stallworth and Male* (1994) and mainly *Duriez* (2005; 2007) SDO describes the extent to which one desires the in-group to dominate the out-group. The recent arguments concerning RWA and SDO do not delineate them as personality characteristics, but on the contrary they conceptualize them as a set of easily influenced cognitive beliefs (Duckitt 2001; Durie z, Van Hiel and Kossowska 2005; Guimond Dambrum, Michinov and Duarte 2003; Durie z, Van Hiel and Pandelaere 2004) or as surface personality traits (Asendorpf and van Aken 2003) that only become stable either in early or late adolescence (Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis and Birum 2002; Vollebergh and Raaijmakers 1991) As a result, it is of vital importance to examine the influence that parents child rearing had on the child reinforcement of RWA and SDO cognitive beliefs.

As so the present research focuses on the impact of parents in the development of racial prejudice and in general prejudice disposition for their adolescent children (Maccoby 1984). It is obvious that parents represent the most important socializing agents for adolescents (Maccoby 1984). More specifically we are really interested in analyzing the impact of the type of intrinsic versus extrinsic goals parents attempt to transmit to their offspring. Furthermore some researchers have primarily examined the correlates of individuals extrinsic versus intrinsic goal pursuit and transmission (Kasser and Ryan 1993, 1996; Vansteenkiste, Durie z, Simons, and Soenens in press). As so, according to *Duriez* (2011) an extrinsic goal pertains to a concern with making a good impression on others through acquiring external indicators of worth such as financial success, physical attractiveness, social recognition, whereas an intrinsic goal reflects a more in-word oriented frame aiming at the realization of basic growth tendencies, such as developing one's talent, building up satisfying relationships and helping people in need.

So based as well on the self determination theory (SDT) parents who during child rearing place high emphasis on the attainment of extrinsic goals rather than intrinsic ones (such as self-development, affiliation and community contribution) will promote RWA and SDO and hence racial prejudice.

Consequently, this research, based as well on the data taken from *Duriez* (2011) will investigate whether Albanian parents extrinsic versus intrinsic goal promotion is associated with adolescents racial prejudice.

The present paper aims at extending this line of research by focusing on the implications that parent's promotion of extrinsic versus intrinsic goal have with prejudice. In so doing we asked parents to indicate to what extent they place high importance onto these goals-contents during child rearing

In the same line with Kasser (2002) and Ryan (1996) it is argued that parental extrinsic goal promotion tend to orient adolescents' attention towards external signs of success

such as being wealthy and rich (financial success); being slim and attractive (physical attractiveness) or being well-known and admired (social status). As a result through these messages parents encourage adolescents to consider themselves through the eyes of others and to wonder to what extent their behavior fit with other people's opinion before taking action.

In contrast, based on *Vansteekiste, Maartes Neyrinck, Bart Ni (2007)* parents who promote intrinsic goals encourage their adolescents to develop their talents and skills (self development), to build up satisfying relationships (affiliation) and to help people in need (community contribution). In this way parents (consciously or unconsciously) rather than promoting values that imply an outward orientation, they stimulate their adolescents to focus on realizing their inner growth tendencies. Hence parent's intrinsic goal promotion creates better opportunities for adolescents to express their inherent potentials.

How parents promotion of E/I goals influence children's racial prejudice and their prejudice disposition.

Previously we argued that adolescents raised in extrinsic goal environments are more likely to objectify others (Kasser 2002) and to consider them as exchangeable products that should be used in the most efficient manner to get ahead in their lives. Such a self-centered and strategic opinion towards others should help them to better attain their materialistic ambitions which are likely to follow from being raised in families that highlight the importance of extrinsic goals. On the contrary, as *Duriez (2011)* states when raised in intrinsic goal promotion families adolescents are more likely to be concerned with the welfare of the other and to take an empathic perspective towards others. According to *Duriez (2004)* high empathy levels are related to negative racial prejudice and children raised up in such environments are more vulnerable to adopt less racial prejudice than those raised up extrinsic goal promotion families.

Another aim of this research is to enlighten the mechanism that explains the predicted positive relation that exists with adolescent's racial prejudice and the goals promoted by their parents. On this effect we can account adolescents RWA and SDO.

RWA is thought to reflect the motivational goal of social control and to be activated by fear, insecurity and a view of the world as dangerous and threatening (*Duckitt 2001; Duckitt and Fisher 2003*)

In other words *Ross' (1993)* and *Duckitt (2001)* analysis suggest that punitive, strict and harsh versus permissive, tolerant and indulgent parenting would activate the belief that the social world is threatening, dangerous and unsafe, which, in turn, would predict adherence to RDA. According to *Duriez (2007)*, so strict and harsh parenting shares considerable overlap with the controlling parenting dimensions in the developmental psychology and it relates to the way adolescents get socialized.

In addition, SDO is said to be obtained by perceiving the world as a jungle which is characterized by a harsh disloyal struggle for power, resources and dominance. Such a view is more strongly adopted by those who are socialized in an unaffectionate climate which lacks attention, love and caring. Affectionate versus unaffectionate socialization practices share a strong conceptual overlap with the parenting dimensions of responsiveness, as conceived by developmental psychologists (*Maccoby and Martin 1983*). These kind of parental environments are most likely to stimulate intrapersonal competition and comparison and as so are more likely to induce SDO, which, in turn predicts racial prejudice.

The study

This research, based as well on the achievements of *Duriez* (2008), aims at introducing parents extrinsic versus intrinsic goal promotion influence on adolescents. It also aims at indicating the children's extrinsic versus intrinsic goal pursuit at their levels of RWA, SDO and racial prejudice. This research is highly based on the following study which indicates ratings of Albanian adolescents mothers and fathers goal promotion separately. The participants on this study are high school adolescents' parents. More precisely 100 mothers and 95 fathers of high school students. For this study we have chosen one of the high school of Gjirokastra, that of "Asim Zeneli". All participants were of Albanian nationality. All high school students received two additional questionnaires, one for their mother and another one for their father to fill separately. The questionnaires will be closed by the parents themselves on quite separate envelopes and will be returned within 10 days. The respective adolescents will not become familiar with the completed questionnaires and their parent answers (because in a second study the same adolescents will be asked to fill the same questionnaire how do they consider their parents rearing as promoting extrinsic or intrinsic goals. Both questionnaires will be compared in order to see if their answers bear any resemblance).

To support and further deepen into *Duriez* (2011) ideas we made this research in another Eastern country, Albania (Gjirokaster). In this context, in order to create our own questionnaires we were highly based on *Duriez* (2011) three parental extrinsic and intrinsic goals.

Three parental extrinsic goal promotion that were assessed are financial success (For me is important that my child is financially successful in his life), social recognition (For me is important for my child to be admired by several people) and physical attractiveness (For me is important for him/her to be attractive). The other three parental intrinsic goal promotions that were as well assessed are self-development (For me is important that my child to develop his talents), community contribution (For me is important that my child helps the others) and affiliation (For me is important that my child develops close relationships with a few friends). The assessing method was with the nomothetic approach instead of idiographic one.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of the study

Variables	Possible	Mean	SD range
Mother reported E / I goal promotion	-5 + 5	-1.52	0.78
Father reported E / I goal promotion	-5 + 5	-1.31	0.79
Right-wing authoritarianism	1—5	2.86	0.49
Social dominance orientation	1—5	2.32	0.65
Racial prejudice	1—5	1.81	0.75

Note: SD = standard deviation; E / I = extrinsic relative to intrinsic

While thoroughly assessing the completed questionnaires we consulted that the three intrinsic goal items were randomly selected whereas the three extrinsic goal items were

highly selected. As so parents place strong emphasis on extrinsic goals for a number of outcomes that high relevance for the society as a whole.

Parents who teach their offspring that the attainment of extrinsic goals constitute an important life task are likely to stimulate them to adopt an objectifying stance towards the others (Kasser, 2002). Adolescents raised in such materialistic environments are likely to lack the necessary emphatic skills to grasp the others perspective and they tend to display discriminative attitudes towards any group or individual that threatens their materialistic ambitions. Hence, they adopt a socially dominant and authoritarian attitude towards the others which in turn predicts racial prejudice.

Table 2. Correlations between Latent Variables for Paternal Ratings (Below Diagonal, N = 164) and Maternal Ratings (Above Diagonal, N = 240)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Parental E / I goal promotion	--	.74***	.24***	.52***	.47***
2. Right-wing authoritarianism	.21**	.31***	--	.25***	.36***
3. Social dominance orientation	.41***	.49***	.23***	--	.67***
4. Racial prejudice	.39***	.47***	.37***	.65***	--

Note: **p < .01, ***p < .001. E / I = extrinsic relative to intrinsic

Conclusions

Parents are God gifted cradle their children, to see them grow up and to wish the best and the most successful future for them. To fulfill their expectations they have to communicate the life goals they want their offspring to aspire. On the other hand, on their adolescence children are fairly good in detecting which goals parents highly emphasize during their childrearing.

The present research aims at detecting the effect of parents' promotions of life goals, which are either extrinsic or intrinsic in the adolescents extrinsic versus intrinsic goal pursuit. It also aims at examining the relation between parental extrinsic versus intrinsic goal pursuit with the adolescents RWA and SDO attitude levels and their racial prejudice. The study shows that parents put more emphasis on the attainment of extrinsic goals and adolescents raised in such environment are more likely to approach others in a rather socially aggressive and domination fashion, because such an interpersonal approach might help them to attain their materialistic ambitions and to raise their racial prejudice towards those that pose a threat to such ambitions.

In a few words we conclude that parental goals promotion during childrearing serves as an indicator in predicting adolescent's attitudes towards their companions and to predict the level of racial prejudice the hold against them.

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