In Search of “the Bedouin Adaptive Adult”: Socialization Goals of Mothers and Fathers From the Bedouin Society of the Negev

Noga Mosco and Naama Atzaba-Poria

Abstract

The Bedouins of the Negev are a unique minority group living in southern Israel. They are known to be a formerly nomadic society characterized by tribal collectivism. The purpose of this study was to improve the understanding of the broad context in which parenting and child development take place in Bedouin society by exploring the images Bedouin parents have of the adults they wish their children to become (the adaptive adult). We explored the images of the adaptive adult as expressed by parents’ ratings of individualistic and collectivistic socialization goals (SGs), while also examining the eco-cultural factors that may be related to these images. Specifically, we examined the relations between SG preferences and parental acculturation attitude, parental education, and child gender. Participants included 65 Bedouin mothers and 30 Bedouin fathers. Parents completed the Acculturation Questionnaire and the Socialization Goals Rating Task. Results indicated that mothers who had higher education and those who had higher levels of contact and participation in Israeli Jewish culture preferred more individualistic SGs over collectivistic SGs for their children. Furthermore, acculturation level was a stronger predictor of maternal SGs than level of education. Contrary to mothers, fathers’ SG preferences were found to be related only to their level of education and not to their acculturation levels. Finally, both mothers and fathers preferred individualistic SGs for their sons and collectivistic SGs for their daughters. The links between SG preferences and the factors of parental acculturation, parental education, and child gender are discussed, and implications are proposed.

Keywords
socialization goals, acculturation, values, individualism and collectivism, Bedouin, parenting

A growing number of studies have examined how socialization goals (SGs) vary between and within different cultural groups (Durgel, Leyendecker, Yagmurlu, & Harwood, 2009; Feldman & Masalha, 2010; Park, Coello, & Lau, 2014). Socialization is defined as the process in which
an infant becomes a competent member of society (Kağitçibaşi, 2007), and SGs are composed of the qualities and skills caregivers wish the child to acquire in the process of becoming an adult.

Studies that set out to examine SGs tend to take an ecological approach toward parenting, in which parenting is viewed as being influenced by individual characteristics of the parent and the child as well as by numerous contextual factors such as family structure, social structure, economic status, cultural factors, and others (Belsky & Jaffee, 2006; Bronfenbrenner, 1995). The interest in parents’ SGs stems from the notion that parental cognitions influence parental practice, and more specifically, that parental SGs are the mechanism through which cultural factors shape both the parent–child interactions and child development (Keller et al., 2006; Phalet & Schönpfug, 2001).

Adaptive adult is a term coined by Roer-Strier and Rosenthal (2001) to describe parental images of the type of adults parents wish their children to become. The use of this term highlights the idea that parents’ SGs and child-rearing practices hold the potential for change in accordance with sociocultural changes (Durgel et al., 2009; Kağitçibaşi, 2007; Roer-Strier & Rosenthal, 2001; Rosenthal & Roer-Strier, 2006). In the current study, we set out to explore the images of the adaptive adult held by mothers and fathers from the Bedouin community living in the southern part of Israel, a community that is going through profound sociocultural changes (Abu-Rabia-Queder & Weiner-Levy, 2008; Al-Krenawi, 2000).

A substantial number of studies use the distinction between individualistic and collectivistic orientations to approach the issue of cultural variation in parental SGs (Kağitçibaşi, 2007; Keller et al., 2006). Individualistic SGs are described as being, primarily, a characteristic of Western countries, where urban affluent living conditions prevail alongside enhanced industry and technology. In societies of this type, parenting is oriented toward the development of a sense of autonomy and agency in the child, as well as toward the development of the child’s personal talents and skills to enhance self-maximization (Keller et al., 2006). The same cultural orientation is sometimes referred to as socialization toward independence (Harkness, Super, & Tijen, 2000) or socialization toward separateness (Phalet & Schönpfug, 2001). Collectivistic SGs are described as being, primarily, a characteristic of non-Western countries, where ecological conditions consist of rural habitation and low affluence. In societies of this type, parenting is oriented toward acceptance of hierarchy and social duties to enhance harmonious functioning of the social unit, namely, the family (Keller et al., 2006). This cultural orientation is sometimes referred to as socialization toward interdependence (Harkness et al., 2000) or socialization toward relatedness (Phalet & Schönpfug, 2001). Although individualistic SGs and collectivistic SGs are not mutually exclusive, cultural groups do appear to differ in the relative value they place on each of these two clusters (Leyendecker, Lamb, Harwood, & Scholmerich, 2002). Furthermore, in addition to between-cultural group differences in SGs, within-group variations are evident as well. Parents from the same culture may vary in SGs according to some contextual factors such as parental acculturation style (Durgel et al., 2009) and parental level of education (Citlak, Leyendecker, Schölmerich, Driessen, & Harwood, 2008; Park et al., 2014). In addition, child characteristics, such as gender (Leyendecker et al., 2002; Phalet & Schönpfug, 2001), may also be related to parental SGs.

The novelty of this study lies in its endeavor to explore parental SGs among the Bedouins in southern Israel. The tribal structure of the Bedouin society, together with its past history and present living conditions, provides a unique context for the investigation of parental values and long-term goals in a culture that is undergoing major changes. In addition, only a few studies have examined paternal and maternal SGs separately, and so, by examining links between SGs and contextual factors separately for mothers and fathers, the current study contributes to the understanding of variation in both maternal and paternal SGs in minority groups going through sociocultural change.
Factors Related to SGs: Parental Acculturation, Education, and Child Gender

Parents from ethnic minority or immigrant families may go through different cultural adjustment processes. They may adopt different acculturation styles according to their involvement with the host culture, on one hand, and their involvement with their heritage on the other (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989). These acculturation styles, in turn, may alter their images of the adaptive adult and, therefore, influence their SGs for their children (Rosenthal & Roer-Strier, 2006). For example, Durgel and colleagues (2009) used an acculturation scale to measure the involvement of Turkish immigrant mothers living in Germany with the host (German) culture. They found group differences in SGs, such that mothers who had high levels of contact and participation in the host culture were less likely to perceive respectfulness as important for their children and more likely to emphasize close warm relationships and self-control compared with mothers who had low levels of contact and participation in the host culture. The current study examines an indigenous minority group; thus, one of the goals is to examine the associations between Bedouin mothers’ and fathers’ acculturation attitudes and their SGs for their children.

In addition to their acculturation processes, a growing body of research has shown that parental levels of education may also be related to variations in SGs (Park et al., 2014; Phalet & Schönpfug, 2001). In a study that compared the SGs of German and Turkish mothers living in Germany, an association was found between maternal education and SGs in both samples (Durgel et al., 2009). Overall, mothers with a higher level of education showed a preference for individualistic SGs such as emotional well-being, psychological development, and independence, and attributed relatively low importance to collectivistic SGs such as respectfulness and role obligations within the family in comparison with mothers with a lower level of education.

Thus, it is evident that both levels of education and levels of acculturation are good candidates for explaining variance in parental SGs. Regarding the relation between these two factors, previous research investigating minority groups has shown that in some cultural contexts, the two processes of acquiring higher education and forming an acculturation style can be intertwined (Berry et al., 1989; Durgel et al., 2009), but in other contexts, they may occur separately (Abdulahad, Delaney, & Brownlee, 2009). Thus, untangling the relations of parental education and acculturation to SGs may further enhance the understanding of parental SGs as well as uncover the links between formal education and psychological acculturation (Durgel, van de Vijver, & Yagmurlu, 2013).

As for child characteristics, a main variable that has been shown to be related to parental SGs is child gender. Within the same cultural group, SGs may differ for males and females (Dion & Dion, 2001; Phalet & Schönpfug, 2001; Roer-Striér & Rosenthal, 2001). A study comparing distinct cultural groups living in Israel revealed different parental expectations for boys than for girls (Rosenthal & Roer-Striér, 2006). Specifically, Jewish ultra-Orthodox mothers expected that, as grown adults, their daughters but not their sons would bring joy to others. Jewish Bukharan immigrant mothers wished for their sons (but not their daughters) to be respected and have many friends, and wished for their daughters (but not their sons) to be modest and considerate. Furthermore, in another study comparing two groups of mothers living in the United States, Central American immigrant mothers emphasized the importance of self-control more for boys than for girls, whereas European American mothers emphasized decency for boys, but highlighted the importance of feeling good about oneself for girls (Leyendecker et al., 2002).

Surprisingly, most of these studies include only mothers, neglecting the investigation of paternal SGs. The lack of inclusion of fathers is especially salient because it is well known that fathers are not replicas of mothers and that fathers may make a unique contribution to their children’s development (Atzaba-Poria & Pike, 2008; Lamb, 2010). Thus, it seems plausible that when preparing children for adult life, mothers and fathers may focus on different values (Goodnow &
Collins, 1990). For example, one of the few studies comparing mothers’ and fathers’ SGs examined mothers and fathers from four Eastern and three Western countries (Park et al., 2014). Park and colleagues found that in all cultures, mothers were more likely than fathers to endorse goals of independence, responsibility, tolerance/respect, and religious faith. Fathers, in contrast, were more likely than mothers to endorse hard work and obedience. The current study focused on the Bedouins of the Negev, a society that distinguishes between masculine and feminine gender roles. Therefore, attention is given to comparisons of SGs highlighted by mothers and fathers for both boys and girls.

**Arab-Bedouins of the Negev**

The Bedouins of the Negev are a unique minority group that is a part of the Muslim-Arab sector in Israeli society. Up until 40 years ago, the Bedouins of the Negev lived as shepherds who migrated according to the change of seasons (Al-Krenawi, 2000). Today, they are considered either a formerly nomadic or a seminomadic society. The Bedouins of the Negev are the poorest population in Israel (Rudnitzky & Abu Ras, 2012). Educational levels are low, as expressed by low rates of high school retention, low rates of eligibility for matriculation certificates (Rudnitzky & Abu Ras, 2012), and low rates of representation in Israeli academic institutions (Abu-Bader, 2010). Most Bedouins of the Negev live in two types of settlements: permanent Bedouin towns or rural villages referred to as “the Bedouin diaspora” (Abu-Bader, 2010). Birthrate among the Bedouins is high relative to the general Israeli population, and the rate of bigamous marriages is estimated at 33% (Abu-Bader, 2010). Bedouin culture is based on tribal collectivism (Al-Krenawi, 2000). Individuals are expected to place their extended family’s interest above their own needs. They are perceived by the environment as being representative of their families at all times and, as a result, must conduct their actions to maintain the family’s good name. Another characteristic of the Bedouin society is its patriarchal structure, perpetuated by established interpretations of Islamic theology and law (Abu-Rabia-Queder & Karplus, 2013). The male members of the family dominate the female members, and the older dominate the younger (Abu-Sif, 2009); therefore, this society fits the model of vertical collectivism (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). Bedouin tradition dictates clear gender roles. Men are in charge of all matters in the public sphere, such as business and politics (Al-Krenawi, 2000), whereas women assume the role of caretaker and housekeeper and are restricted to the private sphere (Abu-Rabia-Queder & Weiner-Levy, 2008). A woman entering the public sphere, where she might interact with men, is considered to be compromising or threatening her chastity and her family’s good name (Abu-Rabia-Queder & Karplus, 2013; Meir & Gekker, 2011).

Living next to the Jewish-majority culture in Israel, the Bedouin society is going through some major changes, including socioeconomic, cultural, and political changes (Abu-Rabia-Queder & Weiner-Levy, 2008; Abu-Sif, 2009; Al-Krenawi, 2000; Al-Krenawi & Slonim-Nevo, 2009). A few examples of these changes are the process of urbanization, the increase in the rate of academic graduates among both men and women (Abu-Bader, 2010), and the increase in the rate of men seeking employment in the Israeli market (Abu-Rabia-Queder, 2008). Furthermore, the personal encounters between the Bedouin and the Jewish cultures lead to psychological acculturation, meaning that individual members of the Bedouin society choose, on one hand, the extent to which they maintain contact and participate in the Bedouin culture and, on the other hand, the extent to which they have contact and participate in the dominant Israeli Jewish culture.

Finally, slow changes are also seen in the traditional gender roles (Abu-Rabia-Queder, 2008; Pessate-Schubert, 2004; Meir & Gekker, 2011): More women are now being allowed to study and attain higher education (Abu-Rabia-Queder, 2011), enabling them to work outside the home and have some contact with the dominant Jewish culture.
Research Objective and Hypotheses

The aim of the current study was to examine the image of the adaptive adult held by Bedouin mothers and fathers by exploring the long-term SGs they hold for their young children. SGs were examined in an exploratory manner while considering other contextual factors, such as parental acculturation style and education, as well as child gender. In addition, similarities and differences between mothers’ and fathers’ SGs were examined.

Four hypotheses were proposed. First, parental acculturation levels would be related to parental SG preferences. Specifically, mothers with higher levels of contact and participation in Israeli Jewish culture would prefer more individualistic than collectivistic SGs, whereas mothers with higher levels of contact and participation in the Bedouin culture would prefer more collectivistic than individualistic SGs. Second, we hypothesized that parental education levels would be related to SG preferences. Specifically, mothers with a higher level of education would prefer more individualistic SGs, whereas mothers with a lower level of education would prefer more collectivistic SGs. Third, we expected that both parental education and acculturation levels would contribute to the variance of SG preferences. Because previous research has not examined fathers, these hypotheses would be examined separately in an exploratory manner for fathers. Finally, we proposed that both mothers and fathers would choose different SGs for their sons versus their daughters. Specifically, parents would rate higher individualistic SGs for their sons and higher collectivistic SGs for their daughters.

Method

Sample

Sixty-five Bedouin mothers and 30 Bedouin fathers participated in the study. The process of recruiting fathers was more difficult than recruiting mothers, but given that the paternal perspective was essential for understanding SGs in the Bedouin society, it was decided to include the small paternal group in the study, using the minimum sample size necessary for analysis. All parents lived in the Negev, the southern region of Israel. Most of the participating parents (54%) lived in the permanent Bedouin townships, 42% lived in the villages of the Bedouin diaspora, and 4% lived in Beer-Sheva, the capital city of the district (see Table 1). Although some of the participants were parents of a number of children, each mother or father was interviewed in reference to only one of his or her children. Criteria for choice of target-child were that the child was 3 to 6 years old and had no developmental disorders. In an attempt to reach a balanced representation of both genders, parents who had both a boy and a girl who fit the criteria for the target-child were encouraged to choose the gender that was under-represented in the sample at that point of data collection.

The mean age of mothers was 31.65 years ($SD = 5.05$, range = 23-42), and the mean age of fathers was 34.60 years ($SD = 6.87$, range = 24-52). The mean age of target-children was 4.56 years ($SD = 1.09$, range = 2.46-6.80). About half of the parents completed the research questions in reference to their son and half in reference to their daughter. All mothers and fathers were married. Most mothers came from monogamous families; however, some mothers came from polygamous families, meaning that their husbands (the target-child’s father) were married to one or more other women. As for the fathers, two of the fathers were married to at least one other woman in addition to the target-child’s mother.

The sample was diverse in maternal education levels: 11% of the mothers had completed 6 years or less of primary education, 52% of the mothers had 6 to 12 years of education, and 37% of the mothers had more than 12 years of education (either academic or vocational). Mothers’ average number of years of education was 11.35 ($SD = 4.71$) and ranged from 0 to 19 years of formal education. As for employment status, about half of the mothers were unemployed and the
other half either had paying jobs or were students. As for the fathers, 50% completed 6 to 12 years of education, and 50% acquired more than 12 years of education (academic or vocational). Fathers’ average number of years of education was 13.67 (SD = 2.95) and ranged from 7 to 19 years of formal education. As for employment status, only a few fathers were unemployed; the majority either had paid jobs or were students.

Most parents were recruited at child development centers situated in Bedouin localities. A research assistant fluent in the Arabic language approached parents at the clinic and asked them to participate in the study. Parents who agreed to participate were led to a quiet, private room inside the clinic. They received a short explanation about the purpose and procedure of the study before signing a consent form. A few of the parents were recruited through the snowball method, whereby parents who had already participated recommended friends, neighbors, or kin who fit the criteria for participation and might agree to join the study. In these cases, research assistants contacted potential participants by phone, and interested families were visited at home, where the interview was conducted. All participants were given a small gift to show appreciation for their cooperation. Because literacy levels were diverse in this sample, participants were given the choice to be read the questions by the interviewer.

**Measures and Procedure**

All measures were translated from Hebrew to Arabic by two research assistants fluent in both Hebrew and Arabic. Points of disagreement were discussed until consensus was reached. The reconciled version of the translation was then reviewed by two Bedouin professionals in child development, who were fluent in both Hebrew and Arabic, to ensure the conceptual adequacy of
the measures as well as the clarity of language. Interviews were conducted in Arabic by three female Arab research assistants. The procedure included a demographic questionnaire, the Socialization Goals Rating Task, and the Acculturation Questionnaire.

**The Socialization Goals Rating Task.** Parents were asked to imagine their child as a grown adult, 20 to 30 years ahead, and to think about what sort of a person they wished him or her to become in terms of personal traits, qualities, and skills they would want him or her to possess. Then, parents were handed 12 cards listing personal qualities presented in random order. They were asked to first read all the 12 cards from beginning to end and then to rank the cards according to their importance (e.g., “How important is it for your child to possess each of the following qualities as an adult?”). Ranking was performed in two stages: First, parents were asked to place each card on a three-dimensional mini staircase, ranging from highest step (“very important”), middle step (“important”), lowest step (“slightly important”), and no step (“not important”). Next, to create a detailed SG hierarchy, parents were handed back the cards they had placed on the highest step (“very important”) and were asked to sort these cards from most important to relatively less important. This process was repeated for all other steps (categories) to create a full rating for the 12 cards. The 12 qualities listed on the cards comprised two clusters of SGs: 6 individualistic SGs and 6 collectivistic SGs (see Table 2). Individualistic SGs included independence, self-confidence, self-fulfillment, personal happiness, ambitiousness, and assertiveness. Collectivistic SGs included proper demeanor, close ties with the family, respected by others, respect elders, take care of parents in old age, and help others.

### Table 2. Individualistic and Collectivistic SGs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individualistic SGs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Child will rely on himself or herself; will make his or her own decisions; will not depend on others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td>Child will have confidence in himself or herself; will express himself or herself freely in the presence of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-fulfillment</td>
<td>Child will discover his or her personal talents; will fulfill his or her potential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal happiness</td>
<td>Child will be content with his or her life; will feel satisfied with his or her life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambitiousness</td>
<td>Child will pursue his or her ambitions; will take responsibility on his or her own life and enhance himself or herself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>Child will stand up for himself or herself; will be able to persuade others to accept his or her opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collectivistic SGs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper demeanor</td>
<td>Child will conduct himself or herself according to the accepted norms of the society; will preserve family honor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close ties with family</td>
<td>Child will maintain close ties with family members; will aid family members in times of need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respected by others</td>
<td>Child will be respected by the society. For example, people will turn to him or her for advice or for help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect elders</td>
<td>Child will obey his or her parents and elders in the family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take care of parents</td>
<td>Child will take care of his or her parents in the parents’ old age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help others</td>
<td>Child will be sensitive to the needs of others; will often help others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. SG = socialization goal.
At the end of the ranking process, each parent created a SG hierarchy, sorted from most valued SG to least valued SG. A score on the measurement of SG preference was calculated for each parent. Scores ranged from 0 to 5 and were calculated by recording how many goals out of the top five SGs in the SG hierarchy belonged to the individualistic SG cluster. Low scores indicated a tendency to prefer collectivistic SGs, and high scores indicated a tendency to prefer individualistic goals. For example, a score of 4 indicated that for the top five most valued SGs, the parent chose four SGs from the individualistic cluster and one SG from the collectivistic cluster.

**Figure 1.** Socialization goal preferences.  
Note. Ratios show the proportion of individualistic SGs (I) to collectivistic SGs (C) within the top five most desirable SGs. Percentages show the frequency of ratios according to the participants' ratings in the SGs Rating Task. SG = socialization goal.

**Coding.** At the end of the ranking process, each parent created a SG hierarchy, sorted from most valued SG to least valued SG. A score on the measurement of SG preference was calculated for each parent. Scores ranged from 0 to 5 and were calculated by recording how many goals out of the top five SGs in the SG hierarchy belonged to the individualistic SG cluster. Low scores indicated a tendency to prefer collectivistic SGs, and high scores indicated a tendency to prefer individualistic goals. For example, a score of 4 indicated that for the top five most valued SGs, the parent chose four SGs from the individualistic cluster and one SG from the collectivistic cluster.

**Acculturation Questionnaire.** Parents completed an acculturation questionnaire, measuring the extent to which they maintained contact and participation with the Bedouin culture and the extent of contact and participation with the Jewish Israeli culture. Questions were adjusted from Regev, Gueron-Sela, and Atzaba-Poria (2012) specifically to correspond to parents from the Bedouin society and their day-to-day reality. Parents indicated on a 4-point Likert-type scale their level of agreement with 32 statements, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). Eleven of the statements measured “contact and participation in Bedouin culture” (e.g., I prefer to watch Arabic-speaking channels on TV; I feel proud of my Bedouin origin, α = .70), and 21 statements measured “contact and participation in Israeli Jewish culture” (e.g., I feel comfortable working with Jewish people; I feel that I am part of the Israeli society, α = .76).

**Results**

**Preliminary Analysis**

The majority of the parents exhibited a mixed pattern of SG preference, meaning that for their top five most desirable SGs, they chose both individualistic and collectivistic SGs (see Figure 1).
Only a few of the parents showed a sharp preference for one of the SG clusters. Specifically, five parents chose SGs from the individualistic cluster for all the top five places in their hierarchy, and only one parent chose from the collectivistic cluster for all the top five places in his hierarchy. Furthermore, the examination of the specific parental SG preferences indicated that the most desirable SGs were personal happiness, chosen by 60% of the parents, self-confidence, chosen by 58% of the parents, and respected by others and respects elders, each chosen by 52% of the parents. Assertiveness stood out as the least valued SG, chosen by 11% of the parents (see Table 3).

Fathers and mothers differed significantly on the acculturation scales. Specifically, fathers scored higher on contact and participation in Israeli Jewish culture, t(92) = 2.61, p < .05, and mothers scored higher on contact and participation in Bedouin culture, t(92) = −.07, p < .05. However, no significant difference was found in SG preferences between mothers and fathers, that is to say, mothers and fathers did not differ in their tendency to prefer individualistic or collectivistic SGs for their children, t(93) = −0.41, ns.

**Main Analyses**

**Parental acculturation and SGs.** To test the first hypothesis proposing that mothers and fathers with higher levels of contact and participation in Israeli Jewish culture would prefer individualistic SGs, Pearson correlations were conducted separately for fathers and mothers. As seen in Table 4, the hypothesis was supported for mothers but not for fathers. Specifically, maternal level of contact with Israeli Jewish culture was positively correlated with SG preferences, such that mothers who had a higher level of contact with Israeli Jewish culture tended to rate higher individualistic SGs, r = .46, p < .001. Furthermore, a negative association was found between maternal contact with Bedouin culture and mothers’ SG preferences, r = −.35, p < .01, indicating that mothers who maintained high levels of contact with Bedouin culture tended to prefer more collectivistic SGs for their children.

To further analyze differences in SG preferences, the contact with Israeli Jewish culture scale was split using a scale midpoint, thus creating two groups of mothers: high level of contact with Israeli Jewish culture (n = 36) and low level of contact with Israeli Jewish culture (n = 28). Further analysis examining the specific SGs revealed that mothers who had a high level of contact with Israeli Jewish culture were significantly more likely to endorse self-fulfillment and self-confidence as important SGs for their child than mothers who had a low level of contact with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socialization goals</th>
<th>Desirability (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal happiness</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respected by others</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect elders</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambitiousness</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take care of parents in old age</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper demeanor</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-fulfillment</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close ties with family</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help others</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Desirability of Socialization Goals.


Table 4. Pearson Correlations Between Variables for Mothers and Fathers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mothers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parental education</td>
<td>Contact and participation in Israeli Jewish culture</td>
<td>Contact and participation in Bedouin culture</td>
<td>SG preferences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental education</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>−.20</td>
<td>.33*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact and participation in Israeli Jewish culture</td>
<td>.40***</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>−.49**</td>
<td>−.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact and participation in Bedouin culture</td>
<td>−.38**</td>
<td>−.44**</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG preferences</td>
<td>.35***</td>
<td>.46***</td>
<td>−.35**</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Figures above the diagonal represent correlations for fathers; figures below the diagonal represent correlations for mothers. SG = socialization goal.

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001, two-tailed.

Israeli Jewish culture (see Figure 2). Mothers who had a low level of contact with Israeli Jewish culture were significantly more likely to endorse the SG take care of parents in their old age than mothers who had a high level of contact with Israeli Jewish culture. It should be noted that because 97% of the mothers scored above midpoint on the “contact and participation in Bedouin
As for fathers, surprisingly, SG preferences were not related to their reports on contact and participation in either of the two cultures, $r_s = .00, −.02$.

**Parental education and SGs.** To test the second hypothesis proposing that parental level of education would be correlated with SG preferences, Pearson correlations were conducted. Results indicated that maternal level of education was positively correlated with SG preferences; thus, higher levels of maternal education were associated with a stronger preference for individualistic SGs over collectivistic SGs, $r = .35, p < .01$. As for fathers, a similar pattern of results was found. Paternal level of education was positively associated with SG preferences, $r = .33, p < .05$, one-tailed, meaning that fathers with higher levels of education tended to rate individualistic SGs higher and preferred them over collectivistic SGs. The follow-up examination of parental differences in specific goal preferences revealed that highly educated parents (i.e., parents with more than 12 years of education) placed significantly greater value on self-fulfillment and ambitiousness than less educated parents (see Figure 3). In addition, they also emphasized self-confidence more than less educated parents; this difference neared significance. Conversely, less educated parents valued respect elders significantly more than highly educated parents did.

To address the third hypothesis, proposing that education and acculturation each have a unique contribution in predicting SGs, a multiple regression analysis was performed. This examination was conducted only for mothers because, as mentioned, paternal acculturation scale, a follow-up examination was not conducted for this scale. As for fathers, surprisingly, SG preferences were not related to their reports on contact and participation in either of the two cultures, $r_s = .00, −.02$.

![Figure 3. Socialization goal desirability differences between parents with high versus low educational levels.](image)

**Note.** Percentages show the frequency of ratios according to the participants' ratings in the SGs Rating Task. SG = socialization goal.

$**p < .01.$
scales were not found to be related to paternal SGs. Results indicated that the regression model was significant, $F(3, 60) = 7.35, p < .01$, explaining 27% of the variance in SG preferences. However, with all three predictors included in the regression model, maternal contact with Israeli Jewish culture was the only significant predictor, $\beta = .32, p < .05$. Maternal education ($\beta = .15, ns$) and contact with Bedouin culture ($\beta = -.18, ns$) did not have a unique contribution beyond the significant contribution of contact with Israeli Jewish culture to the SG preferences.

### Child gender and SGs

To test the fourth hypothesis, proposing that parents would rate higher individualistic SGs for their sons and would rate higher collectivistic SGs for their daughters, $t$ test analyses were conducted. Results supported the hypothesis, indicating that parental SG preferences differed significantly according to child’s gender. As predicted, parents tended to prefer individualistic SGs more for their boys, $M = 2.71, SD = 1.18$, than for their girls, $M = 2.26, SD = 1.11$; $t(93) = 1.92, p < .05$. These findings did not differ for mothers or fathers, $F(1, 91) = 0.18, ns$. Further analysis examining the specific SGs revealed that parents placed significantly greater value on proper demeanor for girls than for boys. In addition, parents reported higher expectations for their daughters than their sons to be respected by others; this difference neared significance. Conversely, parents emphasized ambitiousness significantly more for boys than for girls (see Figure 4).
Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to investigate Bedouin parents’ images of the adaptive adult as expressed by their ratings of individualistic and collectivistic SGs. Driven by ecological (Bronfenbrenner, 1995) and developmental (Belsky & Jaffee, 2006) models, we examined how contextual factors, namely, parental education, acculturation style, and child’s gender relate to parental SGs. Furthermore, because fathers are not replicas of mothers (Atzaba-Poria & Pike, 2008), separate examinations for mothers and fathers were necessary to uncover similarities and differences in fathers’ and mothers’ SGs, as well as in the correlates of those SGs (Goodnow & Collins, 1990; Phalet & Schönplug, 2001).

Results of the first hypothesis, proposing that parental acculturation would be correlated with SG preferences, were supported for mothers but not for fathers. Mothers who reported having higher levels of contact and participation in Israeli Jewish culture and lower levels of contact and participation in Bedouin culture preferred more individualistic SGs over collectivistic SGs, whereas mothers who maintained higher levels of contact and participation in Bedouin culture and lower levels of contact and participation in Israeli Jewish culture preferred more collectivistic SGs over individualistic SGs. These results imply that when mothers are motivated to have closer contact with Jewish society—as expressed by choices of food, music, clothes, having Jewish friends, and acquiring proficiency in the Hebrew language—they prefer the more Western individualistic values—which characterize the Israeli Jewish mainstream culture (Feldman & Masalha, 2010; Samoha, 1999)—for their children. It appears that these mothers adopt Jewish Israeli values and believe that to become competent adaptive adults, their children ought to be ambitious, self-confident, and strive toward self-fulfillment. Furthermore, interestingly, mothers with more contact with Jewish society had not completely abandoned collectivistic SGs. The general value of respect—showing respect and gaining the respect of others—seemed to remain a core value, endorsed regardless of maternal levels of acculturation.

As for fathers, levels of contact and participation in Israeli Jewish culture and Bedouin culture were not related to the preference of one SG cluster over the other. Fathers who reported having high levels of contact with Israeli Jewish culture did not perceive the Western individualistic values as more important for their children than collectivistic values, despite the fact that these values are characteristic of the dominant Israeli Jewish culture. It seems that there is no link between the fathers’ own acculturation style, the extent of contact and participation that they have as adults with Jewish Israeli and Bedouin cultures, and the expectations that they have as parents for their children. This finding further supports previous findings indicating that, for fathers, there is a distinction between their roles as men and fathers (Pleck, 1997).

The diverse pattern for mothers and fathers is consistent with previous research regarding acculturation, gender, and value change. For example, in a study that examined values among Chinese university students in Canada, male students were found to be more traditional than their female peers with respect to beliefs about gender roles and family hierarchy (Tang & Dion, 1999). This result is expected, because nontraditional gender role beliefs generally work to the advantage of women, enabling them to have more freedom and to make more independent choices (Ghuman, 1997; Tang & Dion, 1999). For men, however, nontraditional gender role beliefs may be perceived as a threat to male authority in the family (Lim, 1997). In the current study, we did not find an overall difference between mothers and fathers in their SG preferences. However, findings imply that mothers’ images of the adults they wish their children to become are susceptible to change as a result of their involvement in Israeli Jewish society, whereas fathers’ perceptions of the adaptive adult are somewhat immune to the level of fathers’ involvement in Israeli Jewish society.

Furthermore, results supported the second hypothesis and indicated that both mothers and fathers with more education preferred more individualistic SGs over collectivistic SGs, whereas
mothers and fathers with less education preferred more collectivistic SGs over individualistic SGs. Educated parents viewed the development of self-confidence and personal talents as well as the pursuit of ambitions as appropriate qualities for the adaptive adult. Parents who had less education put more emphasis on traditional values such as maintaining proper conduct and a respectable stance, showing respect toward elders, and fulfilling family obligations such as taking care of parents in old age. These findings are mostly consistent with previous research (Durgel et al., 2009; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001), except for one point: Studies have repeatedly found that educated parents highlight independence as an important SG (Citlak et al., 2008; Park et al., 2014). Interestingly, this finding was not replicated in our study. Instead, independence was a relatively low priority for both less educated and highly educated parents. This finding may suggest that the quality of independence is particularly alien to the Bedouin worldview compared with other individualistic SGs (Dwairy, 2004).

The effects of higher education on female Bedouin students have sparked much interest in the past decade (Abu-Rabia-Queder, 2008, 2011; Abu-Rabia-Queder & Karplus, 2013; Pessatte-Schubert, 2004). Conversely, literature regarding the effects of higher education on male Bedouin students is scarce. Literature on female Bedouin students describes their experience of entering the university as that of entering a new world that exists parallel to the world of their village or town (Abu-Rabia-Queder & Karplus, 2013), with norms, behavioral codes, and expectations being very different from their culture of origin. For example, during their studies, female Bedouin students are encouraged to express their opinions and their feelings, a manner of discourse that is not encouraged in their home environment (Abu-Rabia-Queder & Karplus, 2013). Academic studies also tend to highlight critical thinking and personal achievement, and obedience and harmonious functioning of the group are not rewarded. Thus, it is plausible that the experience of higher education is related to a woman’s embrace of more individualistic SGs as desired values for her children.

The third hypothesis proposed that both parental education and acculturation levels would have a unique contribution in predicting SGs. As discussed earlier, paternal acculturation levels were not related to SGs; thus, this hypothesis was tested only for mothers. The examination of the regression model revealed that maternal contact with Israeli Jewish culture was the stronger predictor of SGs. Maternal education and maternal contact with the Bedouin culture did not have a unique contribution. The correlation between contact with Israeli Jewish culture and maternal education was only moderate and, thus, precludes multicollinearity risk. This finding supports the notion that acquiring a higher education and integrating into the dominant culture are two processes that may evolve in relation to one another, but each of these processes may also occur separately without necessarily giving rise to the other. Second, these findings indicate that for mothers, levels of contact and participation with Israeli Jewish culture were related more to their choice of SGs for their children relative to education and contact with Bedouin culture. It is possible that having contact with the dominant individualistic culture elicits a process of change in personal values and, in turn, in the values that mothers choose to transmit to their children. In fact, the drop in beta value for maternal education when including the acculturation measures in the regression model may suggest a mediation model, indicating that the link between maternal education and SGs is partly accounted for by acculturation.

The fourth goal of this study was to examine differences in parental SGs according to child’s gender. Results supported the hypothesis that parents emphasized more individualistic SGs for their sons than for their daughters. It appears that individualistic qualities are perceived as more desirable for the adult Bedouin man than for the adult Bedouin woman. This result indicates that traditional Bedouin feminine and masculine images continue to prevail, despite the changes that the Bedouin society is undergoing, such as more women acquiring higher education.

The most desirable SG for sons was self-confidence, followed by personal happiness, ambitious, take care of parents in old age, and respect elders; three of these SGs belong to the
individualistic SG cluster and two to the collectivistic cluster. Ambition and self-confidence may well serve the adult Bedouin man in his role as head of the family, controller of family resources, and as the one responsible for looking out for the family interests. The high ratings of the SG *take care of parents in old age* for boys may also reflect parents’ expectation that when they grow old, they will rely more on their sons than their daughters; once again, because the male is seen as the controller of family resources. The most desirable SG for daughters was *respected by others* followed by *personal happiness, proper demeanor, respect elders,* and *self-confidence.* The high ratings of the SGs *respected by others* and *proper demeanor* may reflect to some extent the traditional image of the adult Bedouin woman, who mostly spends her time within the private family sphere and when entering the public sphere takes great care to preserve her chastity and her family’s good name.

Two additional points are noteworthy with regard to the fourth hypothesis: First, the discrepancy between boys and girls was larger for fathers in comparison with mothers. Although this difference did not reach significance, it suggests that fathers’ images of the adaptive adult man and woman are more distinct from one another in comparison with mothers’ images. Second, unlike the discrepancies found for fathers and for less educated mothers, for highly educated mothers, there was no discrepancy between mean scores on SG preferences for boys and girls. This trend suggests that the images of the adaptive adult held by educated mothers are congruent for both their sons and daughters. Due to power limitations, these differences were only examined descriptively, not statistically.

From a more general perspective, this study’s results show an overall mixed pattern of SG preferences, as indicated by the fact that 94% of the parents selected both individualistic and collectivistic SGs for their most preferred SGs. These findings are partly consistent with Kağitçibaşi’s (2007) theory of family change. According to this approach, in several locations worldwide, where a collectivistic cultural group is going through a process of acculturation as a result of continuous contact with Western culture (usually accompanied by industrialization and penetration of technology), parents endorse a synthesized system of values including both individualistic and collectivistic values. In the current study, the synthesized pattern of values is exemplified by the top five most desirable SGs (see Table 3), which include the individualistic SGs *personal happiness, self-confidence,* and *ambitious* at first, second, and fifth places, respectively, and the collectivistic SGs *respected by others* and *respect elders* in third and fourth places. At the same time, our findings are inconsistent with the specific predictions of the family change theory as to the exact kind of synthesis that will emerge. According to the family change theory, in the context of sociocultural change, parents will encourage independence and self-reliance in the domains of education and economy, but at the same time, they will encourage emotional interdependence within the family. In the current study, both *independence* and *close ties with the family* were rated as less desirable, whereas other SGs stood out as highly desirable. The discrepancy between the family change theory and the results of the current study suggest that collectivistic cultures may differ in the values they hold as core and fundamental, and that synthesis between collectivistic and individualistic values may occur in more than one way.

**Limitations and Future Directions**

Several limitations should be noted. First, the educational level of the Bedouin population is misrepresented in this study, with high rates of higher education (academic and vocational) reported for mothers (37%) and for fathers (50%). These rates are higher than the reported proportion among the Bedouin population in the Negev (Abu-Bader, 2010). Furthermore, the over-representation of higher education is partly due to the difficulty in recruiting fathers; because fathers were less likely to attend child development centers, the majority of fathers were recruited via the snowball method, thus leading to the over-representation of higher educational levels. Replicating this
study in future research, including a larger sample of fathers and a more representational sample in terms of educational level, may provide further and stronger evidence to support our findings.

Another point that requires attention is the choice of SGs for the card task. The choice of the 12 SGs was based on the relevant literature and on consultations with Bedouin professionals in child development. Nonetheless, it is by no means an exhaustive list of SGs, and it is possible that it does not include SGs that may be highly valued by some Bedouin parents. Future studies using qualitative investigation may provide information to support our choice of values or to indicate additional values that need to be considered. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, our premise is that SGs are the underlying reason for parental behaviors. Thus, to improve the understanding of parenting and child development in the Bedouin society, future studies may aim to empirically examine the links between parental SGs, parental behaviors, and child developmental outcomes.

Finally, this study focused on Bedouin parents living in the Negev. Replicating the study with other ethnic minority and immigrant parents will provide information on whether these findings are specific to the Bedouin population or can be generalized to other ethnic groups.

Conclusion and Implications

This study investigated parental SGs in a unique cultural group in Israel that is undergoing a sociocultural transition, specifically, the Bedouins of the Negev. The novelty of this study was the separate examination of two different types of cultural encounters: a more formal encounter of the two cultures through education and a more psychological encounter, as seen in parental acculturation style. This is the first study to examine these two distinct settings simultaneously, thus examining their relative contribution to parental SGs. Our findings demonstrate conflicting trends (Abu-Sif, 2009; Al-Krenawi, 2001) prevalent in Bedouin parents’ long-term goals for their young children today. On one hand, the findings point to the influence of modern trends, as evident by the finding that acquiring high education was related to endorsement of Western individualistic goals, both among mothers and fathers. High involvement in the dominant culture and low involvement in the Bedouin culture were related to an endorsement of Western individualistic goals for mothers but not for fathers, suggesting that mothers’ images of the adults they wish their children to become are susceptible to change as a result of their acculturation attitude, whereas fathers’ perceptions of the adaptive adult are somewhat immune to this factor. On the other hand, conservative trends are also at work in the Bedouin society, as expressed by parents’ endorsement of individualistic goals for their sons and collectivistic goals for their daughters, goals that are in line with traditional Bedouin feminine and masculine images.

The findings of this study also have implications for interventions carried out by professionals working with children and their parents. Bedouin parents often receive the advice and instructions of child development professionals who are predominantly Israeli Jewish. Because most therapeutic interventions have been developed in a Western cultural context, these interventions are often difficult to use within the traditional Bedouin culture (Gearing et al., 2013). When meeting with families from Bedouin origin, professionals are advised to embrace cultural sensitivity and to consider individual differences in parental acculturation and education levels as well as child’s gender. These elements—acculturation, education, and gender—were found to be related to parental SGs and, thus, may be directly linked to parents’ expectations and behavior toward their children. The results of this study show that although individualistic SGs such as self-confidence, ambition, and development of personal skills were viewed as desired values in some Bedouin families, collectivistic SGs were still widely prevalent and perceived as adaptive for adult life. Thus, when working with traditional families, professionals need to keep in mind that strong emphasis on child autonomy and self-assertion during intervention may not be desired and accepted in some families and may even disrupt the alliance with the parents.

Acknowledgments

The authors express their gratitude to the research assistants Sara Alwakele, Wafa Amro, and Nour Alnabbari for their dedicated participation in data collection.
Declaration of Conflicting Interests
The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding
The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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