



Title	EXPRESSIVE BEHAVIOR OF JAPANESE MOTHERS IN RESPONSE TO THEIR 5-MONTH-OLD INFANTS' NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE EMOTION EXPRESSION
Author(s)	KANAYA, Yuko; BRADSHAW, Donna L.; NAKAMURA, Chiaki; MIYAKE, Kazuo
Citation	乳幼児発達臨床センター年報, 10, 55-59
Issue Date	1988-03
Doc URL	http://hdl.handle.net/2115/25243
Type	bulletin (article)
File Information	10_P55-59.pdf



[Instructions for use](#)

EXPRESSIVE BEHAVIOR OF JAPANESE MOTHERS IN RESPONSE TO THEIR 5-MONTH-OLD INFANTS' NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE EMOTION EXPRESSION

Yuko Kanaya

Kokugakuin Women's Junior College

Donna L. Bradshaw

Harvard University

Chiaki Nakamura, and Kazuo Miyake

Hokkaido University

This study presents descriptive data on Japanese mother-infant emotional communication in the home. It is the first phase of a longitudinal, cross-cultural study of socialization of emotion. Twelve Japanese mothers and their 5-month-old infants were randomly chosen from a longitudinal sample of 44 in order to develop a coding system. Analysis was carried by replaying the video and coding spontaneous emotional expressions of mothers and infants at home. For this report, both infants and mothers' hedonic tones were analyzed.

Main findings were as follows: Mothers seldom respond negatively to their infants' negative emotion. By contrast, mothers tend to encourage and sustain infants' positive emotion by expressing clearly positive or playful affect. Percentage of mothers' non-response to each of infants' emotion expression varies: Lower percentage of infants' intense (cry) or clear (smile, laugh) expression tended to meet mothers' non-response than infants' slightly negative or slightly positive expression.

Key words: mother-infant emotional communication; negative and positive emotion expression

Introduction

Izard and Malatesta (1987) reviewed several cross-cultural studies and pointed out the cultural specificity of emotion socialization and the developmental role of very early instruction in emotion expression regulation. Caudill and Weinstein (1969) found that American mothers stimulated their infants more and their speech to the infants appeared

The earlier version of this paper was presented at the biennial meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development, Tokyo, July, 1987.

This research was supported by grants from the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (No. 60301011, Principal investigator: Kazuo Miyake), and Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. (US-Japan Educational and Cultural Cooperative Research: Principal investigator: Kazuo Miyake)

Requests for reprint should be sent to Yuko Kanaya, Kokugakuin Women's Junior College, Takikawa, Hokkaido, 073, Japan.

to be directed at reinforcing the happy vocalization, while Japanese mothers' speech to their infants usually occurred in order to soothe them and put down their unhappy vocalization. Dixon et al. (1981) mentioned that early parent-infant relationships among the Gusii of Kenya were characterized by avoidance of eye-to-eye contact and restraint in playful interactions. The Gusii believe the "evil eye," therefore they avert gaze and use bland countenance in interpersonal relationships. These findings suggest that cultural differences in socialization might be implicitly influenced by belief system each culture has to produce different styles of expression regulation.

The purpose of this study is to present descriptive data on Japanese mother-infant emotional communication in the home. It is the first phase of a longitudinal, cross-cultural (Japan-US) study of socialization of emotion, focusing on how infants' regulation of their expression is enculturated through the mother's behavior. In order to understand this process, it is necessary to gather data on maternal responses to different types of infant expressions and on the nature of the emotion expressions mothers display to their infants in the home.

Method

Subjects

Twelve mothers and their 5-month-old infants were randomly selected from a longitudinal sample of 44 (Table 1). They were participants in a Japan-US comparative study of infant emotional socialization.

TABLE 1
The number of subjects

5-month-old	Total	First-born		Second-born	
		boy	girl	boy	girl
Longitudinal sample	44	15	11	11	7
		26		18	
Randomly selected for this study	12	3	3	3	3
		6		6	

Procedure

(1) Home observation of mother-infant emotional communication at 5 months of age

A total 90 minutes of spontaneous mother-infant communication in the home was videotaped using 2 cameras, one focusing on each partner. Each mother was instructed to behave as usual and to try to reduce their anxiety about being observed. The two camera operators and one observer made every effort not to interfere with the mother and infant's ongoing flow of behavior.

(2) Coding system for describing maternal and infant emotion expression

For this analysis, 30 seconds of every 2 and a half minutes were coded. The digital timer images superimposed on the tapes were used. Categories used for infants' facial and vocal expressions were as follows : (1) intense negative (e.g. intense cry), (2) negative (e.g. fuss, cry, or negative vocalization), (3) slightly negative, (4) clearly

positive (e.g. clear smile, or laugh), (5) slightly positive or neutral. Both the antecedent events and the mother's expressive and instrumental responses were recorded. Maternal expressions were rated for hedonic tones (negative, slightly negative, neutral, positive, and clearly positive) and quality (as playful, stimulating, or soft when relevant). These coding systems were tentatively developed by consulting Izard's MAX (1983) and Scherer's research on vocal expression (1982).

Three coders independently coded both the maternal and infant facial or vocal expression. With regard to disagreements, final decision was made after thorough examination and discussion among the coders.

Results and Discussions

(1) Mothers' different hedonic tones in response to their infants' negative or positive emotion

Mothers' types of response to infants' negative, slightly positive/neutral, or positive emotion expression were illustrated in Figure 1. Primary findings were as follows: Mothers almost never display negative affect to their 5-month-old infants except occasional empathic mock sad signals. When infants showed positive expressions, mothers tended to respond with the same expression with slight exaggeration. This was not true when infant expressions were negative.

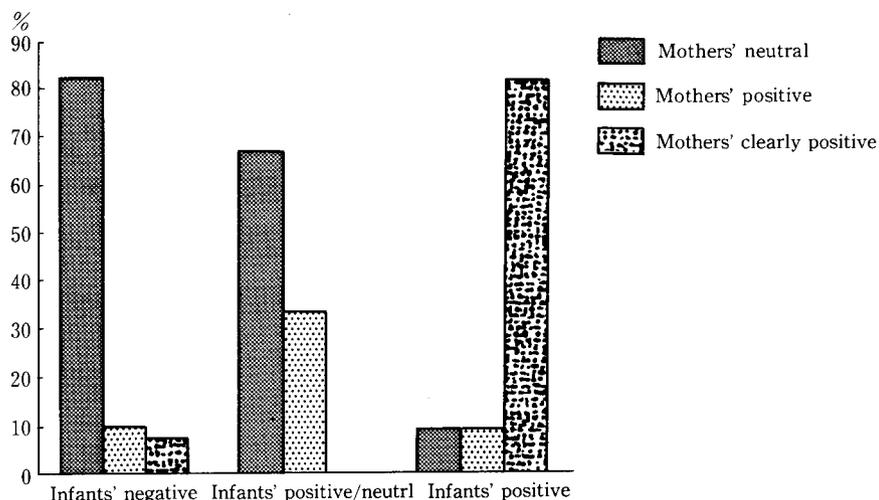


FIGURE 1 Japanese mothers' emotional expression in response to their 5-month-old infants' emotion expression.

(2) Mothers' non-response to infants' negative expression

The percentages of mothers' non-response to infants' negative vocalization and/or negative facial expressions and intense cry were lower than when infants showed other negative expressions (Figure 2). Low frequency of the infants' intense negative expression may cause higher percentage of mothers' non-response to them.

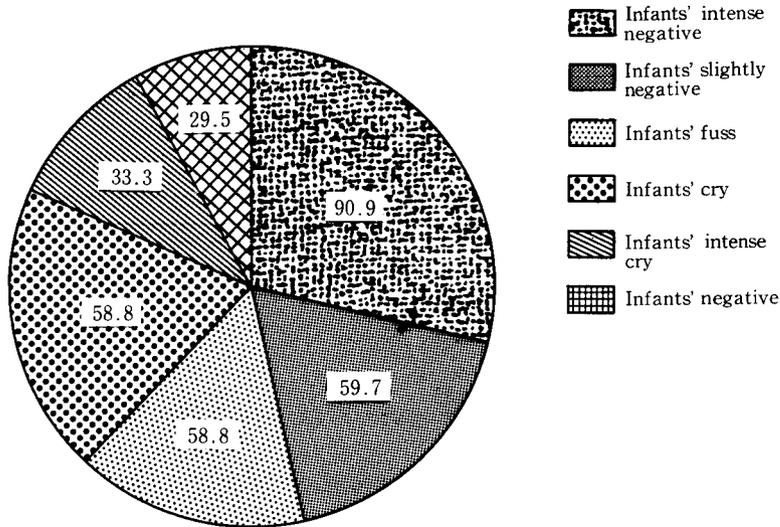


FIGURE 2 Japanese mothers' non-response to their infants' negative expressions. The numbers on the graph indicate the percentage of mothers' non-response to each of infants' negative expression.

(3) Mothers' non-response to infants' positive expression

As shown in Figure 3, the percentages of mothers' non-response to infants' interest (face) and slightly positive expressions (face and/or vocal) were higher than to infants' positive expressions (smile or laugh).

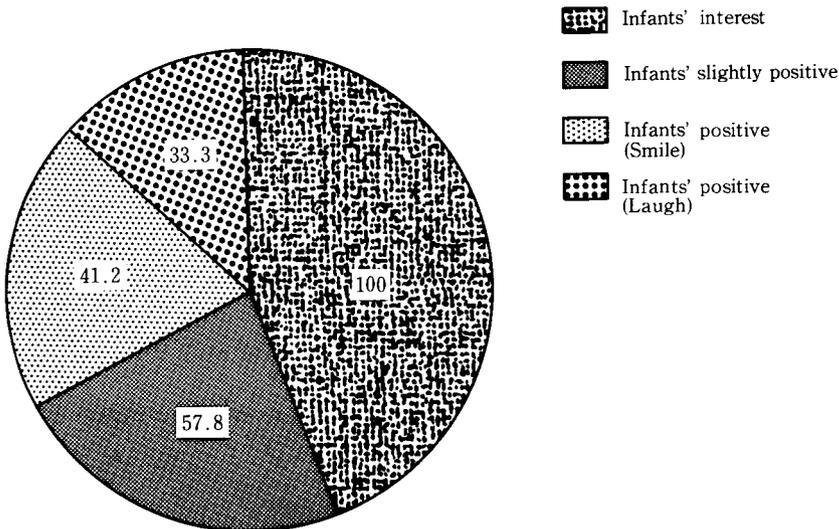


FIGURE 3 Japanese mothers' non-response to their infants' positive expressions. The numbers on the graph indicate the percentage of mothers' non-response to each of infants positive expression.

This suggests that mothers of 5 month-olds may tend to express clearly positive emotion in responding to their infants' positive emotion expression in order to encourage or sustain their infants' pleasantness. They seldom show negative emotion expression to any infants' negative signal, although they show some sad/sympathetic responses to

infants' distress, a finding consistent with reports from more structured observations. Rather than matching infant negativity, they displayed neutral or slight (but not intense) positive emotions to their infants' negative emotion as they played the role of modulator of their infants' negative emotion. As these findings were based on a small sample, we must examine the validity of the coding system adopted with larger sample and comparing samples from other societies.

References

- Campos, J. J., Barrett, K., Lamb, M., Goldsmith, H., & Stenberg, C. (1983). Socioemotional development, In M. Haith & J. Campos (Eds), *Infancy and developmental psychology*, Vol. 2 of P. Mussen, *Handbook of child psychology*. New York : Wiley.
- Caudill, W. & Weinstein, H. (1969). Maternal care and infant behavior in Japan and America. *Psychiatry*, 32, 12-43.
- Dixson, S., Tronick, E., Keeler, C., & Brazelton, T. B. (1981). Mother-infant interaction among the Gusii of Kenya. In T. Field, A. M. Sostek, P. Vietze & P. H. Leiderman (Eds.), *Culture and early interaction*. Hillsdale, NJ : Erlbaum.
- Emde, R. N., Kligman, D. H., Reich, J. H., & Wade, T. D. (1978). Emotional expression in infancy : I. Initial studies of social signaling and an emergent model. In M. Lewis & L. A. Rosenblum (Eds), *The development of affect*. Genesis of behavior : Vol. 1. New York : Plenum.
- Izard, C. E. (1983). *The maximally discriminative facial movement coding system*. Revised Edition. Instructional Resources Center, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware.
- Izard, C. E., & Malatesta, C. Z. (1987). Perspectives on emotional development I: Differential emotion theory of early emotional development. In J. D. Osofsky (Ed.), *Handbook of infant development*. 2nd edition. New York : Wiley.
- Malatesta, C. E. & Haviland, J. M. (1985). Signals, symbols, and socialization : The modification of emotional expression in human development. In M. Lewis & C. Saarni (Eds.), *The socialization of emotion*. Genesis of behavior : Vol. 5. New York : Plenum.
- Schere, K. R. (1982). Method of research on vocal communication : paradigms and parameters. In K. R. Schere & P. Ekman (Eds.), *Handbook of methods in nonverbal behavior research*. New York : Cambridge University Press.