

The Negotiation of Parenting Beliefs by Mexican-American Mothers and Fathers

by

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ABSTRACT

Given the rapidly increasing Mexican-American population and the minimal scholarship addressing parental beliefs of Mexican-American mothers and fathers, the purpose of the study was to explore the ways Mexican-American parents negotiate their parental beliefs. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis, 13 semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven mothers and six fathers who had young children. Theoretical assumptions of this study were based in macro-level ecological systems theory and Chicana feminist perspectives, and micro-level dialogical perspectives. Results were organized around seven parental goals: speaking Spanish, respect, gratitude, education, involvement, discipline, and affection.

Participants spoke of their parenting goals in terms of either differentiating from or connecting with their own parents' practices and cultural traditions. Of the seven parental goals and associated themes identified in the analysis, three were classified as connecting with their parents and traditional values (speaking Spanish, respect, gratitude) and the remaining four involved differentiating from traditional values and practices. In dialoguing about the goals, parents also emphasized values of providing equal educational and other opportunities for daughters and sons, and practicing shared parenting with respect to both discipline and affection.

Findings from this investigation enhance scholarship on parenting beliefs in general by shifting the focus from a static study of beliefs to a more dynamic focus on the emergence of beliefs arising from dialoguing. In formulating beliefs, the parents in this study dialogued with their own past experiences (i.e., how they themselves were

parented), cultural values, and specific people—parents, spouses, friends. Dialoguing as expressed in interviews was often intrapersonal—the person’s thoughts—but at times took the form of reporting actual conversations with others.

The shift in focus to the process of parental dialoguing can result in findings that would not have been apparent from studies mainly concerned with describing parental beliefs or goals. For example, in contrast to expectations that parents situated “between” two cultures will necessarily experience values conflicts, parents in this study adopted a pragmatic approach of selecting and blending values and practices from both cultures. Also, this study points to differences in dialogical complexity depending on the particular parenting goal, with implications for the design of future research on parenting.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The Latino/a population within the United States has been growing steadily since the 1970s, from 9.1 million in 1970 to 50.5 million in 2010, with the largest percentage of this population located in California and Texas respectively (Ennis, Ríos-Vargas, & Albert, 2011; U.S. Office of Management and Budget Standards, 2012).

Contemporaneous with this growth has been an increase in social science research on Latina families, including research on parenting of children and adolescents. Much of this research concerns parenting practices in relation to child outcomes or changes in knowledge and practices resulting from parenting programs (e.g., Barrueco, López, & Miles, 2007; Calzada & Eyberg, 2002; Ceballo, Kennedy, Bregman, & Epstein-Ngo, 2012; Eamon, 2005; Guilamo-Ramos, Dittus, Jaccard, Johansson, Bouris, & Acosta, 2007; Lindsey, Caldera, & Rivera, 2013; Manongdo & Ramirez Garcia, 2007).

Fewer studies have addressed Latino/a beliefs related to parenting. It is culturally-guided belief systems that provide a framework for parental perceptions of their children, childrearing decisions, and everyday interactions with children. Further, of the studies that have addressed Latino/a beliefs about parenting, most are based on reports from mothers (Barnett, Shanahan, Deng, Haskett, & Cox, 2010; Durand, 2011; Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009; Johnson, 2009; Luster, Rhoades, & Haas, 1989; Senese, Bornstein, Haynes, Rossi, & Venuti, 2012). It is equally important to understand fathers' perspectives given that, in two-parent families, fathers' beliefs clearly matter, regardless

of their direct parenting involvement within the family. Also, the increased number of dual earner families may encourage or necessitate that fathers take on a more active parenting role than in the past.

The present research addresses the negotiation of parenting beliefs by Mexican-American parents of young children, both mothers and fathers. The study differs from much of the existing research in its focus on how culturally conflicting beliefs are negotiated both intrapersonally, for each parent, and interpersonally within the immediate and extended family and community. This focus guided the selection of informants in that most were second-generation parents with young children may be particularly likely to experience cultural “in-betweenness” in matters of parenting, and it also guides the semi-structured interview which is designed to encourage discussion of conflicting beliefs, how these are negotiated, and how these beliefs may relate to parenting practices.

Background: Latino/a Cultural Traditions

“Culture forms our beliefs. We perceive the version of reality that it communicates. Dominant paradigms, predefined concepts that exist as unquestionable, unchallengeable, are transmitted to us through the culture” (Anzaldúa, 2012). “Cultures impart meanings to behavior, determine how individuals, including parents and peers, perceive, evaluate, and react to behavior, and eventually regulate and direct the developmental processes of behavior” (Rubin et al., 2006, p. 97). “The inclusion of cultural values in research moves toward understanding group processes rather than simply focusing on comparisons across groups” (Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009, p. 100). With the impact culture has on individuals it is important to consider cultural

characteristics in order to fully grasp values and beliefs and the process of forming specific values and beliefs. Numerous researchers have discussed the importance of considering some of the Latino/a cultural characteristics when working with this population as a way to provide a thorough account within a given context (Behnke, MacDermid, Coltrane, Parke, Duffy, & Widaman, 2008; Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Bermúdez, Zak-Hunter, Stinson, & Abrams, 2012; Calzada & Eyberg, 2002; Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Wells, Cagle, & Bradley, 2006). García Coll and Pachter (2002) assert, “Cultural traditions can influence parenting through the influence of family structure, residency patterns, childrearing practices, and beliefs and attitudes about the roles of children at different ages and stages” (p. 6).

First, within Latino/a culture there are strong feelings toward identification with and reciprocity between family members (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Calzada & Eyberd, 2002; Sotomayor-Peterson, Figueredo, Christensen, & Taylor, 2012). *Familismo* encompasses interdependence, obligation, and loyalty specifically within the nuclear family and extended family (Behnke et al., 2008; Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). It is characterized by attachment, loyalty, and reciprocity (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007) that is often impacted when families immigrate to the U.S. and experience the loss of support from extended family members (Leidy, Guerra, & Toro, 2010). For instance, Behnke, Taylor, and Parra-Cardona (2008) found *familismo* illustrated in “fathers’ reports regarding their need to uphold familial ideals (i.e., responsibility) as well as by their

commitment to protect their children from negative peers and other social forces that they viewed as detrimental to their well-being” (p. 198). In addition, *familismo* can be enhanced via frequent communication between family members (i.e., parent-child) which likely strengthens family cohesion (Ceballo et al., 2012).

Second, respect is of the essence, specifically with Mexican Americans with high ethnic cultural competence (Calzada, Huang, Anicama, Fernandez, & Brotman, 2012). *Respeto* centers on the notion of courtesy and adherence to authority which tends to be based on age or social position (Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). For instance children’s interactions with, parents, *abuelos* (grandparents), and *tias/os* (aunts and uncles). Respect may be shown by having children hug grandparents and aunts and uncles when arriving at family gatherings before getting settled or visiting with others. Additionally, Calzada and Eyberg (2002) found Latina mothers of young children never ignored misbehavior in an effort to teach *respeto*, the adherence to parental authority. In addition, Guilamo-Ramos et al. (2007) discuss the ways *respeto* is represented via parental authority and obedience of youth. Based on current research, Latino/as place greater emphasis on proper demeanor and respectfulness compared to Anglos (Harwood, Leyendecker, Carson, Asencio, & Miller, 2002). “Together, the values of *familismo* and *respeto* anchor the parent-child relationship in a context of closeness, where high value is placed on raising a child that is well-mannered and respectful of authority figures” (Durand, 2011, p. 259). This is echoed with research findings suggesting Mexican-American households consist of children adhering to parental authority, respecting others, and helping around the house, which is contrasted with the

greater focus on childhood autonomy within Anglo families (Livas-Dlott, Fuller, Stein, Bridges, Figueroa, & Mireles, 2010).

Third, *marianismo* is the gender-role construct of female submissiveness within the family which is derived from characteristics of the Virgin Mary (*La Virgen de Guadalupe*, the Mexican version) along with the emphasis on the role of mother, specifically situated within the home (Durand, 2011; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Niemann, 2004). It is a focus on the maternal aspects of women and the value placed on women within the home caring for children (Wells, Cagle, & Bradley, 2006). Within Latino/a culture there is considerable value and meaning attached to the role of *marianismo*, although this may be changing to some extent as more Latina's are working outside the home (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). This shift in family structure and roles may impact the extent to which *marianismo* is endorsed. Alternatively, Durand (2011) suggests mothers continue to embody *marianismo* in the face of family changes (i.e., employment, acculturation, migration). It is clear additional research is needed to further our understandings of this cultural construct and the role it plays within Latino/a families.

Fourth is the concept of *machismo*. Within the literature there are two aspects of *machismo*, positive (*caballerismo*) and negative (traditional). *Machismo* is the gender-role construct of male dominance within the family, a sense of manhood, which is comprised of the leadership role men fill both inside and outside the home (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Wells, Cagle, & Bradley, 2006). Negative *machismo* is typically characterized by aggression, sexism, and hypermasculinity (Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008; Cruz, King, Widaman, Leu, Cauce, & Conger, 2011; Falicov,

2010; Pardo, Weisfeld, Hill, & Slatcher, 2013). Positive *machismo* (*caballerismo*) is characterized as nurturing, family centered (i.e., roles and responsibilities of a father), and chivalrous (Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008; Cruz et al., 2011; Pardo et al., 2013). Cruz et al. (2011) found fathers who endorsed positive *machismo* more so than negative *machismo* engaged in more monitoring, warmth, and educational involvement with their children, and they were perceived by their children as involved fathers. The existing research addressing positive *machismo* suggests, “father’s endorsement of more positive values about a father’s role in the family is related to higher quality parenting” (Cruz et al., p. 737). Conversely, Latino fathers who endorse more traditional *machismo* attitudes have been found to report less involvement with their children compared to fathers endorsing more positive *machismo* attitudes (Glass & Owen, 2010).

It is important to note that, although the above cultural traditions/belief systems are widely discussed as characterizing individuals of Latino/a heritage and may be useful in some ways, such overarching characterizations can also be problematic (e.g., Garcia, 1989; Niemann, 2004), as has been recognized in the designation of societies as individualistic or collectivistic (e.g., Schwartz, 1990). Such characterizations can lead to over-emphasizing between-societal differences, overly imputing ideological coherence, and glossing over the wide variations within societies including substantial individual differences within societal subgroups.

Parenting Beliefs

Beliefs are constructed from personal experience and may be conscious or unconscious (Sigel, 1985). They are “knowledge in the sense that the individual knows that what he [or she] espouses is true or probably true, and evidence may or may not be deemed necessary; or if evidence is used, it forms a basis for the belief but is not the belief itself” (Sigel, 1985, p. 348). Beliefs may change throughout life due to personal experiences such as education, media exposure, relationships, or religion. Nonetheless, exposure to new information does not always equate altering or adding a belief structure due to distrust in the information (Sigel, 1985). According to Bar-Tal (2000), the contents of beliefs are unlimited in scope and fall within two categories, individual beliefs (held by an individual) and shared beliefs (held by a group of people or society; societal beliefs). Societal beliefs are expressed through both direct (i.e., parental instruction) and indirect (i.e., images of parents on television) instruction; they are a sort of detailed map depicting growth, changes, and possible direction. Families are particularly influential in constructing beliefs through direct and indirect instruction (Bornstein, 2002) as “beliefs form an important psychological guide to action” (Sigel, 1985, p 346). Moreover, it is important to note that beliefs about parenting are multifaceted and vary from person to person, in part due to personal experience, values, and upbringing. For this reason, it is imperative to remain mindful of possible cultural differences and contexts that impact the structure of beliefs.

Culturally defined beliefs concerning parenting likely impact decisions parents make and their perceptions of their children (Bornstein, 2002). For example, Risser and

Mazur (1995) found 70% of their sample of Hispanic caregivers reported experience with *mal ojo* (evil eye). *Mal ojo* is a folk ailment affecting children's ability to sleep due to someone looking intently at them or admiring them. Gallagher and Rehm's (2012) participants described this as a strong energy sent through the eyes toward children, resulting in stealing sleep away from them. They believed this ailment could be dissipated through benign touch (Gallagher & Rehm, 2012). Thus, Mexican-American parents might suggest that others touch their child (i.e., on the head or face) in order to prevent *mal ojo*.

Some researchers have found Latinas' beliefs about children and family to be a combination of Mexican cultural traditions and mainstream U.S. culture (e.g., Durand, 2011), and several studies report the struggle parents experience when faced with differing cultural values held within Latino/a culture and those held within the mainstream U.S. culture (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Cardoso, Padilla, & Sampson, 2010; Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Parra-Cardona et al., 2009). Cardoso, Padilla, and Sampson (2010) found that Mexican-American mothers experienced increased levels of parental stress compared to other groups when there were low levels of social support. This is consistent with values of interdependence found within Latino/a culture and independence with mainstream U.S. culture. In addition, the extent to which a struggle exists may depend, in part, on the individual's cultural orientation (Blocklin, Crouter, Updegraff, & McHale, 2011; Durand, 2011; Prelow, Weaver, Bowman, & Swenson, 2010) and ecological contexts (Calzada et al., 2012; Durand, 2011). For example, parents with a stronger orientation to Mexican

culture rather than mainstream U.S. culture will likely experience a greater level of parental stress than the reverse. On the other hand, there is research suggesting that when parents' cultural beliefs are challenged by mainstream U.S. culture "a new set of values and child-rearing beliefs [arise] that allow them to function in both cultures" (Farver, Xu, Bhadha, Narang, & Lieber, 2007, p. 205).

Beliefs Regarding Mother and Father Roles

Power and status underlie beliefs and values about gender roles (e.g., Gecas, 2009; Hofstede, 2001; Johnson, 2005). As Anzaldúa (2012) asserts, "Culture is made by those in power – men. Males make the rules and laws; women transmit them." Gender behavior is structured by social influences which indicate specific gender values – gendered norms – as well as a distinction of roles (Chafetz, 1988; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Social influences come from family, peer groups, and media (i.e., books, magazines, television, movies, music) (Hofstede, 2001). Families are often the central area where gender beliefs and knowledge are formed and reproduced (Chafetz, 1988; Hofstede, 2001). Moreover, the extent to which a person holds traditional or egalitarian gender role ideologies will likely have some bearing on their beliefs about the role of mothers and fathers within the family (Behnke, Talor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; D'Angelo, Palacios, & Chase-Lansdale, 2012) and the treatment of daughters and sons. Considering the ways family structures change is crucial to understanding shifts in gender role ideologies (e.g., Coltrane, 1996). For example, as more Latinas enter the workforce, power dynamics shift within the family which is likely to spill over in to parental responsibilities and involvement, especially on the part of fathers (Behnke, Taylor, &

Parra-Cardona, 2008; Coltrane, 1996; Crouter & McHale, 2005; Durand, 2011).

However, certain aspects of child care (e.g., bodily care) are considered the responsibility of mothers. For example, Coltrane (1996) found in his study of Mexican-American parents, “bodily care aspects of childrearing, including getting children up in the morning, monitoring bathing, helping them dress, taking them to the doctor, tending [to] them when [they are] sick, and arranging for babysitters, were all listed by both spouses as the province of the wife” (p. 91). Mothers and fathers “can facilitate as well as inhibit the type and level of domestic involvement of each other (Parke et al., 2005, p. 113). An examination of gender roles is important because beliefs about what women and men should do as parents may impact their parental practices and the possible outcomes of their children (e.g., Blocklin et al., 2011; Simons, Beaman, Conger, & Chao, 1992).

Mexico’s society impacts gender roles and behaviors in a way that tends to promote traditional gender roles defined through *marianismo* and *machismo* (Hofstede, 2001). For example, research suggests that Mexican oriented compared to Anglo oriented parents are more traditional in gendered treatment of their children (Blocklin et al., 2011). Fathers who are more traditional are not as involved in the education of their children compared to father who have a more egalitarian gender role ideology (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008). Moreover, fathers “with more egalitarian gender role- ideologies [are] more likely to share in the decision making process” compared with fathers who [are] more traditional (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008, p. 192). This is important because of the suggestion that shared parenting leads to a more positive emotional climate within the family (Sotomayor-Peterson et al., 2012).

In addition, research has found differential treatment of daughters and sons rooted in cultural norms of *marianismo* and *machismo* (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007) as well as differences in levels of closeness between parents and children with mothers having a closer relationship overall, especially with daughters (Blocklin et al., 2011). Latino/a parents tend to grant more autonomy to sons compared to daughters and tend to be higher on demandingness with daughters (Domenech Rodríguez, Donovanick, & Crowley, 2009; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Hurtado, 2003). For example, Guilamo-Ramos et al. (2007) found mothers allowed sons more freedom to explore and roam outside of the home while girls were encouraged to remain in the home. This differential treatment was discussed as falling in line with Latino/a cultural traditions of women remaining in the home and men outside the home. Manongdo and Ramírez García (2007) found higher rates of depressive symptoms for Mexican-American boys who reported harsh parental control; this was not the case for girls. This finding falls in line with the cultural characteristics of *marianismo* and *machismo* which suggest Mexican-American men and boys are gender socialized to be more autonomous and girls are to be protected by parents (Blocklin et al., 2011; Manongdo & Ramírez García, 2007). Boys may struggle with harsh control or tight supervision due to the traditional gender socialization while girls perceive this treatment as customary and valued. On the other hand, some researchers found no differential treatment reported by parents of their daughters and sons (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Calzada & Eyberg, 2002).

Qualitative Research on Latino/a Parental Beliefs

Few qualitative studies have explored Mexican American parental beliefs. Of the qualitative studies that do exist, the focus has been on mothers. The qualitative approaches that have been used include in-depth interviews, focus groups, and participant observations. Using a qualitative approach, researchers are able to move beyond the often restricted information gathered through the use of questionnaires and to explore topics in-depth.

Durand's (2011) study consisted of a secondary analysis of qualitative interviews conducted as part of a larger ethnographic component in a longitudinal national investigation. Semi-structured interviews were analyzed with six Latina mothers (five of whom were Mexican) who had a child in first grade. Mothers ranged in age from 26-43 and were considered extremely low-income. The study explored Latina mothers' beliefs about children, education, and their parental role. Mothers tended to view children as "too little" to be accountable yet maturing all the time and made references to children's character and academic traits. The emphasis remained on socio-emotional characteristics more so than cognitive characteristics. Mothers focused on balancing between giving children routines (i.e., facilitating responsibility) and choice (specifically during leisure time). With regard to education, the majority of mothers mentioned children graduating high school or going to college which they believed would help their children have a better life. Beliefs focused on the importance of staying engaged in children's academics regardless of the mothers' own educational attainment and English proficiency. It was also believed that all family members (immediate and extended) were important in the

learning process. Mothers' beliefs regarding their parental role consisted of mothers being the source of information and knowledge for their children (emphasizing communication), guardians and protectors (i.e., keeping children safe in a challenging environment), and primary disciplinarians. Mothers expressed that "raising their children was the most important thing in their lives" (p. 270).

Guilamo-Ramos, Dittus, Jaccard, Johansson, Bouris, and Acosta (2007) conducted 18 focus groups with 63 Puerto Rican and Dominican mother (average age = 39) and adolescent (11- to 14-years-old girls and boys) pairs. A majority of the mothers were first-generation immigrants (80 percent). Each focus group consisted of an average of seven participants (nine groups of mothers and nine of adolescents) and lasted one and a half to two hours. This study focused on the parenting domains of demandingness and responsiveness (Baumrind, 1983, 1987, 1991) with a specific emphasis on parental control and warmth as it relates to core Latino/a constructs (i.e., *familismo*, *respeto*, *personalismo*, *simpatía*, *machismo*, and *marianismo*). Mothers were asked about their "perceived effective parenting practices for an adolescent in middle school" (p. 21). Mothers' responses focused on the importance of monitoring and control (e.g., monitoring adolescents closely and being "strict"), having a warm and supportive relationship with their adolescent (e.g., maintaining control while demonstrating love), explaining parental decisions (e.g., promoting interconnectedness and mutual reciprocity), and building relationships (e.g., fostering closeness and trust). With regard to gender, mothers explained that differential parenting practices with their adolescent daughters (i.e., encouraged to do things inside the home) and sons (i.e., allowed more

freedom outside the home) were the result of Latino/a cultural norms (*marianismo* and *machismo*). These mothers were concerned about parenting in an urban environment because of the negative distractions and possible influences on their adolescent children. Their concerns “influenced their communication with, and supervision of, their adolescents” (p. 24).

Johnson (2009) conducted an ethnographic study consisting of 12 interviews with Latina (Puerto Rican) mothers between the ages of 17 and 29. All of the mothers had given birth to their first child as a teenager, identified themselves as teen mothers, and attended a family literacy program five days a week. Thirty women were observed in program classes and activities as well as community settings. Interviews were also conducted with program staff, the teacher, and community members. The main goal of the study was to richly describe the ways Latina women attending a community based literacy program obtained information about childrearing. The researcher specifically explored how women’s experiences and beliefs mesh with the notion of “best practices” and the idea of an “optimal” way to parent.

Two qualitative parenting studies that have included fathers concluded that Mexican-American fathers, contrary to stereotypes, are involved in parenting and have significant engagement with their children. Both of these studies focused more on parenting practices than on parenting beliefs. One explored coparenting practices through focus group discussions, separately for fathers and mothers (Caldera, Fitzpatrick, & Wampler, 2002). Fourteen couples (28 individuals) with at least one child younger than 11 years of age participated in this study. Except in the area of discipline, where there

was sometimes conflict between parents, parents reported generally collaborative and supportive parenting practices. The authors suggested that collaborative parenting, including presenting a united front to children, might be related to emphasis on familism and on respect within the Latino/a culture.

A second study (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008) consisted of semi-structured interviews with 19 Mexican origin fathers (18 were first-generation immigrants). The interviews lasted between one and two hours and explored decision making, the paternal role, immigration and fatherhood, involvement with children, discipline, and father's perception of the mother's role. Each father (average age = 38) had at least one child, several had five children, with ages ranging from one-year to 20 years of age. Fourteen fathers were married to the mother of their child(ren), three were remarried, and two were cohabiting. Behnke, Taylor, and Parra-Cardona (2008) sought an understanding of the ways migrating to the U.S. influenced fathers' parenting. These fathers indicated that they and their wives shared in family decisions and that the most important role for fathers was being a provider and hard worker. Although "fathers commonly related that they parented in similar ways to the way they were raised or the way they parented in Mexico," "they felt they had to adapt" to living in the U.S. and the new environment" (p. 194). Additionally, fathers indicated that their wives tended to be the one helping children with homework. When fathers did help it was a combined effort by both mothers and fathers. Regarding discipline, most fathers stated it was a joint effort between mothers and fathers, and they rarely reported using physical forms of discipline.

Lastly, fathers reported that the mother's primary role was to be a caretaker followed by being teachers, disciplinarians, and co-providers.

Theoretical Perspectives

Theoretical assumptions of this study are based in macro-level ecological systems theory and Chicana feminist perspectives, and micro-level dialogical perspectives.

Ecological theory emphasizes the importance of taking into account different levels of context while examining the interaction taking place between the individual and their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986, 1989; Holden, 1997). This theory proposes a nested series of levels that are hierarchically organized and interconnected via reciprocity. The innermost level is the microsystem which consists of the immediate setting or context experienced by the developing person and the dyadic relationships within the context. As Bronfenbrenner suggests, it is important to recognize the balance of power within dyadic relationships in an effort to comprehend the impact power has on the individual. The second level is the mesosystem which focuses on the interactions between two or more settings containing the individual, it is "a system of microsystems" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 25). For a parent this may include the interrelation of family, work, and their social life. The third level is the exosystem which consists of settings or contexts that impact, or are impacted by, the individual but do not contain the individual in the setting. Various forms of media (i.e., television, magazines, etc.) would constitute an exosystem because these are outside sources that may directly and indirectly influence parents. The fourth level is the macrosystem which is comprised of cultural or subcultural characteristics, structures, and beliefs. Parents belong to specific cultures and subcultures

that create the framework of the macrosystem, and within the cultures and subcultures there are values and beliefs indicating what is valued or not (Bretherton, 1993; Holden, 1997). Bronfenbrenner (1989) asserts, “the patterns of belief and behavior characterizing the macrosystem are passed on from one generation to the next through processes of socialization carried out by various institutions of the culture, such as family, school, church, workplace, and structures of government” (p. 229).

Chicana feminist perspective along with principles of the ecological theoretical perspective will assist in framing the findings of the current investigation. Feminist perspectives addresses gender as an organizing concept and gender relations (i.e., power relations) with concentration placed on women’s and girls’ experiences (Hurtado, 2003; Osmond & Thorne, 1993). In particular, Chicana feminism places emphasis on Chicanas’ agency and life experiences (Hurtado, 1998; Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009). One area examined by feminist perspectives is the way patriarchy impacts the structure of work within and outside the home which is tied to power and conflict (Osmond & Thorne, 1993). Specifically, “Chicana feminism offers an important lens in which to examine how mainstream sexist ideas may be linked to...traditional Chicano/a family values” (Bermúdez, Sharp, & Taniguchi, 2013). Chicana feminism tends to consist of a continuous engagement with Chicano/a culture and Chicano/a communities (Hurtado, 1998; Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009). Examining gender and gender relations within a given sociocultural context is vital because, “cultural or symbolic notions of gender tell us what it means to be a man versus a woman in a specific sociocultural context” (Osmond & Thorne, 1993, p. 606). Chicana feminism places importance on context

because Chicanas are affected by the interconnection of gender, race, and class (Garcia, 1989; Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009). Consistent with feminist perspectives, exploring gender as interconnected with social class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and age leads to enhanced awareness of families and their relation with society (Bermúdez, Stinson, Zak-Hunter, & Abrams, 2011; Cuádriz & Uttal, 1999; Hurtado, 2003; Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009; Osmond & Thorne, 1993; Zinn & Dill, 2003). In addition, Chicana feminism attends to the multiplicity of social locations that women of Mexican origin occupy, and cautions making broad generalizations and comparisons (Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009). Part of this complex reality is the figurative concept of borders which refers to “Chicanas’ sense of ambiguity stemming from feeling alienated from both their native culture and the dominant culture” (Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009, p. 98).

A third perspective, dialogical theory, complements the above macro theories in its focus on the dynamics of dialogical meaning creation. The use of this theory is important because it offers guidance regarding how people create meanings from the multiplicity of cultural messages. As Bhatia (2002) suggests, acculturation is a “*dialogical process* that involves a constant moving back and forth between incompatible cultural positions” (p. 57). Dialogical theory focuses on how these multiple messages come about and are negotiated in ongoing dialogues. There is a focus on cultural and historical practices and how these practices are linked to race, gender, and power both within the homeland and hostland (Bhatia, 2002).

According to Hermans (2001), “the dialogical self is based on the assumption that there are many *I*-positions that can be occupied by the same person” (p. 249). These

positions are embedded in particular cultural and historical practices and are constantly shifting and being negotiated with other *I*-positions (Bhatia, 2002; Hermans, 2001). For example, one person may negotiate the positions of Mexican-American, daughter-mother, and parent-employee as she constructs and reconstructs meanings. Dialogical theory is process-oriented examining the relationships “between different cultures, between different selves, and between different cultural positions in the self (e.g., multiple or hyphenated identities)” (Hermans, 2001, p. 272). It considers the interconnected social system and how this interconnection impacts meaning formation.

Rationale and Research Questions

Over the past few decades, there has been a shift in the assumptions about Latino/a families and in the nature of the questions being addressed in research. Instead of Latino/a values and practices being negatively contrasted with those of the middle-class majority in the U.S., investigators have turned attention to some of the unique strengths of these families and potential benefits for children (Fuller & Garcia Coll, 2010). This trend is evident in the study of parenting beliefs, especially in qualitative studies that are countering previous stereotypic perceptions of Latino/a families.

Qualitative studies encourage the questioning of stereotypic assumptions in their openness to taking the perspective of other, listening to their experiences, and identifying the meanings they place on their experiences (Berg & Lune, 2012; Daly, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Richards & Morse, 2007, Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Yet, relatively little qualitative research has so far focused specifically on the parenting beliefs of Latino/a parents, despite calls for greater attention to beliefs (e.g.,

Cote & Bornstein, 2000; Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009). In addition to responding to the call for more research in this area, the present study is unique in several ways, the most important of which is its orientation toward capturing the dynamic negotiation of parenting beliefs rather than a static portrayal of such beliefs. Guided by dialogical perspectives, the study will query dialoguing about beliefs over time, including reports of dialogues with actual people, with media, and with societal/cultural narratives. As discussed earlier, research has documented the struggling that parents experience in their exposure to differing beliefs and values of their Latino/a heritage and mainstream U.S. society (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Cardoso, Padilla, & Sampson, 2010; Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Parra-Cardona et al., 2009). Yet we know little about the nature of these struggles, how conflicts are negotiated, and how new beliefs might arise during the course of this struggling and negotiation.

Another contribution of this study is its inclusion of both mothers and fathers. As stated in the preceding pages, there is limited research addressing parenting beliefs from fathers' perspectives and thus a need to include fathers in future studies. Of the existing qualitative research examining parenting, the main focus remains on mothers (e.g., Durand, 2011; Guilamo-Ramos, et al., 2007; Johnson, 2009). This study will give voice to mothers while building our understanding of fathers' experiences when exploring parental beliefs and their dialoguing with cultural voices as these may vary individually and by parental role. As Okagaki and Bingham (2005) suggest, "connecting parents' social cognitions to broader cultural values within specific cultural contexts [is necessary]

to increase our understanding of the role of culture in shaping parental cognitions” (p. 6). This is important because “cultural values influence people’s daily lives and provide guidelines on how to structure relationships, including intimate relationships” (Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009, p. 100).

Third, Latino/as make up a large group of people from varying subcultures (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Spanish-speaking Central or South American countries), and there are differences across groups. For instance, diversity may result from reasons for migrating to the United States, variation in socioeconomic status, and level of acculturation (Harwood et al., 2002). In recognition of the fact that “Latino parents do not constitute a homogeneous group” (Hammer, Rodriguez, Lawrence, & Miccio, 2007, p. 217), this study will focus on Mexican Americans (with recognition of the substantial diversity within as well as between Latino/a groups.)

Fourth, the study will seek input primarily from second-generation Mexican-American parents. Based on previous research, samples tend to consist of first-generation immigrant mothers or fathers (e.g., Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Durand, 2011; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007) with limited exploration of later generation mothers and fathers. The rationale for focusing on second-generation parents is to work with individuals that are most likely to experience “falling between cultures.” It is probable that later generation individuals are relatively close to Mexican culture. At the same time, second-generation individuals’ perspectives may differ from their parents due to being born in the United States.

In sum, guided by ecological systems theory, Chicana feminist perspective, and dialogical theory, the purpose of this study is to access the negotiation of and dialoguing about parental beliefs by Mexican-American mothers and fathers, as reported in individual semi-structured interviews. The broad research questions are:

1. What are the issues/conflicts regarding parenting beliefs experienced by second or later generation mothers and fathers?
2. How are these issues being negotiated over time in dialoguing within the immediate family, with extended family, with others in their social circle, and with perceived societal-level narratives?
3. In what ways are gender dynamics evident in mothers' and fathers' parenting beliefs?

Author's Perspective

Throughout my educational career I have found issues regarding parenting of interest although this was not the focus of my research (i.e., thesis). When I became a parent three years ago my interest in parenting increased. I found myself wanting to know more about the experience of others (women and men) as parents and how they came to hold their beliefs about parenting. This interest was sparked as I continually encountered other parents (primarily mothers) sharing parental advice, experiences, and resources once I informed them I was pregnant. I realized much of the advice shared with me was based on specific beliefs regarding pregnancy, childbirth, children, health, and parenting in general. I contemplated where beliefs came from and how parents deciphered between what to ascribe to and what to disregard. As evident in the stories shared with me through

casual conversation, I knew that some of the beliefs parents held were based on personal experience and others on material they read in books or via the Internet. Furthermore, I reflected on the information shared with me and noticed there was a distinction in experiences and advice that might be based on culture. My Latina friends would make suggestions that differed from my Anglo friends. For example, many of my Anglo friends suggested putting my infant in a crib (in a separate room) and allow her to “cry it out” in order to get her to sleep through the night. This was never expressed as an option by my Latina friends who often slept with their infant in the same bed or had their infant sleeping in their crib but in the same room with them. This sentiment was reiterated by my father who thought my daughter’s room was too far away from mine; her room is about 11.6 feet away and I could see her lying in her crib while I was lying in bed. When she was approximately 11-months-old she started sleeping in a crib in her room and this seemed too early for my father who thought she should stay in my room.

Growing up biracial with an Anglo mother and a third-generation Mexican-American father I frequently found myself recognizing, and to a certain extent questioning, differences in cultural values and upbringing. I was instructed to engage in specific behaviors when around my father’s side of the family that I did not have to do when in the company of my mother’s side of the family. For instance, my father always made sure I said hello and gave hugs to my *abuelito* (granddad) and my *tías/os* (aunts/uncles), with specific emphasis on that order and the purpose of seeking them out, anytime I was in their presence. It was important to do these things before acknowledging anyone else as a sign of respect. There was constant instruction to be respectful to others

around me and to carry myself in a respectful manner (i.e., physical demeanor, appropriate language).

Now that I am married with children I continue to find myself curiously identifying differences in cultural values and upbringing. This awareness was heightened when I chose to marry a first-generation Jamaican-American. We discussed the reality that our children would be multiracial and what this meant for them as well as us as parents. Through interaction with each other's families we, as well as our children, are exposed to a variety of cultural beliefs and values. We have to decide what beliefs and values we will utilize and which ones we will disregard. Although there are similarities in the mixture of our racial and ethnic background there are also differences. For example, my husband's grandmother (referred to as Mama in Jamaica) traveled to the United States to visit us when our daughter was about 3-months-old and thought I should respond immediately to my daughter's cries. This is similar to the way my father responded to my daughter crying and how he thought I should respond. As for my mother, she believed it was fine for my daughter to cry a little without immediate response as this would help strengthen her lungs. The exposure of growing up biracial, partaking in an interracial marriage, and having multiracial children has been intriguing as I seek to have a better understanding of parental beliefs.

Through my experience as an instructor of an undergraduate gender development course, I am continually engaged in critically examining gender issues across the lifespan and seeking new ways to impart this knowledge to students. I find it interesting listening to students' accounts of why parents, or people in general, tend to treat girls and boys

differently. As I assist them in clarifying their thought process I begin to understand their beliefs are often grounded in personal experiences. Frequently, because their experiences are all they have known, their beliefs are in line with the idea that differences (beyond physiological) are inherent – strictly based on nature. The notion that differential treatment is, in part, based on the way people are socialized (nurtured) tends to be implausible to them. I have found people in general tend to struggle with the reality that gender roles are socially structured and this structuring tends to factor into beliefs held about parenting (i.e., role of mothers and fathers) and children (i.e., daughters and sons). I am interested in revealing and comprehending the beliefs people hold with regard to gender and how these beliefs impact their parenting.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Overview: Interpretative Phenomenology

The method of this study was guided by the principles of interpretative phenomenology. Phenomenology focuses on the daily experiences of individuals and the significance of these experiences (Daly, 2007; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003). Phenomenologists seek to understand the participant's perceptions and views regarding a given experience (Daly, 2007; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) emphasizes the ways individuals are situated in the world (i.e., lifeworld, being-in-the-world; see Lopez & Willis, 2004) and how context relates to their perspective regarding their experience. IPA is informed by hermeneutics which emphasizes the centrality of interpretation in all meaning making (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003). Thus, the goal is to “uncover” meanings conveyed by others, but at the same time recognizing that this uncovering is an interpretive process on the part of the analyst.

Participants

IPA researchers aim for relatively small and homogenous samples in order to examine similarities and differences that exist within the sample (Smith, Flowers, Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003). The aim was to recruit participants with a shared experience (Baker, Wuest, & Stern, 1992; Morse, 1998; Sandelowski, 1995; Smith & Osborn, 2003). The shared experience in this case was second-generation parents of young children (under the age of 7 years old). The following criteria were used to recruit

and select couples for this study: (a) second-generation Mexican-American (one or both parents); (b) currently married or living with an opposite-sex spouse/partner; and (c) whose eldest child was age seven or younger. During the course of sample recruitment, the decision was made to include two later-generation Mexican-American fathers (as described below).

Child age was restricted for this study because of the variability that was expected with the experience of having younger versus older children, and also because of my interest in parents of young children. The experience of having young versus older children may impact beliefs about parenting and ideas on how to parent. For example, Calzada and Eyberg (2002) found few differences in the way Latina mothers parented young (2- to 6-year-olds) daughters and sons. In contrast, Guilamo-Ramos et al. (2007) found Latina mothers parented adolescent (11- to 14-year-olds) daughters and sons differently based on the cultural norms of machismo and marianismo. Child's age may impact the point at which specific parental beliefs are enacted (e.g., gender norms). With regard to number of children, parents with more than one child were welcome to participate because the aim of the study was not to focus on a specific child but rather the overall experience of parenting.

The analysis is based on interviews with 13 participants (7 mothers, 6 fathers, ages 22-38). Although data from couples was not required for this study, most second-generation Mexican-American mothers who agreed to participate were partnered with second or later generation Mexican-American fathers, so fathers within these couples were also interviewed. Five couples were legally married and two couples were in long

term relationships with their partner. Six of the couples had one child, and one couple had three children. Considering the gender of the participants' children there were 6 daughters and 3 sons. All mothers and three fathers were second-generation Mexican-American (see Table 1 for an additional description of the participants). One additional father, Santiago, considered himself to be mainly second-generation because he had moved to the United States when he was two years of age. Two other fathers, Antonio and Carlos, were third and fourth generation, respectively. Rosa's partner was excluded from the analysis because he was of Puerto Rican and Spanish rather than Mexican descent. Based on the participants educational attainment and occupation, one couple was identified as upper-middle class, three couples were identified as middle class, one couple was identified as lower-middle class, and two couples were identified as working class (see Atkinson & Brandolini, 2011; Goldthorpe & McKnight, 2006; U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration, 2010).

When asked about the amount of time they saw their parents three participants saw their parents every day (two saw both parents, one saw mother only), eight participants saw their parents at least once per week (four saw both parents, two saw mother only, and one saw father only), five participants saw their parents at least once per month (four saw both parents, one saw father only), and one participant saw her father once a year. Ten participants lived in the same area as their parents, two participants lived away from their parents, and one participant lived in the same area as her mother but away from her father. In addition, several participants reported talking with their parents on the phone fairly frequently. All of the participants were bilingual. Four of the couples'

parents provided childcare for their children, two couples had a babysitter (non-family member), and two couples had a child in school. When asked about traveling to Mexico four participants indicated they traveled to Mexico less than once per year, seven participants traveled to Mexico once per year, one participant traveled to Mexico twice per year, and one participant traveled to Mexico four times per year. Ten of the participants specified trips to Mexico were for the purpose of visiting family members (e.g., grandparents, aunts, uncles). It should be noted that several of the participants indicated they no longer travel to Mexico.

Table 1

Description of Participants

Pseudonym	Couple Number	Age	Education	Occupation	Child Age (Months)	Child Gender
Mothers						
Sofía	1	31	Master's Degree	Speech Language Pathologist	36	Daughter
Rosa	2	38	Unknown	College Admissions	36	Son
Isabella	3	22	Some College	Full-Time Student	12	Son
María	4	26	Some College	Stay-at-home Mother	72	Daughter
Ana	5	24	Some College	Medical Assistant	84	Daughter
	-	-	-	-	60	Son
	-	-	-	-	24	Daughter
Liliana	6	31	Master's Degree	Instructional Designer	9	Daughter
Leticia	7	26	Bachelor's Degree	Receptionist	19	Daughter

Table 1 Continued

Description of Participants

Pseudonym	Couple Number	Age	Education	Occupation	Child Age (Months)	Child Gender
Fathers						
Martín	1	35	Master's Degree	High School Principal	36	Daughter
Santiago	3	22	Some High School	Truck Driver	12	Son
José	4	28	Some College	Production Worker	72	Daughter
Carlos	5	26	Associate Degree	Sheriff's Deputy	84	Daughter
	-	-	-	-	60	Son
	-	-	-	-	24	Daughter
Antonio	6	33	Some College	Phone Operator Supervisor	9	Daughter
Andrés	7	27	Unknown	Construction Superintendent	19	Daughter

Procedures

Participants were recruited through flyers, referrals, and researcher contacts. Flyers (see Appendix A) were distributed in a bilingual newspaper aimed primarily at Latinos/as, posted in churches and community centers, and circulated via e-mail to a community coalition aimed at creating safe environments for families. The majority of participants were recruited through contact made with a community coordinator working on a longitudinal rural-based research project in the southwest region of the United States. A brief description of the study was sent to potential participants, followed by a phone conversation to answer questions and make arrangements for the interview.

A phone conversation was held with one partner from each of the couples. This was typically the partner that had seen the recruitment flyer or had been referred by one of my contacts. During each phone conversation participants were asked their age, relationship status, ethnicity and generational status, the ethnicity and generational status of their partner, their primary language, their partners primary language, the number of children they have, the age of their eldest child, and how they heard about the study. An explanation of the study was provided and any questions the participant had regarding the study were answered. After all questions had been answered participants were asked when and where they would like the interview to take place.

Interview

Interviews were arranged at the participants' convenience and in a location where they felt comfortable. Ten of the interviews took place in the participants' homes, and four took place in a private room at a medical center. Interviews ranged in length from

approximately 39 minutes for the shortest interview to 86 minutes for the longest interview. Interviews (which were audio-recorded) were preceded by introductions, a statement of insuring participant anonymity, and the appropriate informed consent procedures (Appendix B). Parents were interviewed separately in line with the suggestion put forth by Caldera, Fitzpatrick, and Wampler (2002), advocating separating partners in order to attend to each person's view regarding parenting.

The construction of the semi-structured interview (Appendix C) was guided by past qualitative studies and also by the theoretical perspectives that emphasize dialoguing with self, others, and the larger context over time (Hermans, 2001). Participants were given the opportunity to speak openly in order to provide "detailed, first-person accounts of their experiences" (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 56). Participants were asked to share their experience of parenting in as much detail as they cared to provide and were told I would interject for clarification in order to fully understand their experience and the meaning they attributed to various topics (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003). The order of questions varied to some extent from interview to interview, and additional topics were suggested by the responses of the participants. During the interview I took notes in order to aid in bringing to mind topics of interest, areas where additional information or detail was sought, and areas needing clarification after the participant had shared their story. After the interview I took audio-recorded notes reflecting on the interview as a whole and anything that stood out or was of interest.

Analysis

The hermeneutic process was guided on the one hand, by a commitment to conveying the participants' meanings, and on the other, by the theoretical perspectives of this study which direct attention to I-Other positioning in the construction of parenting beliefs and to the local and societal institutional, political, and discursive context (Hermans, 2001; Smith & Osborn, 2003). The procedures of IPA (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009), described below, were generally followed but focused on the particular research questions of this study. The procedures of IPA may be "adapted by researchers, who will have their own personal way of working" (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 67).

Analysis proceeded idiographically, considering cases one at a time (Smith & Osborn, 2003). This involved:

1. Initial listening to the interview and reading the transcript. "It [was] important in the first stage of the analysis to read and reread the transcript closely in order to become as familiar as possible with the account" (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 67).

2. Sections of the text that seemed relevant to the research questions or that were of interest were highlighted on the transcript. In the right margin initial notes were written regarding descriptions and specific impressions of important issues found within the transcript. Notes also pointed to things indicated as important by the participants and the meaning those things have for the participants, with an emphasis on language.

3. Data were coded by topic to help easily access similarities and differences across transcripts. Coding progressed from the description of precise claims toward an "overarching understanding" of the topics they shared with me (Smith, Flowers, &

Larkin, 2009). This part of the analysis consisted of listing emergent themes chronologically and fitting themes together, theme clusters found within individual transcripts in order to create a super-ordinate theme. Certain themes were discarded due to a lack of connection to the present research aims (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Analysis required exploring patterns and connections as they related to the research questions. There was a continual checking of emergent themes with text from the interview in order to keep a close connection to the data.

4. After all interviews were analyzed according to these steps, comparisons were made of similarities and differences across cases. Theme clusters were compared across interviews with attention given to consistency and divergence. Upon reflection of the richness of the themes and relevancy to the topic, a final list of super-ordinate themes was compiled.

Quality Considerations

Researchers have discussed the importance of assessing the quality of qualitative research while ensuring evaluating procedures are not “simplistic and prescriptive” (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). In addition, it is imperative for the researcher to be transparent and explicitly walk the reader through the research process (Ambert, Adler, Adler, & Detzner, 1995; Belgrave, Zablotsky, & Guadagno, 2002). For these reasons, in accordance with the four criteria put forth by Yardley (2000), Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) provide guidelines to how IPA studies can achieve this task. The four criteria were: (1) sensitivity to context, (2) commitment and rigor, (3) transparency and coherence, and (4) impact and importance.

Sensitivity to context. According to Yardley (2000), sensitivity to context consisted of: mindfulness of the theoretical context, awareness of relevant literature, examination of empirical data, consideration of the socio-cultural setting, participants' perspectives, and ethical issues. Beginning with the early stages of the research process and continuing through the completion of the study I maintained sensitivity to context. This was established by starting with relevant literature and situating the findings within this area (Yardley, 2000). The theoretical assumptions used to guide this study, which were based in macro-level ecological systems theory and Chicana feminist perspective, and micro-level dialogical perspectives, were advantageous in gaining insight into the dialogical process of parental beliefs. My examination of the data using the theoretical assumptions was done with consideration given to supportive and oppositional evidence (Yardley, 2000).

An awareness of the socio-cultural environment was important with the focus of this study centered on the experience of a specific population (Mexican-American's with young children). Culture was central in exploring the meaning and negotiation of parental beliefs. The social context of the researcher-participant relationship was also vital to maintaining sensitivity to context. As Yardley (2000) suggested, effects of the researcher (i.e., gender, ethnicity, and parental status) were considered as potential contributors to the structure of the interview and information shared by the participants. I made effort to put the participant at ease and show empathy from the initial contact made prior to the interview and during the interview (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). I made effort to balance power within the researcher-participant relationship by situating the participant

as the expert and allowing their voice to be heard. Although this does not fully eliminate the ethical issue of power differentials I tried to ensure sensitivity to the experience of the participants. I continually strove to be an advocate for this group of parents in order to encourage informed program design and future research with this population.

Commitment and rigor. According to Yardley (2000), commitment and rigor consisted of: in-depth engagement with the topic, methodological competence, thorough data collection, and depth/breadth of analysis. As Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) suggests, “For some elements of the research process, a demonstration of commitment can be synonymous with a demonstration of sensitivity to context” (p. 181). Commitment was evident in the attentiveness given to the participants during each interview as well as the analysis of each case (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Commitment was manifest with mindful engagement in the research process, literature, data collection, analysis, and conclusions – having an overall interest in the topic. The author’s perspective section of the paper refers to my interest and engagement with this topic and why it was important to expand our knowledge in this area of research.

Rigor refers to the researcher practicing “good science” which consists of being thorough throughout the study and making the research process visible to others (Sandelowski, 1993; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). This was accomplished, in part, through the careful selection of participants. A homogeneous sample of 14 participants was selected to best fit the research questions, and interviews were structured to gain extensive information on the topic (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). This was followed by a contemplative and comprehensive analysis of each interview and sharing key areas

from participants' individual stories and the shared experience across cases (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Yardley, 2000).

Transparency and coherence. “Transparency refers to the degree to which the way the researcher comes to his or her conclusions is made transparent to others and hence open for evaluation” (Demuth, 2013, p. 36). Transparency was accomplished by detailing participant recruitment and selection, the structuring of the interview schedule, the ways interviews were conducted, and steps of analysis (Demuth, 2013; Yardley, 2000). I engaged in the process of reflexivity by providing open disclosure of my interest in the research topic, my opinions, my assumptions through the structuring of the interview schedule, and my motivations to conduct high-quality science from the onset of the study through the completion as new understanding emerged (Finlay, 2003; Yardley, 2000).

As suggested by Yardley (2000), coherence was attained, in part, through the “fit” between the three research questions and the use of IPA. The study design and analysis included description and interpretation of the participants lived experience (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Coherence was accomplished by insuring the analysis dealt with contradictions and ambiguities in a clear manner and themes were structured logically. As Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) suggests, “The reader should be aware that they are positioned as attempting to make sense of the researcher trying to make sense of the participant’s experience” (p. 182-183).

Impact and importance. According to Yardley (2000) and Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009), the impact and importance of a study is evident in the usefulness and

influence the findings have on others. This is accomplished through enhancing understanding, informing practices with the community, political arena, and healthcare fields, as well as improving the social climate. This research contributed to the understanding of the negotiation of parenting beliefs within a Mexican-American population and sought to inform views and practices within community settings. It shed light on the experiences of parents who find themselves between two cultures. This was important given this population is constantly expanding and there has been limited research regarding parenting addressing this population. With limited research there has been restricted understanding and inadequate resources for Mexican-American parents and children. Findings from this study were aimed at informing the way we talk about parenting beliefs and practices in an effort to add the relevant cultural competences to our understanding of parental beliefs. This is important when considering whether beliefs are similar or vary from the predominate literature in this field.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Overview

There was little explicit conflict expressed by these parents as they talked about their parenting beliefs in relation to their own upbringing and to Mexican and American cultural values. Instead, for the most part, participants identified parenting goals and spoke of these in terms of either connecting to or differentiating from their own parents' cultural practices and traditions. As expressed by Santiago and Andrés, respectively, parenting beliefs were created by a selection process of choosing from each culture what they found to be of value.

Uh, my parents kinda did, just because they are really good parents, and, like, I was just, like, I would see how they would, like, parent us, and, like, I would take, like, some goods and some bads, like positives and negatives, and I, to where I would be, like, "Okay, when I'm a parent, I'm, that's how I'm gonna teach my son," but there was some things to where I was, like, "No, that's not the way I'm gonna teach them," so.

Um, it does, it kinda just starts coming to you just from, at least for me, just from, from what memories I can remember, and now kind of the stuff that I've seen in the books. So, yeah, that's, it's definitely just, yeah, just bringing back old memories and just knowing, "Well, is that what I wanna do?" or "No, that's not what I wanna do. This is cool. This is not. This is what I'm gonna do. This is what I'm not gonna do."

Participants' stories clustered around seven parental goals (super-ordinate themes): speaking Spanish; respect; gratitude; education; involvement; discipline; and affection. Of the seven parental goals and associated themes identified in the analysis (see Table 2), three of the parental goals were classified as connecting with their parents and

four were classified as differentiating from their own childhood experiences (see Table 3).

Table 2

Super-Ordinate Themes and Themes Across Participants

Super-Ordinate Themes	Themes
Speaking Spanish	Communication between child and grandparents Importance of speaking Spanish
Respect	Importance of respect Respect for elders, emphasis on greeting Respect, impact from upbringing
Gratitude	Thankfulness as a continual goal, not spoiling child Gratitude, connection with upbringing
Education	Providing for child Achievement, money and time
Involvement	Lack of involvement from their parents Desire for involvement with their child
Discipline	Strict parents Harsh discipline, making a shift
Affection	Dynamics of affection in the family

Table 3

Dialogue of Parental Goals

Connecting	Differentiating
Speaking Spanish	Education
Respect	Involvement
Gratitude	Discipline
	Affection

Description of Parental Goals

Speaking Spanish. Twelve of the fourteen participants (7 mothers, 5 fathers) expressed the importance of ensuring their child was fluent in Spanish. In particular, seven of the participants stated it was important for their child to be fluent in Spanish so that they (their child) can communicate with their parents (child’s grandparents). Many of the participants indicated their parents were not fluent in English and preferred to speak to them (the participant) and their child (grandchild) in Spanish. This is noteworthy given that six of the participants’ parents helped with childcare.

Respect. Eleven participants (7 mothers, 3 fathers) articulated the importance of their child learning to be respectful and showing respect to others. Participants had vivid recollection of how their parents and grandparents raised them to be respectful, and they describe respect as being “drilled” and “driven” into them by their parents when they were younger. There was emphasis on showing respect to older people/elders (i.e., grandparents, aunts, uncles), specifically in the way children should speak with or greet

them. There was a distinction made between the way children should speak to younger versus older individuals.

Gratitude. Eight participants (5 mothers, 3 fathers) described the importance of raising their child to value the things they had and not expecting to have everything they wanted. Participant's reflected on their parents doing hard labor and working long hours which often resulted in them wanting to ensure their child knew "nothing comes easy." This concept of valuing possessions was often summarized as gratitude. Participants believed it was important to teach their child to appreciate what they had and where they were in life. This was also expressed as not spoiling their child.

Education. Twelve participants (6 mothers, 6 fathers) stressed the importance of education. Specifically, participants expressed a desire to provide an education for their child. Education was considered important, in part, because participants recognized the struggles their parents faced coming to the U.S. from Mexico due to restricted availability of opportunities which was in part connected with their limited educational attainment. Of the participants that indicated their parents' educational level, the majority of their parents did not attain an education beyond the U.S. equivalence of middle school.

Involvement. When reflecting on aspects of parenting perceived as important, eleven participants (6 mothers, 5 fathers) stated they wanted to be more involved in their child's education compared to the level of involvement they experienced from their parents. Participants contemplated whether the lack of involvement from their parents, with regard to schoolwork and activities, was due to the language barrier, their parent's limited education, or their parent's work schedule. Overall, participants wanted to be

more involved than their parents in helping their child with homework, volunteering with school activities, and attending school events. They described wanting to always “be there” for their child and the importance of being supportive.

Discipline. Thirteen of the participants (6 mothers, 6 fathers), when reflecting on their childhood, focused on the discipline they received. The majority of participants indicated their parents were strict, specifically their fathers. Participants recalled their parents being harsh with discipline growing up and they (the participants) did not want to discipline their child in the same manner. Many of the participants believed there needed to be limits to the way they disciplined their child. Discipline should be done in the “proper way” and often times this meant differing from the way their parents disciplined them.

Affection. When reflecting on the differences between first and later generation parents, eight participants (6 mothers, 1 father) indicated their generation shows more affection to their children when compared to the amount of affection their parents showed. Participants believed it was important to not only love their child but to express that love. Frequently, this was done through affection. They talked about knowing their parents loved them but desiring a more outward expression of that love.

Dialoguing about Parenting Goals

In the first two sections below, connecting and differentiating dialoguing is described and illustrated. This distinction refers to connecting to or differentiating from the practices and traditions of participants’ parents, and these two types of dialoguing were associated with different parenting goals (Table 3). However, as described and

illustrated in the third section, more complex dialoguing also occurred, particularly with regard to the parenting goal of discipline. This involved diversity among participants but also more complex combinations of differentiating and connecting dialogue within interviews. The final section addresses gender dynamics in these discussions of parenting goals, both with respect to parental and child gender.

Connecting dialogue. The three parental goals classified as connecting with their parents (speaking Spanish, respect, and gratitude) were negotiated over time. Participants reflected on their own thought process about why they wanted their child to speak Spanish, learn respect, and express gratitude. As they described their reasoning there was a mixture of their own thoughts, consideration given to their current context, and influence from others (i.e., their parents). Leticia explained,

I want her, I guess that's why I want her to be bilingual, because I think that plays like a major role due to older relatives that we might have that don't speak English...Or when there's somebody in the room, maybe an aunt or an uncle or grandma that only speaks Spanish. It's rude to us if we're just speaking in English and they're there, and we're carrying a whole conversation. I mean, if it's a small conversation, that would be fine, but if it's like we're carrying a conversation, and they don't understand what they're saying, I find that rude, and I catch myself doing that a lot, like with my sisters? My dad will be sitting there, and I'll be, like, we'll have a conversation, and my dad will make a face, or he'll be, like, "Do you not know Spanish? Do you not see me here?" And we try not to do that as much, but we're glad he does that. I mean, I'm glad I know Spanish, so that's it.

Personal experience had a major impact on the participants' dialogue. For instance, it was a consideration of their context (i.e., growing up speaking Spanish at home and continuing to interact with their parents who do not speak English) that appeared to be the foundation of their belief concerning speaking Spanish. In addition,

cultural values were apparent motivators for the participants as they articulated their desired parental goals. For instance, participants emphasized the importance of speaking Spanish themselves but also teaching their children to speak Spanish. Responding to why it was important for his child to speak Spanish, José articulated his thoughts this way, “So, they can communicate with my, with my parents, which would be their, and my grandparents, because they don’t speak English, and so they’d, so they could actually talk right, I guess, instead of hand signals.” Participants were mindful of the interactions between their children and their parents or other family members. The majority of the participants’ first language was Spanish and their parents, typically, were not fluent in English. Keeping this in mind, several of the participants chose to speak Spanish to their child. Choosing to communicate with their child in Spanish would ensure their children were fluent in Spanish. Consequently, this would allow for better communication between their child and their parents (the child’s grandparents). Participants believed their child would be able to learn English from watching television (i.e., cartoons) and when they entered school. Sofía had this to say:

For example, I know I want her to be a fluent Spanish-speaker. So, uh, part of it is because of my culture and because I want her to be able to communicate with my parents effectively. Uh, so then when it comes to, uh, teaching her, I try to, I try, we're, you know, we try to teach her primarily Spanish, which she's learned some English from TV, quite a bit from the cartoons.

Participants’ belief that their child would learn English from watching television came from their reflection on the way they were raised. They recalled learning English from watching cartoons and once they entered school. For this reason, participants thought it would be “easier” for their child to learn English outside the home compared to learning

Spanish outside the home. There was a constant connection to their upbringing and consideration for their parents.

Participants' dialogue consisted of reflecting on the way their parents raised them and the emphasis their parents placed on the issues of respect and gratitude. Participants moved between reflecting on their past to thinking about the present as they resolved the way they wanted to raise their children. The dialogue continually indicated that participants' parental beliefs were negotiated primarily through their familial experience. Leticia explained, "I feel like just be respectful. I feel like we have to be respectful to our elders. That's how, well, I'm comparing it to my brother and sisters, and when somebody's in the house, you go and you say, "Hi" to them, or you'll say, "Bye" to them, a relative or not relative. You have to be respectful." Dialogue connected to the way participants were raised and how their parents instructed them to behave. The expectations of behavior carried over from the participants' parents to the participants and were enacted with the participants' children. The following excerpt exemplifies dialogue connecting participants' parental beliefs with their upbringing, Liliana explains:

Um, of course it's, you want the best. I, um, want the best for them, but at the same time, I don't want them to be rotten, like spoiled rotten. I was raised very poor, and I want to somehow to share that with them. I want them to see the value of, or, yeah, the value and appreciation, appreciation for living here in the U.S. I want them to experience Mexico, and, and the difference, the difference of a third world country and a first world country.

When asked to clarify the aspects of growing up poor that Liliana wanted to pass on to her child she explained,

I guess the humbling, the humbleness of it. That's what I want her to see and, and— It's almost like I want to raise her poor. Like, I want, I want, (laughs) as cruel as that may seem, but I don't want to spoil her. I don't want her to think everything is available. Everything, you know, like, that she can, I want her to know that she can aspire to, to have great things, but that it's gonna cost and that it's, it's, um, it's not free in other words, and, and to value and respect that, if I have this, then I have to take care of it, and, you know, have the worth, wor-, um, how do I wanna say? To be able to appreciate it and take care of it and value it, versus, "I got it and so what?" Do you know what I mean? When you grow up poor, if you break, if you get something, you know, a toy or whatever, you really value it, you take care of it, and that's what I want her to, to learn to get.

It was acceptable for participants to do better than their parents and to want better for their children, but it was important for participants to remember their relative humble beginnings. The belief of gratitude was evident as participants recounted their upbringing and their parent's ability to provide things for them. There was a distinction made between their parents providing things they "needed" rather than things they "wanted," as such there was a great appreciation for what was provided. This sense of value was based on prioritization of needs. Given the context of their upbringing, considering their parent's level of education and career path, it was understandable why many participants were adamant their child show gratitude.

Occasionally, the way participants wanted to raise their children and the values they deemed important connected with their parents but differed from society (e.g., within the parental goals of respect and gratitude). Participants made comparisons between the way they were raised and the interactions they viewed in society. María articulated her experience regarding respect as:

You know, I still, I don't let my kid talk back to me, because I was always showed that's, that's wrong, you know? You never do that to your mom and dad, so that's, but other stuff? Like, there's kids that don't, they don't

have respect, and that's something completely different from what, you know, my parents showed me to always have respect for adults.

María expressed her views pertaining to gratitude as:

Just stuff isn't given to you. Stuff is a privilege, especially nowadays with kids having so much electronics around, and it's stuff like that, it, they're privilege's, you know? We're not—I always tell my, it's, we're not gonna spoil—I mean, she is a little spoiled, she's our only kid, but to some extent, we're, like, there, we draw the line to what she has and doesn't have and doesn't get. Just because it's, it's, I wasn't raised that way, you know? To literally get everything you want when you want it.

Overall, the parental goals that connected with the participants' parents consisted of dialogue where participants referenced their parents, family, and general childhood experiences. The majority of the dialogue was expressed in terms of participants' own ideas rather than reported conversations with others. On occasion, participants indicated a direct conversation that took place with their parents, but this type of dialogue was minimal. Rather than actual conversations with others, participants' thoughts informed their parental choices and the meanings/values associated with those choices.

Differentiating dialogue. Participants clearly differentiated from their parents on each of the four parental goals (education, involvement, discipline, and affection). Participants reflected on the approach their parents took and the way they (the participants) wanted to adjust their parenting, in comparison to their parents. There was a conscious awareness of what their parents did (or did not do) and the way they (the participants) were going to make changes. In comparison to the connecting dialogue, the differentiating dialogue indicated a greater amount of conversation with others. Specifically, dialogue occurred with their parents, their partner, their family members, and others in their social circle.

With regard to education, participants' dialogue differentiated from their experiences growing up. The majority of participants stated they wanted to provide an education for their child. This differed from their parents because their parents were not able to provide an education for them. Santiago described this as:

Um, my ideas are to just, um, work hard, give my son a stable home. Um, get him prepared for the future, like, like put money in his account for when he gets old. Something my parents didn't do for us, you know? Like, get him ready for college, if he's going to college. Have money set up for him, uh, uh, pretty much the plans are just do what pretty much any American, uh, middle class person does for their kids, you know? Like, always be there for him. Prepare ourselves to be there for our son for whatever he needs.

Although the participants' parents were unable to provide an education for the participants, there was a split between participants experiencing a push from their parents to gain an education and parents who did not push them to further their education. In the words of José, "I got outta high school, and I was gonna join the military, but they told me, "No," so (laughs) and I was gonna go to some college in Houston or something, and they said it was too expensive, so I was like, "Man, well, you know, screw it." So I went to work." Of the participants whose parents encourage them to further their education, several recalled their parents encouraging them because they did not want them (the participant) to struggle as they had. Sofia explained,

Yeah, we didn't, I mean, in my household, we didn't have an option, "You're not going to college." "You're going to college!" And the main reason was because my dad said— They didn't have the opportunity because of, um— Well, because they came, they were immigrants, and they didn't have, uh— They didn't have— Not that they didn't have a support system, they didn't have the money to go to college. I think my dad would have loved to have gone and become an architect or something, but he, they just didn't have that. So, my dad had to work long hours [at company]. Um, so he said, "I don't want you have to go through hard

labor, work hard long labor hours, because that's not what life is about. I want ya'll to be doing something—" He's like, "I don't love my job, I just do it because it provides for you guys." So, so, yes, I think, um, we didn't have— He didn't, he didn't give us a choice. He said you're going—

In a similar manner, participants whose parents did not support them in advancing their education expressed wanting to promote their child's education, often to better their child's life. This was evident in the articulations of Antonio and Andrés, respectively:

College was in the back of their mind. It wasn't something that they were expecting of us to do or anything like that. Whereas I see me, and me and [spouse] uh, you know, saving, save money for our girls, for our baby girl or for our children to, you know, further their education past high school, past what the government has to offer, whereas my family didn't see that. They just, basically, it stopped there.

As far as education, they were, like, "Well, great. If you can do it, good. If not, well it is what it is." Compared to us, like, "No, that's, you have to do it, and this is how pretty much the world works now." So, that's definitely something that's gonna be a big push.

Participants believed the reason they were able to accomplish more than their parents was because they had a higher level of education. Andrés explained the difference between his parents and himself as:

Um, you know, they had to work, and with the amount of money that they made, you know, that's, and I guess the lifestyle that they tried to give us, they did. They had to work, just— Compared to now, it's, like, "Well, I know I want this lifestyle. I know this is the type of money that I'm going, that I want, or is gonna make my family the way I want it to be," so, um, you know, like, you do. You go out and you find an education, or you go to some school or some training. Compared to them, it's, that's all they knew was work, work, work, work, work. Compared to me, it's like, well I know how to work, but I also know how to further what I know of work and apply it to something else to make more money. To where, yeah, they couldn't. They couldn't go take a class or get some kind of training. They just had to provide. It just was about providing.

Similarly, this belief was manifest in each generation doing more and having more compared to the previous generation. Participants specifically referred to having more money and time, they indicated their parents worked a lot trying to provide for their family. Martín explained, “The only thing that I have is more disposable income and time; whereas, my dad worked all the time. You know, that was, uh, but that wasn’t his fault. Of course, he was just trying to make ends meet.”

The issues of education and parental involvement were closely related. Repeatedly, participants reflected on their experience as a child recalling their parents did not attend their school events or activities, had limited involvement with their schoolwork, and were not around much in general. Responding to the differences between generations, Sofía articulated her thoughts this way:

Um, I guess the main difference that they weren't too involved. Um, if a teacher called them, they would talk to us, but they never— I, I think, like, now, like if it was me, and, like, if they called me, I'd be, like, I'd be super involved. I'd be up there, you know? But with my parents, I, I don't know if it was the language kind of barrier, the lack of education that they had, but that's why they were, like, "Well, we don't know what to do. We don't know how to help them, because we, we don't know the language how to help them with their homework, so there's nothing that we can do." So, that's one area that I think is way different.

Within the differentiating dialogue, participants were clearly aware of the way they wanted to change their parenting compared to their parents. Participants were able to point to specific examples of the way their beliefs about parenting differed from their parents. Although participants spoke to the hardships their parents endured (e.g., work schedules, amount of money they made, and language barrier), they were adamant about

their desire to change their parenting practices. Rosa, Ana, and Carlos, respectively, articulated this as:

I've shown him the commitment level for me to be there if he's involved in extracurricular activities, whether it be sports, um, because growing up, uh, I was involved in a lot of stuff. My mom worked quite a bit. My dad wasn't around as much, so I didn't always have their support to be there, so I would like to be able to do that for him, you know?

I do good with them and try to be there with their school activities, because my parents were never there with me for my school activities. That's one thing that I try to go with them and volunt-, not volunteer in the class but take things for their class, or things like that.

Well, I'm always there, you know, as far as when the kids need something. I try to go to their, uh, their school stuff. You know, buy them stuff they need. Like, this past Valentine's, me and my wife did the Valentine's box for my daughter. Um, and I wanna be more involved with them than with what my parents were with us when we were younger. I mean, they always had to work, um, to support us and they were hardly ever there, so.

While reflecting on growing up, participants noted the impact of watching- others (i.e., friends and others around them) who had their parents in attendance at events.

Isabella recalled, "Uh, like my parents, um, like I said, my dad was really never around, so, and well with other families, I, I see dads who are, like, so involved, and, you know, like at school sporting events. Like, I would see their dads, and, well, I would want my dad there, so." Participants made a mental note of the way they were raised and compared it to others, friends and society in general. Although there were no conversations taking place with others, specifically around the issue of involvement, participants engaged in a great deal of internal dialogue. Participants knew they wanted to be more involved with their children, and they continually expressed the desire of wanting their parents to be more involved with them as a child.

With regard to discipline, participants engaged in more discussions compared with all other parental goals. This dialogue consisted of conversations with their parents, partner, family, and others in their social circle. Participants differentiated from their parents' harsh discipline and opted for a milder form of discipline with their children. There continued to be an emphasis on the importance of discipline, but the ways in which it was carried out differed from their parents' method. Often, participants made a distinction between the ways they wanted to discipline compared to how their parents (specifically fathers) disciplined them. The participants clearly indicated they did not want to discipline like their fathers and wanted to try other forms of discipline. Santiago described this as:

Uh, not like my dad, for sure. I feel like I will, I won't hit my son, and if I do, it's gonna be the proper way. Like, with the belt, and in the butt only, like in his behind, you know? Not, like, everywhere in his arms, wherever the belt goes. Like, I feel, like, I'm gonna talk to him first, and I'm gonna punish him, like, ground him, uh, like put him in the corner, whatever people do nowadays, and just, just do things differently and see how it works out.

Although participants expressed a desire to alter their discipline compared to the way their parents disciplined, it required continual effort to make the shift. Andrés had this to say:

Well, especially, I guess my main concern going into this was, like, "I want to be nothing like my dad," and, uh, that's pretty much the only, I guess you could say, concern or how I saw or what just constantly was in the back of my mind, or even 'til this day, is, you know? It's, um, I-I, I mean, I have no regrets on, on any of that, on how I was raised or have no remorse or anything like that, but it's just something that, yeah, just always gonna be there. It's, like, you know, my dad, he did, he did a great job providing and all that, but just some things, I just never viewed as okay... He just really had a, I guess you could say, a short temper. So, that's something that I've always, and continue to— Because I do, I catch

myself sometimes, you know, get, getting angry pretty fast. So, it's, like, "Man!" You know?

As participants revealed their shift in beliefs regarding discipline, recounting their experiences growing up, there was a new dialogue occurring with their parents. Several participants discussed having conversations with their parents about the way they (participants) chose to discipline their child. Throughout the course of the interviews it became apparent the participants' parents' view on discipline evolved over time. This evolution was evident in two ways: 1) the participants' parents now taking a more restrained approach to discipline in regards to their grandchildren and 2) in instances where participants had much younger siblings, the participants' parents now took a restrained approach with discipline. Rosa, Carlos, and Santiago, respectively, explained this as:

Um, and it's funny because my mom— I think it's different when it's a grandchild versus a child, because I see the things that my son has done, and she just lets him do whatever, and when we were growing up, it was nothing like that. You, you were gonna get spanked or something.

Um, and, you know, I've, I've told them before, it's, like, "Why don't y'all spank him [younger sibling]? He's, ya'll let him get away with everything when ya'll used to spank us. That's why he, he acts that, that way for a reason." Um, I guess there would be a conflict, I guess they've just lightened up over the years, I guess. That'd be one conflict there, is I don't agree with the way they're raising him now, because they, I don't see that there's any consequences when he does something wrong.

Like I said, they would beat us. My wife, she says she would get beat up, too, and now that they have an 8-year-old, like, they don't hit him at all. They don't even touch him. They don't, they tell him, "I'm gonna hit you," but they don't do nothing, you know, and that's how my little sister is, too. She's so, they're spoiled, you can say now.

Dialogue concerning discipline had the most complexity of all seven parental goals. The overriding similarity consisted of participants differentiating from their parents' harsh discipline. As participants negotiated their beliefs about discipline, dialogue expanded beyond their remembrances and included their awareness of others in their social circles and societal-level narratives. This complexity will be addressed in the next section.

Concerning affection, participants spoke about their parent's (particularly their fathers) infrequent hugs, kisses, and statements of "I love you." This lack of affection led participants to make the conscious decision to show more affection to their child. Participants differentiated from their parents and described hugging, kissing, and telling their child "I love you" on a frequent basis. Participants reflected on their upbringing and referred to their parents' behaviors. Responding to the differences between generations, Sofía articulated her thoughts:

I think maybe also, like, I, I always knew that my parents loved me and stuff like that, but I think also the, the affection type. Uh, I think that's one difference. I mean, I think, uh, I feel like— I, well now my dad that he's older, he's real lovable and stuff, but I think in our household, you know, we didn't, I don't think there was like a lot of, like, hugging. I mean, here with my daughter, we hug her, kiss her, and maybe I just, I have a bad memory, and maybe I just don't remember, uh, but I think that's probably, there's probably more— I think there's more, there is increased affection...

Participants made it clear that they valued affection and believed it was important to show affection to their child. They recalled wishing their parents were more affectionate with them growing up. Isabella explained, "Uh, I just feel like, I, I didn't have that, or much of that, and, yeah, I felt like whenever I was younger, I, I would have liked that, to have that around." Participants did not have

conversations with others but they ruminated over the importance of affection. This dialogue consisted of the perceptions participants had regarding the level of affection their parents showed growing up. Participants went back and forth between referring to their parents and reflecting on their own desires and needs as a child. This dialogue informed participants of the changes they wanted to make, and were making, with their children.

Complex dialogue. Of the seven parental goals, dialoguing about discipline was the most complex. This dialoguing differed across participants but also within the same participant. The following excerpts exemplify the negotiation of discipline by Antonio who connected with and differentiated from societal-level narratives represented in the media.

The difference, the, the questions I had was, was which way works best? And it's, and again, it's gonna be to the parents and to the child, you know, which way is gonna be the best for them. Uh, although violence is something that I don't, you know, like or, you know, I don't want to do, or you know I never hope to do. I don't ever wanna do that to my baby, but at the same time, I see where that puts, puts the child in line. At the same time, I see where, where, in American culture, where, where putting them in the corner doesn't, sometimes doesn't just do the justice that it needs to be done. Like, where as far as discipline where it doesn't settle the kid down, but it's, like I said, it's, it's a big night and day, and it's, like I said, it depends on the parents and the child and how they, how they see it necessary.

The parental goal of discipline included dialogues where participants differed from their parents but connected with society, differed from their parents and societal-level narratives and connected with their partner, and sometimes differed from their partners. Agreement/disagreement with partners was sometimes voiced as a concern about potential disagreements in the future, Sofía explained:

I mean, I think my husband and I coming from the same culture, it has helped that we really don't have— I feel, we're not really different in how we're, we're raising her. We believe in, um, we don't believe in beating or anything like that, but we do believe in discipline. Like, a spanking if she misbehaves, and, uh, so I think that really has helped me raise my daughter, because I think if we were— You, I mean, if we just did, have different views, even if he was Mexican American and he had way different views, I think there would be kind of, uh, we'd have difficulty raising her, or parenting her.

I do feel maybe as she gets older, maybe a teenage stage, high school stage, I think, uh, I think he will be a lot harder, and I think that's where we may have arguments where I'll probably be slightly easier, uh, (laughs) just because he has that discipline strong side... So, I think, we may have some arguments as she gets older, but, um—I just think, like, as far as, um, as far as yelling, that kind of aspect. Uh, being more tough, not showing any— (laughs) I mean, he's real loveable and caring right now, but I feel as she gets older, he's gonna— I feel, I feel, and I hope I'm wrong, I feel he probably will back off a little bit and, just to show that he's a tough dad and that there's rules. Um, so, I feel, I mean, because he could yell, so I'm, I'm just afraid that when she, he may scare her when she gets older if he yells.

Overall, complex dialogue involved connecting with and differentiating from multiple sources at the same time; it was a constant process of negotiation. Some emphasized the need for parents to work together in defining disciplinary goals and practices, and the need for ongoing dialogue as Antonio articulated.

Um, the media wants you to be one way and the church wants you to be one way, and your family wants you to be one way, and your friends want you to be one way. You all, you basically gotta take it all in stride, uh, how— The conclusion me and [wife] have come up with is we're gonna have to go through this as a family at, at all times, you know? This is something that we're gonna have to discuss, whether it be in closed, behind closed doors or, you know, where we can have, be civil about discussing it in front of other people.

Gender Dynamics

As participants shared their experiences about growing up and also becoming parents themselves, there were clear gender dynamics present in their stories. Specific areas where gender dynamics were evident included discussions of the following parental goals: respect, gratitude, education, involvement, discipline, and affection. Similar treatment was believed important when teaching daughters and sons the importance of respect and gratitude. Daughters and sons were to be respectful and have manners at all times, whether in the presence of their parents or away from their parents. Additionally, it was important for all children to be thankful for their possessions and not insist on getting everything they wanted. According to participants, their parents treated daughters and sons similarly when instilling the values of respect and gratitude. This belief was carried over for participants as they too had the same expectations for daughters and sons with regards to learning respect and gratitude.

Participants described the traditional gender roles of their parents, and they discussed the ways traditional gendered expectations impacted them (participants) throughout their upbringing. Frequently, their gendered experience growing up differed from the way they wanted to raise their daughters and sons. For example, with regard to involvement, participants not only wanted to be involved in their child's school activities but also wanted their children to be involved in activities. Several of the mothers recalled not being allowed to participate in school activities (i.e., sports) and not having the support from their parents. This gender dynamic consisted of mothers not being allowed

to participate in activities while their brothers were permitted to take part. Isabella articulated her thoughts:

Uh, and I'm, I want him to be involved in sports and, and everything that he can in school. I mean, something that I wasn't able to do, um, I mean, just basically that's it... That was a great, that was a big issue with my parents, that they didn't think that was, like, appropriate, I guess, because I would be out— But, I mean, when it was sports, you know, it was nothing bad or anything.

Although participants wanted their children, regardless of gender, to further their education, this was not the example they had growing up. For most of the participants, their mothers stayed home and cared for the children while their fathers worked outside the home. Participants recalled their mothers always cooking and cleaning in the home and it was not common for their families to go to restaurants to eat. There was a distinction made between the gendered expectations of the past and current expectations.

Leticia described this as:

Like, the man, you have to, for example as he grows older, he has to take charge just in case his dad's not here. He has to, um, take care of us, he has to just be a provider, I guess. As when you're raising a girl, you, you want her to be independent, but I don't want her to grow up and be like, "You have to be a housewife," because you don't have to be a housewife. You could be so much more. I think, um, as growing up, it was, when I'd see my other family, or my family itself, they'd be, like, "Oh, well, she has to stay home and do the cooking and do the cleaning," and compared to now, it's, like, "Oh, she's getting an education. She has a great job," or "She's making more money than he is." I sometimes see it as, there's, they sometimes we try to make one better than the other, when, but I feel like that was before, like, in the past.

Traditional gender roles were evident as participants described their upbringing, specifically with regard to discipline and parental affection. There was a contrast between the gendered experience participants encountered growing up and the way they wanted to parent. José described this contrast between first and later generations as:

Mmm, I think the guys were str-, or the dads were being stricter— than me, and not just notice it like in my parents. I notice like in my friend's parents and all that, too, because they're the same, and most of the moms are, like, stay-at-home moms, and now the, all-, almost, they all work, do you know what I mean? It's, they would just stay home and wash and cook and all that, and now it's, if both parents don't work some, it's off or something. You know, that's the way I see it. Yeah, the, the, my dad would, would always be, like, the, like I said earlier, you know, he would yell or something, and it's, like, "Oh!" you know, you just don't move (laughs), and when she would do it, it's, like, "Whatever," and now it's, I guess, both.

Participants recalled a distinction between their mothers' approach to discipline compared with their fathers' and they expressed not wanting to parent this way. When describing the way they were disciplined, participants would indicate a sense of dread when being disciplined by their fathers. Discipline from fathers appeared to be more severe in comparison to discipline from mothers. José explained this as, "Because my, because, um, like my dad, when he would yell or something, we'd just, like damn, you know, just, (laughs) and my mom, when she would try to stop us from fighting or whatever, I'd be just like, "Oh, whatever," and just keep on fighting, but "I'm gonna tell your dad." "No, no, no!" Kinda, like, afraid of him, I guess." In addition, Liliana had this to say, "Um, she [mom] was the discipliner, but for my dad to discipline us, "Oh, that was, that was grave, that was serious!" Um, so it's almost like he was the cop, he was the bad cop as far as the discipline went, and I don't see my husband doing that at all. I think it's gonna be just both of us doing it."

Furthermore, several of the fathers described their father's way of disciplining as "outta hand," "mad and just scary," and "very hard." Similarly, although the fathers expressed wanting to discipline differently than their fathers, some of the mothers

expressed concern regarding the way their husband may discipline their child in the future. They described the possibility of their husband becoming “harder” or “more tough” when compared to their ideal level of discipline as a mother and were afraid this would cause problems within their relationship and with their children. Part of this concern for the level of strictness from their husband was rooted in their articulation of their experience or their husbands’ experiences with discipline from their fathers. In the words of Isabella, “Um, my husband, I guess he grew up— They would, their limits of spanking was really, you know? And I’m just sometimes scared that he— Even though he says he was raised one way, you know, that he’s not gonna do that with his child, well I, I guess sometimes I’m just scared that, you know, he’s gonna take it too far with [child] or something.”

The sternness of participants’ fathers seemed to connect with a lack of affection they (participants) received from their fathers. Several participants spoke about the lack of affection their fathers showed and indicated ways they (participants) have altered their parenting. María explained, “Um, my dad, I know he loves me, but he was never the affectionate type. Never to, you know, just randomly give me a hug or just to tell me that “I love you,” and that’s something we do with our daughter.” When participants shared moments where their parents were affectionate they always recognized their mothers. Leticia said, “Mmm, I just wanted to be, not like my daughter's best friend, but I wanted to be, like, loveable and kind, how my mom is. My mom is a very sweet person. Opposite from my dad.” Additionally, although participants expressed the importance of both parents (their partner and themselves) showing affection to their child, there was

variation in how that may be done. Responding to the ways parenting is different for mothers and fathers, José articulated his thoughts, “Mmm, I think moms show more love...Mmm, or not that they show more, but different, different types of showing affection, I guess...Because a mom is like, “Oh, give me a hug,” or whatever, and the dad’s like, “Hey, what’s up?” Do you know what I mean?” Though expression of affection was more evident in the participants interactions with their children compared to their experiences growing up, there continued to be a distinction in the ways affection was carried out by mothers and fathers.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Parental Goals: Correspondence with Past Studies

Seven main parenting goals were discussed by the majority of parents who participated in this study. The identification of these goals both replicates, and in some instances extends, prior research with Mexican-American parents.

Connecting goals. Three child-rearing goals that parents in this study hoped to foster—Spanish language skills, respect for others, and gratitude—connected to beliefs and values of their Mexican heritage. Parents expressed a strong desire to keep their family (immediate and extended) together and connected, and language was viewed as a means to accomplishing this. Consistent with previous research participants spoke of the importance of their children being fluent Spanish speakers (e.g., Bermúdez et al., 2011; Hurtado, 1998). They indicated that the importance of speaking Spanish was deeply rooted in a lifelong commitment to their culture and viewed the language as a contextually relevant medium for conveying their Mexican-American identity across multiple familial generations (e.g., Anzaldúa, 2012). This finding reflects the cultural value of *familismo*, which emphasizes identification with and cohesion among family members (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Bermúdez & Mancini, 2013; Calzada & Eyberg, 2002; Parra-Cardona et al., 2009; Sotomayor-Peterson et al., 2012).

Respeto is frequently mentioned in research as an important cultural characteristic for Latinos/as, and it proved to be the same with this study. Mothers and fathers spoke of the importance of teaching their children to be respectful to them (as parents) and to their

elders (e.g., grandparents, aunts, uncles). This finding was consistent with previous studies indicating the importance Latino/a parents place on socializing children to be respectful (Bermúdez et al., 2012; Calzada & Eyberg, 2002; Calzada et al., 2012; Parra-Cardona et al., 2009; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Leidy, Guerra, & Toro, 2010). This socialization is introduced early with young children and informs children of the hierarchy that exists between younger versus older people (Anzaldúa, 2012; Bermúdez, Kirkpatrick, Hecker, Torres-Robles, 2010; Parra-Cardona et al., 2009; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Leidy, Guerra, & Toro, 2010). The prevalence of *respeto* was reinforced by the parents in this study and the emphasis they placed on speaking with others, specifically addressing the way children should speak with older versus younger people. Participants described the ways in which their upbringing informed their belief about respect and how this belief was passed down through multiple generations.

With regard to gratitude, participants expressed the belief that American culture, in comparison to Mexican culture, promoted “spoiling” children. Participants recalled watching children being rewarded with possessions even when the child had not behaved “properly.” Given that participants were raising their children in the U.S. they believed it was important to teach their children gratitude, as they had been taught. They recognized a change in the societal mindset regarding what material belongings were deemed appropriate for children in the present compared to when they were growing up. However, they did not want their children to expect to have everything they wanted even if it was seen as socially acceptable. Participants were raised by immigrant parents with limited economic means which resulted in a keen awareness that material possessions

were hard earned. Consequently, even though at present many participants had substantially greater spending power than their parents, reflection on the way they grew up guided their desire to ensure their children were grateful for what they had. The parental goal of gratitude has not been included in past studies as a value explicitly deriving from Mexican heritage and, based on parental discussions in this study, may be linked more to the socioeconomic circumstances of family of origin than is the case for the previous two goals.

Differentiating goals. Parents' discussion of the four remaining parenting goals emphasized differentiating from rather than connecting to Mexican heritage and the family of origin experiences of these participants—education, involvement, affection, and discipline. With regard to education and involvement, as previous researchers have found, Latino/a parents want their children to do well in and further their education (Behnke, Taylor, Parra-Cardona, 2008; Caldera, Fitzpatrick, & Wampler, 2002; Ceballo et al., 2012; Durand, 2011). Mothers and fathers in this study recalled the limited involvement their parents had with them, specifically with their education, and sought change in their parenting approach with their children. Participants surmised that their parents were minimally involved because of the language barrier (their parents not being fluent in English), their parents' limited educational attainment, or their parents' work schedule (e.g., Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Leidy, Guerra, & Toro, 2010). Moreover, parents may feel more hesitant to be involved with their child's education when their child has surpassed their (the parents') level of education.

The findings regarding affection expanded previous work by increasing our understanding of affection expressed by fathers and the impact that affection, or lack thereof, has on children as they begin to parent. Participants spoke freely as they communicated the difference in showing affection between first and later generation parents. Their stories indicated first-generation parents (their parents), specifically fathers, were not as affectionate as they (the participants) were. This finding expanded previous work on affection (e.g., Bermúdez et al., 2012), by exploring the experiences of fathers. Consistent with previous work, affection was highlighted as being expressed by mothers (i.e., Calzada & Eyberg, 2002; Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009; Gilamo-Ramos et al., 2007) more so than fathers. Furthermore, when considering acculturation, research has indicated a distinction between affection shown by higher acculturated mothers compared to less-acculturated mothers, with higher acculturated mothers showing more affection (Calzada & Eyberg, 2002). It is likely the participants' cultural context played a role in their perceived importance of affection. In line with the suggestion put forth by Calzada and Eyberg (2002), it may be that participants' parents were "less emotionally available" due to the stress of migrating to the U.S. from Mexico (p. 362). With the majority of the participants being born in the U.S. it is likely they did not experience the same contextual challenges and were more emotionally available for their children.

Finally, parental discussions of discipline, although mainly characterized as differentiating from the practices of their own parents, evidenced more debating, and uncertainty, than was true for the other goals. They described receiving harsh discipline

from their parents and they wanted to make a shift in the way they disciplined their children. Yet they also rejected laissez-faire parenting which they viewed as an “American” parenting style, saying essentially that they felt this was an abdication of parental responsibilities. Consistent with Calzada and Eyberg (2002), participants stated they believed in spanking but thought there should be limits, and as such, spanking should occur in specific situations but other forms of discipline should be utilized first (i.e., verbal reprimands; Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008). Further, both mothers and fathers specified a shift in their beliefs of appropriate discipline prior to becoming parents (i.e., some mothers believed they would never spank their child), as parents of young children (i.e., spanking was seen as acceptable given the situation), and projecting into the future (i.e., when their child is an adolescent forms of discipline may shift). This finding expanded previous work on discipline by Mexican-American parents, indicating parents may alter their beliefs regarding forms of acceptable discipline as their child gets older (Calzada & Eyberg, 2002). Though they were raised by parents with traditional views of discipline, where discipline was relegated mainly to fathers, they believed it was important for both parents to discipline their children.

Gender Dynamics in Parental Dialoguing

Parents contrasted their own gender differentiated family of origin experiences with their goals of equal opportunities for daughters and sons, and less differentiated parenting roles for mothers and fathers. An important goal was providing an education for their children, both daughters and sons. They emphasized wanting to prepare daughters as well as sons for work outside of the home, including providing opportunity

for advanced education and other activities. For example, mothers talked of wanting to involve their daughters as well as sons in extracurricular activities because they had not had these opportunities while growing up, in contrast to their brothers. These goals contrast with traditional Mexican cultural values of *marianismo* and *machismo* where boys are given more freedom than girls and there is greater concern for protection of girls compared to boys (e.g., Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Blocklin et al., 2011; Guilamo-Ramos et al, 2007).

With regard to parental roles, parents' revision of discipline approaches compared to the way they were raised relates to parental gender roles in that most had grown up in families where discipline was relegated to the father. In contrast, these parents expressed the belief that it was important for both parents to discipline their children. This finding is consistent with two previous studies on Mexican-American parents which reported a similar finding (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Coltrane, 1996). Parents also emphasized the importance of fathers as well as mothers showing affection to their children, and they contrasted this goal with their own experiences with parents who did not show much affection (specifically fathers, e.g., Coltrane, 1996). As participants described the importance of both parents showing affection to their children they indicated affection may be expressed differently. Consistent with existing scholarship, mothers and fathers are capable of showing affection to their children, but the ways in which it is shown may differ (Coltrane, 1996).

Dialogical Processes

Types of dialoguing in relation to goals. There was little explicit conflict evident in participants' dialoguing about their parenting goals. For the most part, these parents talked of formulating their own beliefs and goals through a process of selecting (or rejecting) values and practices variously associated with Mexican and American culture, and they did not report any critical reactions from others (e.g., their own parents) regarding their parenting. María described the negotiation taking place for herself as a Mexican-American as, "Um, on some things, it can be a, it's a little, it's not difficult but it's different, like, from what you, you were kind of raised, some customs, and then you'd have to learn to adapt to new ones. It's a little difficult, but I, I tend to manage." This type of negotiation was described by Johnson (2009) in her ethnographic study, "The women's comments reflect a pragmatic approach to parenting, where parents weigh their childrearing beliefs against other factors, such as the influence of the environment, peers, and pop culture" (p. 270). An important implication of this finding is a caution that cultural "in-betweenness" does not necessarily lead to conflict for Mexican-American parents.

The most complex dialoguing occurred in parental discussions of discipline. Participants spoke of both similarities and differences with their spouse's beliefs, American culture, Mexican culture, and others in their social circle. This back and forth between their lived experience growing up in an immigrant household (which was associated more with Mexican culture) and their experience as parents resonates with Anzaldúa's (2012) observation that, "it is possible to both understand and reject, to love

and detest, to be loyal and question, and above all to continue to seek enlightenment out of the ambiguity and contradiction of all social existence” (p. 5). A reason for the complexity of this dialoguing may have been their often vehement rejection of the harsh discipline they had experienced (mainly fathers), and the resulting motivation to seek alternatives. In contrast to other parenting goals, they actively sought resources on discipline techniques (e.g., others in their social circle, books, and internet) which helped to inform their beliefs, but also offered a variety of choices. This navigation resulted in a conscious consideration of the tradeoffs as they sought to establish their own standards for discipline. Perhaps the most compelling explanation for complex dialogue around the issue of discipline is the variability that they encountered in acceptable forms of discipline.

The dialogical “other.” Consistent with previous scholarship, participants’ beliefs regarding parenting had been influenced by their parents and their upbringing as indicated in their stories (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Bermúdez et al., 2012; Durand, 2011). But they also spoke about the various sources of information and resources they drew on when negotiating their beliefs about parenting. Carlos described the influence his friends had on his ideas about parenting as, “Mmm, well, now, now my friends, I mean, the friends I’ve made here, they all have family, and, uh, they talk about their children and what they do, and I’m like, “Oh, well, you know, I could do that, too.” Andrés articulated the use of books as a resource for parenting, he stated, “Um, I went to the Barnes and Noble and just got a bunch of baby books, and then that was for the newborn stuff, and, now, I’m probably thinking I should try another more, you know,

closer into the like 2- or 3-year-old stages.” Participants continually recognized the way their parents raised them and connected and contrasted that experience to their experiences with others in their social circle and larger society. They were negotiating “layers of context” within their family and outside their family (Fuller & García Coll, 2010).

Contributions and Implications for Future Research

This study contributes to scholarship on parenting in several ways. First, it conveys the voices of those who have been underrepresented in research on parenting beliefs—second and later-generation Mexican-Americans, both mothers and fathers (e.g., Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009). As the Latino/a population continues to grow in the U.S. it is crucial to include their lived experience in research to better understand their various positions in life. Additionally, generational status is an important contextual factor that must be considered when working with a Mexican-American population. Recognition of generational status within research with a Latino/a population will inform readers of the contextual structure which may assist in greater understanding of study outcomes. Furthermore, this investigation expands research on Latino/a families by increasing our knowledge regarding parenting from the perspective of both mothers and fathers. (e.g., Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008; Durand, 2011; Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009; Johnson, 2009).

Second, findings from this investigation enhance scholarship on parenting beliefs in general by shifting the focus from a static study of beliefs (e.g., Barnett et al., 2010; Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009; Luster, Rhoades, & Haas, 1989; Pagano, Hirsch,

Deutsch, & McAdams, 2002; Respler-Herman, Mowder, Yasik, & Shamah, 2012; Senese et al., 2012) to a more dynamic focus on the emergence of beliefs arising from dialoguing. In formulating beliefs, the parents in this study dialogued with their own past experiences (i.e., how they themselves were parented), subcultural and dominant cultural values, and specific people—parents, spouses, friends. Dialoguing as expressed in interviews was often intrapersonal—the person’s thoughts—but at times took the form of reporting actual conversations with others.

The shift in focus to the process of parental dialoguing can result in findings that would not have been apparent from studies mainly concerned with describing parental beliefs or goals. One such finding from the present study is the general lack of conflict in the negotiation of parenting goals as expressed by these Mexican-American parents, despite their articulation of culture-related differences in parenting beliefs and practices. Instead, theirs was a seemingly pragmatic approach of selecting what they saw as “best practices” from each culture. Another important finding was the differential dialoguing that occurred depending upon the particular goal. For example, discussion of some parenting goals elicited more discussion of gender differences (parent or child gender) than did others, and parental dialoguing regarding discipline was more uncertain, and complex, than for other parental goals.

Each of these findings has import for future research. They suggest, first, that investigators should not assume that negotiation of parenting beliefs for Mexican-American parents is necessarily conflictual, and instead of focusing on potential areas of conflict in interpretations, they should instead direct efforts toward learning in more

detail how cultural beliefs are being negotiated. Another implication is that the type of parenting goal under discussion matters: it would not be appropriate to draw conclusions about negotiation of parenting goals from discussions targeting a single goal, such as discipline.

Another implication for future research is the value of a multi-theory perspective which draws attention to multiple levels of context, societal power differentials, and the processes by which individuals construct meanings from the multiplicity of contextual messages that they encounter in their daily lives. Ecological systems theory provided a guide in structuring the interview questions to include various contexts where belief negotiation takes place. It also informed the analysis by directing attention to the way beliefs are constructed within and influenced by ethnicity (e.g., Leyendecker, Harwood, Comparini, & Yalçinkaya, 2005). A Chicana feminist perspective (e.g., Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009) guided the exploration of gender dialoguing related to mother and father parenting roles and to parenting goals for daughters and sons. Their dialoguing revealed the ways in which these participants departed from their own parents' traditional beliefs and practices regarding mother and father roles and their aspirations for sons and daughters. These departures from traditional values of *marianismo* and *machismo* are potentially due to a number of interrelated factors, as emphasized within the Chicana feminist literature (and as further discussed below). Dialogical theory provided direction in the development of the interview questions and the reading and analysis of interviews. For example, attention was given to the numerous social positions participants occupied and the ways these positions came together to influence their parental beliefs (i.e.,

partner, parent, child, friend) (e.g., Hermans, 2001). The combination of the three theoretical approaches was valuable in helping me understand the complex interplay of the various contexts (e.g., Bermúdez & Mancini, 2013; Bhatia, 2002; Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986, 1989; Holden, 1997) mothers and fathers occupy and how meaning creation about parenting can usefully be seen as a dialogical process.

Parental goals and dialoguing about goals might differ for second and later-generation parents depending upon a variety of factors, several of which are socioeconomic circumstances, degree of connectedness with parents and extended family, and age of children. Regarding socioeconomic circumstances, Chicana feminism emphasizes intersectionality—the importance of considering the intertwined influences of gender, race/ethnicity, and social class (e.g., Cuádriz & Uttal, 1999; Lucero-Liu & Christensen, 2009). Cuádriz and Uttal (1999) focus on the important question of how to analyze intersectionality in interview studies, suggesting an interpretive analytic procedure which entails querying how each factor (gender, ethnicity, class), and then the relationships between factors, have informed the account. This kind of analysis goes beyond the purpose of the present study, but the concept of intersectionality is useful as a reminder that second and later generation parents often differ from their immigrant parents not only in having grown up in the U.S., but also in occupation and other socioeconomic factors.

Regarding connectedness with family members, most participants in this study lived near to their parents and saw or talked to them daily or weekly. In some cases, the grandparents assisted with child care. This degree of contact might well have mattered for the dialoguing about parental goals, particularly about the “connecting” goals of speaking Spanish, respect, and gratitude. Child age is another potentially influential factor. Participants

spoke about the possibility of changing parenting views when their children reach adolescence. Martín echoed the sentiments of many of the participants as he articulated issues which might arise in the future: “I think the issues just usually would be with, uh, influence on her from friends is one of the biggest one's... Well, because what you see now is, and it's basically when you take a, a child or kid, and you put them around someone else, they get influenced by the way their friend's family treats them.” There may be more evident conflict between cultural values when children are adolescents compared to when they are young. This may be due to the influence of the child’s peers and media which have the potential to challenge the values their parents are trying to instill. Parents of adolescents may experience a greater amount of dialogue with an expanding audience of non-familial sources as they negotiate their parenting goals. Consequently, second and later-generation Mexican-American parents of adolescents may experience a shift in their parental beliefs as they encounter the developmental maturation of their children. An interesting direction for future research would be exploring the dialogical process parents experience as their children transition from childhood to adolescence and the resources they utilize during this period.

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APPENDIX A

RECRUITING FLYER

Attention Mexican-American Mothers and Fathers

You are invited to participate in a research study designed to gather information about your experience as a parent. The purpose of this project is to explore parental beliefs of second-generation Mexican-American mothers and fathers of young children. This is an important study because not much is known about the parenting experiences of people who were born in the United States and whose parents emigrated from Mexico.

In order to participate you must meet the following criteria:

- Be a 2nd generation Mexican-American parent
(a person born in the U.S. with at least one parent born in Mexico)
- Currently living with your spouse
- 20 years of age or older
- Whose eldest child is under the age of 7

Interviews will take place at a mutually agreed-upon location and will last between 1 and 2 hours. All interviews will remain confidential.

I would really enjoy speaking with you.
If you have any questions please contact:

Jennifer Rojas-McWhinney
Texas Tech University
jennifer.r.rojas@ttu.edu



APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM

What is this project studying?

The purpose of this study is to help us understand more about the beliefs and experiences of second-generation Mexican-American mothers and fathers of young children.

Why is this important?

This is an important study because not much is known about the parenting experiences of people who were born in the United States and whose parents emigrated from Mexico.

What would I do if I participate?

You will talk to an interviewer about your experience as a parent, the beliefs you hold as a parent, and how culture impacts your beliefs. You will also be asked about the way you negotiate conflicts between Latino/a culture and mainstream U.S. culture, and how new beliefs might arise during the course of this negotiation. The interview will be audio-taped.

Can I quit if I become uncomfortable?

Yes, absolutely. The researchers and the Protection Board have reviewed the questions and think you can answer them comfortably. However, you may skip any question you do not feel comfortable answering, and you may stop answering the questions at any time. You can leave any time you wish. Participating is your choice.

How long will participation take?

We are asking for between 1 and 2 hours of your time.

How are we protecting your privacy?

No one other than those directly associated with the project will have access to the interview information. The tapes, interview transcripts, and demographic forms will be kept in a secure place. Your name will not be linked to the transcribed interviews, and any use of this material in reports, publications, or at conferences will never be associated with the names of individuals.

If I have some questions about this study, who can I ask?

- The persons responsible for this project are Dr. Nancy Bell, a faculty member in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, and Jennifer Rojas-McWhinney, a graduate student in the same department. You can contact them by calling the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, (806) 742-3000, or by email: nancy.bell@ttu.edu or jennifer.r.rojas@ttu.edu.
- TTU also has a Board that protects the rights of people who participate in research. You can ask them questions at 806-742-2064. You can also mail your

questions to the Human Research Protection Program, Office of the Vice
President for Research, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409.

Signature of Participant

Date

This consent form expires November 30, 2014

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Thank you for your willingness to speak with me today. As you know, I'm doing research on people's ideas about parenting, and I'd like to begin by asking you about your background and your family.
 - A. Let's start with your parents—when did they come to the U.S.? Do they still live in this area? How often do you see them? Do they help with child care? What about your husband's (wife's) parents—(same questions). Do you have brothers and sisters that live in this area? (amount of contact). Are there other family members that you have contact with?
 - B. What about your own family. Tell me about your children (boys or girls, ages). What is your occupation? Your wife's (husband's) occupation? Do you use child care for your children—full time, part time?
 - C. Have you visited Mexico? If so, how often? Do you visit relatives there? How do you think of yourself, in terms of cultural heritage? What about the cultural heritage of your close friends?
2. Now, I'd like to ask you to think back to when you started to imagine yourself as a parent, prior to the birth of your first child. Can you remember thinking about parenting at that time, and can you tell me about it?
 - A. How did you see yourself as a parent at that time? (probe for details)
 - B. What are the things that you think influenced your ideas about parenting at that time? (your own parents, other family members, friends or other

people outside family, books, other media, your cultural heritage—and if so, in what ways)

C. Who did you talk to about parenting ideas at that time? Can you tell me about those conversations?

D. Can you tell me about questions or issues that you had about parenting at that time?

3. Let's move forward in time to after the birth of your first child, say during the first year. Can you tell me about your ideas about parenting at that time?

A. How did you see yourself as a parent at that time? (probe for details)

B. What are the things that you think influenced your ideas about parenting at that time? (your own parents, other family members, friends or other people outside family, books, other media, your cultural heritage—and if so, in what ways)

C. Who did you talk to about parenting ideas at that time? Can you tell me about those conversations?

D. Can you tell me about questions or issues that you had about parenting at that time? Did you resolve those issues? If so, in what way?

4. Now, I'd like to move forward again, to the present. Tell me about your ideas about parenting now.

A. How do you see yourself as a parent? (probe for details)

B. What are the things that you think are influencing your ideas about parenting now? (your own parents, other family members, friends or other

- people outside family, books, other media, your cultural heritage—and if so, in what ways?)
- C. Who do you talk to about parenting ideas now? Can you tell me about those conversations?
 - D. Can you tell me about questions or issues that you currently have about parenting? Are you coming to any resolution of those issues? If so, how?
5. As you look to the future, when your child (or children) is an adolescent, what questions or issues about parenting do you think will come up for you?
- A. Changes/similarities, impacts of work, family, friends, society/environment.
 - B. How do you think you will deal with those issues? What resources will you draw on? Who will you talk to?
6. What does parenting mean to you?
- A. Are there certain principles about parenting that you think are especially important? Where do these principles come from?
7. Are there ways that you think parenting is different for mothers and for fathers?
- A. And are there ways that they are the same?
8. Are there ways that you think parenting is different for children depending upon whether they are girls or boys?
- A. And are there ways that they are the same?
9. What are the main values that you are trying to teach your child (children)? And what do you think are the best ways to teach these values?

10. Can you give other examples of how you try to apply your beliefs about parenting to your everyday interactions with your child (children)?
11. For many parents, their beliefs about parenting change as they get more experience with being a parent. Did that happen for you? If so, in what ways?
12. How do you think ideas about parenting for second-generation Mexican American parents are different from the ideas of their parents?
 - A. And how do you think they are similar?
13. People hear many different ideas about parenting -- sometimes from family members, or friends, or media, etc., and these ideas sometimes don't agree. In your own parenting, have you had experience with ideas about parenting that conflict?
 - A. If so, can you give me some examples? How did you handle each of these?
14. Are there other things about your own or other people's ideas about parenting that we haven't covered?