RESILIENCE IN LATIN AMERICAN IMMIGRANT FAMILIES IN TORONTO: DEFINING THE ROLES OF PARENTING AND CULTURE IN PROMOTING HEALTHY CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PSYCHOLOGY

YORK UNIVERSITY

TORONTO, ON

SEPTEMBER 2016

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Abstract

Although Latin Americans are among the fastest-growing immigrant groups in Canada, there is a lack of data on family mental health and child developmental outcomes in this community. The current study uses quantitative, qualitative and observational measures to produce a representation of the culture-specific family strengths and risks faced by a sample of 34 Latin American mother-infant dyads and compares how a range of parenting behaviours differentially relate to child development across three major cultural groups in Toronto. Authoritative parenting was found to predict higher scores of child socio-emotional development, an effect which differs by cultural group. Within the Latin American sample, the traditional cultural belief *familism* was found to be associated with higher scores of authoritative parenting, and decreased with increasing host culture affiliation. Qualitative data highlights cultural variability in parenting and resilient parenting practices of this group. Clinical and research implications are discussed.

Acknowledgements

There are many people who have contributed in one way or another to the completion of this project. Above all, I would like to share my deepest appreciation for my supervisor, Dr. Yvonne Bohr, who not only has contributed her time and expertise to overseeing this thesis, but who has strongly supported me in pursuing my interests and passions throughout this process. I am so grateful for her unwavering encouragement.

I would also like to thank my second reader, Dr. Christine Till, who has given invaluable feedback on this project and who has worked so hard to ensure I was able to complete everything on time. Additionally, my thanks go out to Dr. Jennifer Connolly and Dr. Joni Sasaki for taking the time to be a part of my committee, and for their wonderful and thought-provoking feedback.

Thank you to all of the members of my lab who assisted me continually throughout this project and who have always been there help in any way they can. I have learnt so much from each and every one of you, and I'm so thankful to be a part of this lab of incredible women!

For all of the volunteer RAs who have contributed to this project- this would not have been possible without you! Thank you for all of the hours that you have put in on behalf of this project. The same goes for all of the mothers and children who have participated in this project: I am so deeply grateful for your willingness to contribute to my research, muchisimas gracias para todos y todas!

And finally, thank you to my friends and family who have accompanied me through the thick and thin of the last two years. I'm sure I would not have made it here without such amazing people in my life. A very special thanks goes to my mother who has unwittingly taken on a part-time job as my editor since I began grad school. Thank you!

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Introduction

Latin Americans-commonly referred to as Latinos- make up the fourth largest group of immigrants and the largest group of refugees in Canada (Citizenship and Immigration, 2012). Despite being one of the fastest-growing immigrant groups in Canada, little is known about family strengths and vulnerabilities, and child developmental outcomes in this community (Ginieniewicz & McKenzie, 2014).

Information about North American Latino communities is derived largely from research conducted in the USA. Discrimination, poverty, and exposure to violence are examples of the stressors that disproportionately affect Latin American immigrant families in the US (Shetgiri, Kataoka, Ryan, Askew, Chung & Schuster, 2009). The scarce statistics available in Canada suggest that the Latin American immigrant community in this country may be faced with similar significant risk factors (Ginieniewicz & McKenzie, 2014). For instance, like US-based Latinos, Latino immigrant groups in Canada have been found to have high levels of trauma exposure before immigration (Rousseau & Drapeau, 2004). Compounding these risk factors, the process of immigration in and of itself can be a very stressful experience. Taken together, this adversity may have many negative consequences for the well-being and mental health of families (Santiago & Wadsworth, 2011). A significant body of research details how parental mental health can affect parenting quality, and, in turn, how parenting quality may impact child development (Mesman, Van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2012). Parenting thus has an important role as a potential mechanism through which risk factors can influence child development, and could serve as a crucial focus for programs promoting healthy child development. These findings should incite research efforts to explore parenting practices in vulnerable Latin American immigrant communities.

Although conditions that greet Latin American immigrants upon arrival differ significantly between the US and Canada (Ginieniewicz & McKenzie, 2014), mental health statistics gathered in the US may shed some light on family mental health and child developmental outcomes in this group. There, Latino immigrants make up the largest minority group, and there is mixed evidence about how this group fares. Although it is often implied that immigrants as a group are at higher risk for negative outcomes, closer examination has revealed a so-called 'immigrant paradox': first-generation immigrants experience better than expected outcomes and each successive generation fares worse. This pattern is so distinct within Latino immigrant populations in the US that researchers have termed a 'Latino Paradox', specifically when referring to better than expected outcomes for maternal and infant health (Ceballos & Palloni, 2010). Although these are interesting and evocative findings, extrapolating from US data is not sufficient to draw conclusions for Latin American immigrants in Canada (Ginieniewicz & McKenzie, 2014) and it is important that we undertake efforts to understand how this community is faring in Canada.

The 'acculturation hypothesis' attempts to elucidate the causes of the Latino paradox, and posits that increasing acculturation of Latin American immigrants (to mainstream North American culture) may be leading to negative outcomes. Recently, attention has been drawn to the theory that decreasing affiliation with traditional cultural values, often observed when families become more acculturated to a host culture, may be responsible for increased vulnerability to negative outcomes for Latino immigrant families across generations (Gallo, Penedo, Espinosa de los Monteros & Arguelles, 2009). Two of the most studied cultural constructs in Latin American populations are *familism*, a value observed in typical Latino families that represents support, acceptance and belonging in a tight-knit family group; and

fatalism, the belief that one's future is predetermined and therefore out of one's control. While familism is a cultural concept firmly established as a key protective factor against development of negative mental and physical health outcomes (Campos, Ullman, Aguilera & Dunkel Schetter, 2014), fatalism has been framed as learned helplessness, but also as an adaptive method of coping with stress (Greenwell & Cosden, 2009). In support of the acculturation hypothesis, it has been found that adherence to these cultural constructs decreases with increasing acculturation (Cuellar, Arnold & Gonzalez, 1995; Steidel & Contreras, 2003).

The role that these traditional cultural constructs play in influencing parenting behaviours of Latino populations has not yet been explored. If these constructs play a similar resiliency-promoting role in parenting as they have been found to do for mental and physical health, parenting education, assessment and intervention programs for Latino immigrants should incorporate these traditional values. This finding would be an integral tool for enhancing the knowledge base of community mental health clinicians, improving our capacity to provide culturally-sensitive programs for Latino immigrants, and promoting healthy child development in this population.

The objective of this research is to contribute an accurate representation of the unique culture-specific family strengths, but also the risks faced by Latin American immigrant families in Canada. The current project assesses the role of traditional cultural constructs as resiliency-promoting factors when it comes to parenting, in the context of trauma exposure, a major risk factor. A second key objective of this research is to contribute to knowledge of cross-cultural parenting by examining the impact of parenting variables on child development and comparing these findings across several cultural groups. The current study builds on an existing lab project which has been collecting data on parenting and child development from mother-infant dyads that

belong to one of several major cultural groups in Toronto. The availability of this database permits examinations of how parenting behaviours and child development differentially relate in comparison to the Latin American sample: a sample from another collectivist culture, Chinese Canadians, and a "non-immigrant" sample of European Canadians.

Background

Parenting, Culture and Immigration

Culture plays a significant role in parenting. Culture influences the meaning of parenting practices and the collective goals of a community and society, shaping what comprises ideal parenting in any given cultural context (Bornstein & Cheah, 2006; Grusec & Davidoff, 2010). While it has been well established that quality of parenting significantly affects child developmental outcomes (Mesman et al., 2012), the analysis of parenting within diverse groups can be challenging as similar parenting behaviours may lead to differing outcomes depending on context (Lim & Lim, 2004). Using Baumrind's (1966) three-category typology of parenting, controlling and restrictive parenting ("authoritarian") styles have been found to lead to poor school achievement in European Americans, while these same parenting qualities may be neutral or predict some forms of success in low SES samples (Luthar, Cichetti, & Becker, 2000) and in African American families (Baumrind,1993). Using Maccoby and Martin's (1983) four-category typology of parenting, it was found that "indulgent" parenting resulted in better academic outcomes for youth in Spanish families when compared with other parenting styles, while findings in European American families consistently uncover that "authoritative" parenting yields the best results for school achievement (Garcia & Garcia, 2009).

Immigration to a new culture with different traditions and values introduces an additional complication when considering ideal parenting behaviours. Acculturation is defined as the evolution of beliefs and behaviours that occurs through intercultural interaction (Emmen et al, 2013). After immigrating to a new country, incomers must attempt to acculturate with the new local culture in order to integrate into their communities. Previous views of acculturation described a learning process during which one had to decide which elements of their native culture they wanted to retain, while adopting novel practices and beliefs from their new culture. Currently, the focus is on the multidirectionality of the acculturation process, which acknowledges that both native and new cultures can influence each other throughout acculturation (Garcia Coll & Pachter, 2002). Recent measures of acculturation recognize that acculturation is bidimensional: an individual can have high or low levels of acculturation to both their heritage culture and to the host culture, and these acculturation processes occur independently (Ryder, 2012). Despite innovations in acculturation research, many researchers have noted the complexity of this construct and have highlighted inconsistencies in the research that may result from our as-of-yet imperfect measurement of this variable (Lara, Gamboa, Kahramanian, Morales & Bautista, 2005). These inconsistencies may also be attributable to divergent indicators of acculturation, which range from measures of language use to scales developed specifically to measure acculturation. In fact, researchers reviewing acculturation measures specifically for use with Latino population in the US have identified 26 different measures used in the study of acculturation (Wallace, Pomery, Latimer, Martinez & Salovey, 2010).

These complications notwithstanding, research has found that as a family becomes more acculturated to their new country, we can observe modifications to native cultural values and practices, as well as changes in ethnic identity, losses of social support and heightened family

conflict (Dillon, de la Rosa & Ibanez, 2013). How a family responds to acculturation depends on a host of factors proceeding and following immigration, including ethnic group, previous traumatic experiences, SES and family cohesion (Dillon et al., 2013). Acculturation can lead to both positive and negative outcomes in immigrant families, and often a mix of both (Garcia Coll & Pachter, 2002).

When families arrive in a new country, parents must decide how to integrate parenting cognitions and practices from their native culture with those from their new culture (Bornstein & Bohr, 2011). It has been suggested that with increasing acculturation to the host-culture, parents tend to adopt parenting practices more closely aligned with the host-culture (Yaman, Mesman, van IJzendoorn, Bakermans-Kranenburg & Linting, 2010). This could be especially obvious when individuals move from a collectivist society, for instance South America, to an individualist society, such as North America, which generally endorses characteristically different parenting styles (Bornstein, 2012). Acculturation with the host culture is therefore an important element to take into account when measuring typical parenting behaviours within an immigrant population.

Despite intriguing findings on the variability of ideal parenting across cultures, the vast majority of research on parenting has been done in middle-class European American families (Garcia Coll & Pachter, 2002; Bornstein, 2012). The paucity of knowledge on cross-cultural variations in parenting has been noted by scholars, pointing to a gap in the existing literature (Maiter & George, 2003). Studies investigating parenting in ethnic minority groups are important to further our understanding of parenting practices in general and how they pertain to child developmental outcomes.

Parental Sensitivity

One significant finding that holds across cultures is that parental sensitivity is a significant predictor of positive child outcomes (Emmen, Malda, Mesman, Van IJzendoorn, Prevoo & Yeniad, 2013). How parental sensitivity is expressed can vary over culture, complicating its study. For instance, the same behaviour by Puerto Rican mothers that predicts attachment security in toddlers predicts insecure attachment in Anglo American toddlers (Cole & Tan, 2007), an attachment style which has been found to be a precursor for development of later psychopathology including anxiety and other internalizing disorders (Kerns & Brumariu, 2013). Additionally complicating this field of study is the fact that the majority of parental sensitivity research has been done in Western cultures (Bornstein, 2012). In fact, despite the large multicultural population of Canada, a recent literature review found only one published study investigating parental sensitivity in ethnic minority groups in Canada (Mesman, van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2012).

Parental sensitivity is a key contributor to healthy child development, though how it is expressed in both ethnic minority and majority populations can differ dramatically (Mesman, van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2012). Researchers attempting to measure parental sensitivity must be conscious that the implications of behaviours associated with sensitivity can vary as a function of culture. A future avenue of research should investigate whether the tools that we use to measure sensitivity are appropriate for cross-cultural use, and ideally should incorporate findings from qualitative research in doing so (Bornstein, 2012).

Risk Factors that May Affect Latin American Immigrants

Latin Americans hail from territories in the Americas where the Spanish language is spoken: this includes Central and South America, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. As of 2011, approximately 381,280 Latin Americans reside in Canada and their numbers are growing every year (Statistics Canada, 2011).

In 2014, the United Nations released a report calling Latin America the “world’s most violent region”, with the highest rate of criminal violence of any other region globally (The Wall Street Journal, 2014). This report outlines the illegal drug trade, poor law enforcement, and guerilla warfare activity as contributors to a “culture of violence” overtaking Latin America. Some countries have higher violence rates than others, among them Mexico and Colombia, the two Latin American countries sending the highest number of arrivals to Canada (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012). Attesting to this heightened environment of violence, a study in Montreal surveying various immigrant groups found that Latin American immigrants had the highest rates of trauma exposure of all sampled groups at 58%, a number that rose even higher among Latin American refugees (Rousseau & Drapeau, 2004). In the US, Latino immigrants have 2-3 times higher rates of PTSD than immigrants from other ethnic groups (Greenwell & Cosden, 2009).

This heightened risk of trauma and trauma-related symptomatology is noteworthy considering the impact that parental trauma exposure can have on parenting behaviours, and in turn, child development. Although the specific mechanisms through which trauma can affect parenting are not clear, it has been proposed that trauma increases feelings of parental stress, decreases warmth towards children and lowers feelings of effectiveness and control, disrupting

positive parenting practices. Maternal trauma has also been hypothesized to affect child developmental outcomes by impacting parenting style (Pong, Johnston & Chen, 2010).

Furthermore, like most immigrant populations, Latin American immigrants are more likely to live in impoverished neighbourhoods than native born residents, compounding risk factors of trauma exposure, acculturation stress, and separation from the family they left behind (Dettlaff, Earner & Phillips, 2009). Thirty percent of Latino immigrants in Canada live in poverty, and this number reaches 55% among Latino refugees (Statistics Canada, 2011). Poverty can impact child outcomes by disrupting positive parenting as a result of financial strain and associated feelings of psychological distress (Mesman et al., 2012). Researchers have described how these risk factors, which are disproportionately experienced by minority families, can lead to disrupted child developmental outcomes as a consequence of their negative impact on parenting practices (Emmen et al., 2013).

Immigrant Risk vs. Immigrant Paradox

It has been found that Latino adolescents have higher rates of behavioural problems compared with European Americans in the United States (Rafaelli, Iturbide, Carranza & Carlo, 2014). In addition, Latino children have been found to be at risk for slower cognitive and language development (Dettlaff, Earner & Phillips, 2009). The *immigrant risk hypothesis* as described by Takeuchi (2007), explains that risks associated with being an immigrant (including increased likelihood of poverty, discrimination, and lower language ability) lead to increased rates of negative outcomes.

Paradoxically, other research has found that some Latino immigrant children across all ages have higher levels of school achievement than children whose parents are born in the US, an

effect that tends to diminish as time in the country increases (Garcia Coll & Marks, 2012), lending support to the *immigrant paradox hypothesis*, which is currently the basis of much investigation. One study found that Latin American immigrants on a whole tended to suffer from relatively low rates of mental illness (Alegria et al., 2008). The physical health of Latino immigrants in the US so far surpasses what would be expected, considering low income levels and scarcity of health insurance coverage, that researchers have coined the term *Latino Paradox* to describe the phenomenon. For instance, maternal and infant health outcomes (birthweight, intrauterine growth restriction, and first year survival) are significantly higher in Latin American immigrant populations when compared with other ethnic minorities, and are equal or higher than outcomes for Whites in the US. Similar to previous findings of superior outcomes in immigrant groups, this advantage dissipates over generations (Gallo, Penedo, Espinosa de los Monteros & Arguelles, 2009).

One explanation for disparate findings is that earlier studies tended to collapse over generational status. While outcomes of 3rd generation immigrants tend to be more unfavourable, 1st generation youth often outperform native-born peers on a variety of developmental outcomes, regardless of SES. It has been suggested that because the parents of these 3rd generation children are born in the new culture, they may not provide their offspring socialization in their native culture, which serves as a protective factor for 1st generation immigrant youth (Garcia Coll & Marks, 2012). Supporting this idea, cultural identity has been found to predict feelings of self-worth in minority youth (Cole & Tan, 2007). Furthermore, cultural maintenance with culture of origin has been linked with better adolescent adjustment (Ferguson, 2013). Cultural affiliation is clearly a promising avenue for exploration in predicting outcomes of immigrant families.

Traditional Latino Cultural Values

Resilience has been defined as a process of “maintenance of positive adjustment under challenging life conditions” (Masten, 1994). Factors impacting resilience can be found at the level of the individual, family or the more distal social context, which encompasses culture (Luthar, Cichetti & Becker, 2000). Culture is rather difficult to define but can be considered as customs and practices that are passed from generation to generation (Cole & Tan, 2007). However, culture changes and adapts throughout history depending on the environmental context. Immigration plays an important role in affecting culture by changing surrounding social context.

Notwithstanding these complications, Latin American culture has received attention as a potential source of resilience, based on findings of the Latino Paradox and low rates of mental illness despite increased environmental risk. Marin and Marin (1991) have identified a number of core values associated with Latin American culture, several of which have been targets of resilience research. *Familism* is a concept that originated in studies of Latinos, which has since been applied cross-culturally. It involves family commitment and placing the needs of the family above all individual members. Latinos, compared with other ethnic groups, are said to have larger family networks with strong feelings of loyalty and reciprocity (Gallo et al., 2009). Ascription to the value of familism is related with better psychological well-being, and has been found to protect against high levels of chronic stress (Mogro-Wilson, 2011). Furthermore, familism has been identified as a crucial element influencing Latino family parenting (Bush, Supple, & Lash, 2004), though it is not clear how specific behaviours are influenced.

Fatalism is the idea that one's future is predetermined and therefore cannot be changed. Latinos and other ethnic minority groups tend to ascribe to these ideals more than European Americans, and it is associated with both positive and negative effects on health (Mogro-Wilson, 2011). Fatalism has been framed both as learned helplessness, and also as an adaptive method of coping with stress (Greenwell & Cosden, 2009). For instance, in some cases people claiming higher fatalistic views are less likely to seek medical help, but on the other hand, they have better health behaviours, long-term well-being, and increased ability to cope with negative health experiences (Gallo et al., 2009).

Several other cultural values inherent in Latin American culture which may have an influence on parenting include '*respeto*' (respect), which describes deference to a generational hierarchy, and is reflected in expectations that children are obedient and respect parental rules. '*Confianza*' (confidence/trust) reflects the importance of interpersonal relationships characterized by a high level of trust and fraternity. The specific role of these cultural values has not been investigated in cross-cultural parenting research, but they appear to hold significant potential for influencing parenting in Latin American families.

While traditional Latin American cultural values are beginning to receive some attention from researchers who are interested in resilience, little is known about how these values influence specific parenting practices and behaviours. Recent models try to incorporate the role of culture; however, research examining culturally-specific strengths and resilience-promoting parenting practices is sparse (Coard, Foy-Watson, Zimmer & Wallace, 2007). Identifying specific cultural values and determining how they may relate to parenting behaviours is an important element of building this body of research. Considering the substantial growth of the Latin American

population in Canada in recent years, and the relatively unstudied mental health status of this population, these research efforts are particularly pressing.

Research Objectives and Hypotheses

Research objective 1a: To assess parenting styles utilized by Latin American immigrants and compare these findings to select samples of other cultural groups in an existing lab database.

Research objective 1b: To evaluate which parenting practices, including parenting style and parental sensitivity, are most strongly predictive of positive child developmental outcomes in the Latin American sample and compare these findings across cultural groups.

Hypothesis 1a: I predicted that endorsement of distinct parenting styles would differ across cultural groups.

Hypothesis 1b: I hypothesized that parenting practices, including parenting style and parental sensitivity, most strongly associated with healthy child development in Latin American immigrant populations would be distinct from those favoured by other cultural groups, based on findings of the variability of ideal parenting across cultures.

Research objective 2a: To establish the prevalence of a major risk factor, trauma exposure, in Latin American immigrant mothers in a large urban centre, and compare levels of trauma exposure across cultural groups.

Research Objective 2b: To evaluate differences in parenting style and sensitivity levels between trauma-exposed and non-exposed mothers.

Research objective 2c: To analyze the impact of trauma on child development through its influence on parenting behaviours.

Hypothesis 2a: Based on previous research that has shown high levels of trauma exposure in Latin American immigrants in Canada, I predicted that this sample of Latin American immigrants would have higher rates of previous trauma exposure than other cultural groups.

Hypothesis 2b: I predicted that increasing levels of trauma exposure would lead to less adaptive parenting practices.

Hypothesis 2c: I predicted that maternal trauma would have a negative impact on child development through its influence on parenting style and sensitivity.

Research objective 3: To determine whether endorsement of traditional cultural values can serve as a resilience-promoting factor by influencing positive parenting practices.

Hypothesis 3: I hypothesized that traditional cultural constructs would play a significant role in predicting parenting practices. Based on the protective influence of familism in previous research, I predicted that familism would be positively correlated with adaptive parenting practices.

Research objective 4: To determine whether the 'acculturation hypothesis' is a viable explanation for the Latino paradox, by investigating how affiliation with the traditional beliefs of familism and fatalism fluctuates as acculturation with the host culture increases.

Hypothesis 4: I hypothesized that endorsement of traditional values would decrease with increasing host-culture acculturation, as predicted by the acculturation hypothesis.

Methods

This study is part of a larger ongoing research initiative, the York Parenting Project, a study examining risk and protective factors in parent-child relationships in diverse Ontario communities. Thirty-four mothers who self-identify as Latina with children under the age of 46

months participated in this study. Mothers were recruited through flyers posted in public locations in neighbourhoods with a high-density Latino population, as well as in a Latino Cultural Centre and Community Centres. A prominent Spanish-language speakers' association also shared the flyer with its members through Facebook. Several participants were also recruited through snowball sampling.

Participants were involved in activities that took approximately two to three hours and consisted of three videotaped play interactions between the mother and infant, a semi-structured interview with the mother, completion of questionnaires by the mother, and the completion of a cognitive development assessment of the child. Data collection took place in the mother's home or at York University. To keep disruption at a minimum for the participating families, the order of the measures themselves was determined depending on the activity level of the child. For example, if the child was sleeping, the questionnaires or semi-structured interviews were completed first and once the child was active, the interaction and the child development measure were conducted. Ideally, the assessment was completed with the child while the mother filled in the questionnaires. The order of the questionnaires was randomized for each participant. With the exception of one mother who completed questionnaires in Spanish, all of the women completed questionnaires in English, with the assistance of a bilingual research assistant or graduate student to translate as needed.

Mothers were compensated for their time with a $40 grocery store gift certificate, along with a basic child development information sheet pertinent to their child's current stage of development. Children received a small gift, such as stickers or a dollar store toy, upon completion of the study.

Measures

Parenting styles and dimensions questionnaire (PSDQ; Robinson, Mandleco, Frost Olsen, & Hart, 2001**)** is a 79-item questionnaire which probes frequencies of parenting behaviours reflecting permissive, authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles. Participants respond to items such as: "I state punishments to my child and do not actually do them", or "I take my child's desires into account before asking him/her to do something" by indicating how often they engage in a particular behavior from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The resulting scores contribute to three subscales representing permissive, authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles. This measure is known as one of the few psychometrically robust scales measuring parenting practices and has been used with multiple different cultural groups in previous research (Winsler, Madigan & Aquilino, 2005). In samples from the United States, the internal reliability value of the authoritative subscale is .88, of the authoritarian subscale is .85, and of the permissive subscale is .73. As previous research has not substantiated cause to hypothesize differences in permissive parenting between cultures, analyses were limited to authoritative and authoritarian parenting subscales. Each participant had a score for both authoritative and authoritarian parenting, and these two values were used in analyses.

The **Nursing Child Assessment Satellite Training Teaching Scale (NCATS;** Barnard, 1978**)** is an observational measure of parental sensitivity, and coding system. Mothers are asked to review a list of tasks, such as grabbing a rattle, or pulling a car on a string, and to select a task which is just beyond the current abilities of the child. The mother spends a maximum of five minutes trying to teach the child the task. This interaction is videotaped and later coded for caregiver and child behaviours, contributing to four caregiver subscores: responsiveness to child cues, support for the child's social and emotional growth, response to child distress, and support

for child's cognitive growth. For the purposes of the current study, analyses were limited to the following caregiver scales which are more pertinent to the sensitivity construct as recommended by test developers: responsiveness to child cues, response to child distress, and caregiver total sensitivity (Barnard 1978, 1994). The total caregiver sensitivity score has an internal reliability constant of .87. This measure has been used successfully in research on parental sensitivity with ethnic minority families, although its validity across cultures is not firmly established (Mesman, van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2012). The researcher coding this data had achieved 90% reliability prior to coding.

The **Trust Events Survey (**Boat et al., 1996) was designed to screen for trauma exposure. Respondents indicate whether or not a given traumatic event of a list of 26 specific described events has occurred in their lives, for example the unexpected death of a loved one, or seeing a friend be killed. Scores were summed and averaged to range from 0 (no trauma exposure) to 1 (affirmative answers to all 26 traumatic events). As this measure is designed specifically to screen for history of trauma exposure, no psychometric properties have been established.

The **Vancouver Index of Acculturation** (VIA; Ryder, Alden & Paulhus, 2000) provides a bi-dimensional measurement of acculturation. It is a 20- item self-report questionnaire probing relationships, values, and adherence to cultural traditions, for example: 'I often participate in my heritage/mainstream North American cultural traditions', and 'I enjoy entertainment from my heritage culture/North American culture'. Answers are scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree) and yield two sets of scores, affiliation with heritage culture, and with North American culture. This scale is considered to have adequate reliability for use in research (Huynh, Howell & Benet-Martinez, 2009) and has been used within immigrant and second-

generation minority populations in Canada (Ryder, Alden & Paulhus, 2000). Internal reliability of this measure is .79.

The **Attitudinal Familism Scale** (Steidel & Contreras, 2003) is an 18-item measure probing adherence to typical familistic values. Items load onto four separate factors, including Familial Support, Familial Interconnectedness, Familial Honour and Subjugation of Self for Family, which come together to form a total score. Items, such as 'a person should live near his/her parents and spend time with them on a regular basis', and 'a person should feel ashamed if something he/she does dishonours the family name' are rated from 1 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree). This scale was developed specifically for use with Latino populations and has shown good psychometric properties (Steidel & Contreras, 2003). The internal reliability constant for this scale is .83. It has since been used to measure familism in other cultural groups in research settings (Schwartz, 2007).

The **Fatalism Scale (taken from the Multiphasic Assessment of Cultural Constructs-Short Form- MACC-SF;** Cuellar, Arnold & Gonzalez, 1995**)** is an 8-item scale that measures affiliation with beliefs representing fatalistic views, such as 'we must live for the present, who knows what the future may bring', and 'people die when it is their time and there is not much that can be done about it'. It has been used with Latino populations in previous research with adequate psychometric properties. In line with previous research (Greenwell & Cosden, 2009), three items that did not load heavily onto the measure were removed, increasing the psychometric value of the scale. The internal reliability of the remaining five items is .75. Items are answered on an 8-point Likert scale, ranging from completely disagree to completely agree.

Bayley Scales of Child Development-III is a commonly used measure of child development for children between the ages of 1-42 months (Bayley, 1993). The examiner presents objects or tasks and observes the child's responses. Items increase in difficulty according to developmental level to provide a total score. For the purposes of this study, assessment was limited to the cognitive scale, which provides a measure of sensorimotor and visual processing, and other facets of cognitive processing. A self-report questionnaire completed by parents about their child's socio-emotional development was also included as a child developmental outcome variable. This test has shown good reliability and validity (Albers & Grieve, 2007). The measure was standardized on a representative sample of 1700 children, the cognitive scale yielding an internal reliability constant of .93, and the socio-emotional scale with an internal reliability value of .90

Quantitative Analyses

Analyses were conducted using SPSS Version 23.0. Prior to running analyses, prerequisite assumptions of linearity and/or homogeneity of variance were checked by graphing and visually examining data. In the case of a violation of homogeneity of variance, group differences were evaluated using Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric tests which do not rely on the assumption of homogeneity of variance. In one case, an outlying data point was removed from analyses in order to address concerns with assumption violation. Several instances of missing and/or errant responses on items on the PSDQ (parenting style) meant initial analyses were run excluding missing data in a pairwise fashion. In order to maximize the use of collected data, analyses were re-run using *person mean imputation,* a technique to impute missing data which has been found to be an appropriate and efficacious means of dealing with the issue of missing data (Hawthorne & Elliot, 2005). Person mean imputation uses mean response scores of

participants who responded to at least 80% of PSDQ items. When results were divergent, which occurred due to the latter having greater statistical power, analyses using both techniques were included in the results. However, PSDQ scores reported in results are those using participants who responded to 100% of the items, unless otherwise noted. Sample sizes were not consistent across all analyses due to missing data; *n*s are noted for analyses in the results section.

Analyses using the CTES (trauma) and the PSDQ used the mean response scores on the questionnaires. For instance, all scores on the CTES ranged from 0 (score for 'no' response) and 1 (score for 'yes' response) with scores closer to 1 indicating higher levels of trauma exposure and scores closer to 0 indicating little trauma exposure.

Qualitative Analyses

Researchers have noted the importance of qualitative data in providing context in cross-cultural research (Bornstein, 2012). Semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to glean more detailed information regarding a mother's conceptualization of sensitivity and what it means to be a good parent. Interviews also addressed the issue of culture, and how the mothers believed that their cultural background had affected their behaviours and attitudes as mothers. Participants were given the opportunity to respond to interview questions in English or in Spanish. All of the interviews were later transcribed, and if necessary, translated, in order to analyze data. Semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), a commonly-used method of extracting themes that reoccur across interviews and participants, to uncover important themes in the parenting of Latino parents. The steps outlined by Braun and Clark (2006) were followed: I began by familiarizing myself and immersing myself in the data through transcription and re-reading of transcripts, then generated initial codes. This process was repeated until data were saturated, and no further codes could be generated.

Data were initially coded using a computer software, Dedoose, a program designed for facilitating the coding and analysis of qualitative data (Lieber, 1990). Once this initial coding scheme was developed, I re-read the transcripts to identify themes and developed a framework into which codes were sorted. Finally, the selected themes were revised, named, and written up. A detailed description of this process can be found in Appendix D.

Participants

The study sample consisted of thirty-four women who responded to advertisements aimed at Latin American (LA) mothers with children under the age of 46 months. The mothers ranged in age from 20 to 42 years with a mean age of 31.3 (*SD* = 6.16). Children's ages ranged from 2 to 46 months with a mean age of 22.75 months (*SD* = 13.01). The majority of the sample had completed university or college (48.4%) and had an average annual household income ranged of approximately $58,000. Women reported their (or their family's) country of origin as Mexico (n=11), Colombia (n=8), Argentina (n=3), Chile (n=2), Venezuela (n=2), El Salvador (n=2), Dominican Republic (n=1), Guatemala (n=1), Guyana (n=1) or Costa Rica (n=1). Two mothers did not report their country of origin. Eighty-four percent of the sample was first generation, and of this group who was born outside of Canada, had been in Canada for an average of 8.23 years (*SD* = 6.15, range = .58–27.00). Detailed demographic information can be found in Appendix A.

A sample of 47 European Canadian and a separate sample of 48 Chinese Canadian mothers served as comparison groups for selected analyses. European Canadian (EC) mothers had a mean age of 28.9 (*SD* = 8.15). Of the 88% who responded, mothers reported an average annual household income of $62,300. Fifty-one percent of the mothers held post-graduate degrees. Chinese Canadian (CC) mothers reported a mean age of 34.0 (*SD* = 4.37). Eighty-one

percent of the sample held a post-graduate degree and of the 83% who responded, reported an average annual household income of $87,300. The CC sample was 94% first generation, and had been in Canada for an average of 11.4 years (*SD* = 7.21, range = 1.00–26.00). Demographic information for the comparison groups is included in Appendix A.

Results

Objective one. The first research objective was to evaluate parenting practices employed by Latin American mothers and determine whether particular parenting practices were more strongly predictive of positive child cognitive and socioemotional development. This was compared to the findings in Chinese Canadian (CC) and European Canadian (EC) mothers in order to determine whether there were differences in the parenting styles employed by mothers cross-culturally, and whether the optimal parenting style differed by cultural group.

A paired-samples t-test revealed that Latin American mothers endorsed significantly more authoritative parenting on the PSDQ ($M = 4.11$, $SD = .47$) than authoritarian ($M = 2.01$, $SD = .41$; $t(23) = 16.34$, $p < .01$) parenting styles. In order to determine whether one parenting style was more predictive of child cognitive or socio-emotional development, linear regression models were estimated using scores on the PSDQ as predictors of scores on the cognitive scale on the Bayley-III, and separately on the socio-emotional scale of the Bayley-III. The model using parenting styles as predictors of cognitive scores of children on the Bayley-III was not found to explain a significant proportion of variance ($n = 23$, $R^2 = .093$, $F(3,18) = .62$, $p = .61$). In contrast, authoritative parenting was found to explain a significant proportion of variance in child socio-emotional development ($n = 23$, $R^2 = .35$, $\beta = 15.94$, $t = 3.32$, $p = .003$). Authoritarian parenting was not significantly predictive of variance in child socio-emotional development ($n = 23$, $R^2 = .013$, $F(1, 24) = .32$, $p = .58$).

Linear regression models using responsiveness to child cues, response to child distress, and caregiver total sensitivity subscales of the NCATS as predictors of child cognitive development were not found explain a significant proportion of variance (n = 24, R^2 = .97, F(3, 23) = .82, p = .49). These predictors were also not significantly predictive of child socio-emotional development (n = 27, R^2 = .21, F(3,20) = 1.80, p = .18).

Mean scores on authoritative and authoritarian parenting on the PSDQ were compared across LA, EC and CC groups. In support of hypothesis 1a, a one-way ANOVA found a significant main effect of cultural group on authoritarian parenting, n =102, F(2,99) = 16.14, p < .01. Post hoc Tukey tests found that compared to EC mothers (n = 36, M = 1.58, SD = .35), LA mothers reported significantly greater authoritarian parenting (n = 31, M = 1.99, SD = .43, p < .01), at levels comparable to CC mothers (n = 35, M = 2.06 SD = .38, p = .72). Mean scores on authoritative parenting did not differ between cultural groups (n = 86, F(2,83) = .27, p = .77).

Linear regression models with interaction terms representing cultural group and parenting style were estimated to determine whether ideal parenting style differentially predicts socio-emotional development depending on cultural group. The model including these interaction terms was not found to predict a significant proportion of variance above and beyond the model excluding the interaction term, n = 70, R^2 = .23, F(2, 64) = 2.26, p = .11.

Repeating this analysis using person mean imputation to account for missing data on the PSDQ found that the model including interaction terms representing cultural group and authoritative parenting explained a significantly greater proportion of variance than the model excluding this interaction term, n = 91, R^2 = .15, F(2, 85) = 3.15, p = .048, in support of hypothesis 1b. Although no individual cultural group comparison or interaction term variable explained a significant non-zero proportion of variance (all p > .10), a pattern emerged with authoritative parenting having the greatest benefits for socio-emotional development in children

of CC mothers, and the weakest benefits in children of EC mothers, with the influence of LA mothers' authoritative parenting on their children's socio-emotional development falling in the middle. Results from this hierarchical regression analysis can be found in Table 1. A graph of this relationship can be found in Appendix B. Cultural group was not found to interact with authoritative parenting style on children's cognitive development (all $p > .30$). No interaction between cultural group and authoritarian parenting style was found to predict a significant proportion of child cognitive (all $p > .48$) or socio-emotional development (all $p > .53$).

Table 1.

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Using Parenting and Cultural Group (Model 1) and the Interaction term (Model 2) to Predict Child Socio-Emotional Development (N= 90)

	Model 1			Model 2		
Variable	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	B
Authoritative Parenting	6.88	3.18	.22*	9.68	4.85	.31*
Cultural Group						
1 vs. 0	2.73	3.45	.095	46.70	28.28	1.63
2 vs. 0	-3.97	3.74	-.13	-51.81	38.65	-1.66
Interaction (Cultural Group x Authoritative Parenting)						
1 vs. 0 x Authoritative Parenting				-10.55	6.76	-1.56
2 vs. 0 x Authoritative Parenting				11.42	9.25	1.54
R^2	.088			.15		
F for change in R^2	2.80*			3.15*		

Notes. Cultural Group was represented as three dummy variables with Latin Americans represented by the number 0, European Canadians represented as 1, and Chinese Canadians as 2.

For all analyses, the dependent variable was child socio-emotional development .

Authoritative parenting was calculated using person mean imputation for all participants responding to at least 80% of items.

* p < .05, ** p < .01

Objective two. The second research objective was to establish prevalence of trauma exposure and determine its impact on parenting. Firstly, the prevalence of trauma exposure was measured and compared across three cultural groups. Then, the relationship between trauma exposure and parenting style, and parental sensitivity was examined. Differences in parenting practices between mothers with higher versus lower trauma exposure were also measured. Finally, the relationship between trauma and child development was examined.

Initial analyses were conducted to determine whether trauma exposure differed across the three cultural groups included in the analyses. Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric tests compared scores on the CTES between EC, CC and LA mothers and found no difference in trauma exposure between groups, $\chi 2$ (2, N = 107) = 2.70, p = .26), findings which failed to support hypothesis 2a.

The relationship between trauma exposure and parenting within the LA sample was examined using Pearson's r correlations. CTES scores and PSDQ scores of authoritative and authoritarian parenting were not correlated (all $r < .12$, all $p > .71$). Trauma was also not significantly correlated to responsiveness to child cues, response to child distress, and caregiver total sensitivity scores on the NCATS (all $r < -.20$, all $p > .18$). Correlations between trauma and parenting variables can be found in Table 2.

Table 2.

Correlations Between Trauma, Parenting Style and Parental Sensitivity

Variable		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
1. Maternal Trauma Total	Pearson Correlation	--	.12	.07	-.13	-.20	-.19
	N	--	20	24	22	22	22

2. Authoritative Parenting	Pearson Correlation	--	-.007	.03	-.23	.14
	N		24	22	22	22
3. Authoritarian Parenting	Pearson Correlation		--	-.10	-.36	-.23
	N		--	27	27	27
4. Sensitivity to Cues	Pearson Correlation			--	.13	.69**
	N			--	29	29
5. Response to Distress	Pearson Correlation				--	.37*
	N				--	29
6. Caregiver Sensitivity Total	Pearson Correlation					--
	N					--

* p < .05, ** p < .01

In order to evaluate whether highly-traumatized mothers' parenting styles differed from those with low levels of trauma exposure in the LA sample, ANOVAs compared scores on authoritative and authoritarian parenting between mothers with trauma scores above versus below the median on CTES scores. No differences between "high" and "low" trauma mothers were found for authoritative parenting ($t(17) = -.022$, $p = .98$) or authoritarian parenting ($t(20) = .24$, $p = .81$). Analyses were re-run to evaluate differences in authoritative and authoritarian parenting of mothers who had trauma scores in the top quartile versus the bottom quartile. No differences were found for authoritative parenting ($t(12) = .15$, $p = .87$) or authoritarian parenting ($t(11) = 1.02$, $p = .33$). Failure to find a relationship between trauma and parenting variables failed to support hypothesis 2b.

Finally, the relationship between maternal trauma and child development was examined. In contrast to prediction 2c, trauma was found to be positively correlated with child cognitive

development scores on the Bayley-III (*r*(25) = .52, *p* = .008), but not to child socio-emotional development (*r*(22) = .26, *p* = .25).

Objective three. The third research objective was to determine the relationships between traditional cultural values and parenting practices. Before running these analyses, scores derived from familism and fatalism questionnaires administered to LA mothers (*n*=24) were compared with a small subgroup of the EC mothers (*n*=8). This group was only a small subsample of the larger group of EC mothers, the majority of whom participated before initiation of the current project which introduced measures of familism and fatalism. Since group size was unequal, t-tests assuming unequal variance were used. These tests found that familism scores were significantly higher in LA mothers (*M* = 111.75, *SD* = 21.13) versus EC mothers (*M* = 71.75, *SD* = 12.66; *t*(20.63) = -6.45, *p* < .01). Fatalism scores were also higher in LA mothers (*M* = 23.83, *SD* = 6.39) than EC mothers (*M* = 15.13, *SD* = 2.53; *t*(28.78) = -5.50, *p* < .01). These findings substantiate the idea that these cultural values distinguish Latin American samples from mainstream cultural groups.

Linear regression models using familism and fatalism as separate predictors of PSDQ subscores and parental sensitivity scores on NCATS subscales were estimated. This model did not predict a significant non-zero proportion of variance in authoritative (*n*= 21, R^2 = .16, *F*(2, 18) = 1.76, *p* = .20) or authoritarian parenting (*n*= 22, R^2 = .03, *F*(2, 19) = .30, *p* = .75).

Analyses using person mean imputation for missing PSDQ scores found that familism significantly predicted a non-zero proportion of variance in authoritative parenting (*n*= 23, R^2 = .18, β = .009, *F*(2, 21) = 4.70 *p* = .042). This finding supports hypothesis 3. Using this technique, fatalism was still not predictive of authoritative parenting (*n*= 23, R^2 = .002, β = -.003, *t* = -.18, *p* = .86), nor did familism or fatalism explain a significant non-zero proportion of variance in authoritarian parenting, *n*= 23, R^2 = .046, *F*(2, 20) = .49, *p* = .62.

Linear regression analyses also used fatalism and familism as predictors of responsiveness to child cues, response to child distress, and caregiver total sensitivity subscores on the NCATS and none of these correlations reached significance (all $p > .34$).

Objective four. Further analyses aimed to determine whether the 'acculturation hypothesis' is a viable explanation for the Latino paradox, by investigating how affiliation with traditional beliefs fluctuates as acculturation with the host culture increases. In support of the acculturation hypothesis and hypothesis 4, familism was found to be negatively correlated with acculturation to host culture, $r(20) = -.56$, $p = .011$. Fatalism was not significantly correlated with acculturation to host culture, $r(21) = -.20$, $p = .39$. In contrast, neither familism ($r(21) = -.15$, $p = .51$) nor fatalism ($r(21) = -.20$, $p = .39$) was significantly correlated to heritage culture acculturation. The correlations between familism, parenting style and acculturation can be found in Table 3.

Table 3.

Correlations Between Familism, Parenting Style and Acculturation

Variable		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1. Familism	Pearson Correlation	--	.43*	.13	-.15	-.56*
	N	--	21	22	21	21
2. Authoritative Parenting	Pearson Correlation		--	.06	-.056	-.37
	N		--	24	21	21
3. Authoritarian Parenting	Pearson Correlation			--	-.004	.23
	N			--	24	23
4. Heritage Acculturation	Pearson Correlation				--	.54**
	N				--	25
5. Host Acculturation	Pearson Correlation					--
	N					--

* p < .05, ** p < .01

Qualitative Results

Thirty Latin American mothers completed semi-structured interviews which probed meanings attributed to “good” and “sensitive” parenting, and how parental sensitivity was valued and shaped by their culture. Codes making up themes of good and sensitive parenting can be found in Appendix E. Questions also broached histories of trauma exposure, and the perception of how this impacted their parenting, providing context for quantitative findings of trauma. Culture was a recurring topic throughout interviews; women were asked to describe key cultural differences between their home and Canadian cultures, and to describe how they felt leaving their homes had affected their experience of being a mother. A full list of interview questions can be found in Appendix C.

Good Parenting. Mothers were asked to define what being a good parent meant to them. Responses fit in to five general themes which are described along with their composite codes below: *Guiding with Respect, Warmth, Self-Sacrifice, Balance* and *Providing Necessities.* Since quantitative results found that authoritative parenting was the most popularly endorsed style of parenting in this sample, it was not surprising that some of the codes overlapped with subscales of the PSDQ which make up the authoritative parenting score, notably *Guiding with Respect* (Democratic Participation) and *Warmth* (Warmth/Acceptance), a finding which bolsters the relevance of this parenting style within this group of mothers.

Guiding with Respect- This most commonly endorsed theme was made up of four codes: *Teaching/Guiding, Encouraging Autonomy, Encouraging Child’s Self-Expression,* and *Treating Child with Respect.* The role of parents in *Teaching/Guidance* came up across many interviews and took many forms, through instilling of values, serving as role models for children, and providing exciting and enriching activities. Teaching children “good values” was seen as the

most important lesson mothers could impart; this included religious and cultural values, as well as respect for others. For example, one mother explained: "You are creating a life, right, and I want her to be a good person – a good human being"(ID 159). Another important means of guiding children was for mothers to serve as role models by personifying these values: "for me, being a good parent is being able to guide your child, to teach them between, the difference between good and bad, teach them good values…yeah, so being a guide to them. And a good example." (ID 184). Providing stimulating activities was seen as crucial in order to equip children with the "tools to have every opportunity", and to keep children entertained. The other code in this theme was *Encouraging Autonomy,* and this was highlighted as the mothers' desire for their children to become who they are by promoting independence and exploration. Several mothers also indicated that it was important for them to build their children's confidence by promoting resilience and teaching them how to deal adaptively with failure. Helping their children learn how to recognize and label feelings, and *Encouraging their Children's Self-Expression* was repeated as a priority throughout interviews. Finally, several mothers described the importance of *Treating Children with Respect;* recognizing that the child is a different person, separate from them, who can collaborate on family decisions: "Understanding that they are a different person and you know you have to learn, you have to learn or getting to, get to know them. And…just kind of be there guiding them, but let them be their own person" (ID 133).

Warmth- this theme emerged from descriptions of child-focused parenting that entailed loving and dedicated practices leading to positive emotional outcomes for children. The four codes that made up this theme were *Demonstrating Love and Affection, Understanding Child's Needs, Delighting in Child*, and *Raising Happy Children. Demonstrating Love and Affection* was one of the most popular responses as to what makes a good parent, and was seen by some mothers as

something they inherited through their culture which they wanted to instill in their kids: "it's like, we [Latinos] are warmer. More affectionate than other cultures here. So I think that if we instill this in children when they are little, he will not be scared of showing this in his relationships with others." (ID 136; Translated from Spanish). Being able to *Understand their Child's Needs* through reflective and detail-oriented practices was highlighted as another important trait of a good parent. The experience of being a mother was generally described as very positive, and many responses evidenced mothers *Delighting in their Children*: "we always play, I feel like a three years old also with her. Go back to my childhood and start living that childhood again…with a friend now" (ID 152). Finally, many mothers mentioned that ultimately, having a happy child was key in determining whether one is a good parent: "I think to be a good parent, it's more about how the child is. So in order to have a good parent, you need to have a happy child" (ID 1).

Self-Sacrifice- This theme consisted of three codes which summarized the importance of putting the child's needs ahead of their own: *Devotion, Sacrificing their Own Needs,* and *Patience.* Many mothers saw the ability to *Devote* themselves entirely to their children and ensure their kids felt security in knowing they were always there for them as one of the most important contributions they could make: "I have to be there for them when they need me, available all the time… Like, I feel like that [time] is the one thing that I have that I can give to them and that lets them know like OK, like my mom is there for me" (ID 195). At the foundation for many mothers, being a good parent required *Sacrificing their Own Needs* if necessary in order to meet those of their children, and ensuring that their children's needs came ahead of their own. This was generally seen as a welcome commitment for mothers: "They [the children] come first, I never mind, all of my thoughts are about them, in what they like…I'm always thinking of them. And that doesn't

make me feel bad, many people say it's like you leave yourself behind, but for me it has never at all made me feel bad, actually, I like that." (ID 165; Translated from Spanish). Finally, one of the most common responses as to what made a good parent was *Patience*: this quality was seen as critical in interacting with their children, along with being adaptable and easy-going.

Finding a Balance- This theme consisted of two codes that described *Balancing Discipline and Fun,* and also *Parenting as a Process* through which mothers gained experience and figured out what works best for their child. In describing the value of *Balancing Discipline and Fun,* several participants endorsed the importance of being strict in raising their children, but still maintaining an emphasis on the child's wants and needs. One mother described her goal as finding a "good balance between her [child's] desires, her development, and her discipline" (ID 141). Implicit in this balancing act was the learning curve that every mother experiences, across which they make mistakes and learn how to become better parents. Many mothers described good *Parenting as a Process*: they described the role of mother as something one grows into, and how they were "learning something new every day". One mother described this as a "process of self-discovery for women" (ID 163; Translated from Spanish).

Providing Necessities and Protection- The two codes that made up this final theme are *Providing Essentials* and *Security.* It is notable that while one might imagine that *Providing Essentials*, such as food and shelter, is a crucial part of being a "good" parent, only six out of 30 mothers supplied this response to the question of what makes a good parent. Several mothers did highlight the provision of *Security* as one element of good parenting. This response was especially powerful in light of the fear and lack of security several mothers described in their home countries: "Sometimes you'd go with your [shopping] cart, you'd have the kid, and in the time you put the things away, they kidnap your kid. Or you put them inside— like, you don't even know what to

do at this point. Uh, I put him inside, and someone's already come and taken him" (ID 162). Mothers described how "the security this country gives you…it's another point to have the possibility to be a good parent" (ID 173; Translated from Spanish).

Sensitive Parenting. Mapping on well to the definition of parental sensitivity found in the literature, mothers' responses to the question of "What does it mean to be a sensitive caregiver?" could be broadly divided into two general themes: *Distinguishing Child's Cues, and Responding to Cues.* A final theme, *Balance,* was implicated throughout the mothers' descriptions of sensitivity. Interviews also covered the mothers' views of the perception of *Sensitivity in Latin American Culture.*

Distinguishing Child's Cues- This theme was made up of two broadly defined processes which were represented by the codes *Interpreting Cues* and *Analyzing Children.* In order to recognize the needs of their child, mothers indicated it was important to be observant, detail-oriented and reflective. "I think a sensitive parent is the person that's attentive when their child feels sad-- --or happy, or nervous, or… Yeah, like they have the capacity to see any—interpret the feelings of their child" (ID 186; Translated from Spanish). Some mothers described a process of trial and error in trying to figure out how to help their child when they needed. What assisted in this process was *Analyzing Children,* which meant learning about their children as individuals and using this knowledge to guide their responses as mothers, even if they were frustrated. "I really have to understand that he's upset for a reason and not myself getting upset because he's upset, like he needs a lot of help at the moment so I think it's noticing that and being sensitive to those occasions when he needs you the most. Like in his case, because of his temperament, I want to be very tuned in with that" (IDD 144).

Responding to Cues- After identifying children's needs, the second aspect of sensitive parenting described by mothers was being able to respond adequately to these cues. Two codes clustered to make up this theme, and included: *Openness* and *Support.* Responding in an *Open* way meant listening to their child without judgement, and being kind and open to both their child's and their own feelings. Openness in communication about discipline was mentioned by a few mothers. Several mothers described the importance of providing help or *Support* when their child is in need. *Supportive* responses were most commonly described as empathic: "I think sensitive deals a lot with emotion. So I think when, let's say your child is hurt or not feeling well, you suffer the same in pain" (YPP1). *Supportive* responses were also described as affectionate, respectful, and as instilling a sense of security for their child.

Balance- Throughout discussion of parental sensitivity, *Balance* and flexibility were highlighted as key in helping these mothers determine how to best respond to their child's needs. The abilities to be flexible and to arrive at a compromise were mentioned as qualities of a sensitive mother. At times, this also meant balancing parental intuition with advice from parenting books or friends:

> "Even though you have read all these articles, sometimes you have to follow your gut, you know? Even if the books are saying and the theories are saying that sleep and you let them cry out in the middle- I couldn't feel comfortable doing that. I just never felt comfortable…leaving the room with her crying hysterically. I wanted to her to feel that I was there…so it's just following my own gut, you know? It's just making choices and finding that balance of what's recommended and what you're finding out is best for your child" (ID 134).

Sensitivity in Latin American Culture. Nearly every mother claimed that being a sensitive parent was very important for them, one claiming it was "more important than money or even education" (ID 1). The majority of these mothers claimed that their heritage cultures highly

prioritized sensitivity, and some described this as a differentiating factor between host North American and Latin American cultures: "I feel like we [Latin Americans] are more- a little more sensitive [than Canadians] or we're like more prepared to listen, to accompany… So it's like planting a tree and letting the typical sun, the typical water… We're more…we put the water, we put the sun, yes, we're there more to accompany all those processes…In these situations I feel that makes you be more sensitive" (ID 186; Translated from Spanish). However, some mothers indicated that sensitivity was not an important aspect of their culture. There appeared to be a divergence between South American and Central American cultures in this regard: those from South America were more likely to describe their cultures as valuing sensitivity, whereas those from Central America were less likely to do so, a pattern that was mentioned by a mother with Guatemalan heritage whose husband was from Colombia: "I've noticed that it's almost very, more…like I find that Central Americans, like that part, are more colder? As opposed to like Colombians and going down more [further South]" (ID 195).

Trauma. Sixteen mothers out of 30 described having had "a significant traumatic experience which has impacted their parenting". This question elicited a wide range of responses, including being robbed at gunpoint, witnessing their child choking, losing a loved one and having a parent who was substance dependent. While these were very diverse responses that varied in their level of traumatic intensity, I opted to include all of the shared experiences in these analyses, especially in light of the fact that subjective appraisal of trauma can significantly predict its impact (Udwin, Boyle, Yule, Bolton & O'Ryan, 2000).

Mothers were asked about the impact that traumatic events had had on their lives and abilities as mothers, and these responses were evaluated to be either positive, negative, neutral, or a mix. Interestingly, mothers were just as likely to say that traumatic events had a positive influence as

they were to endorse a negative impact, speaking to the resilience of this group of mothers. For example, one mother who felt her traumatic childhood and the dysfunctional parenting she received empowered her to choose more positive options for herself as a parent described:

> "My dad used to drink heavily. So him and my mom would always be fighting. And that was probably one thing I always said, like, I want to marry someone that doesn't drink. And thank God, he doesn't drink or smoke or anything. So I think that was definitely something, and I didn't want my kids growing up like we grew up…I know that when I was younger I hated it, and I know the way I felt and I definitely don't want to put my kids in that situation. Definitely affected me, the way I wanted to raise them." (ID 195)

Mothers who described a trauma that affected them negatively described feeling overprotective or unable to trust others as a result of being abused in childhood or being raised in an insecure context. For those mothers who endorsed mixed effects of trauma, one woman whose uncle was kidnapped and almost killed explained that this empowered her to teach her child increased appreciation, while also experiencing the negative impact of guilt and nervousness:

> "Violence and poverty in my country…it makes me feel guilty for all the things that I have or I give her extra things that aren't necessary. But at least I learn how to appreciate everything I have. It maybe made me more aware of crime and how in Canada, it can also exist, it does exist, right? So I think I'm more careful with her. Like I tell her always hold my hand, don't talk to strangers…or just be careful around men, especially men. And yeah, I just teach her how to know what the kids go through in our country and to appreciate what she has and maybe want to do something to change the world in the future." (ID 1)

One mother described how an early experience of childhood sexual abuse made it challenging to trust others along with her child, but implied a reliance on fatalistic beliefs to cope with this anxiety: "I'm just trusting the universe and knowing that that sort of thing may happen to anybody" (ID 134).

Another noteworthy topic that arose was the issue of normalizing instances that may typically be seen as traumatic. For example, when one mother was asked whether she had ever experienced a significant traumatic event, the following conversation ensued:

> "M: Mm, no. A significant experience…no! Really I haven't had neither an accident or anything. Fortunately. Thank God.
> R: So, for example, if we're taking about safety in Venezuela, that—
> M: I've been robbed. Yes, with a gun. (laughing), but it's something so normal there.
> R: Seriously? So then when I say 'something significant', that doesn't even enter your mind?
> M: *No!* It's really normal." (ID 163; Translated from Spanish)

Cultural Factors. Women described their culture as a source of strength and hoped to be able to teach children about their roots by imparting the values that they had inherited through their culture. Some mothers described the challenges present in many Latin American countries as a major source of resilience. Throughout the interviews, themes corresponding with traditional Latino cultural values also came to light, including *Familism, Confianza, Fatalism* and *Respeto.*

> "I have noticed that in our cultures, since we have to go through more things…because this is our life, because we have to look, it's not so easy for us to get things, so we are more like resilient. We have to be, since our environment is like this. And in any case I see this as a strength, because here I have also seen when something simple happens, since they haven't ever faced a failure, it's terrible…but I think that it's good, it's, it's a painful thing but because you're resilient because you've fallen many times, that hurts. But in the end in life, it is useful for a child. So I try to instill this, so that he is able to deal with failure." (ID 136; Translated from Spanish)

> "I have seen people who have been growing up through a harsh life and become stronger. So when you are exposed to those things, it might be difficult but it makes you stronger. I want [child] to see what it is like to live in poverty, so she can become more understanding. More aware, and more grateful." (ID 159)

Familism- Women described how in their home countries, it was typical for extended families to meet on a regular basis. For example, one mother explained, "I believe that back home we were very family oriented. I am not saying that they are not here, but it's different. I guess we used to

have big families and we would get together every afternoon – I don't know, it's just different." (ID 159). Intrafamilial support in childcare for these mothers contrasted with Canadian practices which they saw as involving principally the nuclear family or external caregivers. "We're more family-oriented, I think. We depend a lot on the family. For everything. Here not so much, here is more daycare, babysitters, and all that stuff. So, the family, the secondary, like, your in-laws, are not so involved in the…grow-up of the kids. With us, everybody is involved." (ID 156) These close feelings of family ties and commitment at times extended to friends and neighbours as well.

Confianza- Mothers were asked whether they had access to other caregivers who help them raise their children, and the most common answers were either that they did not, or that they relied exclusively on other family members. Implicit in these responses was that it was difficult for many of these mothers to trust others with their children. '*Confianza*', or trust, is a value observed in Latin American culture which implies a strong degree of mutual reciprocity and highlights the importance of trust in interpersonal relationships. Some women attributed the lack of options of alternative caregivers to a traumatic experience which precluded them from trusting others with their children. For others, a lack of connectedness with friends and neighbours resulted in only the nuclear family caring for the child. One mother described the difference in the support received by her in-laws versus her own family: "When you're a first in time mommy, it's pretty different because they're your in-laws, so at some point you can't cross that line, right? Like, basically, you're not their child, right, so it's not the same [support you'd get from your own family]." (ID 140). For the few who opted to put their children in daycare, it was common to hear descriptions of confianza invoked in these relationships: "[the daycare is] kind of the extended family…we are raising her together…I can include in my family to those people who take care of my family" (ID 141).

Fatalism- Several mothers alluded to beliefs associated with fatalism. A couple of women explained importance of teaching their children to enjoy each day as though it could be their last: “I think life is something that was given to you to enjoy. To enjoy as much as you can, because you don’t know what’s going to happen tomorrow!” (ID 152). Some mothers also ascribed occurrence of certain events to the “idea of like everything has time, maybe this is the time” (ID 169) and as mentioned above, also invoked fatalistic beliefs to cope adaptively with trauma.

Respeto- In the context of describing childhood experiences and their impacts on preferred childcare practices, women described the traditional value of *Respeto,* which signifies respect to the family hierarchy. While women generally described their parents as models for their own parenting, many of them indicated that there were both aspects that they would maintain and things that they hoped to change. Authoritarian parenting practices, such as the doling out of punishment without explanation (which was often physical), and high parental demand for control were among the most popular things that women named as wanting to change with their own families. In contrast, the most critical aspect for them to maintain from their upbringing was an emphasis on “good values.”

Navigating Cultural Paradigms. Women were asked about the differences between their home and Canadian cultures in the sphere of parenting. The main differences that mothers had noted between cultures were in *Dependence, Discipline, Parental Involvement,* and the *Use of External Parenting Resources.* During these conversations, women also explained the process of *Weighing Costs and Benefits* of immigrating, and discussed how this experience has shaped their parenting.

Dependence- The most commonly endorsed difference between cultures was the Canadian focus on raising independent children who leave the home as soon as they are old enough. Latin

American families were described as wanting their children to be dependent on them for as long as possible and for children to live with their families until marriage: “the nest of the child at home is much more important representation, and for Canadians it’s more about independence. “*They left, they’re gone”* uh... *“that was my task”,* one time I talked to a friend that I have here, she would tell me “it’s that…that’s my mission. I accomplished it, I had my kid…Ciao! and that’s it”. But for us it’s not like that” (ID 173; Translated from Spanish). It is notable that many mothers described “good” parents as those who encourage autonomy, which is more in line with host culture parenting goals. This was one example given of adopting new parenting practices since coming to Canada.

Discipline- The other most common difference mentioned by mothers was discipline patterns. Half of the mothers had received physical discipline beyond spanking, and the majority of these descriptions were accompanied by an explanation of physical punishment being normative in their culture: “In Mexico, yeah, you don’t talk back to your parents, because you are going to get maybe a slap, you know, in the hand, or…yeah. So, yeah for sure, you don’t talk back to them. Cause you know what’s coming back, something is coming physically to you. So you learn pretty young” (ID 133); “In Colombia, you’re raised… like they think that if they punish you physically, that’s the way you learn.” (ID 152). While this was commonly mentioned as being a part of their upbringing, this was also one of the most popular targets for change for these mothers, after being exposed to alternative options in Canada: “Here, people try to reason with their kids, they explain a lot. I have seen that… I don’t know, I think it’s better and I’m going to try that way actually. Because I don’t feel like physical aggression is good, and…when my mom was doing that, I was like “I don’t care, the pain is going to go away, so you can hit me whatever you want, I don’t care.” (ID 150)

Parental Involvement- Several mothers described greater parental involvement on the part of Latin American parents compared to Canadian parents. They noted this difference specifically in patterns of play: "When you [Canadians] play, I feel that when he goes to play, the parents sit, read a book and the children jump, leap. We [Colombians], well speaking personally, are jumping, leaping, accompanying them." (ID 186; Translated from Spanish). Another mother described seeing these differences in involvement in the school context, where she felt Canadian parents were less likely to concern themselves with attending parent-teacher meetings. Finally, another mother described how this involvement could affect the whole family:

> "They would invite him— back in Mexico his classmates would invite him and like, you don't even ask, you know the little brother is going too. And for some reason, the neighbour, and you get to the classmate's birthday party with my son, my daughter, the neighbour, and it's— it's totally normal. And the party is bursting with people and here it's like, it's your kid…and that's it! And you go, and they feed him, and that's so strange to me… here for example I was telling you, I go…and well, the ones that stay… well they don't talk to you. It's like they're watching the kid and…it's different." (ID 162)

Use of External Parenting Resources- Several women described that parents in Canada rely on books and external support groups, such as parenting groups, for advice in raising their children. Several mothers described that they noticed that Canadian mothers work "by the book" and ascribe closely to rules that dictate appropriate parenting practices. "I feel like in Mexico, the parenting part is like more natural. I feel that here is like more structured. Like if you are going to be a mother, you have to study, you have to go to these circles and then these activities and then join to a group of mothers that you will look for them on the internet but not your neighbourhood…like unnatural! Like you have to research, yeah? It's on the internet!" (ID 141). Latin American mothers, on the other hand, were said to rely more strongly on their family for support. "In Mexico, it's more about what your family tells you. Like what worked for them, and

what they heard from another mom, or your grandma…you rely more on your family than the doctor." (ID 157)

Weighing Costs and Benefits- The mothers attributed several negatives to having left their home countries to come to Canada, many of which were associated with the loss of familial support and assistance in raising their children, especially as first-time mothers. Half of the women who were interviewed mentioned losing this support after immigrating, and how this has impacted their lives by limiting the amount of time they were able to spend on their own activities: "So here I, every two months, I can, I ask someone to please take him while I go to a doctor's appointment, that's a lot of help for me. But in Colombia, surely it would be every week, someone would want to be with him and take him and it wouldn't only be for one or one and a half hours…they'd take him for the whole afternoon, they'd help me so I could think about other things, relax a little, and do other things. That here, no…" (ID 136; Translated from Spanish). It was a common comment that back home, the mothers would feel "less stressed" or would have more time to themselves; One mother described how now that she is in Canada, she has no privacy from her child, even to go to the bathroom. Finally, several mothers described a loss of connections with both their families and their cultures for themselves and for their children: "That's the part that I miss the most, yeah. Like, when I think about the crime and all that, I don't miss that. But I do miss that, the relationship that you have with other people. Yes. And the, like you call family everyday, you see them very often, it's…yeah, I do miss that part." (ID 144)

On the other hand, the mothers seemed to perceive the benefits of having left their country to come to Canada to overshadow the negatives. Several mothers described that despite losing familial support, they were glad to be raising their children on their own as they are able to choose how they would like to do it, rather than perpetuating engrained patterns of childcare that

they may not agree with. One mother added that immigrating on her own required her to be more independent and self-reliant: “if I were there, I think I’ll be more relaxed. Here it’s more, it’s tough, I think. But at the same time it’s good because you become like tough too, and you become to do things by yourself, and maybe you, you always like, um, teach your kids as you want, and not as your mom.” (ID 135)

Additionally, increased security in Canadian society was highlighted as major facilitative factor in being a good parent. Several mothers described the stress associated with living in their heritage societies where children are targets of kidnappings, and described the peace of mind that comes with living in a lower crime society:

> M: “Here my daughter can be free. And that’s so important. In spite of the climate, the snow, everything. She’ll be able to--- It’s totally worth it.
> R: So do you think you have less stress now than before, over there?
> M: Oof! A lot less. In spite of the fact I don’t have help from my mom and my sister and all, a lot less.” (ID 163; Translated from Spanish)

The infrastructure in Canada, including the increased availability of childcare subsidies, public transport system, and language classes were all mentioned by mothers as means of balancing the losses associated with leaving their home cultures and families.

> “I miss a lot of things, I need a lot of things, but…If you were to tell me “here’s a ticket for Bogota [Colombia]” I would tell you no. I’m not interested in going back to Colombia. I wonder how [child]’s life would be but, I prefer to be here. Yes, I hate cold in the winter and the food and everything. But when I put that on a scale, that she’s here— the very act of you being here, and me— they don’t give us opportunities to do what you’re doing here there. You don’t see that there. There, you don’t see research…One sees that and goes “no, no” you can’t be so ungrateful.” (ID 173; Translated from Spanish)

> “I’d be more close to my family of course, I’d have my brothers around him and his cousins will be around, right? That would be the main difference. But there’s some other stuff that you’ll like to have there that you don’t, right? So that’s why I’m here. Basically the government support. The health insurance, right? Education, the opportunity to meet with so many different cultures here, right, the language…yeah that’s more opportunities

> that you don’t have at home. For me as a single parent it’ll be really hard to achieve back there.” (ID 194)

Mothers described one of the greatest advantages of immigrating to Canada was being able to pick and choose the parenting practices that they found the most helpful: “I’m going to try to have the both of the ways, because there’s things from one culture and from the other that I don’t like at all, so maybe just trying to teach her the best of each.” (ID 169) One mother aptly described this process as “negotiating cultural paradigms.” (ID 141)

> “There are certain things from the culture that also aren’t good. So I try, I know that there are some things that we do that make the children very dependent, yes?...Culturally, we make it so children stay at home until they are married and we don’t give them enough independence and that’s not good! So I try also to analyze this…and see how they do it here, although here it seems like the opposite, it’s too much independence…too much! So I try to compare what there is there with what I’ve seen here and I try to find a middle point.” (ID 136; Translated from Spanish)

> “I think you go making that mix of cultures, of the Canadian part and the Mexican part, no? The diet is different there, the caregiving is different, maybe for the culture here, what we have there can be a bit more crude in some ways, just as things that we do here, in Mexico it could be like, why are you doing that, so that’s where this culture clash comes in, and in the end, we, what we do is make this mix of what we bring from our roots and what we learn and what we see with other kids.” (ID 167; Translated from Spanish)

The familiarity with two distinct cultures was perceived as a strength for some mothers: “Coming from a different background and just having like, a fusion of two cultures, gives me a more open-minded sort of, you know, things can be done this way or that way and I can always choose which way to go, which avenue…is best. So, I value that, you know, that diversity.” (ID 134)

Discussion

This study used quantitative, qualitative and observational data to determine the roles of trauma exposure and traditional cultural values in parenting and child development in a Latin American immigrant community in a large Canadian urban centre. This study found support for

hypothesized differences in parenting styles across cultural groups, as well as in the child socio-emotional developmental outcomes associated with these parenting styles. On the other hand, findings failed support the hypothesis that this sample of Latin American immigrants would be characterized by comparatively high trauma rates, and that trauma exposure would negatively impact parenting and child development. The results provided evidence that the traditional cultural value, familism, is positively associated with authoritative parenting. Adherence to this belief was found to decline with increasing host culture acculturation, in accordance with study predictions, bolstering the 'acculturation hypothesis' which attributes worsening outcomes for immigrant groups across generations to decreasing affiliation with heritage culture beliefs. In contrast, fatalism was not found to be linked to parenting or acculturation. Neither cultural belief was found to be affiliated with heritage culture acculturation. Qualitative results complemented these findings, and are discussed in conjunction with quantitative results below.

Based on previous research, I hypothesized that trauma exposure would be higher in Latin American immigrants than in other cultural groups. Contrary to earlier research findings, self-report questionnaires probing exposure to traumatic events failed to support this hypothesis and revealed similar trauma exposure levels in European Canadian, Chinese Canadian and Latin American mothers in the current survey. I speculate that this may in part be due to the unique characteristics of the participants in this sample who were generally highly-educated, and from higher SES brackets than the general Latin American population in Canada which is at increased likelihood of living in poverty (Statistics Canada, 2011). Additionally, risk for trauma exposure is likely related to county of origin, which was diverse across this sample, as national levels of violence and conflict differ drastically among regions of Latin America. This project did not

distinguish between refugees and immigrant, groups who likely have very different pre-migration experiences, another potentially influential factor when considering risk for exposure to trauma.

Trauma did not appear to influence self-reported parenting styles in this sample, and this was true even when comparing mothers who scored on extreme ends of the spectrum of trauma exposure scores. This lack of relationship was unexpected based on previous literature outlining the negative consequences of trauma on parenting behaviours. Several reasons for this were speculated. First of all, it could be that since overall trauma scores were relatively low, there wasn't a great deal of variance in trauma scores and thus a relationship between parenting and trauma did not emerge. It is also possible that the normalizing of a traumatic experience, by virtue of the ubiquity of these experiences, could curb its impact by mitigating its negative effects and lessening its influence on parenting behaviours. Individual evaluations of the significance of a trauma are critical factors to consider both in research and clinical settings, and this certainly merits attention in future research. Another consideration in light of these lower than expected trauma scores is the likelihood that the participating women who have, for the most part, left their homes and families to come to Canada, are a self-selected, resilient and empowered sub-group. The latter idea was reinforced during interviews in which women repeatedly expressed that trauma ultimately had a positive effect in their lives. In further support of this speculation is the finding that maternal trauma was positively correlated with child cognitive development, an unexpected yet potentially meaningful finding in light of the sentiment of empowerment brought about by trauma. Perhaps mothers were able to transmit the positive and empowering effects of trauma to their children, through means that were not fully captured by measures in this study. The role of maternal trauma in child cognitive development will be important to explore in future research.

Findings of increased authoritarian parenting in this Latin American sample compared to European Canadian mothers are not surprising, based on an abundance of work demonstrating that collectivist cultures, such as Latin American cultures, are characterized by predominantly authoritarian parenting styles (Rudy & Grusec, 2001). There were, however, no differences between cultures in levels of authoritative parenting, and this was the most endorsed style of parenting utilized by Latin American mothers. When asked about what makes a good parent, many codes and themes that emerged from the interviews overlapped with the definition of authoritative parenting, indicating that Latin American mothers in this sample tended to both prefer and utilize this style of parenting, despite being from a culture that typically employs authoritarian practices. Throughout the interviews, women alluded to the option to pick and choose their preferred practices from the expanded repertoire of parenting that they were exposed to through both their culture of origin and their new culture: authoritative behaviours, such as using reason and explanation in discipline were frequently endorsed as practices they wanted to incorporate into their parenting repertoire, while authoritarian practices such as hierarchical family structure and use of physical discipline were those that they found less useful. This corresponds to findings in previous research that indicate that newcomers often adopt host culture parenting practices (Yaman, Mesman, van IJzendoorn, Bakermans-Kranenburg & Linting, 2010), and gives us some insight as to how acculturation may take place within the context of parenting. Future research investigating how immigrant parents navigate cultural paradigms to select and shape parenting behaviours of immigrant groups is an important avenue to expand our knowledge on cross-cultural parenting.

While authoritative parenting did not seem to be related to child cognitive development, it was linked to higher scores of socio-emotional development in children. In line with the study

hypothesis, this effect interacted with cultural group, in that Chinese Canadian children experienced the greatest benefits, followed by Latin American and finally European Canadian children. Research lends support to differences in parenting across cultures, a finding influenced by changing meaning or significance attributed to specific parenting practices in different cultural groups. As a result of the changing significance of these practices, their impact may vary across cultural contexts. These findings were somewhat surprising, given that we might imagine that practices most closely aligned to the culture's mainstream practices would be most beneficial for children. Perhaps families that immigrate are those who are most likely to reject the traditional parenting practices from their home countries, or are most likely to quickly adopt those of the new country, and the acceptance of these practices leads to stronger link between these parenting behaviours and positive child development. We are still a long way from understanding how exactly culture moderates the relationship between parenting and child development, a relationship that likely changes over time and with acculturation. This interaction is an important avenue for future research; qualitative data, such as that collected in this project, will play an important role in shedding light on key cross-cultural differences in typical parenting, helping us to further shape our hypotheses surrounding meanings attributed to different practices and explain differences in child outcomes.

It should also be noted that the goals of parenting are different across cultures. Western cultures place a strong value on certain socio-emotional outcomes, such as self-expression, confidence, and autonomy, traits that are measured by the Bayley-III, but other cultures may prioritize child outcomes that were not fully captured by this measure. This is an important consideration to make when researching child development in order to avoid cultural bias. In this case, qualitative data from interviews supports Latin American mothers sharing these goals, such

as independence and openness in self-expression, for their children. Qualitative data can be a powerful tool to avoid imposing culturally sanctioned ideals for child development, and should be incorporated when doing work with diverse cultural groups.

One of the parenting variables considered in this research was maternal sensitivity. Although perceptions of maternal sensitivity as described in interviews mapped very well onto the definitions found in the literature, NCATS scores were not found to be related to either cognitive or socio-emotional development, counter to my hypothesis and unexpected, based on the body of research that details the relationship between maternal sensitivity and child development. Previous research has found that sensitivity is expressed differently across different cultural groups, and that similar behaviours can lead to differing outcomes depending on cultural context. Since this research tool has not been researched for use with the Latin American immigration population in Canada, it is possible that the NCATS is not ideal for measuring sensitivity in this group. Use of an alternative measure of maternal sensitivity could provide more information on the role of maternal sensitivity and its connection with child development and traditional cultural values in the future. Qualitative data from this research may help inform how to appropriately select a measure of sensitivity for use in this population, a suggestion that has been made previously by other scholars concerned with the influence of culture on parenting (Bornstein, 2012). It is also conceivable that this relationship would emerge more strongly as children age and stronger attachment relationships are forged. Since this research looked at infants as young as two months, this may be too early for the relationship between maternal sensitivity and child developmental outcomes to become evident.

Although participants were not asked explicitly about acculturation, the topic of cultural differences elicited responses which lend weight to current research in the field of acculturation

that describes how individuals who arrive in new cultures negotiate between their heritage and new host cultures and can adopt new attitudes and practices while retaining those ones they bring with them from their culture of origin (Vadher & Barrett, 2007). The option to “pick and choose” was perceived as a personal strength by mothers in our study. Quantitative findings revealed that host culture acculturation was negatively associated with familistic beliefs, suggesting that affiliation with some traditional heritage values may waver as newcomers increasingly adopt practices and values associated with Canadian society. This finding aligns with the acculturation hypothesis, which suggests that declining affiliation with heritage culture beliefs could be responsible for decreasing outcomes in immigrant groups across generations. However, the same was not true of *fatalism*, reflecting differential susceptibility of particular cultural values to changing contexts and increasing host culture acculturation. It is possible that fatalism is a more engrained value and less likely to change after immigration. On the other hand, qualitative data pointed to practices associated with *respeto* were mentioned by mothers as some of the most important candidates for change in their childrearing practices. Future research could investigate how other traditional Latino cultural values change with increasing acculturation to shed more light on the acculturation hypothesis as it pertains to Latin Americans in the context of parenting.

It is important to consider that these findings were complicated by a lack of relationship between affiliation with traditional cultural beliefs and *heritage* culture acculturation, results which have been mirrored in other research specifically investigating the relationship between familism and acculturation (Steidel & Contreras, 2003). This finding is intuitively contradictory and begs the question of whether or not this is an adequate measure of acculturation, an important question given the mixed findings surrounding acculturation in the literature. Researchers in the field of acculturation should continue to refine existing measures of acculturation and should

perhaps consider including affiliation with traditional cultural beliefs as an indication of heritage culture acculturation in development of these measures.

In this study, the relationship between host culture acculturation and familism is noteworthy in light of the positive relationship between familism and constructive parenting practices; it appears that in the Canadian context, this traditional belief relates to parenting behaviours that have been shown to lead to improved child socio-emotional development for many diverse groups of parents. This may be an important consideration for clinicians or service providers working with Latin American immigrant families. Knowledge of the role of familism in predicting positive parenting practices can provide a basis to promote this value in parenting programs or interventions. In addition, an awareness of how it may be influenced by host culture acculturation serves as a means to especially support those families who may have higher levels of acculturation. In terms of research, this finding also sets the stage for an investigation of how familism may be related to parenting practices in different contexts; for instance, in Chinese Canadian families who showed stronger benefits of authoritative parenting, or in Latin American families who have not left their countries.

Limitations

This was one of the first research endeavours to study Latin American immigrant parents in Canada, which remains largely neglected by Canadian researchers. One of the strengths of this study is the incorporation of mixed qualitative, quantitative and observational measures, and the availability of a large database permitting comparisons across three cultural groups. That said, the current study has several limitations. First, the sample size is relatively small, limiting generalizability of quantitative analyses. Additionally, participants were women who sought out the opportunity to participate in research, which may result in a bias in the sample characteristics.

Demographics of this sample substantiate the speculation that this sample is not representative of the overall Latin American population in Canada. It will be important in future research to try to engage different sectors of the Latin American immigrant population through stratified population sampling.

Secondly, this study is a cross-sectional design which limits conclusions about directionality and causality. For example, it isn't clear whether increasing host culture acculturation leads to a decreased affiliation with familistic beliefs, or whether having lower levels of this traditional value at the outset leads one to become more strongly acculturated with host culture. It will be valuable to design a longitudinal study to permit conclusions surrounding causality.

There is also a question as to whether shared informant bias may have had an impact on the findings in this study. For example, it is conceivable that mothers who endorse authoritative parenting behaviours are also more positively inclined when reporting their child's socio-emotional development. Future studies could consider triangulating data from multiple sources, for example from another parent or caregiver, or use of an alternative measure that does not rely on self-report, to overcome the issue of shared informant bias.

Finally, it will be important in future research to avoid grouping all countries of Latin America together. Although this is a regular practice in research with Latin American populations, experiences of newcomers in Canada will be very different if they are coming from Argentina or El Salvador, Mexico or Costa Rica, which all have very different histories and current crime levels, and limiting a research study to a more specific region will likely lead to more consistent results. This is also true about differentiating between immigrants and refugees, a

distinction which has significant implications for the kinds of pre-migration experiences one has, and which was not considered in this research.

Implications and Future Directions

The findings reported here have important implications for research in the field of cross-cultural parenting. Qualitative findings from this study provide a framework for investigating differences in immigrant parents versus mainstream Canadian parents, while also underscoring the similarities between groups in terms of parents' concepts of "good" and "sensitive" parenting. Descriptions of how parents are able to balance parenting practices of their home and mainstream cultures also bolster recent directions of acculturation research, in which newcomers are no longer seen as acculturating unidirectionally towards or away from host and heritage cultures, but rather forming their own unique mixture of cultures with elements adopted from both. It may be of interest for researchers studying acculturation to include affiliation with traditional cultural beliefs in development of new measures of acculturation to improve our ability to represent this construct.

It will be important for future research build on this groundwork of information on parenting by Latin American immigrant families in order to equip clinicians with the knowledge needed to best promote positive outcomes in this group. Future research should use a longitudinal design to promote an understanding of causation when it comes to parenting styles and their relationship to child development, and should ideally try to differentiate sample characteristics by country of origin and immigration status. A longitudinal design may also help to further elucidate the relationship between maternal sensitivity and child development. Researchers could additionally consider using alternative measures of maternal sensitivity that have been developed for use with, or whose use has been substantiated with, the Latin American immigrant

population, in order to guarantee cultural relevance of the instrument. Finally, it will be valuable to ensure future research includes participants from a representative sample of Latin American immigrants to extend generalizability of research findings.

The current research may have significant implications for clinicians working with Latin American clients. First, although trauma did not appear to be a salient risk factor in this group, previous research has found otherwise, underscoring the heterogeneity of the experiences of this group. It is valuable to consider previous trauma exposure, and determine whether and how this is affecting parenting. The current findings also highlight the fact that effects of trauma are not uniquely negative, and adaptive coping or empowering influences of this trauma can be utilized in parenting programs to boost resilience. Incorporating traditional cultural values, such as *fatalism* and *familism*, which appear to be characteristic of Latin American parents, should also be considered for clinical work with this population in order to make practices more culturally-relevant. *Familism* in particular is tied to parenting practices that predict healthy child socio-emotional development, and could be a useful consideration for programs that promote adaptive parenting with Latin American populations.

Conclusions

The goals of this research were to survey the parenting practices employed by a sample of Latin American immigrant families in Canada, and how these differentially impact child developmental outcomes, while considering the interacting influences of trauma exposure and traditional cultural values. This study provided evidence to substantiate the importance and value of *familism* and provided rich detail on the resilient parenting practices of this community. However, these findings also emphasize the great heterogeneity of parents in this group, and call

for future research endeavours with the Latin American immigrant population in Canada to further expand on our knowledge and build our capacity to promote healthy child development in this group.

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Appendix A

Demographic Information from Latin American Participants

ID	Age	Child Age (months)	Marital Status	Education Level	Annual Household Income	# of People in House-hold	Country of Origin
Mean	**30.24**	**22.75**		**College/ University**	**53,200**		
1	20	33	Single	Some college/ university	14,000	2	Not Reported
33	30	22	Married	Some college/ university	Not reported	3	Dominican Republic
34	27	23	Married	High school	Not reported	3	Chile
37	25	32	Common-Law	Some college/ university	40,000	4	Mexico
43	32	24	Common-Law	Some college/ university	Not reported	4	Mexico
102	19	1	Single	Some high school	12,000	2	Guyana
104	22	33	Single	High school	36,000	4	Costa Rica
123	20	42	Single	Some high school	18,000	10	El Salvador
124	18	14	Single	Some high school	20,000	3	Not Reported
126	20	19	Single	Some high school	4,800	5	El Salvador
133	35	2	Married	College/	90,000	3	Mexico

				University			
134	36	30	Married	Postgraduate	100,000	3	Mexico
135	39	12	Married	Postgraduate	180,000	4	Mexico
136	39	36	Married	Postgraduate	18,000	3	Colombia
140	30	9	Married	College/ University	83,000	3	Colombia
141	35	16	Married	Postgraduate	50,000	3	Mexico
144	42	36	Married	Postgraduate	120,000	3	Argentina
150	30	13	Married	College/ University	25,000	4	Chile
152	29	36	Married	College/ University	67,000	3	Colombia
153	30	24	Married	High School	39,000	4	Argentina
156	26	12	Common -Law	High School	20,000	5	Venezuela
157	38	4	Married	College/ University	160,000	3	Mexico
159	33	42	Married	College/ University	80,000	3	Colombia
162	34	42	Married	College/ University	66,000	4	Mexico
163	33	24	Married	College/ University	25,000	3	Venezuela
165	34	24	Married	College/ University	50,000	4	Mexico
167	33	12	Common -Law	College/ University	30,000	3	Mexico
169	32	4	Married	College/ University	25,000	3	Mexico
173	34	46	Married	Postgraduate	50,000	3	Colombia

184	31	30	Married	Postgraduate	50,000	7	Colombia
185	28	36	Married	College/ University	40,000	5	Argentina
186	31	24	Married	College/ University	40,000	7	Colombia
194	35	12	Divorced	College/ University	28,000	3	Colombia
195	28	5	Married	College/ University	68,000	4	Guatemala

Demographic Information from European Canadian Participants

ID	Age	Child's Age (months)	Marital Status	Education	Income	Number of people in Household
Mean	**28.85**	**18.96**		**Some College/University**	**62,340**	
2	21	31	Married	College/University	45,000	4
10	44	31	Single	College/University	10,000	2
11	31	2	Married	College/University	32,000	3
18	42	8	Divorced	Some College/University	72,000	2
23	23	15	Single	College/University	15,000	2
25	25	32	Single	College/University	15,000	4
26	22	13	Common-Law	High School	15,000	3
27	38	13	Single	Some College/University	50,000	6
31	19	9	Common-Law	Some High School	Not Reported	4
32	17	2	Single	Some High School	10,000	2
38	21	15	Single	High School	16,000	2
40	32	10	Married	Some College/University	80,000	3
41	33	16	Married	College/University	135,000	4
47	30	17	Common-Law	Some College/University	65,000	3
48	32	7	Married	Postgraduate	75,000	3
50	27	7	Married	College/University	60,000	3
52	20	20	Single	Some High School	Not Reported	7
53	33	6	Married	College/University	110,000	4
56	24	41	Common-Law	High School	Not Reported	3
58	28	14	Married	Postgraduate	30,000	3
59	38	31	Married	College/University	150,000	4
60	25	7	Married	College/University	70,000	3
62	37	35	Married	Some College/University	90,000	4

63	29	30	Married	Some College/University	100,000	5
67	35	12	Married	College/University	69,000	3
84	18	9	Common-Law	High School	14,000	5
91	34	42	Single	College/University	50,000	5
95	18	15	Single	Some High School	10,000	6
96	19	19	Single	Some High School	10,000	3
99	21	32	Single	High School	10,800	2
103	18	6	Single	Some High School	6,000	5
105	17	2	Common-Law	Some High School	17,000	3
109	20	11	Married	Some College/University	30,000	5
119	31	4	Married	College/University	90,000	3
122	23	7	Single	Some High School	Not Reported	2
125	19	18	Single	College/University	15,000	7
132	20	24	Single	Not Reported	Not Reported	2
170	33	19	Married	Postgraduate	200,000	3
172	38	41	Married	High School	60,000	7
174	39	18	Married	College/University	200,000	4
175	35	38	Married	Postgraduate	60,000	4
176	34	27	Common-Law	Postgraduate	80,000	3
177	32	26	Married	College/University	90,000	4
178	41	31	Single	Postgraduate	60,000	2
179	42	21	Common-Law	Postgraduate	Not Reported	3
180	41	29	Married	College/University	170,000	3
181	36	26	Married	Postgraduate	130,000	4

Demographic Information from Chinese Canadian Participants

ID	Age	Child's Age (months)	Marital Status	Education	Annual Household Income	Number of People in Household
Mean	**34.05**	**21.98**		**College/ University**	**87,300**	
5	33	41	Married	College/ University	Not Reported	5
8	35	8	Married	College/ University	Not Reported	6
9	36	39	Married	College/ University	Not Reported	7
12	31	30	Married	College/ University	70,000	5
13	39	23	Married	College/ University	70,000	4
14	34	31	Common-Law	College/ University	50,000	Not Reported
39	28	24	Married	College/ University	60,000	4
65	38	9	Married	College/ University	80,000	4
66	46	28	Married	College/ University	50,000	4
68	39	17	Married	College/ University	Not Reported	6
69	33	10	Married	College/ University	175,000	4
70	32	20	Married	Postgraduate	400,000	4
71	36	29	Married	Postgraduate	16,800	5
72	34	26	Married	Postgraduate	45,000	4
73	32	19	Married	Postgraduate	170,000	3
74	39	3	Married	Postgraduate	Not Reported	4
75	32	38	Married	Postgraduate	140,000	3
76	32	33	Married	College/ University	90,000	4
77	29	7	Married	Postgraduate	100,000	6
79	37	24	Married	Some College/ University	120,000	6
80	39	18	Married	Postgraduate	150,000	4
81	33	6	Married	College/ University	60,000	3

82	32	12	Married	College/ University	100,000	8
83	45	38	Single	Postgraduate	15,000	3
85	33	10	Married	College/ University	160,000	4
88	39	19	Divorced	Postgraduate	80,000	3
106	32	5	Married	Postgraduate	16,000	4
107	32	39	Married	College/ University	40,000	3
137	31	3	Married	College/ University	Not Reported	3
138	33	28	Married	Some College/ University	160,000	4
139	31	31	Married	Some College/ University	80,000	6
143	23	2	Divorced	College/ University	Not Reported	4
145	32	19	Married	Postgraduate	25,000	4
146	40	24	Married	Some High School	44,000	4
147	33	30	Married	College/ University	150,000	5
148	40	18	Married	Postgraduate	100,000	3
149	36	24	Married	College/ University	80,000	6
151	33	19	Married	College/ University	50,000	8
155	35	22	Married	College/ University	40,000	9
160	28	3	Common-Law	Some High School	55,000	5
164	36	18	Married	College/ University	Not Reported	6
166	31	30	Married	High School	10,000	8
168	34	19	Married	College/ University	150,000	6
171	29	39	Married	High School	18,000	4
188	30	41	Married	College/ University	30,000	6
189	29	37	Married	High School	22,000	10
190	39	6	Married	Postgraduate	200,000	7
191	31	37	Married	High School	20,000	4

Appendix B

Relationship between Authoritative Parenting and Child Socioemotional Development by Cultural Group

Cultural Group
European Canadian
Chinese Canadian
Latin American

European Canadian: R^2 Linear = 0.001
Chinese Canadian: R^2 Linear = 0.186
Latin American: R^2 Linear = 0.345

Child Socioemotional Development
140.00
130.00
120.00
110.00
100.00
90.00
80.00
70.00

2.50
3.00
3.50
4.00
4.50
5.00
Authoritative Parenting

Appendix C

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

SENSITIVITY

What does it mean to you to be a good parent?

What characteristics do you think you possess that make you a good parent?

What does it mean to be a sensitive caregiver?

Is it important to you to be sensitive, reflective, understanding, and warm towards your child? Is this emphasized in your family? Is this emphasized in your culture?

ROLE OF OTHER CAREGIVERS

Are there other caregivers who assist/have assisted in the caregiving of your child?

What role and responsibilities does this person have in caregiving?

TRAUMATIC LIFE EXPERIENCES

Earlier, you completed a questionnaire that asked you some questions regarding difficult life experiences that can have a lasting effect (e.g. death of a loved one, exposure to violence). Have any of these experienced affected the way you parent your child?

INTERGENERATIONAL PARENTING

How would you describe your relationships with your parents as a young child?

Did your experiences as a child influence how you parent today?

What forms of discipline did you receive as a child?

What impact did that have on your use of discipline with your own child?

OTHER

How do you think your experience would be different if you were raising a family back home?

What differences have you noticed between typical Canadian parenting and Latin American parenting?

Appendix D

Process of Analyzing Qualitative Data. Qualitative codes were developed inductively through repeated revisions of transcripts. This process maps on to Thematic Analysis as described by Braun and Clark (2006). Themes of ‘Good’ and ‘Sensitive’ parenting were established prior to interview but the specific themes and codes found within these broader themes were developed inductively. A step-by-step description of the qualitative analysis process is as follows:

Step 1. Review transcripts of interviews and make notes on recurring topics or themes.

Step 2. Review notes and generate initial set of codes (completed using Dedoose, a computer software program).

Step 3. Re-read transcripts.

Step 4. Review code structure and re-group/consolidate redundant codes.

Step 5. Re-read transcripts.

Step 6. Refine codes, continue to consolidate redundant codes.

Step 7. Finalize codes, and generate initial theme structure

Step 8. Write-up qualitative findings using proposed thematic structure.

Step 9. Consult regarding theme structure and solicit feedback.

Step 10. Incorporate feedback regarding theme structure; re-write report.

Step 11. After consulting and receiving approval, finalize written report.

Appendix E

Codes that Contributed to Theme of Good Parenting

THEME	Participant ID's who endorsed each code
Guiding with Respect Teaching/Guiding Encouraging Autonomy Encouraging Child's Self-Expression Treating Child with Respect	001, 033, 034, 037, 043, 133, 134, 135, 136, 140, 150, 152, 156, 157, 159, 162, 163, 165, 167, 169, 173, 184, 185, 194, 195
Warmth Demonstrating Love and Affection Understanding Child's Needs Delighting in Child Raising Happy Children	001, 033, 037, 043, 102, 134, 136, 140, 141, 144, 152, 153, 156, 157, 159, 162, 163, 165, 167, 169, 186, 194, 195
Self-Sacrifice Devotion Sacrificing their Own Needs Patience	001, 033, 034, 037, 102, 133, 135, 140, 150, 153, 156, 157, 159, 165, 167, 173, 194, 195
Finding a Balance Balancing Discipline and Fun Parenting as a Process	033, 133, 134, 136, 141, 152, 159, 162, 163, 165, 167, 169, 185
Providing Necessities and Protection Providing Essentials Security	133, 136, 140, 144, 153, 157, 162, 163, 169, 173, 186

Codes that Contributed to Theme of Sensitive Parenting

THEME	Participant ID's who endorsed each code
Distinguishing Child's Cues Interpreting Cues Analyzing Children	037, 133, 135, 140, 141, 144, 150, 156, 159, 165, 167, 169, 184, 185, 186, 194, 195
Responding to Cues Openness Support	001, 033, 034, 136, 140, 144, 150, 152, 153, 156, 157, 159, 163, 169, 173, 184, 185, 194, 195
Balance Flexibility Intuition	001, 134, 135, 141, 162, 165,

Appendix F

Description of NCAST Terms

Maternal Sensitivity to Cues	How well a mother reads and responds to her child's cues during the teaching interaction
Maternal Alleviation of Distress	How well as mother is able to respond to and modify her behavior to soothe child's distress during teaching interaction

Appendix F

NCAST Norms in Comparison to Latin American Means

NCAST Terms	NCAST Hispanic Norms	Latin American Means
Sensitivity to Cues	9.23	9.07
Maternal Responsiveness	10.24	9.52
Caregiver Total	40.61	39.41

Appendix G

Cognitive Scaled Scores and Percentile Ranks on Bayley-III (Age Normed)

Infant ID	Scaled Score	Percentile Rank and Descriptive Term
Mean		
1	11	63; Average
33	9	37; Average
34	6	9; Low Average
37	9	37; Average
43	9	37; Average
102	12	75; High Average
104	11	63; Average
123	10	50; Average
124	6	9; Low Average
126	9	37; Average
133	18	100; Very Superior
134	16	98; Very Superior
135	12	75; High Average
136	10	50; Average
140	13	84; High Average
141	11	63; Average
144	10	50; Average
150	3	1; Extremely Low

152	10	50; Average
153	Not Reported	Not Reported
156	13	84; High Average
157	10	50; Average
159	11	63; Average
162	11	63; Average
163		
165	11	63; Average
167	10	50; Average
169	11	63; Average
173	9	37; Average
184	10	50; Average
185	10	50; Average
186	12	75; High Average
194	13	84; High Average
195	10	50; Average

Appendix H

Socio-Emotional Scaled Scores and Percentile Ranks on Bayley (Age Normed)

Infant ID	Scaled Score	Percentile Rank and Descriptive Term
1	6	9; Low Average
33	13	84; High Average
34	Not Reported	Not Reported
37	9	37; Average
43	6	9; Low Average
102	8	25; Average
104	13	84; High Average
123	15	95; Superior
124	8	25; Average
126	12	75; High Average
133	13	84; High Average
134		
135	11	63; Average
136	11	63; Average
140	7	16; Low Average
141	11	63; Average
144	12	75; High Average
150	10	50; Average
152	12	75; High Average
153	Not Reported	Not Reported
156	8	25; Average
157	15	95; Superior

159	10	50; Average
162	11	63; Average
163		
165	4	2; Borderline
167	11	63; Average
169	13	84; High Average
173	11	63; Average
184	9	37; Average
185	10	50; Average
186	10	50; Average
194	11	63; Average
195	Not Reported	Not Reported