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PARENTING CHALLENGES AND RESILIENCIES OF LATINO IMMIGRANT PARENTS

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PARENTING CHALLENGES AND RESILIENCIES
OF LATINO IMMIGRANT PARENTS

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
Nicolette Rose Riggio
Brenda Irene Avalos
June 2017

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ABSTRACT

Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. Thirty five percent of Latinos who are currently children will be contributing taxpayers and will be having a great influence on the future economy. Immigrant Latino parents must overcome significant challenges to ensure their children's well-being. The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges and resiliencies of Latino immigrant parents. This study examines the resources Latino immigrant parents lacked and what knowledge and parenting skills they already obtained. This study specifically looked at Latino immigrant parents and their specific needs regarding parental knowledge and resources. This study used a qualitative design accomplished through the use of face to face and phone interviews. This study conducted 15 interviews with first generation Latino immigrant parents who resided in Southern California who migrated to the United States and had at least one child born in the United States. One major finding of this study was that Latino immigrant parents could benefit from school resources for their children such as tutoring, assistance with the college admission program and assistance with applying for scholarships and financial aid. Another major finding was that language was one dominant challenge and barrier that Latino immigrant parents faced that affected their ability

to cope with the U.S school system. Based on the findings of this study one of the recommendations is to produce a policy that mandates the U.S school system to have translation services available for Latino immigrant families.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The introduction will begin with a problem statement that introduces the population that will be the focus of this research and a description of the proposed study. The second part of the introduction will describe the purpose of the study and its significance for the social work profession.

Problem Statement

In the United States, Latinos make up over 17% of the population, making Latinos the largest ethnic minority (Bean, Brown, Leach, Bachmeier, & Van Hok, 2013). Latinos are also the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States with a 43 percent growth happening within the last 10 years and represent 16 percent of the total U.S. population which translates to 50.5 million individuals (Ayon, 2014). Currently, there are more than 10 million Latino children who are U.S citizens and who have at least one parent who is undocumented (Philbin and Ayon, 2016). It is estimated that in 10 years, 35% of Latinos who are currently children will be contributing taxpayers and they will be having an impact on the future economy (Philbin & Ayon 2016). These projections give an idea of the great

influence Latino children will have in the future and the importance of promoting their well-being (Philbin & Ayon, 2016).

Per a past study, immigrant parents are significantly more likely to live in poverty and have lower levels of education than parents from other ethnic groups (Ornelas, Perreira, Beever & Maxwell 2009). Due to challenges and obstacles immigrant parents face in adjusting to a new country, immigrant parents have been found to be more likely to face social isolation and have limited access to community resources (Ornelas et al., 2009). It has also been found that those who do have social support are affected negatively by it in that it magnifies social obligation and stress which in turn, leads to an increase of risk of depression (Berkman & Glass, 2000). Despite the risk factors immigrant Latino parents face, immigrants have a lower risk of being diagnosed with mental health disorders than parents who are born in the United States in general (Vega et al., 1998). Immigrant Latino parents must overcome significant challenges to ensure their children's well-being.

The Latino population is growing and it is crucial that Latino immigrant parents know effective parenting skills and knowledge in order to produce the best child outcomes. Educating Latino immigrant parents regarding positive parenting can also result in those parents passing down effective parenting behaviors to their own children.

Different parenting styles can significantly impact children's overall well-being. There are three distinguishable parenting styles which are authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive (Braza et al., 2015).

Authoritarian parents are high on parental control (parent's role in promoting respect for rules and authority) and low on parental warmth (the interaction between parent and child) (Braza et al., 2015).

Authoritative parents are high on both parental control and parental warmth (Braza et al., 2015). Permissive parents are high on parental warmth and low on parental control (Braza et al., 2015). Children who are raised by those who use authoritarian or permissive parenting styles are more likely to express both internalizing and externalizing behaviors such as anxiety, aggression, and depression (Braza et al., 2015).

Negative/Ineffective parenting can lead a child to develop low self-esteem, more symptoms of anxiety and depression, higher rates of aggression, and lower school satisfaction and success as they transition into adolescence (Smokowski, Bacallao, Cotter, & Evans, 2014). Research shows that good parenting is critical in preventing child maltreatment such as neglect and abuse (Ward, Sanders, Gardner, Mixton, & Dawes, 2016). Child Maltreatment stems from a lack of parenting skills which can affect the child into adulthood and lead to the possibility of substance abuse, incarceration, and/or

homelessness (Ward et al., 2016). Latino immigrant parents are faced with multiple stressors which can cause positive effective parenting to be ignored which produces poor child outcomes (Leidy, Guerra, & Toro, 2010). Child neglect especially at a young age can cause disorganized and/or insecure attachment which produces biological reactions within the body that can put the child in a state of distress (Wilkerson, Johnson, & Johnson, 2008). The consequences of a child experiencing neglect and having attachment issues are developmental delays, emotional deficits, and socialization issues (Wilkerson et al., 2008).

Prior research shows the importance of parents needing basic parenting skills in order for children to thrive and succeed as well as the specific challenges Latino immigrant parents face (Leidy et al., 2010). This study will examine both the challenges and resiliencies of Latino immigrant parents. This study will assess what resources should be in place for Latino immigrant parents as well as the parenting skills already obtained. This is an important area to study because there needs to be more effective parenting in order to reduce rates of child maltreatment which significantly impacts children as they grow older. It is also important to provide resources to parents in order to break generational cycles of ineffective parenting.

Policy Context

The number of immigrants deported from the United States has risen dramatically in a short time frame, from 190,000 in 2001 to 400,000 in 2012 (Wessler, 2012). Children who are exposed to having a family member deported have been found to have heightened fears of family separation (Philbin & Ayon, 2016). Due to deportation, the children of deported parent have been found to suffer from secondary trauma and emotional stress (Philbin & Ayon, 2016). Latino immigrants underuse public and community services due to not being eligible for public support under federal law (Finno-Velasquez, 2013). The U.S federal government bars most non-citizens from publicly funded services such as Medicaid, income assistance, and housing (Finno-Velasquez, 2013). Those Latino immigrants who are eligible for some public assistance do not access the services due to mistrust of government assistance and due to fear of exposure and deportation (Finno-Velasquez, 2013). Fear of exposure and deportation is legitimate because having citizen children or being the primary provider does not guarantee that the parent is safe from being deported (Wessler, 2012). Between 2005 and 2010, 87 percent of deportation cases involving individuals with citizen children resulted in deportation (Wessler, 2011).

Current immigration policies affect social workers in a variety of roles such as social workers who advocate for policy changes, as well as direct service social workers. Social workers work with families that face deportation not only with the parents but with helping children cope with losing a parent. Social workers must link their clients to available resources and provide support through this state of crisis. Often times, laws and policies prevent social workers from assisting clients effectively. In order for social workers to provide good quality services to the immigrant population, social workers need to be competent and up to date on the latest immigration policies (socialworkers.org, n.d.).

Practice Context

Currently, there is very little research indicating what social workers are doing to address the needs of the Latino immigrant population, but there is research that suggests what social workers can do for this population and what their role should be. There is a rise in awareness of the growing Latino immigrant population and majority of agencies have had to translate all handouts to Spanish due to the increase in the Latino population. Many agencies have social workers that are bilingual and speak both English and Spanish in order to communicate effectively with the Latino population.

Social workers should be very concerned with current anti-immigration legislation because of their core values such as social justice (Ayon, 2014). One key aspect of the social work profession is to advocate for oppressed populations and intervene when populations lack resources and empowerment (Ayon, 2014). In order to assist the oppressed Latino immigrant population, social workers need to engage and have an understanding of how this population is affected by their socio-political environment, as well as ask them what services they feel they need to obtain a better quality of life (Ayon, 2014). Social workers can also reach out to their community and discuss immigration and work towards changing the negative perceptions of immigrants (Ayon, 2014). Research shows a great need for social workers to engage with the growing Latino immigrant population and provide resources.

Because the Latino population represents the fastest growing population in the child welfare system, social workers are involved and provide a variety of services. For many families, the first initial contact with any service is with a child welfare worker who provides the family with available resources in the community (Finno-Velasquez, 2013). Caseworkers are in the position to assist the family with referrals to services that assist with a variety of problems (Finno-Velasquez, 2013). Although Latino families receive a variety of services, in many

cases these services are not provided until child protective services (CPS) is involved and the family is in a state of crisis. There is little research indicating that social workers are involved with Latino Immigrant families outside of CPS.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges and resiliencies of Latino immigrant parents. This study will examine the resources Latino immigrant parents lack and what knowledge and parenting skills they already obtain. This study is specifically looking at Latino immigrant parents and their specific needs when it comes to parental knowledge and resources. Latino immigrant parents already face economic, cultural, and familial challenges as a result of their immigration (Behnke, Taylor, & Parra-Cardona, 2008). Latino immigrant parents and their children also are more likely to live in poverty and are exposed to harsh and adverse conditions such as unsafe neighborhoods, lack of resources, working multiple jobs, and facing discrimination (Leidy et al., 2010).

There is little research specifically looking at the resources Latino immigrant parents need in order to help them raise their children in a new country. One study suggests that Latinos underutilize public and community services because of the barriers in

accessing the resources (Finno-Velasquez, 2013). Another study found that Latino immigrant fathers felt that immigration impacted the way they parented due to newly found influences such as a higher standard of living, more access to parties, sex, alcohol and drugs in the U.S., more exposure to television, increased autonomy, and reduced family involvement (Behnke et al., 2008).

The research design used for this study will be a qualitative design study. The researchers will interview approximately 15 Latino immigrant parents regarding their parenting challenges and resiliencies. This research design is the most reasonable design for this study because the study is looking at individual parenting needs and challenges and how parents overcame those parenting challenges. The participants will be asked all open ended questions and will be discussing the challenges they faced when raising their children along with parenting skills they utilized that were effective in producing positive child outcomes.

Significance of the Project for Social Work

This research will impact social work practice by being able to help social workers provide the resources and parental knowledge that Latino immigrant parents feel they need in order to parent effectively. Many social workers work in settings where they are

working with children and their parents such as school-based sites, CPS, and foster care agencies. This study will be beneficial in providing social workers with information regarding a certain population and their parenting styles. Social workers will also be able to educate Latino immigrant parents in areas where there could be a possible lack of parental skills and/or knowledge. This study will also help social workers use a strengths based perspective with their clients. Even though Latino immigrant parents face parenting challenges, they also possess effective parenting skills and have overcome parenting challenges.

In addition, this study will contribute to social work practice in that it will identify the challenges Latino immigrant families face as a whole and illustrate the dynamics of migration as well as the implications of immigration policy on individuals and families. It is important for social workers who provide direct service to know the impact immigration policies have on their clients in order to effectively support them. This study will also illustrate the importance of policy advocacy. Change needs to be done at a macro level as well and social workers need to advocate for this change. Immigrant families face many challenges and the policies currently set in place are just another obstacle that makes it almost impossible for the Latino immigrant population to locate and receive much needed services.

This study will illustrate the necessity for social workers to design and coordinate community programs for immigrant families. Ultimately, the study will hopefully conclude that there needs to be policies that support and assist immigrant families in an effort to better assist the children in these families.

Many Latino immigrant parents already face challenges and one of those challenges is how to raise children in a new country. Not all service agencies have diverse resources that can be given to various ethnicities and cultures. This study will help service agencies realize the importance of examining the population they serve and addressing that population's specific needs. Service agencies can struggle with meeting diverse clients' needs due to language barriers and cultural differences. It is important to adapt materials and resources so that they are useful for the populations the agency is serving.

This current study seeks to answer the following questions: What parental challenges do Latino immigrant parents face? What resiliencies do Latino immigrant parents obtain? What resources/services do Latino immigrant parents feel they need? What parenting skills, styles, and/or knowledge have Latino immigrant parents used and were they effective in producing positive child outcomes?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter consists of a discussion of the relevant literature to this study. This chapter is divided into three sections which are effective and ineffective parenting and the child outcome, theories guiding conceptualization, and challenges and resiliencies of Latino immigrant parents.

Effective/Ineffective Parenting

Research shows that children transition better into adolescence and adulthood, have more success, and have better psychological health when their parents adopt effective parenting skills, discipline skills, and have better psychological health (McKinney, Morse, & Pastuszak, 2016). Parents that are responsive, build a healthy and loving relationship with their children, and teach their children to obey rules, and show respect have children that express less externalizing and internalizing issues such as depression, anxiety, and aggression (McKinney et al., 2016). According to prior research, Latino children express more externalizing and internalizing behaviors than European-American children (Holtrop, McNeil Smith, & Scott, 2015).

Studies show that youth of Latino immigrant parents have lower rates of drug use and sexual risk taking, and are more likely to succeed in school when their parents are involved, knowledgeable, and supportive (Behnke et al., 2008). Latino immigrant parents are faced with various stressors and because of that effective parenting is compromised leading to poor child outcomes (Leidy et al., 2010).

Parents that fail to respond to their children, fail to form a healthy and loving bond with their children, and use inappropriate discipline techniques have children that express multiple areas of concern such as developmental delays, attachment issues, school problems, etc. (McKinney et al., 2016). Parents who use harsh and/or physical discipline, yell or scream at their children, are inconsistent, and lack warmth have children who exhibit more disruptive behaviors (Knopf, 2015). Physical discipline such as spanking have been found to lead to children having difficulty at school, behavior issues, low self-esteem, delinquent problems and mental health issues (Mackenbach et al., 2014, p.1). Parents who use time outs and take away rewards such as play time or toys versus physical punishment have children that have better psychological health (McKinney et al., 2016).

There is also evidence that suggests continuous harsh parenting during childhood is linked to a child having low social and cognitive skills (Tomoda et al., 2009). These changes in brain

development ultimately have important implications for adolescents' academic outcomes. Tang and Davis-Kean (2015) argue that poor parenting causes problems for preteens and teenagers academically (Tang & Davis-Kean, 2015). During the preadolescent and adolescent years, cognitive skills become more complex and they develop a better, more complex understanding of the world around them, impacting the relationship they type of relationships they build with others (Tang & Davis-Kean, 2015, p.873). Poor parenting has an effect on children at all levels of their development as well as preadolescent and adolescent years.

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

Social Learning Theory states that we learn and imitate behaviors from what we observe in our environment (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). If children grow up learning from their own experiences it is beneficial for parent's to display effective parenting styles and skills (O'Conner et al., 2013). As previously stated children express the least amount of externalizing and internalizing behaviors such as depression, anxiety, and aggression when their parents use an authoritative parenting style (Braza et al., 2015). This theory shows the importance of parents receiving the resources they need because they then will model appropriate parenting skills that

their children can adopt and use when they become parents. This theory also emphasizes the importance of modeling various appropriate behaviors such as being responsible, respectful, consistent, empathetic, and kind, in order for children to display those same behaviors.

The Social Interaction Learning (SIL) model is similar to the Social Learning Theory. Holtrop, McNeil Smith & Scott (2015) define it as, “The research-based model describes how everyday interactions occurring between family members shape long-term patterns of behavior for parents and children” (p.360). Specifically, the model states that parenting practices have a powerful, direct effect on the child’s outcomes and child adjustment (Holtrop et al., 2015). Coercive parenting practices may in fact result in antisocial behavior (Holtrop et al., 2015). The SIL model states that there are five positive parenting practices including; monitoring, discipline, skill encouragement, problem solving, and positive involvement (Holtrop et al., 2015). When a parent maintains positive parenting practices during difficult situations, children are more resilient to harmful environments and develop healthy ways of adjusting to adverse environments (Holtrop et al., 2015).

Attachment is a strong affectional bond with another individual (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). Attachment theory suggests three

main attachment styles which are secure, insecure-ambivalent, and insecure-avoidant (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). Secure attachment is when the child cries when the primary caregiver leaves and seeks comfort when they return and are molded to the caregiver's body and comforted when picked up (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). Insecure-Ambivalent is when the child cries when the primary caregiver leaves and seeks contact when they returned but the child arches their back to avoid contact (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). Insecure Avoidant is when the child doesn't cry when the primary caregiver leaves and acts unaware and uninterested in the primary caregiver when they return (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). Children who lack a strong attachment and/or experience neglect will develop an insecure attachment which can cause developmental delays, socialization issues, etc. (Wilkerson et al., 2008). This shows that parents need resources and basic parental skills in order to understand the importance of developing a strong bond with their child and to become responsive to their needs. Parents who lack responsive to their children's needs often do not pick up on subtle clues as to when their child is hungry, tired, frustrated, etc. (Wilkerson et al., 2008).

The parent educational involvement theory states that punitive parenting leads to problematic academic outcomes. This theory was

developed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler in 1995 (as cited in Tang et al., 2015). The theory is based on the idea that a parent who uses positive skills and is more involved leads to high child achievement because the child learns the skills from the parent and the child learns to like school (Tang et al., 2015,p.874). The parent educational involvement theory states that more harsh, corrective parenting may lead to less optimum achievement due to the fact that harsh parenting practices usually do not include teach a set of skills to the child and does not foster positive feelings in the child overall.

Challenges and Resiliencies

Research shows that Latino immigrant parents often struggle with getting involved with their children's education due to language barriers (Leidy et al., 2010). This prevents parents from being able to help their children with homework and school projects. Latino immigrant parents often experience a power struggle with their children due to their children attending school and learning English and the rules before they do (Leidy et al., 2010). Research shows that Latino immigrant parents feel as if their children learn the new ways of living faster and sooner and therefore overpower them (Leidy et al., 2010). This study was conducted through a quantitative design using

a survey to collect data (Leidy et al., 2010). This study had a sample size of 282 participants: majority of participants were female, majority indicated their country of origin to be Mexico, and majority of participants had one child around the age of ten years old (Leidy et al., 2010).

Latino immigrant parents also struggle with a loss of extended family (Leidy et al., 2010). A loss of extended family is a loss of a support system that could have been there to support these parents. Past studies show that immigrant parents also fear to ask for help due to the fear of deportation (Leidy et al., 2010). A past study looking at Latino immigrant fathers, showed that immigration impacted the way they raised their children and that they worried about their children adapting to their new environment (Behnke et al., 2008).

Research shows that Latino immigrant parents do utilize positive parenting skills which are able to buffer the effects of immigration stressors (Leidy et al., 2010). Latino immigrant parents do show resiliencies and that can be due to their cultures focus on family over their own individual needs (Leidy et al., 2010). Latino families display hierarchal parenting (clear parental authority) which has brought out externalizing behaviors for European-American children, but not for Latino children (Holtrop et al., 2015). Latino families emphasize respect and their children are taught to respect

authority which could be reason why hierarchal parenting was not an issue for Latino children (Holtrop et al., 2015). Prior research shows that Latino children express less externalizing behaviors when parents show higher levels of monitoring (awareness of children's activities) and skill encouragement (positive reinforcement) (Holtrop et al., 2015). Specifically for Latino immigrant parents, greater parental monitoring is associated with less substance use, gang activity, and fewer sexual partners for Latino youth (Holtrop et al., 2015). Latino immigrant parents who use academic encouragement are associated with higher educational success for Latino youth (Holtrop et al., 2015).

A study was completed in order to gain understanding of what parental interventions Latino immigrant parents felt they needed and would be effective. The results of the study indicated that Latino immigrant parents wanted parental interventions that promoted collaboration, that were culturally sensitive, and that promoted family cohesion and respect (Cardona et al., 2009). This study was conducted using a qualitative design where data was collected through focus group interviews (Cardona et al., 2009). This study had a total of 83 participants: majority were female, majority of participants identified their country of origin to be Mexico, majority of participants were 35 years old, and majority of the participant's children were 6 years old (Cardona et al., 2009). Latino immigrant parents expressed

their needs of knowing proper discipline as well as expressing their fears of having their children consuming drugs and alcohol at a young age (Cardona et al., 2009). Latino immigrant parents expressed a need for understanding the requirements for college and what steps need to be taken to attend a University (Ayon, 2014). Latino immigrant parents also expressed interest in changing the community's perceptions of immigrants in order to reduce the discrimination their families face (Ayon, 2014).

Summary

As previously stated, previous literature shows a great need for parental resources for the fast-growing Latino population. Latino immigrants are faced with multiple challenges and experience discrimination which can cause effective parenting to be ignored which leads to poor child outcomes (Leidy, Guerra, & Toro, 2010). This study will address the parental needs of the Latino immigrant population as well as look at the challenges and resiliencies of this population.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

In this section of the paper, an overview of the research methods utilized in the study of the challenges and resiliencies of Latino immigrant parents will be presented. Specifically, the study's design, the sampling methods, the data collection process, the procedures, the protection of human subjects, and the data analysis are presented and discussed in detail.

Study Design

The current study examined the challenges and resiliencies of Latino immigrant parents. This study used a qualitative research design. This qualitative design was accomplished through the use of face to face and phone interviews. This current study sought to answer the following questions: What parental challenges do Latino immigrant parents face? What resiliencies do Latino immigrant parents obtain? What resources/services do Latino immigrant parents feel they need? What parenting skills, styles, and/or knowledge have Latino immigrant parents used and were they effective in producing positive child outcomes?

One advantage of using a qualitative design is that the researchers get more detailed and in depth answers. Another advantage of using a qualitative design is that more complex questions can be asked. Researchers can also explain terms and questions in order to get the most reliable answers.

One limitation of using a qualitative design, is the limited number of participants upon which the results are based. Without a large sample size, it is difficult to conclude that the results will be generalized to a larger population size. Another limitation of this study is that the research results will be based on self-reports which limits the reliance on the data. Participants may not truthfully report their behaviors and feelings. Participants may answer the interview questions with socially acceptable answers. Participants may be inclined to change their answers so that it can be more socially acceptable. For example, participants may change their answers regarding the kind of discipline they provide for their children because the kind of discipline that is acceptable in the United States differs from the discipline acceptable in their native country. In addition, participants may report data that they believe is to be true but may result false due to faulty memory. Some participants have been living in the United States for a long time and have adult children. It may be

difficult for participants to accurately recall their experiences raising their children in the United States after so many years have passed.

Sampling

This study recruited participants through non-probability convenience/availability sampling as well as snowball sampling. Participants will include family and/or personal acquaintances of researchers. There were 15 interviews completed with first generation Latino immigrant parents currently living in Southern California. Participants were Latino immigrant parents who migrated to the United States and had at least one child born in the United States. Participants were of 18 years of age and older and consisted of both genders. Individuals excluded from the study were parents born in the U.S as well as those individuals who are Latino immigrant parents who do not have any children born in the United States.

Data Collection and Instruments

Data was collected through the use of face to face and phone interviews. Participants were also asked to respond to various questions such as gender, age, marital status, educational background, occupational status, the number of children and their age, native country origin, and the age in which they traveled to the

United States. Participants were asked to respond to questions regarding services availability and ease of access in the United States. The topics covered in the interview were the participant's fears and challenges in the United States, their support/resiliency and parenting skills/characteristics.

The interviews were structured interviews. The questions as well as the order of the questions were predetermined prior to conducting the interview. At times, the researchers were asked to give more explanation to clarify questions. The interviewee asked participants to provide more explanation when the answer they provided was vague. The participants were interviewed in person or over the phone. Completion of the interview took no longer than 60 minutes. Participants also chose whether to be interviewed in English or Spanish. The interview questions were provided in the language that the participants stated as their primary language (See Appendices C &D).

Procedures

The interview questions were asked in face to face interviews and over the phone if in person interview was not feasible. Permission was obtained through Cal State San Bernardino's IRB board after careful review. Completion of the interview questions by each

participant took approximately half an hour, but some took longer due to participant's detailed answers and willingness to answer all questions. No identifiable information of participants was recorded.

Participants were provided with a consent form and confidentiality statement prior to the completion of the interview questions. If the participant agreed to the terms of the consent form, an X was marked on the consent to participate box (See Appendices A & B). This consent form was returned to the researchers. Data was collected from 01/01/2017 to 06/30/2017.

Participants chose whether they would like to be interviewed in person or over the phone. When participants chose to have an in-person interview, the participant chose the desired location for the interview to take place. Participants also chose whether they agreed to be audio recorded. Participants also chose whether to be interviewed in English or Spanish. After the completion of each interview, the interviews were simultaneously transcribed and translated into English if needed.

Protection of Human Subjects

The confidentiality of the participants was of primary concern of the researchers. In order to protect the human subjects involved in this study, precautions needed to be taken. No identifiable information

was collected from the participants such as names, addresses, etc. in order to protect the anonymity of the participants. All data collected from the interview was typed onto a word document. Once the data collected was transcribed into a word document, all audio data was destroyed. The typed document was secure since the laptop itself is password protected. The data itself was only reviewed by the researchers and faculty advisor. When the data was entered into SPSS an ID was given to represent each participant. After the data was entered into SPSS all interview question answers were destroyed.

In addition, signed informed consent forms were used to further protect the participant's' identity. The informed consent form informed participants that they may refuse to participate or answer any questions at any time of the interview. The informed consent form also informed participants of the confidentiality of their answers. The consent form also indicated to participants that the interview was to be recorded and that all audio data was to be destroyed once data analysis was completed.

Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis involved convenient availability sampling and the use of a structured interview. Data analysis used descriptive

statistics to summarize and describe the characteristics of the interview data. Researchers used a journal during interviews to write down procedures, rules, and notes. Researchers also wrote down data about what transpired in the interviews and how the participants were obtained. Data was transcribed from the audio recordings to the written transcript by the researchers themselves. No identifying participant information was included on the transcript.

This study consisted of first level coding and second level coding if possible. In first level coding, the meaning of units were identified and put into categories. Codes were assigned to the categories in form of letters or symbols. In second level coding, similarities and differences between categories will be identified in an attempt to detect relationships. The goal of this qualitative study was to describe the major categories or themes that emerge from the interviews and to identify any relationships between major themes.

To assess the trustworthiness of the results and to ensure consistency, triangulation was used. This coding was done independently among the two researchers. They then compared their coding of each interview and agreed on important subthemes. The final round of review focused on relationships between themes and the correspondence with theoretical framework regarding parenting in

Latino immigrant families. In addition, member checking will be used if possible.

Summary

This study explores the ways in which Latino immigrants describe their migration and acculturation experiences in the United States in relation to their role as parents. Specifically, this study explores the challenges and resiliencies as well as the parenting skills and characteristics of Latino immigrant parents. This study is qualitative and used non-probability convenience/availability sampling as well as snowball sampling. Structured interview questions were used to gather the perceptions and information of participants. This study furthered our understanding of the challenges first generation Latino immigrant parents face in the United States as well as the resiliency they possess to help them overcome obstacles.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

In this chapter, demographics and characteristics representing Latino immigrant parents that were interviewed in this study will be presented. Major findings, regarding parental challenges, parental styles utilized, forms of disciplines utilized, and migration challenges will be presented as well.

Presentation of the Findings

Demographics

The sample population included fifteen Latino immigrant parents that were interviewed for the study. Among this sample, 6 were male, 40%, and 9 were female, (representing 60%). The median age of participants was 48 years old. The youngest participant was 27 years old and the oldest participant was 60 years old. The study included 6 participants between 21-40 years of age, and 9 participants between 41-60 years of age. Exactly 67% of participants (10 participants) were married. Another 13% of participants (2 participants) were single and another 13% of participants (2 participants) were in long term relationships. Only 7% of participants (1 participant) were widowed.

Among this sample of participants, 80% of participants (12 participants) were currently employed, while only 20% of participants (3 participants) were unemployed. Out of those participants that are currently employed their occupations varied greatly. The participants reported an array of occupations such as retail worker, construction worker, truck driver, behavioral health care manager, etc. Out of the participants interviewed 27% of participants (4 participants) had four children total, 27% of participants (4 participants) had one child only, 13% of participants (2 participants) had two children total, 13% of participants (2 participants) had five children total, and only 7% of participants (1 participant) had three children total. There was a total of 7 participants (47%) where all their children were currently minors (under the age of 18 years old), 5 participants (33%) had all children that were currently 18 years of age and older, and only 2 participants (13%) had children that were both minors and adults currently.

Among the participants interviewed, a total of 7 participants (47%) migrated to the United States in the 1980's, 4 participants (27%) migrated to the United States in the 1990's, and another 4 participants (27%) migrated to the United States in the early to mid 2000's. Out of the participants interviewed, 87% of participants (13 participants) native country was Mexico, while only 13% of participants (2 participants) native country was Bolivia. Only 7% of the participants (1 participant) reported

7th grade as their highest level of education, 27% of participants (4 participants) reported 8th grade, another 27% of participants (4 participants) reported 9th grade, 13% of participants (2 participants) reported high school, another 13% of participants (2 participants) reported some college, and only 7% of participants (1 participant) reported a graduate degree as their highest level of education.

Fear living in the U.S

Participants were asked if they had any fears about living in the U.S currently or in the past. Over two-thirds of participants (10 participants) stated that they did have a fear about living in the U.S. Of the 67%, 27% of participants (4 participants) stated that language was a main fear. One participant stated, “Yes, not understanding or speaking the language” (I8, personal interview, February 2017). Other participants included language as a fear but stated they had additional fears. He stated, “One big fear was how I was going to find a place to live...a job if I didn’t understand or speak English. When I had my kids here, I worried about how they were going to grow up...would they refuse to speak Spanish and forget about their culture?” (I10, personal interview, February 2017). One female participant stated, “Well, the language was the first thing.... another thing that I thought about and I was scared about was having a good relationship with my American neighbors. Because in Mexico, you have a strong sense of community” (I11, personal interview, February 2017).

Another male participant disclosed that he feared the treatment his children would receive for not speaking English fluently. The participant stated, “I worried about how my family and I were going to be treated by Americans. I didn’t want my children who were not born in the United States to be treated differently because they looked different and because they didn’t know English” (I12, personal interview, February 2017).

Of the 67% (10 participants), the remaining 33% of participants (6 participants) had a mixture of responses that did not include language. One female participant stated, “Right now yea...to be deported because of the current president but when I got here I wasn’t worried” (I4, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant stated, “Yes, not having a job” (I5, personal interview, January 2017.) A 27-year-old female participant stated, “Being at the wrong place at the wrong time” (I9, personal interview, February 2017) as her fear of living in the U.S. Participant 13 stated, “...I was scared that I would never see my friends and family that lived in Mexico again. I grew up with the same friends and it was really hard for me to move away to a whole different country” (I13, personal interview, February 2017).

One third of the participants (5 participants) stated that they did not have any past or current fears. One participant, a 55-year-old Mexican female stated, “No, for me everything seemed easy. Even when having my kids, over here I had them in a hospital, and over there who

knows...they let you die over there” (I1, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant, a 27-year-old female stated, “I feared crossing over but I didn’t have any fears about living here. I remember being depressed.... I was 17 years old and I had to start over...leave my family and friends behind” (I6, personal interview, January 2017).

Migration Challenges

Participants were asked what challenges they have faced while migrating to the U.S. Seventy three percent of participants (11 participants) identified language as a challenge. One participant simply stated, “The language” (I1, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant stated, “Language, learning English” (I2, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant stated, “The language...It's always going to be a challenge for me” (I5, personal interview, January 2017).

Twenty seven percent of the participants (4 participants) identified personal safety as a challenge they faced while migrating to the U.S. One 27-year-old male participant stated, “Yes, I was assaulted and robbed when crossing. The first time I attempted to cross with some friends and we were low on food and it was hot...We had to cross the desert...” (I6, personal interview, January 2017). Another 38-year-old female participant stated, “Well I had to cross the desert, it was hard coming over here, but I

think it was easier a few years ago than it is now. I think it is more dangerous these days” (I11, personal interview, February 2017).

Finding Employment in the U.S

Participants were asked about their personal experience and/or their spouse’s experience finding employment in the U.S. The majority of the participants (80%), stated that finding employment was easy because they had help from either a friend or family member. One 60-year-old participant stated, “I didn’t struggle because when I came I already had a job set up by my family” (I3, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant who was 54 years of age stated, “Well, when I started to work, someone helped me to get a job, a friend of mine recommended me and I got the job. The job was working at a kitchen in a coalescent hospital. My husband was already working when I came over” (I7, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant who was 27 years old stated, “I ran away from home and needed a job and my mom’s friend got me a job. It was easier because I knew someone and I think if I did it on my own I think I would have struggled” (I9, personal interview, February 2017).

The remaining 20% of participants (3 participants) stated it was difficult finding employment for them and/or their spouse. One 27-year-old participant stated, “Yes, it took me about three months to find a job that

didn't check for documentation" (I6, personal interview, January 2017).

One 40-year-old participant stated, "I struggled finding work. I had a friend help me get my first job here, who knows how long I would have been looking without her help" (I10, personal interview, February 2017).

Parental Challenges

Participants were asked if they had faced any parental challenges while raising their children in a new country. Forty percent of the participants (6 participants), indicated that language presented as a barrier to the involvement in their child's education. One 54-year-old participant stated, "That I didn't have anyone to take care of them when I had to work and the language. I couldn't help them with their homework or meet with their teachers if I had any questions and concerns because of the language" (IP, personal interview, January 2017). One 40-year-old participant stated, "I couldn't help them with their homework, I couldn't ask the teacher how my kid was doing in school, I would've liked to be more involved in their school..." (I10, personal interview, February 2017).

Another participant who was 38 years old stated, "It was hard to reach out to a teacher to find out how my son was doing in school. Thank God that he has always done well and gotten really good grades, but early on I wanted to just check with the teacher but the language got in the way" (I11, personal interview, February 2017).

One third of participants (5 participants) of participants indicated that the parental challenge they faced was financial. A 58-year-old participant stated, “Really hard...because everything was so expensive” (I5, personal interview, January 2017). Of the 33% of participants, 15% (2 participants) reported that finances were their primary concern when it came to their children’s health insurance coverage or lack of coverage. Another 58-year-old participant stated, “Paying rent for me...Trying to keep the children healthy with no insurance. I was worried about them getting sick, and how I would pay bills if they did get sick” (I8, personal interview, February 2017).

The remaining 20% of participants (4 participants) stated that their parental challenge was difference in cultural parenting styles. The four participants stated that they had to adjust their parenting style or form of discipline when they came to live in the U.S. One 46-year-old participant stated, “A lot because you can’t do a lot of things or say things to them that you could in Mexico...you can’t really spank them here” (I4, personal interview, ‘January 2017). Another 52-year-old participant stated, “Different culture and parenting styles. I came from a culture that used an authoritarian parenting style that was very strict...” (I14, personal interview, February 2017).

Social Support

Participants were asked if they had any family or friends already living in the United States prior to their arrival to the U.S. If participants did have friends and/or family living in the U.S, did they provide any help or support to them upon arrival. The majority, 14 participants (93%), indicated that they did have family and/or friends living in the U.S who provided help with finding employment and/or provided housing. One 60-year-old participant stated, “Yes, when I came, family helped me with already having employment for me and they also helped me in that I had a place to live when I got here” (13, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant stated, “My sister in law was here. She helped me find a job and let me live with them until I found a job and to save up money” (15, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant stated, “My uncle lived here before me and my parents came, he helped us by letting us stay with him until my dad found a job” (13, personal interview, February 2017). There was only one participant (7%) who had no family or friends who lived in the U.S.

Living Arrangements

Participants were asked what their living arrangements were upon first arriving in the U.S as well as their current living arrangements. Fourteen participants (93%) reported living with family upon first arriving to the U.S. One participant stated, “I lived with my parents. My dad was already here ...my mom and my sister came with me at the same” (12,

personal interview, January 2017). Another participant stated, "Lived with family and my husband because I got married in Mexico and then soon after came to the U.S." (I5, personal interview, January 2017). One participant (7%) reported she lived with friends upon first arriving in the U.S. 93% of participants (14 participants) did not indicate their current living arrangements. The one participant (7%) that did report their current living arrangement stated, "When I got here, I moved into an apartment with my husband. He was living in that apartment for a few weeks before I moved in. Right now, I live with my husband in a house with two of my adult children" (I7, personal interview, January 2017).

Effective Parental Skills

Participants were asked what parental skills they have used that have been effective in raising their child(ren). Three major categories were identified in their responses. The three major categories include; strong communication, parental involvement in children's education and strict parenting/physical discipline. Eight participants (53%) reported strong communication as a parenting skill they have used and have found to be effective. One participant stated, "I talk to her most of the time. She's still small and I think it might be different once she goes into her teenage years...but for now I talk to her" (I2, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant stated, "I try to talk to them and try to teach them that they need to work hard to get somewhere in life...I try to teach them that

nothing in life is easy” (I4, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant stated, “Strong communication as well as giving them something when they deserve it” (I5, personal interview, January 2017).

Parental involvement in children’s education was the second major category described by four participants (27%). One participant stated, “I tried to be involved in my kids schooling by asking them how their day was, what they learned in school, who their friends were...things like that...” (I10, personal interview, February 2017). Another participant simply stated, “...trying to be involved in their school activities...” (I9, personal interview, February 2017). The third major category was strict parenting/strict discipline totaling three participants (20%). The first participant stated, “I was taught to be strict, I was most strict with my first two boys. I used to use physical discipline because I didn’t know any other way. This is how it is done in Mexico. But eventually I realized that it is not done like that in the United States...” (I12, personal interview, February 2017). The second participant stated, “...sometimes I would spank them...when I get frustrated and they don’t listen, but that has only happened a few times” (I10, personal interview, February 2017). The third participant stated, “Strict parenting and some rewards as well...were effective in keeping order in the home and for my children to know what they could and could not do” (I14, personal interview, February 2017).

One subcategory was identified, spending quality time with children. A total of two participants (20%) reported spending quality time as a parenting skill they have found to be most effective. First participant stated, "Spending time with them and I also put them into sports" (I3, personal interview, January 2017). The second participant stated, "I spent time with them...I never left them alone and attended school meetings...I was always there. Even though I sometimes had a hard time understanding, but I was present" (I7, personal interview, January 2017).

Effective Discipline

Participants were asked what forms of discipline they currently use with their children. Out of the participants interviewed three major categories were identified regarding the forms of discipline they used with their children. Some of the participants utilized multiple forms of discipline and their answers fit into more than one category. A total of 10 participants (67%) reported groundings and timeouts as their primary form of discipline. Another 10 participants (67%) reported taking away privileges, and a total of 8 participants (53%) reported spankings and physical discipline as their primary form of discipline. Participant 2 stated "Right now she (her daughter) is really into her phone and iPad. So I take them away when she doesn't listen and that is how I get across to her. I ground her for about a week or so" (I2, personal interview, January 2017). This participant reported that she currently uses taking away privileges as well

as groundings as her primary forms of discipline. Another participant, a 52-year-old male, stated “I was much harder on my older children and used more spankings whereas with my youngest child I never spanked and I have a closer relationship to my youngest child” (I14, personal interview, February 2017).

Strong Bond/Attachment

Participants were asked if they felt that they had a strong bond and/or attachment to their children. All 15 participants (100%) reported that they would consider themselves to have a strong bond and attachment with their children. There was one participant who stated “Yes, but with my older children I have more distant relationships with compared to my younger children” (I14, personal interview, February, 2017). This differed from all the other participants who reported that they had a strong bond an attachment with all of their children.

Parental Skills/Discipline Exposure

Participants were asked what parenting styles and forms of discipline they were exposed to as a child and if they found them to be effective. No participants indicated any use of parenting styles from their parents and/or parental figure. All 15 participants (100%) were exposed to spankings and physical discipline as children. Upon inquiry whether participants found spankings and physical discipline effective, 100% of

participants (15 participants) found this form of discipline effective in short-term, but not in long-term. One participant, a 27-year-old male stated “She would just tell us things and sometimes hit us with a belt or slap us. It worked sometimes because we would stop. It stopped working as I got older.” (I6, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant stated “I was hit with the belt, and whatever my dad found lying around the house.....It was effective in that I would stop what I was doing, but there were times that I was hit, and it was for small things, I felt I didn’t deserve it. I hated my father growing up and it took a lot of soul searching to forgive him as an adult” (I10, personal interview, February 2017). Both answers reflect that spankings and physical discipline would make them stop their current actions, but in the long-term there were other implications involved where it was no longer an effective form of discipline.

Characteristics of Parents

Participants were asked what characteristics a parent should possess. A total of 7 participants (47%) reported that parents should be loving. Participant 4 stated “To be loving so they can be loving back to you” (I4, personal interview, January 2017). A total of 6 participants (40%) reported that parents should be patient. One participant, a 36-year-old male stated “I think parents should be both patient and loving. Try to talk to them whenever possible” (I13, personal interview, February 2017). Another participant stated “Patient definitely, be caring, you have to be

respectful, not only towards your kids, but everyone else because you model for them” (I9, personal interview, February 2017). A total of 4 participants (27%) reported that parents should be strict. Participant 10 stated “Patient and loving, but also strict. You have to be able to balance those things” (I10, personal interview, February 2017).

Resources for Parents

Participants were asked what parental resources they could benefit from. Based off the participants answers three major categories emerged. The first category was resources for parents which included financial/school programs, English classes and parenting classes. Participant 10 stated “It would of helped to have some English classes, someone to explain to us what programs are out there for us parents to better our lives and to have a better chance of getting a better job” (I10, personal interview, February 2017). Another participant stated “Employment assistance to get a better paying job to provide for the family. Have some kind of education to get a certificate and get a better job” (I8, personal interview, February 2017). A total of 40% of participants (6 participants) feel they could currently and previously have benefited from financial/schooling programs, English classes, and/or parenting classes. The second category was affordable child/day care. A total of 33% participants (5 participants) indicated that they could currently and previously have benefited from affordable child/day care. One participant

stated “Day care, as of government assistance I would prefer not to do that just because I think there might be some implications legally” (I9, personal interview, February 2017). The third category was school resources for their children such as tutoring and assistance with applying to college as well as financial aid and/or scholarships. A total of 33% participants (5 participants) indicated that they could currently and previously have benefited from more school resources for their children. One participant, a 55-year-old female stated “Tutors. I think tutors would be a great resource to have to help your children” (I1, personal interview, January 2017). Another participant stated “For the children to get help with getting into college, applying for scholarships, things like that” (I4, personal interview, January 2017).

Experience with School System in U.S

Participants were asked to speak about either their personal experience with the school system in the United States or their experience with their children being in the school system in the United States. A total of 7 participants (47%) had a personal experience where they attended classes within the United States school system. Only 1 participant out of the 7 indicated a bad personal experience due to discrimination. All other 6 participants indicated a good experience while they attended classes in the United States. However, all participants did indicate that translators were needed due to language barriers. One participant stated “I went to

school here for about 3 months. I stopped going because I decided to start working and earn money instead. It was fun going to school because I met new people and it was so different from school in Mexico. I had a translator for all of my classes so I didn't struggle with the language" (I6, personal interview, January 2017). A total of 6 participants (40%) had an experience with their children attending school in the United States. All 6 participants indicated that they had a good experience, but that their main challenge was being able to communicate with school staff as well as help their children with their homework due to the language barrier. One participant stated "I didn't feel I could reach out to anyone. The teachers did not speak or understand any Spanish. I felt like my kid had to find things out for me" (I10, personal interview, February 2017). Another participant, a 55-year-old female stated "It was great and I am very thankful for the teachers my children had and all the involvement opportunities I was given.....I was very involved with my children's schooling and volunteered a lot which helped me learn the language and the system" (I15, personal interview, February 2017).

Balancing Work and Family

Participants were asked how they balanced work and family. A total of 7 participants (47%) reported that they had one parent stay home while the other parent worked which made it easier for them balance both family and work. Participant 11 stated "It was easy for me because when I got

pregnant I stopped working to take care of my son. My husband works.” (I11, personal interview, February 2017). A total of 3 participants (20%) reported that they used child/day care to help them balance work and family. One participant stated “I would leave them at daycare while I went to work and that really helped” (I5, personal interview, January 2017). Three participants (20%) reported that they managed their time well in order to balance both work and family. One participant stated, “I managed my time. We had time to travel and go to the park and spend time outdoors, but of course with work you are under pressure and it creates stress” (I14, personal interview, February 2017).

Advice for Other Immigrant Parents

Participants were asked if they had advice to give to other immigrants coming to the United States who would be raising children. Two major categories were reported from the participants. The first category was spending quality time with their children. A total of 27% of participants (4 participants) reported that it is very important to spend quality time with your children. One participant, a 50-year-old male stated “Try to spend as much time with your kids as possible because time goes by really fast and before you know it they will be all grown up” (I12, personal interview, February 2017). The second category was for the parents to learn the new culture, but to keep their culture as well. A total of 20% of participants (3 participants) reported that it was important for

parents coming to the United States to learn the new culture, but to also keep their culture and customs as well. One participant stated “We have to keep our culture and teach our children where they came from.....and also be open minded because it’s different over here than in Mexico. We need to combine what we learn from our own country and be willing to learn new things here” (I2, personal interview, January 2017).

Two sub-categories were indicated based off the participant’s answers. The first sub-category was for parents to get involved in their children’s education. A total of 13% of participants (2 participants) reported that they would advise parents to get involved with their children’s education. Participant 6 stated “To be involved in your child’s education” (I6, personal interview, January 2017). The second sub-category was for parents to get educated in order to get a better paying job and better provide for their family. A total of 7% of participants (1 participant) reported that parents should get educated in order to obtain a better job and be able to better provide for your family. One participant stated “Go to school immediately and get certified for a job to get more money and be able to provide more security for the family” (I8, personal interview, February 2017).

Summary

In summary, this chapter presented the demographics, characteristics, and major findings, regarding parental challenges, parental styles utilized, forms of disciplines utilized, and migration challenges. Furthermore, the opinions, experiences, and beliefs derived from 15 face-to-face and phone interviews were used to illustrate the findings that were presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the major findings presented in chapter 4. Also presented in this chapter will be the limitations of the study, recommendations for social work practice, policy, and research. Finally, this chapter concludes with a summary of findings and implications for Social Work practice.

Discussion

The participants of this study were diverse in terms of gender and age. The results of this study identified that majority of participants struggled to get involved with their children's education due to the language barrier. Majority of participants expressed that it was difficult to communicate with school staff and to help their children with homework due to the language barrier. These findings are consistent with previous literature (Leidy et al., 2010). Previous literature shows that the language barrier that Latino immigrant parents face prevents them from helping their children with homework and school assignments (Leidy et al., 2010). Many participants expressed interest in being involved in their children's education, but eventually became discouraged to the lack of available

communication and/or resources available in Spanish. These findings emphasize the need for more translation services in school districts as well as more available resources in Spanish.

The results of this study also indicated that majority of participants could have benefitted from school resources for their children such as tutoring, assistance with the college admission program, and assistance with applying for scholarships and financial aid. These findings were also consistent with previous literature (Ayon, 2014). Previous literature shows that parents expressed an interest in both themselves and their children in have a better understanding of the college process (Ayon, 2014). These findings indicate a need for more available resources for both parents and students regarding the college process such as qualifications, how to apply, and financial aid.

The findings of this results indicated that all participants were exposed to spankings and physical discipline while growing up. More than half of the participants reported using spankings and physical discipline as their primary form of discipline with their own children. The findings indicate that the participants utilized the same forms of discipline that they were exposed to as children. Prior research shows that parenting practices have a powerful, direct effect on the child's outcomes and child adjustment (Holtrop et al., 2015). The participants had also reported finding spankings and physical discipline effective in short term, but not

effective in long term. Even though the participants reported feeling this way, more than half of the participants still utilized spankings and physical discipline with their own children. These results show how people will model the behaviors they learn as children. These results could also potentially be showing that the participants lacked knowledge of alternative forms of discipline, therefore, used the form of discipline that they received while growing up. Previous literature does indicate that Latino immigrant parents expressed their needs of knowing proper discipline (Cardona et al., 2009).

The results of this study showed that majority of participants also utilized groundings/timeouts and taking away privileges as forms of discipline. These findings are also consistent with previous literature that states that Latino immigrant parents do utilize forms of positive parenting (Leidy et al., 2010). Research shows these positive parenting skills are beneficial since they are able to buffer the effects of immigration stressors (Leidy et al., 2010).

The study identified language as one of the dominant challenges and barrier (themes) the Latino Immigrant parents faced in the U. S. The results of this study found that language was what Latino immigrant parents struggled with the most and that language also affected the ability to cope with the U.S school system. This finding is consistent with Perreira, Chapman and Stein study (2006) findings that language was one

of the first obstacle parents must overcome to help their children navigate their lives in the U.S. Perreira, Chapman and Stein (2006) found that parents felt a sense of helplessness, alienation and limited in their ability to advocate for their children due to not speaking English upon arrival to the U.S. Findings of their study revealed that the language barrier proved evident when parents tried to help their children with their homework and to navigate the school system. A similar theme emerged in this study. Participants in this study were limited in their ability to help with their children's homework, meet with teachers and attend parent-teacher conferences due to language. Furthermore, participants in this study revealed that language was a barrier to their own personal education.

This study also found that strong communication was one of the major themes. Participants identified strong communication as a parental skill that they have used in the past that has proved to be effective in raising their children. This finding is consistent with Ceballo, Kennedy, Bregman and Epstein-Ngo (2012) finding that a large portion of their participants (63%) declared that successful parenting depended on parent-child communication. The study found that Mexican immigrant parents valued close relationships with their children which they were accomplished by building trust and communication (Cabello et al., 2012). Furthermore, the study found that Mexican American adolescents identified communication as an essential component to good relationships with their

parents. Although this study did not interview the children of Latino immigrant parents, the findings are consistent with Ceballo et al., (2012) in the response given from the Latino immigrant parents.

Limitations

Limitations of this study include the small sample size of 15 Latino immigrant parents that may not be representative of all Latino immigrant parents. One of the criteria that the participants had to meet in order to be a part of the study was to have one child that was born in the United States. There may have been different responses for Latino immigrant parents whose children were born in another country and migrated to the United States with them.

Another limitation to this study is the credibility of participant responses. Participants may have withheld information or altered the answers to questions on the topic of forms of discipline due to fear of being judged by the researcher. Researchers attempted to ensure honesty of participants by making it clear to participants that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point. Researchers involved only those who are genuinely willing to participate in an effort to promote participant credibility. However, it is possible that participants did not answer questions honestly. This can be minimized by having researches make a

statement encouraging participants to be frank in their answers and reassuring participants that there is no wrong or right answer to the questions.

Recommendations for Social Work Practice and Policy

As evidenced by the findings of this study, one of the major challenges Latino immigrant parents face in the U.S is coping with learning English. Social workers, particularly those providing direct services, should keep in mind that language is a common barrier for the Latino immigrant population and that it affects this population in a variety of settings. It is critical for social workers to make accommodations for clients whose English is their second language. Such accommodations can include transferring the client to a social worker who is bilingual or having a translator present when the social worker meets with the client. Social workers who work in a school based counseling setting should keep in mind that it may be necessary to advocate to have bilingual services for the Latino immigrant parents to keep them informed on their children's academic performance, and to also encourage parent participation in their children's education.

In addition, based on the findings, strong communication is valued as an effective parental skill amongst Latino immigrant parents. It is important for social workers to keep in mind that communication is an

effective skill for successful parenting for this population and to promote communication when working with both Latino parents and their children. Social workers can provide psychoeducation to parents and children on the benefits of having a strong communication and provide interventions on how to develop such skill.

Another finding indicated that participants were utilizing the same forms of discipline as their parents used. This emphasizes the importance of social workers to provide education to Latino immigrant parents regarding alternative forms of discipline other than spankings and/or physical discipline.

Findings of this study also showed that Latino immigrant parents utilized some forms of alternative disciplines such as groundings/timeouts and taking away privileges. This showed that Latino immigrant parents do possess strengths in their ability to use positive parenting. Social workers need to be aware of this in order to pull out their client's strengths and empower them to continue to utilize positive parenting.

Change needs to be done at a macro level and social workers need to advocate for this change. Immigrant families face many challenges and the policies currently set in place are just another obstacle that makes it almost impossible for the Latino immigrant population to locate and receive much needed services. Social workers need to design and coordinate community support programs for immigrant families.

Specifically, social workers should advocate to make changes in the school system to be required to provide translation for their students and their families. Upon enrolling a student into school, the school staff should be able to identify if the student and/or their families are not native English speakers. Mandating the schools to provide translation service would also be beneficial for school staff. Staff would be able to effectively communicate academic and behavior concerns to parents early on and bring it to the attention to the parents.

Further research is needed to improve upon the programs and services to the Latino immigrant population. Future research should include a more diverse sample. Even though the dynamics challenges and resiliency may be similar within all immigrant communities, the results may vary based on the native country the participant migrated from. Latin America includes twenty countries, each with their own unique culture that may have an impact on the challenges they face living in the United States.

Conclusion

This study identified the parental challenges, parental styles utilized, forms of disciplines utilized, and migration challenges that Latino immigrant parents face. Hopefully, this study will help social workers understand both the needs and strengths of Latino immigrant parents. It is

also hoped that this study will help social workers know what resources Latino immigrant parents can benefit from.

APPENDIX A
INFORMED CONSENT FORM-ENGLISH



California State University, San Bernardino
 Social Work Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee
 APPROVED 1/22/18 MOD AFTER 1/22/2018
 IRB# SD 1719 CHAIR Janet Chang

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
 School of Social Work

INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are asked to participate is designed to examine the challenges and resiliencies of Latino Immigrant parents. The study is being conducted by Nicci Riggio & Brenda Avalos, both MSW students under the supervision of Dr. Janet Chang, Professor in the School of Social Work, California State University, San Bernardino. The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board Social Work Sub-committee, California State University, San Bernardino.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the study is to examine the challenges and resiliencies of Latino Immigrant parents.

DESCRIPTION: Participants will be asked of a few questions on the challenges and resiliencies they faced, the resources they feel they could benefit from, and the parental knowledge and/or skills that they do obtain and that have been effective in raising their child(ren). Participants will complete face to face or phone interviews and all answers will be recorded for translation purposes.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation in the study is totally voluntary. You can refuse to participate in the study or discontinue your participation at any time without any consequences.

CONFIDENTIALITY OR ANONYMITY: Your responses will remain anonymous and all data will be destroyed once data is analyzed.

DURATION: It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete the interview.

RISKS: There are no foreseeable risks to the participants.

BENEFITS: There will not be any direct benefits to the participants.

CONTACT: If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Janet Chang at 909-537-5184.

RESULTS: Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library ScholarWorks (<http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) at California State University, San Bernardino after December 2019.

This is to certify that I read the above and I am 18 years or older.

Place an X mark here _____

_____ Date

I agree to be tape recorded. _____ Yes _____ No

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APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT FORM-SPANISH

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS-ENGLISH

Interview Questions on the Challenges & Resiliencies of Latino Immigrant Parents

1. How old are you? _____
 2. What is your gender? _____
 3. What is your present marital status?
 - Never married/ single
 - In a long term relationship
 - Married
 - Divorced
 - Widowed
 - Other, specify _____
 4. Are you currently employed? _____.(if yes, state current occupation)
 5. How many children do you have? _____.
 6. How old are your children? _____.
 7. When did you travel to the United States? _____.
 8. What is your native country? _____.
 9. What is the highest level of education you have completed? _____.
-
1. Did you (have you) specific fears about life in the U.S?
 2. What challenges have you faced while migrating to the U.S.?
 3. What was your (or spouse) experience finding employment in the U.S?
 4. What parental challenges have you faced while raising your child(ren) in a new country?
 5. Did you have your family/friends already living in the United States when you arrived? If so, did they provide any help/support?
 6. What were your living arrangements upon first arriving in the U.S? Current living arrangements?
 7. What parental skills (Ex. strong communication, rewards for positive behaviors, being involved in children's schooling, etc.) have you used that have been effective in raising your child(ren)?
 8. What form of discipline (Ex: spankings, time outs, taking away privileges etc.) have you used? Of the forms of discipline you have used, which ones did you find to be most effective?
 9. Would you consider yourself to have strong bond/attachment to your child(ren)?
 10. What parenting skills and forms of discipline were you exposed to as a child and did you find them to be effective?
 11. What characteristics (Ex: patient, loving, etc.) do you think parents should have when raising children?
 12. What parental resources could you benefit from?
 13. Tell me about your experience with the school system in the U.S?(can include the parents experience attending school in US or the parent trying to navigate the school system for their children)
 14. How did you balance work and family?
 15. What advice would you give to people like yourself who are coming to the U.S and raising their children here?

Created by Nicolette Rose Riggio and Brenda Irene Avalos

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS-SPANISH

Preguntas de la entrevista sobre los desafíos y resiliencia de los padres de inmigrantes latinos

1. Cuántos años tiene? _____
 2. ¿Cuál es su género?
 3. ¿Cuál es su estado civil actual?
Nunca se casó / soltero
En una relación a largo plazo
Casado
Divorciada
Viudo
Otros, especifique _____
 4. ¿Está usted empleado actualmente? _____. (En caso afirmativo, indique la ocupación actual)
 5. ¿Cuántos hijos tiene? _____.
 6. ¿Qué edad tienen sus hijos? _____.
 7. ¿Cuándo viajó a los Estados Unidos? _____.
 8. ¿Cuál es su país natal? _____.
 9. ¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que usted ha completado? _____.
-
1. ¿Tenía o tiene usted temores específicos sobre la vida en los Estados Unidos?
 2. ¿Qué desafíos ha enfrentado al migrar a los Estados Unidos?
 3. ¿Cuál fue su experiencia propia o de su cónyuge en encontrar empleo en los Estados Unidos?
 4. ¿Cuáles son los retos como padre que enfrentó al criar a su (s) hijo (s) en un nuevo país?
 5. ¿Tuvo usted familiares o amigos que ya vivían en los Estados Unidos cuando llegó? Si es así, ¿Le proporcionaron alguna ayuda / apoyo?
 6. ¿Cuáles fueron sus condiciones de vida al llegar por primera vez a los Estados Unidos y como son actualmente?
 7. ¿Qué habilidades como padre ha utilizado que han sido eficaces para criar a su (s) hijo (s)? (por ejemplo, una comunicación fuerte, recompensas por comportamientos positivos, participación en la escolarización de los niños, etc.)
 8. ¿Qué forma de disciplina ha utilizado? De las formas de disciplina que ha utilizado, cuál o cuáles cree que fue o fueron eficaz para cambiar los comportamientos del niño? (Ej: azotes, tiempo de espera, privación de privilegios, etc.)
 9. ¿Usted se consideraría a sí mismo tener un fuerte vínculo o apego a su (s) hijo (s)?
 10. ¿Qué habilidades de crianza y formas de disciplina se le impusieron a usted cuando era niño? ¿Cual o cuales fueron efectivas?
 11. ¿Qué características cree que deberían tener los padres cuando crían hijos? (ejemplo: paciente, amor, etc.)
 12. ¿Con qué recursos podría beneficiarse usted como padre?
 13. ¿Usted estudió en los Estados Unidos? Si es así, cuénteme acerca de su propia experiencia con el sistema escolar en los Estados Unidos como estudiante.
Cómo fue su experiencia como padre con el sistema escolar para sus hijos?
 14. ¿Cómo equilibrio trabajo y familia?
 15. ¿Qué consejo le daría a personas como usted que están criando a sus hijos aquí en este país?

Created by Nicolette Rose Riggio and Brenda Irene Avalos

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ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES PAGE

This was a two-person project where the authors collaborated throughout.

These responsibilities were assigned as listed below:

1. Data Collection:

Team Effort: Nicolette Rose Riggio and Brenda Irene Avalos

2. Data Entry and Analysis:

Team Effort: Nicolette Rose Riggio and Brenda Irene Avalos

3. Writing Report and Presentation of Findings:

- a. Introduction and Literature

Team Effort: Nicolette Rose Riggio and Brenda Irene Avalos

- b. Methods

Team Effort: Nicolette Rose Riggio and Brenda Irene Avalos

- c. Results

Team Effort: Nicolette Rose Riggio and Brenda Irene Avalos

- d. Discussion

Team Effort: Nicolette Rose Riggio and Brenda Irene Avalos