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Urban-Rural Differences in Sociable and Disruptive Behavior of Kenya Children[1]

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The city mouse lives in a house;
The garden mouse lives in a bower;
He's friendly with the frogs and toads,
And sees the pretty plants in flower.

The city mouse eats bread and cheese;
The garden mouse eats what he can;
We will not grudge him seeds and stocks,
Poor little timid, furry man (Rossetti 1972).

Ms. Rossetti has made some useful observations about mice and men. Rural children do indeed seem to be friendlier and more sociable than their city cousins, at least in Kenya. And the country child in Kenya, although far from timid, seems to display fewer dominant and aggressive social behaviors in the rural setting than occur in the city. Ms. Rossetti also has the germ of a theory for these differences—urban children and mothers eat store bought bread and cheese, and do not have to perform the horticultural tasks and chores required by the country child to eat what he or she can. Differential routines and chores related to the subsistence economy may indeed play an important role in social behavior differences in city and country.

The influence of cities on families, parents, and children is a paradoxical topic in a way. Although folk views of the city generally picture strong effects (in the West, effects often thought to be deleterious compared to some buccolic alternative), systematic research on urban-rural differences in child development and parenting often cannot find systematic effects. When differences are found, the specific features of the city which cause them cannot readily be disentangled. Cross-cultural work on the city only re-emphasizes this problem by documenting the enormous variety of cities around the world (e.g., Gulick 1973; Basham 1978). There are cities throughout the world, and neighborhoods within most cities, which belie at least some of the standard ecological definitions of urban sociology—large size, high population, high density, social complexity, cultural heterogeneity. From a child's point of view, or from the point of view of a primary caretaker, the city may look very different. Of great importance to the study of the effects of cities on children's behavior then, is first to consider this

child-caretaker perspective; to consider the current evidence as to what ecological or other variables have been found to be important in cross-cultural research on socialization differences, and try and apply these to urban situations; and to control for other features of urban families which may be confounded with city residence itself.

A similar complexity prevails in assessing what if anything might be common in the social behaviors of children or parents living in cities. LeVine, Klein, and Owen (1967:253) summarize their own work with traditional and modern fathers in a traditional Yoruba city, Ibadan, Nigeria; more modern city families show a movement

> . . . towards greater premissiveness towards the child's spontaneous desires (his aggression, his occupational choice, etc.) greater egalitarianism in husband-wife relations and more affection and emotional warmth in father-child relations. The major trend lacking in our Ibadan fathers. . . is the shift away from physical punishment and towards 'psychological' techniques of discipline.

LeVine, *et al.* (1967) describe features of more modern parenting also characteristic of families which are middle-class or elite in socio-economic status. Clignet's (1967:281) work further emphasizes confounding multiple effects in his studies of environmental change in the Ivory Coast. Rural-urban comparisons of two different cultural groups at three different subsistence niches (rural-resident farmers, urban manual workers, or urban clerical workers) show both similarities and differences in discipline styles, weaning patterns, and authority relations. Furthermore, he identifies three kinds of change: linear, threshold, and curvilinear. These data indicate that there are two or three-way interaction effects to contend with, and sometimes no strong evidence of urban effects at all.

Ecological features of cities, like crowding or density, have not proved to have systematic effects on children or parenting either (e.g., Fischer, Baldassare, and Ofshe 1975; Glass and Singer 1972; Freedman 1975). Density may intensify reactions to many situations and speed the pace of many interactions, but this is true for positive and for negative feelings and situations and for all sorts of parenting patterns and child behaviors, as far as is known. Higher levels of societal complexity, and greater hierarchy and social differentiation also often accompany city life and these factors can have profound effects on the family. Some of these covariates of city life are used in this paper in developing specific antecedents of parent-child behavioral differences.

Indeed, an important problem recognized in other attempts to search for child behavior correlates of urban-rural societal differences has been the confounding of modernity (indexed by Western education, and perhaps a cluster of attitudes) with urbanism or complexity (new kinds of family units, a different subsistence economy, large heterogeneous populations, social class and occupational specialization, and so on). Just such factors need to be controlled in dealing directly with urban-rural differences.

A sample of families studied in Kenya in large part allows for a test of the effects of the urban setting apart from other cultural and modernization effects on families. These families are all from the same patrilineal, patrilocal clan in Western Kenya, part of the Abasamia of Kisa, a subtribe of the Abaluyia (Sangree 1966; Wagner 1949; Were 1967). The rural Abaluyia are horticulturalists who keep some cattle and raise staple grains and vegetables. They are also heavily involved in recurrent migration to Nairobi. Recurrent migration in-

volves periodic urban visits and employment for men needing wage income, along with a continuing maintenance of a rural subsistence farm. Women maintain these farms in Kisa and periodically visit their husbands in Nairobi. Their younger children frequently go along with them to the city, and usually return again to the country when the wife returns. Older children visit the city less often, since they are needed more for chores in the rural areas, and are often attending schools there. The rural-urban family unit thus created, however, is something different from either an extended or a nuclear family, since families divide their time between city and country. This pattern of commuting, and the duolocal residence system which results, provides an opportunity to examine urban-rural differences independent of modernity and acculturation effects.

Twenty-four urban and twenty-four rural resident male family heads within this rural-urban clan community were matched by age, education, and kin ties. All the urban families lived in one housing estate called Kariobangi. Urban men were in unskilled or semi-skilled occupations and had a median of two years of school. All the families spoke Luluyia in the home. The parents in the sample had very similar childhood socialization experiences of their own, since they were reared in Kisa. The mothers and fathers were also given a self-report modernity scale (Smith and Inkeles 1966) and a short form of the Health Opinion Survey (reported in Inkeles and Smith 1974), and there were no significant urban-rural differences in either scale (Weisner and Abbott 1977). Family visits between city and country were frequent (a median of two a year) and so neither rural nor urban samples were cut off from social contacts with one another (Weisner 1976). In many respects, then, these parents and children were similar culturally and attitudinally; they differed in that some family members lived in an urban setting and others in a rural one. It is this situational-environmental difference, controlled for by a combination of matched sampling and naturally-occurring conditions, which is the focus of this paper.

THREE RURAL-URBAN SETTING DIFFERENCES AND CHILDRENS' BEHAVIOR

What aspects of urban and rural household and domestic units or environments are likely to lead to systematic rural-urban differences in children's social behavior? Clues come from some of the key factors found in comparative cross-cultural research on cultural differences in and antecedents of children's social behavior. It is likely that the same general factors found in these studies will be important in contrasting urban and rural settings. Three kinds of influences have been identified in comparative work: (1) the subsistence activities and resulting daily routines characteristic of urban and rural places (Minturn and Lambert 1964; Whiting and Whiting 1975); (2) the personnel in the household to be cared for and/or able to assist the mother in child care and other household responsibilities (Whiting and Whiting 1975; Weisner and Gallimore 1977); and (3) the relations of the household unit to the immediate social community within which it is embedded (Whiting 1963). How do each of these factors appear in Nairobi and Kisa?

Subsistence and Daily Routines

Abaluyia mothers in Nairobi rarely work in the wage economy; most are in town to visit their husbands, or perhaps seek medical or other services unavailable in the rural area. The rural mother maintains a subsistence horticultural

economy, including gardening activities, which may be shared with her husband or other men in her husband's compound. Preparing meals and maintaining the home is far more time-consuming in the country than in the city. Rural mothers are gone from the home for extended periods working the fields or doing other chores. Urban-resident mothers leave the household for work purposes far less often than rural mothers. Urban mothers also have child care, cleaning and cooking responsibilities, and usually have no one to help them in the town; but in general they have far less to do. Children differ in their tasks and daily activities in the same way. Rural children have gardening, house maintenance and cleaning, cooking, water-collecting, and child caretaking chores that are regular, necessary for the home and required by adults. These activities are minimal in the city.

Personnel in the City

Rural Kisa homesteads are part of patrilineal, patrilocal groups of related agnates with their wives and children. Although rural households vary in size, most consist of more than a conjugal unit, and all are surrounded by kin in neighboring homesteads. Rural mothers live with their own children and husband (if he is not in Nairobi) and some additional affines. Mothers who come to visit in Nairobi or to live there with their husbands bring their young, pre-school-age children. Older children seldom come to town except for short visits or holidays, since they are needed for rural chores and are attending rural schools. The costs of travel and food in the city are very high and rooms are already crowded. Thus the urban mother has fewer younger children in town with her, she has few or no coresident kin to help with child care and her husband is gone for work or to visit outside the house a great deal of the time.

Relations with the Larger Social Community

Children and mothers can move about relatively little in the city; exploratory space and range is restricted. Up to age ten or so, children stay very close to their own rooms. Visiting with other Abaluyia from the parents' own subtribe does occur, but usually only when parents go with the young children. Some cooperation and sharing occurs between Kariobangi neighbors, but this is a far cry from the ability of children and mothers in their rural home area to roam from homestead to homestead, finding kin and familiar children and adults everywhere. Compared to rural children and mothers, urban children and mothers are very restricted in physical and social mobility and the ability to explore and leave the household.

In summary, rural mothers have more assistance in child care, they are gone from the home more often, have both older and younger children present in the sibling group, and have more space and mobility, as well as more kin support. Each of these urban-rural situational differences have been shown to affect child caretaking and children's social behavior in previous cross-cultural and comparative research, and each one is relevant for the daily routines of urban or rural caretakers and children. They are not simply large-scale ecological features of city or country life, based primarily on the experiences of workers or noncaretakers outside the home and family group. It is likely that in most contrasts of rural-urban setting differences, most of these same distinctions would be found as well. But there are many cities where these features may well

not occur, and rural homes where they differ. The urban-rural contrasts in children's family settings discussed in this article refer to these specific features, and not simply to city and country locations in general. Greater specification of what particular aspects of city life are implicated in any particular outcome, such as children's social behaviors, will make future comparisons of urban-rural differences much more fruitful.

METHODS AND SAMPLE

The 48 matched sample families within the rural-urban network of recurrent migrants was used to select rural and urban resident children for study. All children were between the ages of two through eight, both boys and girls, in both city and country households within the matched sample. In 1970 and again in 1972, these children were observed in their homes. Kenyan secondary school or university women were hired and trained both in observational techniques and in a variant of the Six Culture coding scheme for describing children's social behaviors (Whiting, et al. 1966). The observers were from the same ethnic group as the Abaluyia families and were in some cases from the same location. Students were trained in recording 30-minute running naturalistic protocals focused on a particular child. All observations were done in the home compound between eight and five during the day: children who left their compound were followed around during the observation period. Coding was done by the observers themselves, as soon as possible after the field observation. Coding reliability and training was supervised by an experienced American research assistant. Coding reliability was periodically checked between field observers and the coding supervisor, and per cent agreement was maintained at over .70. The field narratives themselves could not regularly be checked for comparability once initial training was completed. However, overall similarity of narrative content was a criterion for beginning the actual observations.

Table 1 summarizes the Kenya child observation data base by age, sex of child, and rural-urban location. There is an overlap in the 1970 and 1972 observations between children reobserved two years later, and children added in

TABLE 1
Summary of Kenya Child Observation Data Base
By Age, Sex, and Rural-Urban Location of Observation

	Sex		Age		Location		
	Boys	Girls	2-5 Yrs	6-8 Yrs	U	R	Totals
No. of Cases*	44	71	77	38	69	46	115
No. of Observations	136	189	223	102	192	133	323
No. of Interacts	5,098	6,528	8,417	3,209	7,396	4,230	11,626
No. of Children	27	41					68

*All unique age by setting by child observations. Children observed at different ages and/or in different locations, are counted separately. Thus a child observed at least once at ages 5 and 7 in both city and country would count as 4 different "cases".

1972 (or not reobserved in 1972). Observations are grouped into all unique child by age by setting groups cases. There are 115 cases divided among a total of 68 children. A boy who was observed at two different ages in the city (for example at age five in 1970 and age seven in 1972), would have his observations counted as two cases. A different child, observed at age five in the city and then observed at age five in the country, would also be counted as two cases. A child observed at age five and seven in both city and country at each age, would be counted as four different cases. Thus, the level of analysis begins with the 30-minute narrative protocol, focused on a particular child of a given location, and sums up all observations on that child in that location at that age, and groups all the interactions recorded for those observations together as a case. Proportion scores and other scores are computed by case.

This technique of aggregation has benefits and disadvantages. One benefit is that age and location are consistently controlled throughout all the analyses, and there is a fairly large number of pooled interacts available; this increases the stability of the scores obtained for a given age and sex classification in a given setting.

Some children are observed at different ages, in both Kisa and Nairobi, and therefore are included in more than one case. Of the 68 children, 21 were observed at two or more different ages. This subset comprises 54 of the 115 cases and 159 of the total of 323 observations. At the same time, thirteen children were observed in both urban and rural settings at the same age. This overlapping subset of the data base comprises 26 of the cases and 94 of the observations. Aggregation of the same child into different cases seems the appropriate unit for purposes of a comparison of children's social behaviors by age and setting.

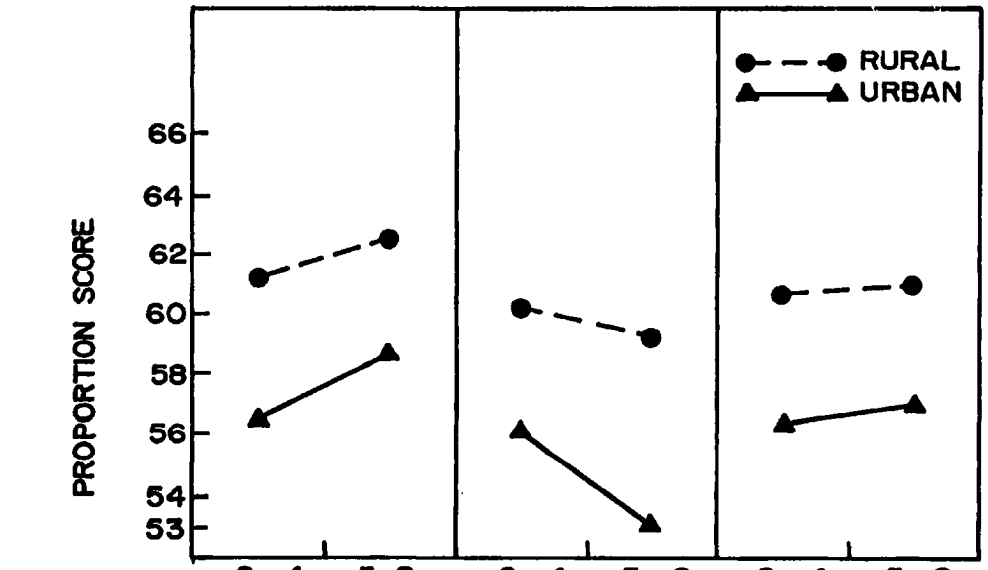
Each child was observed a median of four times. The 323 30-minute narratives yielded 11,626 interacts, or an average of 37 per observation. A coded interact consists of four parts: an initiator or subject of the interact, a verbal description of some resource (social or physical) which was transmitted (i.e., help, food), the object or target of the interact, and some indication of a modality or style of the interact. The observations are first divided into these interact units, and then coded for their subject, content, target and style. The content code used was derived from extensive work in Kenya and in the Six Cultures project (Whiting *et al.* 1966). The code emphasizes the development of social responsibility in children, various kinds of sociability, aggression, dominance, several kinds of dependence, tasks, and individual behaviors.

RESULTS

General Finding 1: City children are only slightly less likely to engage in social interaction than rural children.

Figure 1 illustrates the mode of presentation to be followed in comparing urban and rural data.[2] Age and sex differences are shown, along with a comparison between city and country cases. This graphical presentation provides the maturational context for city-country differences, since age and sex are important influences on many of these behaviors. Figure 1 compares the proportion of social behaviors to all behavior (social and nonsocial) for boys and girls

FIGURE 1: Proportion of all Social Behaviors to all Behaviors by Age, Sex, and Urban or Rural Setting



MEAN SCORES	GIRLS 2-4	GIRLS 5-8	BOYS 2-4	BOYS 5-8	GIRLS & BOYS 2-4	GIRLS & BOYS 5-8	N
RURAL	61.18	62.83	60.20	59.31	60.71	61.00	46
URBAN	56.76	58.79	56.17	53.33	56.59	57.04	69
TOTAL	57.98	60.36	58.00	56.86	57.98	58.91	115
N	40	31	22	22	62	53	

two to four and five to eight. Sixty-one per cent of all rural children's interacts were social, compared to 57 per cent of city children's. Most of the difference is accounted for by city children who were alone with their mother and most of these children were age two to five. Note also that boys have slightly fewer social behaviors than girls, and older boys and girls are increasingly different. The overall rate of social interaction differs primarily because of urban domestic groups with a mother and one small child living alone; this situation rarely or never occurs in rural settings. The general finding of interest is that differences between city and county settings primarily are due to different kinds of social behaviors of children and parents and differences in whom these behaviors are directed to, rather than large differences in the rate of social interaction generally.

General Finding 2: There is a significant overall similarity in the proportion of children's social behaviors in city and country settings.

For each case a proportion score was calculated for each of 46 different social behaviors. The total number of interacts for all observations for that case was divided into the total number of coded interacts of each category of social behavior. The resulting proportion score was then summed across all urban or rural cases, and the mean proportion scores were calculated and ranked. Table 2

compares the rank order and proportion scores for the fifteen most frequently occurring social behaviors in both city and country settings. Seventeen social behaviors in all are listed in Table 1: the first fifteen for the urban setting are the fifteen most frequently occurring social behaviors children made when initiating interaction with all others. The last two behaviors ("eats with" and "entertains") were tenth and twelfth respectively on the corresponding most frequent social behaviors for rural cases.

One striking observation about Table 1 is that Abaluyia children are fairly similar in the social behaviors they show towards others, the Spearman *rho* for the ranks is .56, significant at the .05 level.[3] The seven most frequent social behaviors (through "offers sociability"), for example, are identical between city and country children. These seven behaviors account for 60 and 69 per cent respectively of all urban and rural social behaviors coded. Nine of the twelve most frequent urban children's social behaviors appear in the rural list as well. The seventeen behavior categories in this list account for 82 per cent of all coded urban behavior, and 88 per cent of all rural behavior. Urban-rural differences need to be viewed in this context of a quite high overall similarity in the patterns of social behaviors in Abaluyia children of these ages.

The category "seeking sociability" provides an example of the importance of the overall context of rural-urban differences; the rural-urban difference is strong and statistically significant (by t-test)—yet seeking sociability is ranked third on the list of all rural social behaviors and first for all urban behaviors. Thus even though urban and rural resident children differ along this dimension with urban children higher, seeking sociability is a relatively common behavior in rural resident children, too. The point for purposes of this paper is that both the following statements can be and are true; (1) there is an overall similarity in the rank of all proportion scores for children's social behaviors, and (2) there are strong and significant rural-urban differences between children within this overall rank order similarity in behavior profiles.

The overall similarity in rank-ordering of the social behavior proportion scores is not too surprising. General cultural differences have been reported to be the most powerful single effect in the Six Cultures study, as well as in Edgerton's (1970) four cultures, each with a contrasting pastoral and horticultural subsistence mode. The Abaluyia culture (in this case) exerts a similarly powerful effect on children.

In addition, there are pan-cultural similarities between all children aged two through eight, both boys and girls, in the development of social behavior. There may also be distributional characteristics of the data which produce similarities in behavioral scores. For instance, D'Andrade (1974:182-184) has reported a general tendency for a J-curve effect in the distribution of coded social behaviors—many behaviors with relatively low proportions, and a few with high proportions. The proportions in Table 2 for both rural and urban settings show this effect. Each social behavior profile shows two behaviors occurring over ten per cent of the time, three (urban) or four (rural) between six and ten per cent occurrence, and the remainder occurring three per cent or less.

Finally, the coding system, and the ever-present possibility of trait-consistency bias in the coding and rating of behaviors has likely had an effect in keeping the rank order of behaviors similar. This happens in two ways. First, the behaviors

TABLE 2
Fifteen Highest Proportion Scores for Social Behaviors
In Rural and Urban Locations, Where Child Initiates Interact (N = 115)

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR DESCRIPTION	URBAN MEAN	URBAN CUM. PERCENT	URBAN RANK	RURAL MEAN	RURAL CUM. PERCENT	RURAL RANK
Seeks sociability	15.12	15.12	1	8.87	8.87	3
Social play	10.38	25.50	2	5.74	14.61	7
Talks with	9.16	34.66	3	17.65	32.26	1
Sits with, follows	8.32	42.98	4	14.35	46.61	2
Seeks approval, praise	6.43	49.41	5	7.65	54.26	5
Seeks material goods	5.93	55.34	6	6.57	60.83	6
Offers sociability	5.41	60.75	7	8.17	69.00	4
Seeks to annoy	2.88	63.63	8	2.41	71.41	11
Offers material goods	2.77	66.40	9	2.83	74.24	9
Seeks freedom from annoyance	2.54	68.94	10	0.83	75.07	20
Seeks help	2.49	71.43	11	1.02	76.09	17
Unintentionally hurts self, others; encounters difficulty	2.17	73.60	12	1.63	77.72	13
Laughs with	2.07	75.67	13	3.35	81.07	8
Seeks physical injury	2.02	77.69	14	1.48	82.55	14
Seeks instrumental information	1.74	79.43	15	1.22	83.77	15
Eats with	0.71	80.14	24	2.54	86.31	10
Entertains	1.70	81.84	16	2.11	88.42	12

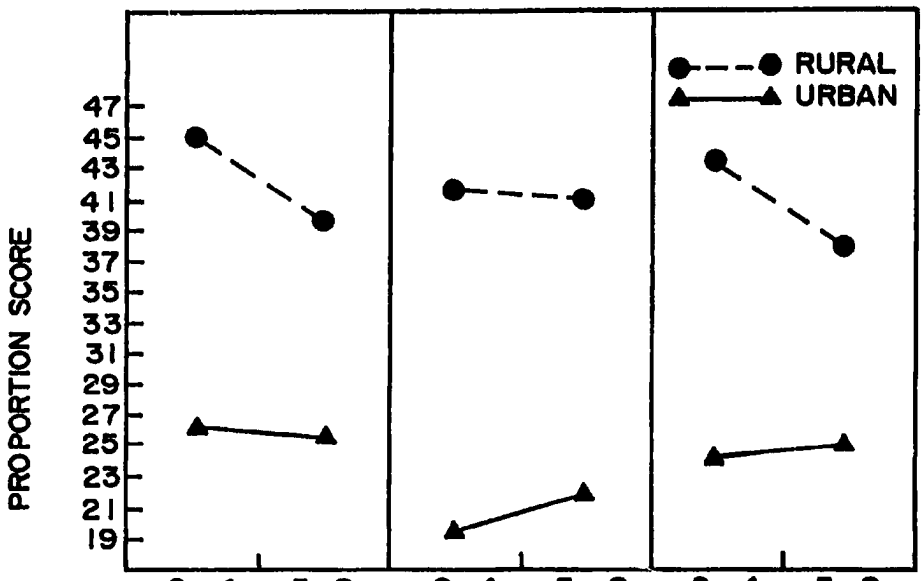
or behavior categories are correlated; if sociable behaviors are common in both settings, then the several kinds of sociable behaviors are likely to be more common. These are not independent variables. Second, coding itself imposes an artificial consistency and association between behaviors which may not be there in reality (D'Andrade 1974; Shweder 1978). There is a semantic similarity (or opposition) between the behavioral descriptors used in the coding categories. Both the recording of the field protocols and the post-observational coding of the field narratives are influenced by these semantic connections. Coders and observers may recall that behaviors went together because the categories are semantically similar, rather than because they actually were associated. The inference of actors' motives, or behavioral meaning in two different situations, such as between two dyads, is also influenced by cultural assumptions about what behaviors should go together, or what should characterize motivations associated with a particular dyad, rather than with what actually occurs in behavior.

General Finding 3: Children in rural settings engage in more sociable and friendly interactions than city children.

Sociable behaviors include greeting others, talking, eating, sitting or singing with others for the purpose of sociability; being affectionate, or laughing with others; and entertaining others. For sociability to be coded, the context of the interaction could not be specifically related to chore performance, making requests or demands of various kinds to others, or teaching others. If none of these content areas were involved, then the simple summary "Talking with" was scored.

Figure 2 shows the proportion of all sociable behaviors for younger and older

FIGURE 2: Proportion of all Sociable, Friendly Interactions, by Age, Sex, and Urban or Rural Setting



MEAN SCORES

	GIRLS 2-4	GIRLS 5-8	BOYS 2-4	BOYS 5-8	GIRLS & BOYS 2-4	GIRLS & BOYS 5-8	N
RURAL	45.36	40.17	42.20	41.62	43.86	40.92	46
URBAN	26.90	26.32	19.75	22.33	24.81	25.04	69
TOTAL	31.98	31.68	29.96	33.73	31.26	32.53	115
N	40	31	22	22	62	53	

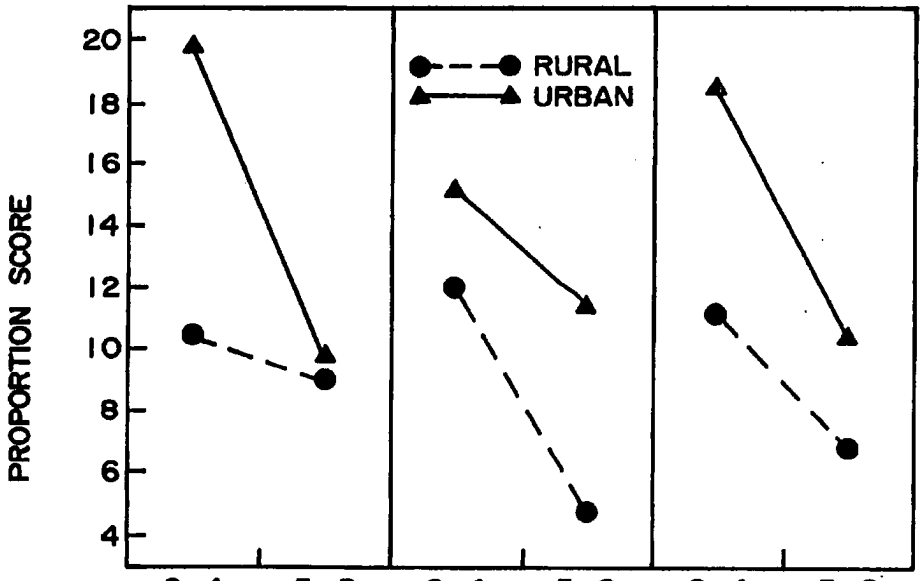
boys and girls in city and country settings.[4] The rural-urban differences are dramatic; for example, 45 per cent of all social behaviors of rural resident girls age two through four were sociable, compared to about 27 per cent of all young urban girls' social behaviors.

The various specific code categories comprising overall sociability also showed differences between city and country settings. Most of these categories are shown in Table 2: both sitting with others and talking with others, for instance, have substantially higher proportion scores in the rural samples than in the city. Laughing, smiling, and entertaining others are also more common in the rural samples, although these are relatively infrequent behaviors. The overall pattern appears to be that ongoing sociable interchanges within the domestic group or within a homestead are more common among children in the rural setting. Further insight into this difference—why it occurs, different styles of sociable interaction in the two settings, and to whom sociable interactions are directed—are closely related to the next set of findings.

General Finding 4: Children in rural settings offer sociable behaviors to mothers more than city children; city children seek sociability from others more than rural children.

Interacts where children asked others for sociable interaction or sought out others for the purpose of sociability were distinguished from interacts where

FIGURE 3: Proportion of Child's Seeking Sociability from Others by Age, Sex, and Urban or Rural Setting



MEAN SCORES

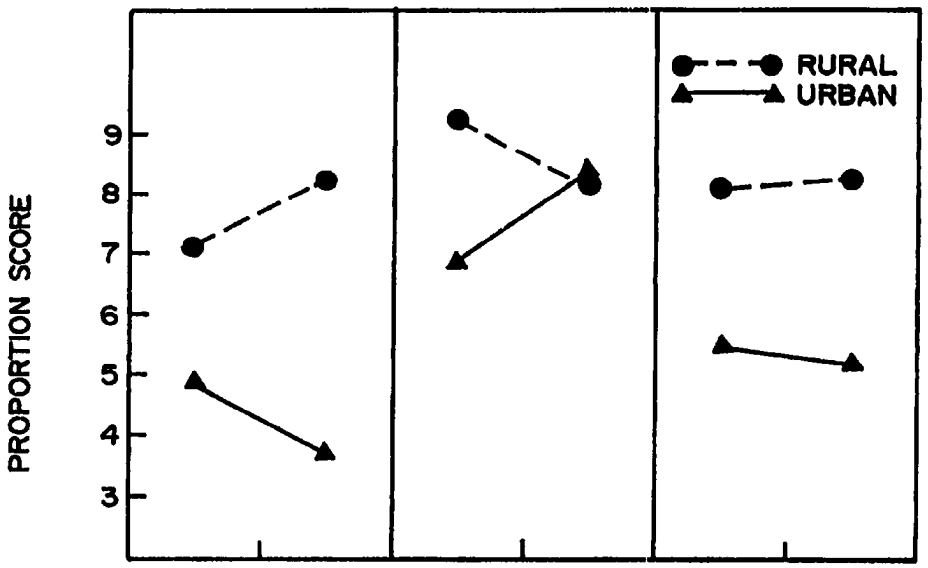
	GIRLS 2-4	GIRLS 5-8	BOYS 2-4	BOYS 5-8	GIRLS & BOYS 2-4	GIRLS & BOYS 5-8	N
RURAL	10.46	9.25	12.00	4.77	11.19	6.92	46
URBAN	19.59	9.90	15.22	11.44	18.34	10.39	69
TOTAL	17.08	9.65	13.82	7.50	15.92	8.76	115
N	40	31	22	22	62	53	

there was ongoing sociability of the kinds described above. In addition, situations where a child offered a sociable or friendly interaction to another individual—i.e., initiated such an exchange—were coded separately. Figure 3 shows the proportion scores for seeking sociability from others and Figure 4 shows the proportion of offers of sociability to others.

Although rural children are more often engaged in general sociability, urban children more often seek sociability from others. Rural children, however, offer sociable initiations of behavior to others more often than do city children, with the exception of urban and rural older boys, where both groups are equally high. Younger children in both settings and for both sexes seek sociability from others more often than do older children, and boys generally offer sociability to others more often than girls. In general, seeking sociability from others occurs nearly three times more often than offering in the city, but the two styles occur equally often in the rural setting (see Table 2).

Why are urban children higher on seeking sociability but lower on offering and general sociability? Some clues are provided by a closer look at the targets of these behaviors—to whom does the urban child direct his or her requests to seek sociability and contact? The answer is primarily his or her mother. Nearly 20 per cent of all the interactions urban children direct toward their mothers involved seeking sociable interaction, compared to 8.8 per cent of child-to-mother interaction in the rural setting. Interactions between siblings do not

FIGURE 4: Proportion of Child's Offers of Sociability to Others by Age, Sex, and Urban or Rural Setting



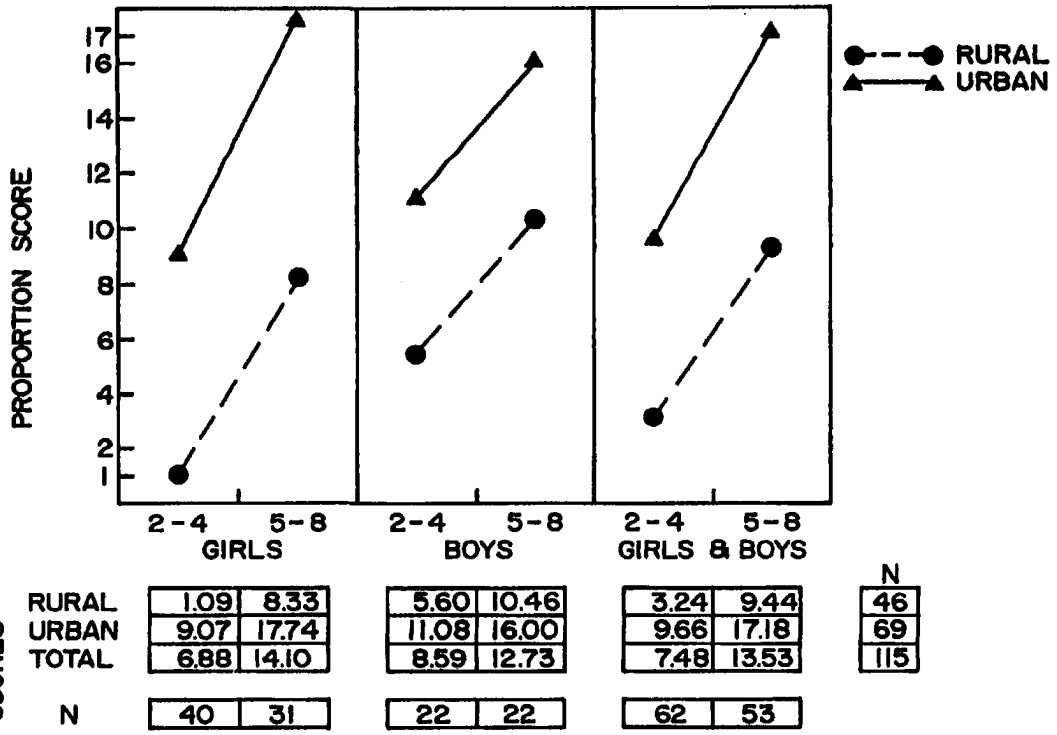
MEAN SCORES	GIRLS 2-4	GIRLS 5-8	BOYS 2-4	BOYS 5-8	GIRLS & BOYS 2-4	GIRLS & BOYS 5-8	N
RURAL	7.18	8.25	9.20	8.15	8.14	8.20	46
URBAN	4.93	3.74	6.92	8.44	5.51	5.25	69
TOTAL	5.55	5.48	7.96	8.27	6.40	6.64	115
N	40	31	22	22	62	53	

differ in the proportion of seeking sociability; when interacting with sibs, urban children sought sociability 10 per cent of the time, compared to 8 per cent in the rural setting. Thus the difference in seeking behavior in the city is primarily due to child-mother interactions.

Kinds of seeking behavior other than sociability show a similar pattern, although with smaller percentage differences; 15.1 per cent of child-to-mother behaviors in the city were seeking attention or praise, for example, versus twelve per cent in the country. Urban children sought attention from peers 4.3 per cent of the time, compared to 2.5 per cent in the rural setting. A similar finding emerges in comparing other, related attempts by children to seek resources from others. Urban children seek help, comfort, and permission to do things from their mothers a total of 10.5 per cent of the time in the city, compared to only 3.7 per cent of the time in the rural setting.

Just as seeking behaviors are related to urban settings and to mother-focused interactions, so general sociability is more common in rural situations and peer interactions. This difference appears to be due to the interrelation of setting and targets of interactions and not simply to the availability of mothers. There is no difference in the proportion of general sociability (mutual talking, sitting together, laughing, etc.) between children and mothers in city (34 per cent) and country (33 per cent) settings. But 36 per cent of all rural children's behaviors

FIGURE 5: Proportion of All Dominant and Aggressive Interactions by Age, Sex, and Urban or Rural Setting



initiated towards sibs and other children involved general sociability, compared to 17 per cent of urban children's interactions with sibs and other children. Thus controlling for the dyad (child-mother or child-sibs)[5] shows a reversal of social styles, emphasizing seeking-oriented, mother-directed urban interaction, and general sociability towards sibs and peers in the country.

No single factor interpretation can account for the quantitative or the ethnographic data on differences in sociability. Subsistence activities of children, and personnel in the households both appear to be related to these differences. Increased presence of the mother in the city; the absence of older children in the city to provide a hierarchy of child caretaking responsibility, or buffer between mother and child and the decreased work load placed on urban children all combine to produce differences in sociability. Rural children have mothers available less and older sibs present more; they have more interaction within the context of chores and task performance done amongst, or in collaboration with, other sibs. Rural children were observed doing tasks and chores over twice as often as were urban children and were observed involved in sociable interactions while doing a chore or task (child care, cooking, preparing food, cleaning) over three times as often as were urban children.[6] Rural children are engaged in sociable behaviors in the context of tasks and chores with older children present, with fewer opportunities to seek resources (including sociability) from mothers, and with more opportunity and pressure to engage in mutual, collaborative exchanges. This interpretation seems to fit another set of behaviors which differ

between city and country and which are the converse of sociability; dominant, aggressive, and generally disruptive behavior between children.

General Finding 5: Urban children seek to dominate or act aggressively towards others more than do rural children.

Figure 5 shows a strong and consistent rural-urban difference on a summary measure of dominant and aggressive behaviors initiated by a child towards others. It also shows that older children initiate such behaviors more often than do younger children in both city and country, among boys and girls alike. This category of dominant and aggressive behavior includes annoying others; hitting or kicking others or attempts to do so, insults and teasing of others, threats to physically injure others, taking or destroying objects belonging to others, and attempts to seek freedom from annoyance by others. Of all these behaviors, only three (seeks to annoy, seeks freedom from annoyance, seeks physical injury) appear in the list of the fifteen most frequent behaviors in either the city or the country (Table 2). Although several of these behaviors are of low frequency, they consistently show a pattern of relatively higher rates of occurrence in town. When aggregated together, this overall frequency of occurrence is quite high; between eight and seventeen per cent for urban children and one and ten per cent for children in rural settings. These activities certainly can and do cause trouble and turmoil within the small urban rooms and courtyards in Kariobangi. In general, there clearly are indications of disruptive behavior amongst children and there are more disruptive child behaviors in town than in the country.

Similar to differences in sociability, children direct disruptive behavior differentially towards different targets in the city and country. In neither setting, however, do children direct their aggression towards adults. Deference towards adults and compliance to their requests is a very powerful pressure in Abaluyia society and African societies more generally (Munroe, Munroe, and Le Vine 1972: 82-83). Not a single aggressive or dominant behavior appears on the list of the fifteen most frequent child-to-mother behaviors for either city or country settings. Disruptive behaviors are virtually all directed towards siblings and other children and this is the only dyad where frequencies are high and consistent differences appear. Of all urban child-to-sibling interaction, 13.2 per cent were dominant or aggressive, compared to eight per cent of rural children's behavior directed towards sibs.

These data on aggressive behavior as well as sociable behaviors do not seem to fit the well documented findings from other studies (particularly those using the Six Cultures code and parent interviewing categories) that children in nuclear families characteristically have proportionately high scores for acting sociably, touching others, and seeking help from others. Children in extended families, on the other hand, have been found to exhibit frequent assaulting of others, insulting others, and reprimanding others and/or receiving reprimands from others (Whiting and Whiting 1975: 114-129). This difference has been attributed to increased father and mother salience in nuclear families, which may tend to encourage sociable, intimate behavior from children. Similarly, the extended family is more often characterized by hierarchical authority, increased task responsibility, and therefore harsh punishment for disruption, accompanied

by fewer periods when adults are present in a non-task-directive role. The rural families in the Kisa sample, however, where expanded and extended family and domestic group organization is common, had higher sociability scores among children and lower aggressive behavior scores than did their urban counterparts, who were usually living in conjugal households.

It is likely that the major reason for this pattern is that neither the nuclear nor extended family ideal-typical setting fits the rural-urban network family and household arrangements characteristic of this sample. The rural-urban network sample is actually characterized by duolocal residence; mothers and children spend time in extended or expanded households, in conjugal households, and in subnuclear households (usually when the husband is absent from the rural homestead, without other extended patrilineal kin present). This pattern of mixed residence is rather commonly associated with certain kinds of rural-urban interdependency in Africa and elsewhere (Ross and Weisner 1977), and differs from either extended or nuclear/conjugal family and household types.

In addition, the targets of sociability or disruptiveness do differ between the rural and urban settings and in a way that conforms to the broad model of nuclearity and intimacy found in other studies. Children do direct more sociability toward mothers in the city and peers are more often the targets in the rural settings, as the nuclearity/intimacy model would suggest. Older children also direct disruptive and aggressive behaviors to younger children in the city and country but the urban frequency is higher. This pattern is due to differences between urban and rural peer groups. The urban peer group has fewer older children, is smaller in size and is physically confined compared to the rural counterpart peer settings. Thus some of the same processes which have been suggested as regulating sociability or aggression in extended and nuclear families appear to be operating in the rural-urban network sample but the urban-rural aggregate comparison is subject to a variety of other influences in addition to family and household type. The very low frequencies, approaching zero, of child-to-mother directed disruption or non-compliance, are in fact strongly influenced by cultural patterns among the Abaluyia which are closely tied to subsistence and extended family pressures.

A Perfectly Matched Sample: The Child as his Own Control

The rural-urban network sample has been compared, using the 115 case units, in order to obtain a large sample of behaviors and to control for differences between the families other than urban-rural situational differences. It is also possible to compare individual children who have spent time in both city and country settings; this is a different level of contrast and answers questions about the relative strength of different situational effects, controlling for possible individual differences among children observed in only one setting. The child acts as his own control for such potential personality differences. There were thirteen children comprising 26 cases who were followed between Nairobi and Kisa and observed in both settings during the same year of fieldwork. The families who moved back and forth with their children did so for a variety of personal reasons. This subset of children seemingly provides a perfect matched comparison since they were observed during the same period of time in both rural and urban locations.

The children involved in this subset were compared for sociability, seeking and offering sociability, aggressive behaviors and dominance. In each case, a Wilcoxon T-statistic was calculated on the differences between mean proportions of each type of social behavior for each child when that child was observed in the city and the country. The results were dramatic; none of the differences were significant, and a sign test of the direction of differences were also nonsignificant.

These results led to an examination of each child in the particular rural or urban situation in which that child was observed. The families in this matched sample appeared to be in situations that were atypical for the pooled sample of children overall. Of the thirteen children in the perfect matched sample, nine came from four different families. These families were among those more likely to travel between city and country and, with one exception, had older siblings not attending school in the rural areas. Thus the personnel in the urban homes in these families were identical to the personnel in the rural homes, since the mothers tended to travel with older siblings. This is an unusual child migration pattern for the population as a whole. In addition, these children were put to work in town. These particular families were unusual for the organized work load and responsibility they continued to perform in town. Two of the mothers, for example, did some petty trading while they were in town (again an unusual occupational role) and were absent from the home most of the day, leaving the older children in charge, or leaving a neighbor mother or child to occasionally look in. Only the effects of crowding and urban and rural neighborhood differences were thus truly representative of the overall pattern of findings. These did not seem to have an effect on the results which would overcome the urban-rural similarity in personnel, sibling group, and task responsibility.

The perfectly matched group appears to be different from the total rural-urban sample precisely on some of the dimensions that produced situational differences in the total sample; size and composition of the peer group, work and task pressures, amount of mobility between city and country, etc. Indeed, the fact that these families appeared so often in both settings with all their children enabled more extensive observations to take place and so led to this group being perfectly matched. But these traits also made this subsample different from the overall rural-urban network sample. The results of the perfectly matched analysis suggest that peer group, daily routine, work pressure, and mobility between settings may be relatively more powerful rural-urban situational factors than crowding and neighborhood supports since the latter factors alone did not lead to urban-rural social behavioral differences in the children.

PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND RESPONSES

Although this analysis has emphasized situational influences on children's behavior, parents and children were not passively shaped by these influences. Families varied in the degree of active adaptation to changes brought about by city life and their own beliefs and attitudes were influential in how they responded. Urban mothers were sometimes disturbed by the changes they observed in their children while in the city. Mothers in Kariobangi reported that they seemed to have more trouble with their children when they came for periodic visits. Children seemed, they said, to mind adults and other children

less readily. Mothers themselves often said that they preferred the country, even with its increased work load, simply because there were things for them and for their child to do there and people to do them with. Typically, they firmly disapproved of a child spending all his years in the city and consciously attempted to balance a child's stay in town with visits to his or her rural homestead. Both fathers and mothers believe that this reduces roguishness and gains for the children a greater respect for kin, work obligations, and for their own language. Mothers who did stay in the city for considerable lengths of time would often try to import a maid or helper (often a niece or other kin) to help with child care and related duties. Mothers often recognized for themselves the added stability and decreased frustration which often resulted from increased help for both parents and children.

Mothers comment on the density, crowding, and lack of a neighborhood where they feel free to visit or let their children roam and explore alone. City children and their mothers are in a very restricted courtyard area with many social and physical restrictions placed on mobility. Conflicts and disruption in Kariobangi cannot readily be resolved by leaving the scene of the interaction by going to another room, house, or out to a field or another homestead of a kinsman. Children and mothers must remain together; the option of spatial separation to avoid or reduce disruption and annoyance is greatly reduced in the city. Disruptive behavior amongst children is often the result.

Informal review of many of the narrative protocols and parents' interviews concerning child-rearing problems, along with ethnographic observations in both city and country, tends to show social interactional cycles of aggressiveness and disruption in the city, without effective methods for interrupting them. Being stuck in and around a small urban room adds to the length of these episodes and increases the patterns of sequences of younger sibling horseplay, aggressiveness, and dominance.

Mother's and father's perceptions of these situational effects varied, as did their responses to changes in their children's behavior. Some were keenly aware of why things were different; these parents tried to extend their social networks within Kariobangi to provide alternative caretaking arrangements, and/or tried to time urban visits to correspond with periods when older children—either their own children, cousins, nieces and nephews, or younger siblings—could visit. Other mothers, staying for short periods of time, sighed and persevered. Urban mothers often experienced a decrease in feelings of efficacy, a change which Graves (1972) also found in her studies of urban and rural child care. Only families living in the city for lengthy periods of time, or with parental educational levels at the top of the distribution in this sample,[7] seemed to shift their child rearing practices towards the more democratic or egalitarian styles suggested by LeVine *et al.* (1967), Lloyd (1970), and others for their highly Westernized, elite West African samples, or by Leiderman and Leiderman (1974a; 1974b) for the Kikuyu of Kenya.

Parents' reports of urban and rural child care, their own strategies for dealing with situational differences and their emphasis on the importance of compliance and early discipline reflects the similarity of Abaluyia cultural beliefs concerning socialization with which the discussion of urban-rural differences began. In spite of situational differences in social behavior, there is still quite a homogeneous set

of parental expectations within the rural-urban network sample. These parental ideals are different from traditional ones in areas such as the importance of educational achievement and (somewhat decreased) task expectations, but very similar in compliance pressures, sex differences, and commitment to Abaluyia language and the authority of elders. Even the rural-urban social behavior differences which occur are expressed in culturally appropriate ways; i.e., disruptiveness is directed toward younger siblings, not mothers. Thus far, this nonelite sample, with strong rural family ties, retains most traditional socialization values and displays a strategy of short-term necessary adjustment to urban life, rather than more basic changes in overall expectations for socialization.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Cross-cultural study of differences in children's social behavior has focused on factors such as personnel present, subsistence pressures, and social and community support (including levels of complexity). Urban and rural settings also differ along these dimensions. This paper has examined their effects on the overall pattern of social behaviors and on various kinds of sociability and disruptive behaviors of young children aged two through eight. The kind of rural-urban network sample of families used in the study provides some controls on nonsetting differences, such as socio-economic status, age and stage in the family developmental cycle and modernity, between urban and rural residents. These situational differences were used to interpret several findings: rural children engage in more sociable behaviors than urban children, city children seek interaction more than do rural children, and urban children seek to dominate and act aggressively towards others more than do rural children.

An analysis of urban-rural differences between children who acted as their own control showed no significant differences. This subgroup of children differed from the total network sample in personnel present and daily routines and work in the city, but not in other respects. This may indicate that these factors (personnel and routines) are the most important in accounting for the urban-rural differences in the total sample.

Parents' own perceptions and attitudes towards these behavioral changes and situational pressures are also important in understanding how different families are trying to adapt to the duolocal residence pattern of the rural-urban network migrant cycle. Answers to descriptive, interpretive or explanatory questions as to just how and why city and country children differ in behavior are not only important to theoretical research concerning the origins of variations in the development of children's social behavior. These questions also speak to very real problems for the millions of parents and children in horticultural and pastoral societies facing adaptation to city life.

NOTES

1. Support for this study was provided by the Carnegie Corporation through the Child Development Research Unit, University of Nairobi and Harvard University, Albert Maleche, John and Beatrice Whiting, Directors. Support was also provided by two NIMH Fellowships to the author. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the American Anthropological Association, Mexico City, November 1974. Harold Levine, Dennis McGilvray, Sandra Meicher, and Richard Shweder provided very helpful comments on earlier drafts.

2. Data are presented in terms of graphical comparisons and percentage differences rather than in

statistical summaries. The use of the case unit (all unique age by individual child by setting observations) make certain statistical tests complex in their interpretation since some children appear in several different cases and since the number of observations per case varies. Still, fairly extensive statistical work has been done with these mean proportion scores, including t-test differences, correlations between behavior categories, and some multivariate statistics, including three-way analysis of variance entering age, sex and urban or rural setting as independent variables. In general, urban-rural, age and sex differences or interactions displayed in graphs or shown in percentage differences in the text are confirmed by statistically significant differences in mean proportion scores. Where the text refers to trends or tendencies, this indicates that the statistical differences were not strong. For purposes of this paper, it is the pattern of findings at the level of age by sex by setting observations and the relationship between children's behaviors and setting differences that are of interest.

3. These data are limited to all the interacts the child being observed initiated toward others. The comparisons of interacts initiated by others towards the child being observed show even stronger rank order correlations between city and country, with a Spearman *rho* of .87, significant beyond the .01 level. Requests by mothers and older siblings to change behavior and to perform chores, exchanges of material goods with the child, and sociability dominate the list of specific others-to-child behaviors. Aggressive and dominant behaviors, with the exception of seeking freedom from annoyance, do not appear on the list of the fifteen most frequent interacts. The child-focused and initiated behaviors are selected for study since they show more sensitivity to urban-rural differences, and show a wider range of sociable, dominant, and aggressive interacts for purposes of rural-urban comparison.

4. These summary scores, which aggregate a number of specific behavioral categories, can mask the differential importance of specific items. For example, rural children were recorded as "talking with" other children nearly twice as often as urban children, yet rural children "entertained" others only slightly more often than did urban children (see Table 2). Where the base rate for a behavior is in any event low (such as for some of the dominance and aggression categories), one or two large differences can mask five or six closely similar or even reversed rural-urban comparisons. Although the magnitude of rural-urban differences varies across individual behaviors, the direction of differences is consistent in the behaviors summed together here to provide overall sociability or dominance/aggression scores. (Seeking and offering sociability are already discrete categories, and were not summed.)

5. Mothers and siblings are by far the most frequent recipients of children's behaviors. Some 43 per cent of all interactions were from a child to its siblings, and another 15 per cent were from a child to the mother. Interactions between the child and other nonsib children accounted for about twelve per cent of all interaction. Other female adults accounted for 5 per cent, other male adults, including fathers, 2 per cent and all others data not recorded, or a group interaction situation account for the remaining 23 per cent. Mothers and siblings account for the majority of all dyadic interactions recorded and consideration of other categories such as other adult females, etc., does not significantly change the pattern of results.

6. City children were also recorded as engaged in social play (as opposed to games with formal rules) 10.38 per cent of the time, compared to 5.74 per cent for rural children. It appears that city children engaged in more organized and structured play than rural children, which partially substituted for the general sociability without organized play occurring in the country. Social play as an activity also partially substitutes for sociability in the context of chore performance, which is more common in the countryside. The inference that social play substitutes for other categories is based on ethnographic observations and reading of narratives; it is difficult to demonstrate that specific proportion score differences are attributable to specific tradeoffs in one or another social behavior.

7. The most highly educated mother in the rural-urban sample had completed eight years of school and one father had completed eleven. This range is comparable to that for Kisa as a whole—indeed it is slightly higher—and is similar to the educational levels of nonelite working employed African men in Nairobi.

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