

Cosas Llevadas: Inside Life Story Narratives from Latina Mothers of Mexican Descent
with High Academic Accomplishment

by

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ABSTRACT

The field of developmental psychology often underrepresents Latinx individuals within their corpus of published scholarship. In the area of lifespan identity development this is particularly evident from the scarcity of Latinx life story narratives. In addition, Latinx family parenting styles is an underdeveloped area of scholarship. At the same time, a robust literature base demonstrates that for youth from non-dominant culture families, ethnic racial identity can increase measures of adaptive well-being and academic achievement. Because academic achievement for Latinx students does not proportionately reach levels of educational success as compared to white students, research investigating foundations of ethnic racial identity within Latinx families is warranted. This investigation extends parenting style literature within the field of developmental psychology by exploring inter-generational practices of Latinx families. Participants within this study include mothers of Mexican descent who have earned at least one Master's degree, a level of high academic achievement attained by only 10 percent of the adults within the U.S. Each Latina mother, ranging in age from 36 to 63 years, participated in two or more semi-structured interviews. Protocols were based on McAdams's life story interview; McAdams's life story narrative analysis, based upon Erikson's lifespan theory of identity development, provided a model of analysis. In addition, transcripts of participant interviews, totaling more than twelve hours, were analyzed according to themes of parenting styles and family socialization practices. Familial ethnic socialization was embedded within routines and practices of mothers' families of orientation. Mothers employed a concerted cultivation parenting style within their families of procreation. In alignment with McAdams's framework, mothers narrated

life stories in a redemptive manner. In other words, a negative life event was conveyed as having a positive outcome. Implications from my study inform scholars and can offer usable information for parent and teacher education by means of contextualized family activities and parental practices gleaned from participants' life story narratives.

DEDICATION

For the Latina mothers who imparted their life stories. *Muchas gracias, mis amigas.*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Prologue

This project stems from nearly two decades of work in K-12 schools as a special educator for communities composed of over eighty-five percent Latinx families. A major purpose of this project has been to address an absence of scholarship on middle class Latinx parenting. By conducting basic descriptive qualitative research with a diverse group of middle income, highly educated Mexican American mothers, the developmental literature base on parenting could be expanded to be more inclusive of nondominant-culture families. This research offers an informed counter-narrative to the deficit master narrative of Latinx parents being non-involved parents. As such, non-deficit based portraits of involved Latinx parents could be utilized with preservice and in-service teachers of students from historically marginalized families.

I am a white woman of primarily Irish heritage from a lower middle class family of orientation whose grandmother, Alma Trenary Mulligan, supported her six children as a single mother by cleaning houses and doing other families' laundry. As a single parent I mothered three now-adult daughters while working as a faculty member amongst a majority of White colleagues from whom I witnessed deficit perspectives enacted in attitude, speech, and behaviors toward our Latinx students and their families.

As an adult who grew up in a family of orientation with a parent with bipolar disorder, mothering was inconsistent and sibling relationships were not close. I believe this is one reason the family-based strength of the value of familism that is often

observed in Latinx families was most salient to me when I engaged in regular contact with Latinx parents and families to include siblings of my students as a special educator. The collective worldview of familism, that is, valuing family members and the family group above individual wants and desires, was one among many strengths that was evident in discourse and practices of many Latinx students and families, an evident contrast to the individualistic upbringing in my family of orientation.

Understandings gained after having spent many years in public service with Latinx students and families in schools together with my interdisciplinary study of learning, culture, and family form the foundation from which I intend to engage in scholarship to a) expand developmental psychological understanding of parenting styles and b) to address teacher bias collectively, an outsider in solidarity with Latinx stakeholders within. Presently, completion of this dissertation research project with six Mexican American mothers bestowed within me deeper insights, perceptions, and comprehensions in relation to this work.

Author Note on Title

Cosas llevadas is Spanish for “things carried.” Usage herein refers to a cluster of both negative and positive specificities that emerged from my data and literature review on this particular yet little-studied population of academic high-achieving mothers who are second generation *estadounidenses* of Mexican heritage that grew up in working and lower middle class families. In this context, *cosas llevadas* includes personal and familial histories of stigmatization, integrations of dually conscious understandings, disparaging master narratives, caveat American redemptive identities, along with honored responsibilities engendered from a more collective worldview—all things not requisite

for carry by *estadounidenses* of white European heritage who typically hold an individualistic orientation.

Significance of Study

The largest group of Latinx in the U.S. are of Mexican origin (Caldera, Velez-Gomez, & Lindsey, 2015). Research has shown that there is an achievement gap for students of color, that Latinx students drop out of school in greater number, and that fewer Latinx high school graduates proportionally attend college (Fry & Lopez, 2012). Interdisciplinary scholarship investigating circumstances regarding these statistics has been undertaken by psychologists, family scientists, and educational psychologists.

Theoretical frameworks employed in this research explicate our current socio-political, historical climate that not only does not endorse positive regard towards Mexican Americans, Mexican immigrants or persons of Mexican heritage, but that conversely often disparages them via stereotypical thinking and non-favorable depiction in media (Diaz McConnell, 2018), and negatively differential treatment by many in mainstream society. Observations from personal teaching experiences corroborate with ethnic-racial minority youth report of stereotyped and discriminatory experiences in schools (Umaña-Taylor, 2016).

Although research has shown classroom based discussions on race to be an avenue for stimulating awareness of social justice (Brown, Bloome, Morris, Power-Carter, & Willis, 2017), teachers and other adults working with ethnic minority youth often avoid conversing with diverse young people about ethnic and racial topics in their sites of practice (Brown et al., 2017; Umaña-Taylor & Rivas-Drake, in press). This is sometimes due to a lack of a familiar pedagogy for how to engage the topic, or

sometimes due to a false belief in the acceptability of a color-evasive approach to teaching. A forthcoming nonacademic volume authored by Umaña-Taylor and Rivas-Drake (in press) is an example of a helpful conduit for relaying scholarly findings to the public. These authors, who primarily publish academic papers, devised this book for an audience of parents, classroom practitioners, and laypeople who work in a professional capacity with ethnic minority youth. Likewise, findings from my study will not only serve to inform scholars, but can convert into useful, usable information with implications for parent and teacher education via contextualized family activities and parental practices gleaned from participant life story narratives.

Carola Suarez-Orozco is currently developing classroom curriculum titled, *Reimagining Migration*, to facilitate teachers' ability to conduct meaningful classroom discussions towards empathy building as well as to address negative stereotypes experienced by immigrants of Mexican heritage and other backgrounds (Lecture Presentation, 2018). Her curriculum is modelled upon a life-story based curriculum, *Facing History in Ourselves*, that has been efficaciously used for decades in schools to teach empathy and perspective taking in connection to The Holocaust. Stories that relate difficulties and sacrifice experienced by others are a medium that can assist people in developing empathy which in turn can promote a more empathetic, informed, and welcoming society. By attending to non-deficit-based, life story narratives from mothers of Mexican descent who have high academic achievement our understandings will expand and the literature base will become more representative. These life stories of the mothers' experiences in schools both as students and parents can serve as a counter story to deficit master narratives.

In their recent analysis, Syed, Santos, Yoo and Juang (2018) explicated their concern that the field of developmental psychology, driven by individualistic ideological master narratives, is systematically reproducing racial colorblindness via practices and accumulated evidence. Syed et al. (2018) noted that study of parenting practices of cultural socialization by parents has only recently begun to be investigated. Authors state that, “This is a major oversight...” in developmental psychology due to lack of information on “...how parenting develops and operates in relation to these issues misses a key piece of parent-child relationships.” (p. 818)

Moreover, Syed et al. (2018) explained that due to lack of historical accumulation of studies on the topic, it is important for researchers to accumulate descriptive qualitative, foundational information before study of causal mechanisms can be implemented on the topic of parental and other socialization constructs. Intergenerational parenting practices of Latina mothers with earned graduate school degrees have not been systematically recorded to date. Suizzo (2015) insists that to know more about Mexican Americans’ perspectives on parenting, we need to ask parents themselves.

Purpose of Research

This project was designed to specifically investigate parenting styles and other parental involvement practices that emerge as most salient in Latina mothers’ life stories. Therefore, I undertook life history interviews with 6 Latina mothers. A key purpose was to document highly educated Mexican American mothers’ intergenerational parenting experiences to better understand how they were parented along with how they made choices while parenting. These findings expand extant parenting literature to be more representative of the heterogenous group of Mexican origin mothers residing in the

southwestern US. Additionally, findings have potential to inform teacher training, parent education, and school policy intending to improve parent and school communication and partnerships.

Research Questions

My research questions were:

1. How do Mexican American mothers who have high academic achievement narrate their life stories?
2. What developmental influences do highly educated Mexican American mothers mention as being supportive towards their academic success?
3. How do Mexican American mothers' experiences compare with research regarding the concerted cultivation parenting style?

Organization

In the next chapter, Chapter 2, a review of literature in the areas of a) two popular parenting styles and b) Dan McAdam's redemptive storytelling framework (2006; 2013) are presented. In Chapter 3, the research design and methodology used to collect and analyze participant data is described in detail. Next, within Chapter 4 portraits for each participant offer descriptive illustrations of mothers' life narratives. Within Chapter 5, results addressing answers to each of the three guiding research questions are provided. Lastly, Chapter 6 outlines conclusions, implications, limitations, and future directions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I begin with reviews of the literature on two mainstream, popular parenting style theories. Literatures grounding both: a) Baumrind's authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting style typology and b) Lareau's concerted cultivation parenting style are presented. Next, a review of the literature on Dan McAdams's narrative storytelling framework (2006; 2013) is provided. To close the chapter, I describe a less widespread parenting style called the Chicana M(other)work Framework (Caballero, Martinez-Vu, Perez-Torres, Tellez, & Vega, 2017).

Parenting Styles

The socializing concept of parenting styles is popular. Since March 2015, in just a single year, there have been over 8,700 scholarly and peer-reviewed journal articles published on the topic of parenting styles. These contemporary articles explore effects of parenting styles on a range of ages, from infancy to adolescence, and investigate a wide range of concomitant results, from academic to social-emotional to physical health and food related outcomes. There is no question that parenting is important. According to Berns, "Parenting styles affect children's attachment, self-regulation, prosocial behavior, competence, and achievement motivation." (p.174, 2007)

Baumrind's Authoritarian, Authoritative, and Permissive Parenting Styles

In the 1960s psychologist Diane Baumrind pioneered work on the topic of parenting styles, and found persistent results linking parent styles with socialization outcomes in children. Her resultant theory became especially widespread--readily adopted in both academic and mainstream thinking. Baumrind delineated three parenting

styles: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. As compared to Baumrind's original line of research and early work on parenting styles, more recent work views parenting styles as fluid, diverse, and contextually based.

In a review exploring empirical study of the construct of parenting style, Darling and Steinberg (1993) raise specific concerns regarding research on parenting styles. Foremost, they would like to disentangle parenting style with parenting practices as well as to elucidate the processes involved in why parenting styles achieve purported outcomes.

Parenting styles is a construct that refers to general, parental, emotional and communicative characteristics in relation to their children. Parenting styles encompass components of emotional warmth as well as behavioral and psychological control. There are four main types: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved—all based on combined measures of acceptance/responsiveness and demandingness/control (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). The parenting style that has been associated with most favorable outcomes for mainstream European American children is that of authoritative parenting style. This style is also referred to as democratic and involves explanations for directives as well as a warm flexibility towards children. Children of authoritative parents are thought to be self-regulated, self-motivated, and content. The least favorable parenting style is that of the uninvolved parenting style. This style is associated with many difficult outcomes for children to include delinquency, poor school achievement, and little self-control over emotional regulation (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2010).

Berns (2007) describes the permissive parenting style as one that displays low demandingness and control, but high acceptance and responsiveness; and the

authoritarian style as high in demandingness and control, but low in acceptance and responsiveness. Children of permissive parents may be impulsive, aggressive, and have poor self-regulation. Mainstream European-American children of authoritarian parents have been found to become discontent, fearful and distrustful. Yet contradictory results in literature on diverse populations land within authoritarian parenting.

Parenting styles are affected by level of education, knowledge of child development, as well as socioeconomic situation. “It has been found that, generally, parents of lower socioeconomic status are more punitive, emphasizing obedience, whereas parents of higher socioeconomic status use more reasoning, emphasizing independence and creativity.” (p. 174, Berns, 2007). A couple of theories emerge regarding barriers some families have in carrying out authoritative parenting versus authoritarian parenting. McDevitt and Ormrod (2010) explain that a) there may be situations in dangerous neighborhoods where firm directives promote safety, and b) economic hardships along with concomitant stresses of poverty negate a fully authoritative approach.

Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological model of human development (1989) offers a framework for understanding parenting as nested in contexts of a multitude of influences such as diverse world view, as well as socioeconomic situation. Bronfenbrenner’s theory as applied to parenting styles can be conceptualized by visualizing that the parent and child operate within a network of nested layers that affect everything within.

Macrosystems such as political ideology, economy and culture influence parenting.

Exosystems such as social services and parents’ workplaces affect parenting.

Mesosystems of interactions between microsystems—family, peers, community, and

family affect parenting. Additionally, parenting changes across time—Bronfenbrenner’s chronosystem. Further, historical influences on persons and cultures affect parenting.

Goals and values of parents vary: for example, some parents prefer a permissive style, and on the other hand some parents prefer an authoritarian style. Core world-views such as independence versus interdependence will be reflected in parenting style.

Individual children’s personality: agency and participation in the family unit can also influence parenting style. Cole (2009) observed that parenting style can change over time, particularly as a child moves through developmental stages.

For adolescents, parenting style has been associated with peer choices. Teens who have authoritative parents (democratic) have internalized their parent’s values, and need less peer approval (Fuligni & Eccles, 1993). These researchers found teens with authoritarian parents (parent-centered) have alienated themselves from parents’ values, and embrace a peer group to gain feelings of acceptance (Fuligni & Eccles). For teens of permissive parents (teen-centered), Fuligni and Eccles determined that an antisocial peer group is desired.

Specific findings on parenting style have been determined based primarily on research designs investigating European American youth and based on Baumrind’s theoretical framework: work by Chao (2001) and others caution one to resist over-applying negative effects of authoritarian parenting to children of other ethnicities. Chao found that some Asian American youth respond very well to aspects of authoritarian parenting, which has been described as a blended combination of the main styles.

Lightfoot et al, state, “...many African-American children respond positively to no-

nonsense parenting, . . . , although it shares many features of the authoritarian style described by Baumrind.” (p. 347, 2009).

In her book on ways to support improved parenting, Miller (2010) not only describes Baumrind’s parenting style framework, but includes a system of four parenting styles developed by Gottman (1997): dismissive parent, laissez-faire parent, disapproving parent, and emotion-coaching parent. Gottman believes as each parent becomes in touch with and manages her/his emotions, then her/his parenting will improve. Gottman uses the emotional climate between parent and child along with emotional climate present in the home as determinants of each of the four styles. This framework may serve as a prescriptive intervention when working with parents and families in service of children. Though Baumrind’s ubiquitous parenting styles are quite popular, there are alternative ways to view parenting styles.

In 2013, the American Psychological Association published an edited volume titled, *Authoritative parenting: Synthesizing nurturance and discipline for optimal child development*. With this book, editors Larzelere, Morris, and Harrist gathered work by APA’s leading researchers in efforts to answer the three remaining unanswered questions regarding authoritative parenting which are a) What are the specific mechanisms that promote the effectiveness of authoritative parenting? b) Why do effects of authoritative parenting vary across cultures? and c) Are the positive outcomes associated with authoritative parenting due to parent or child affects? Only one chapter of the ten included in the volume offered a review of research that addressed application of Baumrind’s construct of parenting styles to nondominant families. Syed, Santos, Yoo, and Juang (2018) pointed out that because research with nondominant-culture families is

relatively new as compared to the literature base with European American families, researchers do not have enough descriptive information to begin systematically investigating mechanisms for nondominant-culture families. Indeed, this volume does little to extend or expand Baumrind's foundational parenting style construct to nondominant-culture families, despite the stated purpose.

Lareau's Concerted Cultivation Parenting Style

Resulting from her in-depth, ethnographic research with families, Annette Lareau conceptualized two distinct parenting styles which she called a) accomplishment of natural growth, and b) concerted cultivation (2003, 2011). For the parenting style of accomplishment of natural growth, parents actively make certain that the child's needs for food, clean clothing, shelter, and medical care are provided. In this style, children frequently have unstructured time to enjoy with kin or neighbors. Parents do not structure leisure or formal learning activities, nor do they engage in extensive dialogue with children regarding children's opinions or feelings: parent and child roles are seen as stable and distinct with parent providing directives, and the child obeying. Lareau observed that families of lower income, working class and poor parents, enact this style of parenting.

Alternatively, middle class parents are driven by a motivation to help their children succeed, and to be certain they are not slighted from their due attention. They feel entitled to participate in and make a point to enter their child's school, call teachers, or even administrators if they feel their child is not being treated with enough individual consideration. This parenting style, concerted cultivation, also includes parenting behaviors of reasoning with youngsters about why limits are set, as well as asking

children for their preferences regarding important as well as mundane things. In concerted cultivation, children experience highly structured out-of-school-time with lessons from music and art to sports participation. Several of these organized activities are participated in weekly. More educational items such as books and puzzles are found in the home. Homework is not only expected and supervised, but there is often active parent support and participation in daily homework assignments along with long-term school projects.

As noted, the two styles are class specific, and Lareau's concern regarding the styles lies in the fact that children not reared within an environment of concerted cultivation are not granted a cultural capital that will give them a helpful blueprint in dealing with institutions of school. Thus children who've grown within a family of orientation that enacts the parenting style of concerted cultivation enter school with a repertoire of practices, or in other words, a cultural capital that matches the school's discourse patterns that they developed from prior experiences interacting with adults in structured institutional settings. The transition to the institutional discourse of schooling is streamlined for children with experiences afforded them via a concerted cultivation style. Conversely, the institutional discourses of schools have not been encountered in any prior experiences by children who've grown according to natural growth parenting style as they likely have not encountered formalized interaction with unfamiliar adults who often structure patterns of speech dissimilar to more informal patterns of interaction. This incongruity is similar to the school-home disconnect that Heath observed in her in depth study (1983) of families and schools. Lareau explains that society privileges specific behavioral repertoires learned by encountering concerted cultivation. Further, an

internalized sense of empowerment has been cultivated in children of concerted cultivation. Lareau explains, "...while children whose parents adopt strategies of concerted cultivation appear to gain a sense of entitlement, children (who experience accomplishment of natural growth style) appear to gain an emerging sense of distance, distrust, and constraint in their institutional experiences." (p. 3, 2011).

Lareau's distinct parenting styles of accomplishment of natural growth and concerted cultivation are based on intensive, long-term ethnographic study¹ inclusive of interviews with, and extensive observation of family behaviors. She writes:

My study focused much more on behaviors than attitudes. If I looked at attitudes, I saw fewer differences; for example, all exhibited the desire to be a good mother and to have their children grow and thrive. The differences I found, however, were significant in how parents *enacted* their visions of what it meant to be a good parent. (Lareau, 2011, p. 386).

Lareau observed that parenting behaviors followed patterns that were different across economic classes, irrespective of ethnicity. Her study displays families enacting consequential behaviors to scarcity of resources, along with an informational scarcity (Handel, 2006).

Though all parents, regardless of economic means, strive to do their best to be good parents, the parenting style of accomplishment of natural growth parenting style enacted by poor and working class families is not as beneficial as the style, concerted

¹ Over the years of 1994 and 1995 Lareau conducted parent interviews and community and home observations of twelve families. Observations of each family were made over the span of about a month's time and included an overnight stay and approximately twenty visits with each family.

cultivation, that middle class families afford for their children. Experiences in multiple organized activities outside the home interacting with adults provide valuable experiences to middle class children which instill a sense of entitlement and ease that will carry over to the institution of schooling for these children.

Three large-scale, quantitative articles all based on survey data from ECLS-K 1998-1999 corroborate Lareau's class-based construct of concerted cultivation (Bodovski & Farkas, 2008; Cheadle, 2008; Cheadle & Amato, 2011): parental SES is positively and strongly associated with concerted cultivation. However, Cheadle and Amato (2011) found moderately strong racial/ethnic differences after controlling for SES. Cheadle and Amato report that SES explained 50% of variance in concerted cultivation, and that race/ethnicity explained 30%.

In addition, work conducted in Britain (2011) by Irwin and Elley titled, "Concerted Cultivation? Parenting Values, Education and Class Diversity" investigated parent orientations towards children's education and expectations using both survey and interview methodology. The authors found seeds of concerted cultivation in working class parents' orientations.

Prior to Lareau's work, other researchers had been looking at parenting characteristics that could be related to the concerted cultivation parenting style. For example, from his in depth, ethnographic study, Clark (1983) determined a list of seventeen behavioral patterns that were observed in families, which differed between high and low achieving students. He notes that this list of behaviors that support educational success are not based on race or social class; these patterns are present irrespective of income. A few items from the list of patterns observed in families with

high achievers include: parent high expectations, parents engage in implicit achievement-training activities, and parents defer to child in intellectual matters. This list heralds behaviors that coincide with the parenting style pattern of concerted cultivation, and Clark suggests they are seen in families of low economic resources.

In a large-scale quantitative study, Spera, Wentzel, and Matto (2009) found all parents ($N = 13,577$) held high expectations for their children in middle and high school. Authors also found that aspirations increased as a function of parental education across all ethnicities. Further, results show that parent expectations increase according to student grade point average. The directional relationship of this association is unknown. In a meta-analysis exploring school-specific parent involvement and academic achievement, Fan and Chen (2001) discovered a very strong association for parental aspiration/expectations and student achievement. As parental expectations are influential for children's success, the question of how parental expectations for their children's future moderate parenting practices is an important one.

Irwin and Elley (2013) carried out a qualitative study that consisted of interviews of parents regarding both a) expectations and aspirations for their children, along with b) their perceived role in shaping such futures. Parents' perceived roles in their children's outcomes may be classified into either of Lareau's two parenting styles: accomplishment of natural growth, or concerted cultivation. In their study, Irwin and Elley looked at diversity of parental responses both within and across social classes. Authors found that some parents are actively motivated to nurture and shape their children's future according to parental aspirations across all class levels. However, they observed that the expression

of this active role in supporting their children's future is manifested differently content-wise by class.

Irwin and Elley (2013) examined how each of three parents across social classes also engaged with low-motivated, older teenage sons. The first parent, Samuel, was a middle class health care professional. Samuel describes different approaches he used in an effort to help influence higher grades for his son; by managing different strategies to help his son's homework habits as well as by enlisting his parents (former teachers) to speak to and help motivate his son. A second parent, Nicky, worked as a preschool teacher and had a partner bringing in income as a mechanic, and thus the family were of intermediate means. After doing poorly in school due to low motivation, their teenage son applied to join the army. Nicky displayed a compromised hope for her former goal of full time education for this young man by embracing the sentiment that he would select a position in the army that offered ongoing training as a key to successful future employment.

Lastly, Jenny, a single mother in financial disadvantage echoed Claire's appraisal of knowing her child possessed full ability, but that ". . .he just don't do it. . ." (p. 126, Irwin & Elley, 2013). Jenny remarked, ". . .but I can't make him." (p. 126, Irwin & Elley). Jenny believed that the regime of the school was in disagreement with what worked best for her son. Jenny felt constraint in the contextual situation faced regarding her son and his schooling. With these three cases, Irwin and Elley illustrated how parents' expectations, practices, and likely outcomes "are inextricable from their classed contexts." (p. 325).

A Commonality of Baumrind's and Lareau's Parenting Styles

Use of language to control behavior while childrearing is a commonality in both Baumrind's and Lareau's parenting style theories. For the area of disciplinary actions carried out by parents, Baumrind's theory (2013) defines coercive behavioral control as that seen in authoritarian parenting style. This is a style of parenting viewed as less optimal for children's development due to immediacy of expected compliance, use of manipulative techniques, and inflexibility of parenting directives made towards children (Baumrind, 2013). Research has documented this style of parenting in lower socioeconomic groups. This is also the most contested area within Baumrind's parenting style theory such that research has documented different results among cultural groups. This parenting is aligned with Lareau's description of parents of lower socioeconomic groups that enact the parenting style of natural growth.

On the other hand, authoritative parenting is a type of child-rearing often documented in families with greater socioeconomic resources. This style of parenting has been deemed the most adaptive of Baumrind's types of parenting for children and youth, especially widely documented in studies of families of European American origin. Authoritative parents utilize extended conversations to offer explanations to children that rationalize reasons for their request of behavioral compliance. Authoritative parents frequently entertain children's vocal feedback to parental directives on behavior. Further, after entertaining children's pleas, authoritative parents are often flexible and sometimes modify their original behavioral directive (Baumrind, 2013). This parenting style is aligned with Lareau's description of both African American and White parents of middle and higher socioeconomic groups that enact the parenting style of concerted cultivation.

Research with Latinx parents has not been systematically conducted on the parenting practices of natural growth or concerted cultivation among economic levels.

In sum, parenting style constructs such as Baumrind's parenting styles and Lareau's concerted cultivation often fail to adequately include a platform for the voices of ethnic minority parents representing multiple social class locations. In particular, the perspectives of highly education Latinx parents are absent. Further, there is an absence of scholarship providing intergenerational representations of parenting styles. This study addresses these two gaps in the literature. Parenting styles reflect ideological master narratives (Baumrind, 2013) present in institutions and homes within communities. A well-documented ideological style used by adults in the U.S. to narrate life story events is the termed, the redemptive framework, and it was developed by McAdams (2006; 2013).

McAdams's Redemptive Narrative Storytelling Framework

Dan McAdams is a research psychologist and professor at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois who has published extensively—numerous journal articles along with two book-length volumes (McAdams, 2006; 2013) on redemptive American life story narratives. The redemptive framework is a way some people have of spontaneously conveying negative or traumatic events with a beneficial outcome, or positive outlook. A few examples of include: a) having a bad job, yet then ending up with a new position that was better overall, b) realizing from illness that one has come to a better understanding, and c) challenges and stress lead one to espouse a positive outlook on life.

McAdams (2006) first book-length publication on the redemptive self was revised, expanded, and republished in 2013. Within these volumes McAdams explains

that a personality quality called generativity can be defined as, “an adult’s concern for or commitment to promoting the welfare and development of future generations.” (2013, xi) Mentors, coaches, counselors and especially, teachers are examples of employment that would be classified as a generative career. McAdams (2006, 2013) explains that generative adults tell redemptive stories. Within his chapters he explains details of redemptive life narratives by means of his corpus of data from large-scale, adult research interview projects that he has conducted across decades.

McAdams’s theories are founded upon the lifespan development theory of identity by Erik Erikson (1965). Further, McAdams grounds his theories in Bruner’s (1990) establishment of meaningfulness of narrative stories being aligned with the self. McAdams’s redemptive framework has a robust foundation in life narratives of both White and African American life story interviews (2006; 2013). Remarkably, within McAdams’s 2013 book titled, *The Redemptive Self: Stories Americans Live By*, I have not yet located one citation, summary, or mention of life narrative research that has been done with Latinx within this updated volume that is based on his book originally published in 2006. I have also not been able to locate scholarly publications with Latinx participants that utilized or analyzed life story narratives or referred to accounts of redemptive life stories with McAdams’s narrative theory. Thus, the present study also seeks to contribute to the literature by utilizing the redemptive life story perspective with Latinx participants.

Chicana M(other)work Framework

Chicana M(other)work was created by a collective of five Chicana scholar activists in Tucson, Arizona and is comprised of six tenets as follows: a) it is

intergenerational, b) it means carving space, c) it means healing ourselves, d) it is an imaginary, e) it makes our labor visible, and f) it names mothering labor as prayer and mothering as an offering (Caballero, Martinez-Vu, Perez-Torres, Tellez, & Vega, 2017).

Chicana M(other)work Framework (Caballero, Martinez-Vu, Perez-Torres, Tellez, & Vega, 2017) is a framework based upon Collins's (2005) intersectional mothering and Chicana feminism and includes ideals of mothering being composed of care work that is: intergenerational, carves space, heals mothers' selves, is an imaginary, and that makes their labor visible. Caballero et al. (2017) was written by a collective of five high academic achieving Chicana mothers who grew up in working class families of origin. Each mother-author of the Chicana M(other)work collective (Caballero et al., 2017) had earned a PhD, or was enrolled in the active process thereof. Chicana M(other)work (Caballero et al., 2017) represents a framework for exploring Latina mother narratives that includes history and power relations, acknowledging contextual influence from institutions as well as stigmatizing master narratives from the macrosystem as playing important yet distal roles in identity development.

This group of mothers initially formed within the setting of higher education, although Caballero et al. (2017) explain that Chicana M(other)work also extends out to application within community settings. Syed et al. (2018) recommended, "the advancement of an inclusive developmental science requires making space for new perspectives that do not neatly fit with existing models." (822) The mainstream parenting model of concerted cultivation (Lareau, 2003; 2011) is an existing model of parenting that contrasts to Caballero et al.'s (2017) Chicana M(other)work, a framework that takes into account both power and historical factors. Lareau's concerted cultivation outlines

that parenting styles can be divided into two groups based on social class and economic resources is grounded within sociological reproduction concept of Bourdieu's cultural capital (Davies & Rizk, 2018) and it does not take into account contextual interactions that situate the child and her activity within a broader sphere of influential factors as are addressed by the Chicana M(other)work that is based upon Collins's (2005) intersectional mothering and Chicana feminism.

Integration and Critique

With the exception of the relatively newly conceived Chicana M(other)work Framework (Caballero et al., 2017), each of the three mainstream psychological theories summarized above have been significant in both academic and layperson arenas for significant amounts of time. Baumrind's typology has been around for four decades. Both Lareau's and McAdams's books have been reprinted due to each volume's popularity. These three 'big' theories: Baumrind's parenting styles, Lareau's concerted cultivation, and McAdam's redemptive framework for narrative life stories have been replicated widely. They each have been instrumentally influential on wide-spread understandings of U.S. parenting, families, and--in the case of McAdam's redemptive framework—lays a foundational, 'prototypical' understanding for how adults construct and conceive of adult living in the US. The largest nondominant cultural group in the U.S. are Latinx (McAdams, 2013). However, after four decades of investigations utilizing Baumrind's parenting style model, researchers continue to debate whether the different effects observed across nondominant culture family groups are due to the model being culturally specific, or if alternatively-- the culturally equivalent nature of this parenting style model is due to flawed research design and methodology (Sorkhabi & Mandara, 2013).

Furthermore, Latinx life story narratives are missing from the substantial research base that grounds McAdams's redemptive framework. Additionally, Latinx families are missing from research design and scholarship on Lareau's concerted cultivation parenting style.

Baumrind (2013) explained that her parenting style model signified social ideology. McAdams noted (2006; 2013) that his redemptive framework reflected predominant social ideology from generative adult U.S. lives. In light of the dearth of research with Latinx adults on McAdams's redemptive storytelling frame, and with research missing with Latinx families particularly on the parenting style of concerted cultivation, this dissertation research study was designed to contribute to the literature base by collecting life story narratives from Latinx mothers while specifically seeking to document manifestations of parenting style across generations (i.e., both within mothers' families of orientation and in their current families of procreation) via life story narratives which reveal how they were parented as well as how they are parenting.

Literature reviewed herein illustrated differences in behaviors of parenting with higher levels of formal education (Keller, 2018; Lareau, 2003; 2011). Lareau's concerted cultivation parenting style was developed from an in-depth ethnography that was inclusive of both African American and White working, middle, and upper middle class families (Lareau 2003; 2011), but the concerted cultivation parenting style has not yet been documented within Latinx families' routines. Thus for this research study, Latinx mothers with high academic achievement that were interested in sharing their life story narratives on parenting and schooling were recruited. Purposes of this investigation are to expand the literature base on the topic of parenting styles, to extend understandings of

intergenerational change across families (e.g., formal schooling), and to explore the narrative frameworks of Latinx mothers.

The next chapter, Chapter 3, Research Design and Methodology, begins with discussion of the study's research design and next delineates the order of methodological steps undertaken for this investigation. Secondly, Chapter 3 provides detailed descriptions of participants' demographic information and settings of interview sessions. Thirdly, Chapter 3 explains analysis procedures while including coding definitions and examples.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This phenomenological case study investigation was designed to gather intergenerational lifespan narrative data from Latina mothers of Mexican origin of high academic achievement on the topic of parenting and schooling. Narrative life storied data can afford a contextualized account to events and experiences from across stages of the lifespan as well as gather interactions across generations. According to Creswell (2014), phenomenological research is wherein, "...the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants."

Seidman's (2006) phenomenological interviewing methodology seeking participant report of personally contextualized meanings is conducted across multiple meetings. In this study each mother participated in at least two semi-structured interview sessions. Interviews consisted of semi-structured questions modeled after both Seidman (2006) and McAdam's life story narrative interview (2005).

Participants

A multiple case study design was used for this study. Six academically high achieving Latina mothers of Mexican heritage, ranging in age from 36 to 63 years old participated. Recruitment fliers were distributed at three sites of author's professional and social networks to include: an urban high school, a large university, and a beauty salon. Criteria for participation included: a) previously earning at least one post-bachelor graduate degree, b) being a parent of at least one biological child, and 3) identifying as Latina. All participants are of Mexican heritage: five were born in the U.S., and one

immigrated to the U.S. during adulthood. Five participants are bilingual and are fluent in both Spanish and English.

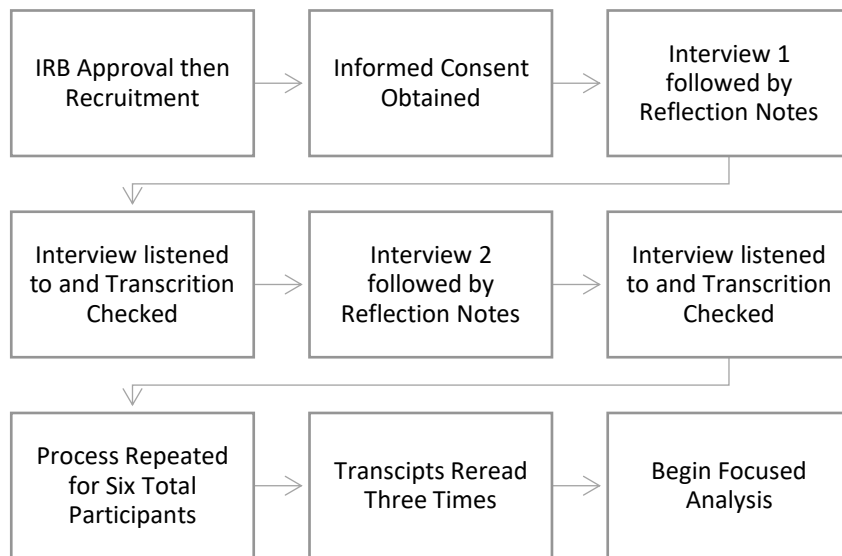
Participants' parents were either born in Mexico or were of Mexican heritage and born in the U.S. Formal educational levels of participants' families of origin range from fewest years of formal schooling being attendance up to second grade. Many of the participants' parents attended school in Mexico and as such it is important to note that the two countries differ in their structures and systems of education when considering intergenerational levels of formal education. Maximum years of formal schooling for participants' parents was embodied by one participant's father having earned a bachelor's degree. Five participants were first generation college students. Four of the mothers earned university scholarships while in high school; one was for musical accomplishment and three were for academic accomplishment. Five of the six mothers directly attended four year universities immediately after graduating from high school. One of the six mothers was married and had children before beginning her higher education trajectory at a community college. All participants demonstrated fruitful academic achievement by having earned multiple college degrees. Thus, each woman is representative of the approximately 10 percent of U.S. population with a master's level college degree.

Data Collection

As displayed in Figure 1, data collection proceeded according to the following steps: recruitment, informed consent, participant's initial interview, post-interview reflection notes, interview listening, and then transcriptions obtained and checked while listening to audio recording. Next, procedures were repeated for the participant's second interview. This series of steps were undertaken with a total of six participants.

Once Institutional Review Board approval was received, recruitment of participants commenced. Recruitment fliers were distributed at three sites of author's professional and social networks to include: an urban high school, a large university, and a beauty salon. Interested persons who contacted the author were informed of study details and were invited to participate if meeting criteria for inclusion. Six of seven persons invited to participate completed both interviews. The seventh interested person that was invited to participate happened to break her foot and was unable to meet during the data collection window to review the consent form or to schedule interview meetings.

Figure 1 Data Collection Flow Chart



After completing a face-to-face consent disclosure with question-and-answer session, consent signatures were procured a series of semi-structured one-to-one interviews were conducted. Interviews were audio-recorded and ranged in length from 50 to 105 minutes with each woman participating in at least two separate interview sessions. Interviewees were given the option to determine their pseudonym. One of the six women created her pseudonym, and all others requested I pick something for them. At that time, I

suggested possible names, and the participant selected amongst them. Moreover, within this report, particular details including setting locations have been renamed in effort to maintain participants' privacy. Before conducting my first interview with any of the study's participants, I engaged in two separate pilot interview sessions to facilitate my familiarity with interview protocol items as well as to determine timing and pacing. In addition, the pilot interviewees offered feedback on the interview protocols regarding the order of the questions and helped me to pinpoint any ambiguities in the items that required further clarification. These two separate, audiotaped pilot interviews were conducted across two meeting sessions that directly mirrored the study's interview design for multiple interview sessions and were undertaken with a) a single white mother of a teen who was in her early 50s and b) an African American man in his early 60s who had parented three now-adult children.

Initial Interview

At the initial interview participants first filled out a demographic questionnaire that included a request for the nativity and educational levels of their parents. Secondly, participants engaged in a cognitive retrieval task. The Familial Ethnic Socialization (FES) measure was used as a cognitive tool to propel mothers to reflect upon and recall their years as an adolescent. Mothers were notified that the form was a rating scale designed to be used with youths, and were asked to reflect back what it was like for them as a youth in high school. Mothers were given a green pen to circle items in the list, "as if they were in high school and rating their family of orientation at that time." Once completed, the green pen was replaced with a purple pen. Now, mothers were asked to redo the form in the second colored pen. Mothers were asked to consider their current

home setting environment and apply an answer for each of the items as reflective of the contextual circumstances of their current parenting operationalized within their family of procreation. Before proceeding with interview 1 question items, mothers were asked to observe the visual pattern of their multi-colored responses on the FES form and to note any differences they observed across the two sets of responses.

At this time the FES form was put aside, and the mother and I engaged in the semi-structured interview questions as based upon McAdam's (1995) narrative life story interview. Once interview one was conducted, the mother and I arranged to meet at their convenience for Interview 2. Interview two was scheduled approximately one week after interview 1, although the actual interval between interviews varied according to mothers' scheduling needs and requests.

After each interview and the mother was thanked for her participation, I returned to my vehicle to copy down reflection notes on the interview. Once returning home the interview recording was listened to while I noted any needed follow up questions and then it was sent to transcription company. Two professional transcription companies were paid to transcribe all interviews. Fact checking was done by listening to audio files while reading printed transcripts, and noting corrections.

Interview Settings

Mothers decided upon the most convenient time and place for our interviews to take place. Both of Margarita's interviews took place in her home. The setting was quiet, private and free of distractions. Helen also requested that I meet her in her home, and both interviews were conducted at her kitchen table. Reyna's interviews took place in her living room. At the end of the first interview, Reyna's husband returned with the

children. During our second interview, Reyna's five year old daughter came down stairs briefly to check with her mother about the dog's behavior. After a few minutes chatting with her mother she returned upstairs to continue playing with her older brother, and then her mother and I finished the second interview protocol. Esme invited me to her home for the first interview. Her son also checked in with her briefly during the interview, like Reyna's daughter had. Esme was interested in meeting at a restaurant convenient to her work location for our second interview. We were seated in a semi-private back corner of the restaurant and met during a time when the setting was not loudly busy. Frida invited me to her home for the first interview, and scheduled the second interview with me during break in her workday. We met in her private office with the door closed for interview two. Alazne Pilar requested that I join her in her classroom after the school's campus was cleared in late afternoons. Since she had to leave quickly at our second meeting due to catching a ride from her colleague to the auto repair shop to pick up her car that had unexpected repairs, we scheduled and met for a third time to complete the Interview 2 protocol questionnaire. At the end of each participant's second interview sessions, mothers were presented with a \$20.00 gift card to compensate them for their time.

Data Analysis

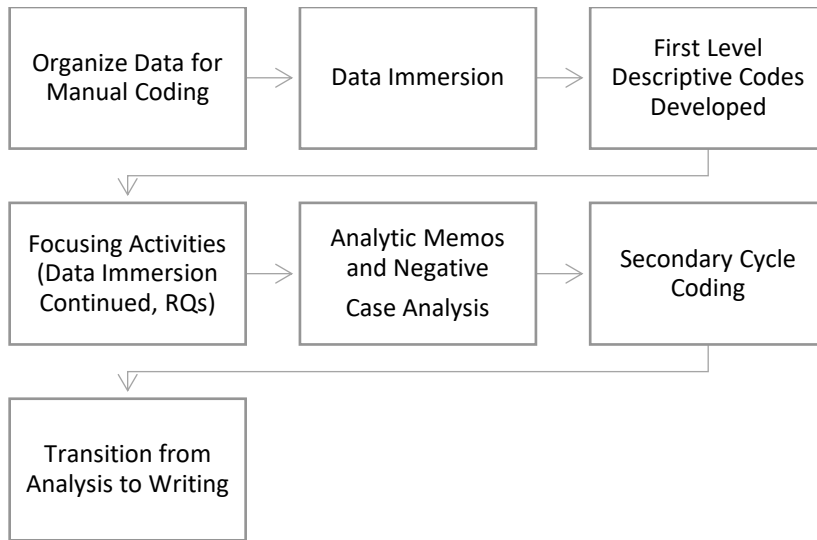
Transcribed pages were read a minimum of three times. Then, initial open coding was conducted on 20 percent of the transcribed pages to inductively determine first level descriptive codes, and subsequently to designate second level analytic codes. Each transcript was colored in with highlighters according to hierarchical code's specificity.

The color matched excerpts were then grouped within a second document according to research codes and questions.

The ‘concerted cultivation’ parenting code included a wide range of acts of deliberate parenting behaviors enacted in efforts to support of the child’s growth and optimal potential. This code included parenting practices in the data such as a) enrolling child in extracurricular activities, providing individual music lessons or purchasing an instrument for the child, b) advocating at the child’s school for an alternative placement or placing one’s child in a non-neighborhood school, c) strategies used to promote heritage language maintenance, and d) parent engaging in purposed, direct instruction to relay parents’ preferred or observed choices that are available to the child (e.g., urging female teen to experience a variety of social settings to practice talking to others and getting comfortable in diverse circumstances) and use of explanations and reasoned rationalizations for engaging in promotive socializing behaviors (e.g., Margarita urged son to go up to and inform teacher of his desire to play drums instead of his current instrument).

The code, academic support, was used for factors that were supportive of mothers’ academic achievement and included a) direct mention of acts by a supportive parent, teacher, or counselor (e.g., mothers’ mothers expectations of high achievement being evinced by their daughters in schools) and b) direct mention of supportive environmental factors (e.g., there was no television allowed and so children spent time reading; an expressed enjoyment of reading).

Figure 2: Data Analysis Flow Chart



To answer my research question on how participants told their life stories, data was examined inductively. Story telling patterns aligned with a coding framework by McAdams (2006; 2013) called the redemptive story narration framework. The redemptive framework is a way some people have of spontaneously conveying negative or traumatic events with a beneficial outcome, or positive outlook. A few examples of include: a) having a bad job, yet then ending up with a new position that was better overall, b) realizing from illness that one has come to a better understanding, and c) challenges and stress lead one to espouse a positive outlook on life.

McAdam’s redemptive framework codes either a ‘yes’ or a ‘no’ for each storied event as told by the participant to deem if it is redemptive or not. McAdams explains that most events in life story narratives are not told in a redemptive manner. For events conveyed where a negative life event was framed with a positive outcome or with beneficial effects as demonstrated in some examples above, the researcher will code a ‘yes’. Ten storied events across participants were selected from the transcripts by the first coder for application of inter-rater reliability. The second coder did not agree with two of

the ten as using a redemptive story frame, and the first coder fully acquiesced. Raters discussed the definitions and more examples from McAdams's redemptive framework. The second coder then suggested new two storied events from the transcripts. The first coder agreed with the second that the redemptive framework was exercised in the newly selected narrative samples. Therefore, after discussion between raters, individual rater reliability went from 80 percent to 100 percent agreement for practices while applying the code of using the redemptive framework to data.

Positionality of Researcher

I am a White woman over 50-years-old engaged in social equity scholarship for the purpose of supporting improvements in schools that would benefit all children and youth, but most particularly children and youth from historically marginalized ethnic and racial groups. My engagement and work with Latinx women in this study is grounded in almost 2 decades of work as a teacher in large urban schools of over 85% Latinx student populations. Being similar in age to the participants, having similar educational degrees, and being the mother of three adult daughters are factors that built rapport and supported the interviews to unfold more so as authentic interpersonal conversations, rather than formalized interactions.

A major purpose of this dissertation research project was to provide a platform for Latina mothers to share their life stories in effort to expand the knowledge base to include life experiences imparted by highly academic achieving mothers of Mexican descent. At the outset of the research project I shared the two-fold intention of this research to a) document a non-deficit focused, counter narrative to stereotypic accounts of Latina women often portrayed in media and to b) learn more about lifespan development of

family practices that may have been factors of support for their high academic achievement. Mothers verbally expressed their agreement with the purposes and told me that they saw a value of and merit for study that sought to address these purposes.

Limitations and Parameters of Study

This study was designed to collect intergenerational stories on schooling and parenting from across a small number of participants to glean excerpt of and from long and complex life histories. Within this study, a small number of cases were engaged to participate in effort to glean a more in depth understanding of the participants' complex, situated lived experiences versus gathering less information from a more numerous amount of participants that would have resulted in less nuances of experiences evince within data collected. The cases are not meant to be a representative sample of mothers who are of Mexican descent who have achieved high academic accomplishment.

Chase (2005) explained that, "...narrative researchers view stories as both enabled and constrained by a range of social resources and circumstances." (656) This principle is not only applicable to the interviewee, but the interview as well. Chase (2005) lists social, cultural and historical locations as being influential in the construction of life narratives. Similarly, Hardaway illustrated that as a situated self, one holds only partial knowledge at each given moment and circumstance. The positionality of my being a White woman researcher and cultural outsider influenced the narratives shared by participants. Chase (2005) explained that narrative stories are "flexible, in part shaped by the audience," (657) and therefore co-constructed. Limitations of my researcher as outsider lens must be acknowledged as inhabiting this position may have not afforded me access to insider insights that could promote engagement in specific topical areas such as

protocol development, follow up probes during the interviews, or to make additional or alternative connections across cases or during analysis that my White privileged experiences may have precluded.

In addition, participants in this study were mothers, and the parameters of this design choice precluded input on parenting from co-parenting fathers (or partners). In addition, parameters of this study's life story interview based-design did not afford methodology of collection of observational data of intergenerational family members.

Member Reflections

After initial data analysis stages progressed such that writing had commenced, I contacted mothers to arrange follow up briefings wherein they were presented with a written segment of the findings and/or their individual portrait to obtain their feedback and input. One mother clearly stated that she wanted a full copy of the dissertation to read after the successful completion of my degree. Two mothers were nonresponsive to contacts or were unable to meet due to busy schedules.

A second group of three out of the six mothers participated in member reflections by reading portions of the written report. One mother arranged for me to provide her with a written report, yet she didn't follow up afterwards to discuss or meet. I had the opportunity meet in person with one mother over lunch wherein she read a portion of the write up and we talked at length and in depth regarding codes and preliminary analysis. This participant said she felt honored to have her story included in the research, that it made her feel valued, and that she liked very much how her story was summarized and presented. The third mother that participated in member reflections also expressed approval of the written report. She shared, "I loved reading this—it's absolutely

beautiful!” This mother also discussed data coding and analysis with me across a series of conversations.

Findings generated from my data analysis are presented in the subsequent two chapters. Directly following this chapter, in Chapter 4: Portraits presents a cluster of six separate, descriptive sketches constructed from mothers’ narrated life-stories. Direct quotations are embedded throughout each mother’s individual profile. Next, Chapter 5: Findings summarizes the results from this dissertation study’s research questions.

CHAPTER 4

PORTRAITS

This chapter provides a “portrait” of each participant and was created based in portraiture research methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005). Focal components include factors and events connected to mother’s academic achievement. In addition, some of the parenting practices that in some ways may be classified as concerted cultivation are indicated. Intergenerational aspects of parenting are observed throughout the portrayals. Mothers’ life story narratives for this research study included reflections on their own parenting from their former families of orientation along with descriptions of practices demonstrating how they currently enact parenting with their own children.

Margarita²

“Trust me, I’m not stupid, it’s just that you’re speaking a language that I am not skilled in.”

Music plays softly on a small radio as we sit at Margarita’s oak dining table, completing our first interview. In her living room Margarita, 48-years-old, has a framed Picasso print, grand piano, and an electric drum set. She has long been a fan of music, and recalled greatly enjoying learning to play the piano via lessons while growing up in Mexico. The fact Margarita would regularly attend individualized piano lessons from a nearby expert after her school day ended is indicative of the parenting style of concerted cultivation (i.e., a parenting style where the parent invests in development of a child’s

² Particular details including setting locations have been adjusted in effort to safeguard privacy. Mothers were given the option to choose their pseudonyms.

potential). Margarita was born and raised in a large city located close to the Mexico border; her birth order was number four of six siblings, and she attended public schools in Mexico through high school. When it came time for college, she followed her older brother's example—to drive across the border and attend a U.S. university.

Summarizing the college experience in one word, “traumatic,” she explained the reason for this appellation: “I didn’t speak English, and I had to learn the language.” In college Margarita experienced frustration, suspecting that others might attribute her grades to be evidence that she was unintelligent; she conveyed to me that she wished she could assure her college instructors of her worthiness to engage in college coursework. Margarita illustrated her English language learning challenge cogently by noting that initially it took her an entire day to read one page from a college textbook--from 10:00 in the morning until 10:00 at night, as she was deciphering the page using a dictionary. Margarita recounted that--as she was a good reader, she rapidly reduced total reliance on the dictionary. Margarita felt disappointed in taking a year longer than others took to earn her four-year bachelor's degree in finance which she finished in five years. Years later, she married and moved to the U.S. where she earned a graduate degree in Spanish from the same U.S. institution wherein she obtained her bachelor's degree.

Having taught high school Spanish as a World Language for fifteen years, Margarita finds it unfortunate that her fourteen-year-old son Marshall will not speak in Spanish with her, or others, including his cousins during regular visits to her birthplace in Mexico. Margarita attributes her concerns to two main reasons: she has tried to teach him some Spanish, and her sisters' children in the U.S. converse in English as well as in some Spanish. Marshall has told her that he does not identify as Mexican American.

Margarita mentioned that her son sometimes teased her for having a detectable accent when she spoke or sang in English which is understandably evident from having been raised in Juarez and not being situated in an English-speaking setting until attending a university in Texas after graduating from high school. Margarita attributes obtaining her first college degree with promoting her initial development of English fluency. She since obtained a master's degree in the U.S. and further developed English fluency for the last eighteen years since living in the U.S. full time, being employed as an educator for more almost ten of them. All interviews were conducted in English. During Margarita's interviews a few instances occurred where each of us would request that the other please repeat a phrase or word. At times, she repeated a word that I stated or a phrase from my questions as a means for clarification. She also purposefully spelled out her son's name when she initially shared it. As another example, she spelled out the word, Malinche, for me, since I did not register this term in my vocabulary.

Margarita explained that while she was growing up in a city near the U.S. border she was aware of salient beliefs held by others, including her parents, that Mexicans were perceived as lazy, and that they weren't as valued as U.S. citizens due to the two countries' economic disparity. Margarita confided that while young she internalized this Mexican-deficit thinking regarding the two countries' comparison: "...They are rich and we're poor. They are a developed country and we are underdeveloped. I almost forgot because now I don't think in that way. But growing up ...I had that in my soul." This is an instance where Margarita was determined parent different than how she was parented.

Margarita derives clarity and strength from her evangelical faith. She remembers a time about six years prior wherein she felt less connected to religion. Margarita pinpointed a strong change in her thinking, which she exemplified in the following quote.

I went to a party, a quinceañera one day. Then the pastor blessed the girl, and his wife, took the microphone and she shared her testimony. At that moment, I did not appreciate that. At that moment I thought she was just exaggerating. I thought that it was out of place, like it's a party and you are making us cry here. Then four years later, I thought of her and I thought, "Wow." She sowed a seed, and I said, "Okay, I want to be like her." She doesn't know because I never saw her again, but she made a big impact.

When questioned whether a good education is important for a child to do well in life, Margarita relayed, "I've always thought that it was very important." Further, she believes that having a good education remains important, and that the value of this has not changed over the years. Throughout high school Margarita felt boredom, and she summarized this experience as follows:

I was always a good student, but I didn't like school. It was boring. The teachers were boring. Super boring. We didn't have what we have now, like technology of course, but we didn't even have books. The teacher would just lecture around or from the desk. They would just talk and talk and talk and talk. I would just open a book and read off the book and write, take notes on what the teacher was saying. That was super boring. I remember just always looking out the window wanting to fly away. I didn't want to be there. The good thing is that I hated it so much that

I did my best, trying not to do it again. I said, "Once and that's it. I want to make sure that I'm out of this place," because it was not invigorating. It was not.

Esme

“Diversity. There is extreme diversity within Mexican heritage women.”

Esme Garza, 41 years-old, is a PhD candidate. Esme expects to finish after a fifth year in her program—one more academic year. Esme taught in an elementary-level bilingual classroom for more than 15 years. Esme’s daughter Blanca, 17 years-old, is currently full of excitement—she just received her letter of acceptance to enter the same university as a college freshman in August. Blanca attended the elementary school wherein her mom taught and thinks it’s great they’ll be together at the university for a year. Esme’s son Moises, 9 years-old, attends third-grade where Esme formerly taught. This school is located in the Garza family’s neighborhood--only blocks away from their two-story home nestled within a recently-developed housing subdivision located in a large southwestern city. Within this area of the city, the community’s population is over 80 percent non-white, and the majority of residents, approximately 60 percent, identify as Latinx (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Esme attended grades K – 12 in public schools within this community with the exception of completing fifth grade in a southern Texas school. Graduating at 17 years-old, Esme “was stuck on going to a nearby four-year university, though most friends went to community college.” In fact, Esme’s mother’s friend cautioned that the guidance counselor at her daughter’s nearby high school asserted that it was an entirely out-of-the-question, poor choice to directly attend a four-year university after high school--that doing so would only invite failure. Esme’s mom supported her choice, and Esme

graduated four years later, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Bilingual Elementary Education. Esme's mother was supportive of her daughter's specific educational desires and preferences despite conflicting information. After graduating Esme immediately began work as a classroom teacher. Esme next earned a Master's degree in the area of early childhood--also from a state university, over the course of the next six years teaching full time.

Esme's father, Gustavo, his parents, grandparents and great-grandparents were born in the U.S. and are of Mexican heritage. Her father's family is not wholly certain of the specific geographic location of their Mexican origin. Gustavo was raised in Salinas, California near San Francisco. Owing to memories of having hands and bodies slapped at school when speaking their heritage language, Esme's grandparents decided to refrain from teaching or encouraging Spanish language fluency while raising Gustavo and his siblings. Thus, Esme's paternal relatives are non-Spanish speaking, and many have married persons of non-Latinx, European American heritage. Esme states that her paternal relatives: espouse low levels of Latinx ethnic pride, speak in a manner in which you can discern a California surfer or Valley girl stylistic speech, and are U.S. citizens who proudly embrace mainstream American identity.

In addition to Spanish language fluency and ethnic identity, religion is another area where Esme noted variability between her paternal and maternal sides. Her mother, Maria grew up in a conventional Catholic home, and maternal relatives practice traditional Catholicism. Esme's mother was born in and grew up in a small town in Mexico and participated in schooling through 6th grade. Esme's dad earned a high school diploma in the U.S. and later met Maria while in Mexico traveling for work. Knowing no

Spanish, Gustavo was motivated to learn Spanish vocabulary along with conversational ability in order to speak in Spanish with Maria. Esme reports that over time he learned a good deal more Spanish and maintains fluency. In efforts to develop bilingualism in their children, Maria and Gustavo determined that Esme and her five brothers would speak only English with their father, and only Spanish with their mother. Further, Maria would not let her children blend the two languages; Esme and her siblings spoke in either English or Spanish, unmixed, while communicating in their home. These deliberate, creative heritage language maintenance practices enacted by Esme's parents were successful in the support and development of bilingual abilities in all of their children. Such practices, although not referred to in the literature as specifically concerted cultivation, are indeed parenting practices that parents enlisted in particular effort to develop children's potential. Therefore, in this manner they could be classified as concerted cultivation, although to date the parenting practice of concerted cultivation has not been applied to heritage language maintenance.

During our interview, Esme deemed having a good education is somewhat important for a child to do well in life. She conveyed the importance of education has lessened over the years. Esme expressed awareness that college does not equate to success in the following quote:

I've seen so many students go to college, and then somehow really struggle getting a job, really struggle with—sometimes with emotional issues that I feel that education could help in some ways, but somehow, something gets missed. More recently, just watching people who didn't even attend college and can be

just as happy and successful and really value the things that you think education give[s] you, but it doesn't give you.

Reyna

“I understand completely, completely understand it. If people are having conversations in Spanish I totally understand.”

After driving a distance outside of the city through cotton fields and other types of farmland, I arrived at Reyna's charming home located within a new planned gated community. Within the living room many silver clothing racks displayed brightly colored women's business casual dresses, tops and skirts, evidence of Reyna's personal business, her entrepreneurship in women's fashion. Reyna, 36-years-old, is also a veteran public school educator who teaches fifth grade, and a mother to two young children aged 5 and 9 years old. Reyna was born in south Texas; her father, paternal grandparents and paternal great grandfather were born in a Texas border town. For quite some time, Reyna's paternal lineage historically resided in this region--before the land was deemed within U.S. boundary lines. Reyna is the oldest sibling of three children in her family of origin. In the summer after fifth grade, the family relocated from Texas to Las Vegas, Nevada as her father took employment there. At that time, the family stopped attending Catholic church services. As Reyna explained,

I feel like religion was really a big part of my life in Texas, and then once we moved to Reno, it was like my parents were like, we don't have to go to church, we just didn't do anything. So we never went to church. Rarely did we go to church ever. It just stopped completely. We just didn't do it. Then I grew up without anything really.

Reyna's mother along with both of her maternal grandparents were born in Mexico. Reyna's mother came to the U.S. when she was seven years old, and experienced physical punishment in school for speaking Spanish to include being smacked on the hands while on the playground. Therefore, though Reyna remembered her parents speaking in Spanish quite often, her parents didn't insist upon Reyna and her siblings becoming Spanish speakers. She explained, "They never forced us to learn Spanish. It was never like, 'You have to learn how to speak Spanish.' " Nonetheless, Reyna recounted that she always understood Spanish spoken by her parents and extended family members.

In other words, Reyna mastered listening comprehension, also called receptive language ability, in Spanish. Reyna remembered that throughout her upbringing she firmly resisted speaking Spanish aloud even when prompted by family members. Though Reyna refused to orally produce speech in Spanish, receptive Spanish skills are illustrated by her favorite childhood memory of listening at length to detailed stories told entirely in Spanish by her *abuela*. These stories were prompted by old photographs of her maternal grandparents' early adulthood in Mexico City that she and her *abuela* often gazed upon together. Reyna illustrates, "We have old pictures of them that I just find so fascinating. I always have. They were in Mexico City as well. There were photographers on the street. The photographers would take pictures of you as you were walking down the sidewalk. My grandmother's fashion is just so amazing."

As a fifth grade teacher in a diverse elementary school, Reyna states that she utilizes her knowledge of Spanish to speak as accurately as she can with parents who are Spanish speakers. She explained, "I don't know what it is, but I think I get embarrassed or

I feel like I don't speak well, so I don't speak it as much as I probably could. I try, especially conferences with parents.” Further, Reyna testifies that although she is far from a perfect Spanish speaker the parents of her students show appreciation for her efforts to communicate with them in their home language.

Reyna believes that the influence of a good education is very important for a child to do well in life. She believes that this has changed—that it has become much more important for a child to experience a good education for that child to do well in life. Reyna had a clear memory about having selected her current career as an educator. She conveyed, “I am a teacher because that's what I've always wanted to be. I've always wanted to be a teacher. Since I was in first grade I knew I wanted to be a teacher.”

During her not so happy high school years, Reyna engaged her musical talents by participating in the band and devoting herself to intense practice, becoming an outstanding musician of her instrument. Reyna went to college on a music scholarship for the flute. While in college Reyna didn't want to be in the orchestra long-term, or to work as a band teacher. Reflecting on a self-observed, ongoing personal drive “to do better” Reyna remarked:

I always want to keep going, but the challenge is I don't know what I want my end ... I don't see the end thing. I have a Bachelor's. I have two Master's degrees. I wanted to be a principal, but now I'm not so sure I want to be a principal anymore. It's like I get there and then once I get there I'm like, "Well I don't know if I want to do that anymore."

Frida

“I never thought about college, had it not been for her [high school counselor].”

I was invited to Frida's home for our first interview, a ranch house located in an established neighborhood nestled in foothills adjacent to a large southwestern metropolitan city. Sitting at her dining table covered in a white tablecloth, adorned with a glass vase filled with long lilac gladiolas, we nibbled snacks arranged on a china plate: party crackers, sliced cheese, salami, and green-ringed white pear slices sprinkled with chili powder.

Frida, 63 years old, grew up in a small Arizona town located on the border line between U.S. and Mexico. Being the eldest, Frida led the way for four siblings while growing up; Frida took pride in helping siblings with homework. Her father worked in construction, and she mentioned that there, "...was very little money." About her father, Frida stated, "My dad was a wonderful influence; he does not fit at all the traditional Latinx male. He was gentle, he was kind, and he helped my mom diaper my sister." Family literacy, particularly dual language maintenance was made a priority in her family's home. Frida stated,

There was a rule in my family that you only spoke English at school, and Spanish at home. So, he [father] only spoke Spanish, so in order to be respectful to my dad, we spoke Spanish at home and English at school. That was very important, for my family to keep the language but to also learn English.

Frida's parents deliberate heritage language maintenance practices enacted by were successful in the support and development of bilingual abilities in all of their children. Such practices, although not referred to in the literature as specifically concerted cultivation, are indeed parenting practices that Frida's parents enlisted in particular effort to develop their children's potential. Therefore, in this manner they could be classified as

concerted cultivation, although to date the parenting practice of concerted cultivation has not been applied to heritage language maintenance.

Frida's mother and her maternal grandmother were born on the U.S. side of the Arizona border. Frida's maternal grandfather, her father and both of his parents were born on the Mexico side of the Arizona border. Frida's family had property in both countries. The geographical significance of her upbringing is conveyed in Frida's following statement. "I grew up in the border in Arizona. [This] contribute[d] greatly to the person that I am. The way I live my life has a lot to do with growing up with I think one foot almost on each country, Mexico and the U.S."

As a high school guidance counselor in a large southwestern urban school of approximately 2,700 students, Frida is responsible for more than 600 students on her caseload. This counselor to student ratio is lower than many large urban high schools, yet the national average is one guidance counselor for every 470 high school pupils (citation). Frida's district office reports that the school district's population consists of 95% minority students. Frida is one of two counselors at the high school whose caseloads primarily consist of students categorized as English language learners. In addition to scheduling and monitoring her large caseload of students, Frida conducts topical support groups; this academic year one of her groups consists of emancipated youth living without family. These young people either arrived in the U.S. alone, or their family decided to return to their citizenship country--while these individual students chose to stay in the U.S.. Frida explained almost all youth in such circumstances eventually yield by returning to countries of origin, rejoining family members. Moreover, Frida took on an

additional leadership role beyond typical work week duties; for three years now she has served as director for the annual school-wide, multi-night diversity camp held in Prescott.

Frida has been working in the counseling profession for 28 years and has raised two adult sons with whom she stays connected to by speaking with them over the phone weekly, and gathering with them bimonthly to enjoy dinner. When considering whether a good education is important for a child to do well in life, Frida concurs that it is very important. She believes that the impact of a child obtaining a good education has changed to be more essential. In other words, the importance of having a good education for child to do well in life has greatly increased over time.

While travelling by car, the four-year university that Frida elected to attend was four hours away from where she grew up; she departed the border town at 18 years of age, and was the first person in her family to attend post-secondary education. Frida remembers her high school counselor mentoring her in regard to college choices in her quote below,

Well, she thought U of X was probably a better choice, because it was close to home, but I actually wanted to [go] further from home. I did both, and actually XSU ended up giving me more money, which is why I went to XSU. I got a scholarship from them.

Helen

“Latina or Chicana is fine or Mexican American. Either or all I answer to.”

Helen used multiple terms when speaking about her ethnicity and the ethnicity of persons residing in her community which was just down the road from where Esme

taught elementary school for over a decade. Helen provided additional details regarding use of ethnic racial identifying terms,:

I think when we were growing up, we just called ourselves Mexican Americans.

Actually, Chicanas is the term that I'm just embracing now as an adult, at my age, at this level of education. Latina was something I started calling myself more when I went to [professional graduate] school. Up to then, it was Mexican American.

Helen is 55 years old, a college instructor, PhD student, and mother to four adult children ranging in age from 36 through 27 years. Helen lives in the house where she and her twelve siblings grew up. This home, located in a large southwest city, is situated within an ethnic enclave immediately adjacent to a historically famous barrio about which her community college history professor, Dr. Pete Dimas, wrote a book.

Participation in this professor's history course was "one of the major turning points in my undergraduate work." Dr. Dimas taught history from a non-Eurocentric perspective.

Helen explained, "He presented United States. history as originating through Mexico, not the pilgrim route." Dr. Dimas lectured about events that took place near the southern border of Arizona, including stories of injustices and clashes between indigenous peoples and the Spaniards. Both of Helen's parents were born in Mexico, whereas Helen was born on the Arizona side of the state's southern border. As second youngest of her parents' twelve children, she remembers being about nine years of age when all of her older siblings left home.

Describing grade school, Helen expresses, "It was pretty segregated in the sense that we had probably ninety-nine percent Latina, Chicanas, Mexican Americans in this

particular neighborhood that grew up here.” Further, Helen explained that all her teachers were, “Anglo” though they were, “very caring people.” In regard to school participation and parent-teacher partnerships, Helen relayed that, “My dad was very hands-off. He says, ‘I wouldn't come to you for advice on being a master butcher. That's my specialty. You're the teacher. You teach my children.’”

In the course of his childhood, Helen’s father did not participate in traditional formal education beyond 6th grade. Nonetheless, like Helen, he demonstrated impressive capacity for words and language. His grandmother, an immigrant from Spain where she had worked as a university professor in Salamanca, was brought over to marry in the Americas where she taught Helen’s father three or four different languages while he was very young. Helen explained, “He knew English. He knew the indigenous language. He knew Spanish. At three years old, he was reading the bible to the women's sewing circle.” Ultimately, Helen’s father and mother participated in a community-based program whereby both earned GEDs while in their forties.

When considering whether a good education is important for a child to do well in life, Helen concurs that it is very important. She believes that the impact of a child obtaining a good education has changed over time to be more important. In other words, the importance of having a good education for child to do well in life has become more important over time.

Helen suspected her grade school teachers to be unbelieving her displays of outstanding verbal intelligence. Helen recalled, “I remember in grade school being thought of as being gifted and always being pulled out of class because I knew these words and I knew what they meant.” She explained further, “They didn't have a gifted

program at that time in '73, '74 or '72. They would just pull me out of class to take these higher comprehension tests. Then they would whisper, but they never told me anything.” Intergenerationally, both Helen’s grandfather and Helen demonstrated a facility and motivation, for languages, literacy, reading and words.

Helen stated that she was currently fluently bilingual in both Spanish and English, although English was her first language. Helen shared that she taught herself Spanish in her early twenties, and that she engaged actively and fluently in both languages across settings and activities. For example, she facilitated a community support group in Spanish for many years.

While in grade school, Helen espoused feelings of injustice when she observed classmates being treated unfairly, either by teachers or peers. A special memory that stands out for Helen is when, while 6 years old, she became a reader during first grade. She recalled:

When I learned how to read, I felt like somebody had handed me the keys to the kingdom. I felt like it was the greatest gift on Earth to be able to read. I remember it felt like somebody took like blinders or shackles or the skin off my eyes and I could see. I was reading everything.

Alazne Pilar

“School makes you very aware. Teachers couldn't pronounce my name. That was always very telling for me, like, ‘I'm different. You can't even pronounce ...’”

During a late afternoon Alazne Pilar and I met in her classroom located within a large urban high school for our first interview. This is her eighteenth year as a public school teacher, she is 45 years old and mother of two children aged thirteen and eighteen.

Alazne Pilar indicated that having a good education is very important for a child to do well in life. She feels that having a good education has become moderately more important over the years. Alazne Pilar explained:

“I feel like maybe a lot of important people haven't even finished maybe their higher education, but yet, certain jobs don't require that. I feel technology's one of them. That's a component I'm not very good at, but they are. So, I don't know.... But I'm an educator so I will always say, right?”

Alazne Pilar commented that her teachers were always nice, but that her name was tricky to pronounce in addition to being rarely seen. She said, “I mean, that's difficult for somebody that knows Spanish, for heaven's sake.” Alazne's mother imparted to Alazne that she was bestowed the name of her father's mother. Alazne Pilar shared, “And, you know, she once told me that ... She said to me, ‘Your father loved your grandmother. Loved her. So he named you after her.’ And for me, that did it. I love my name.” An only child, both of Alazne's parents were born in Mexico. She noted:

“I understood that my parents came here for a better life. And almost like visitors. I've always known, you know, our roots are not originally from here. My parents were always very cautious to be respectful. And it's almost like we had our place, you know? It's sad, but it's true.”

Before starting kindergarten, Alazne Pilar was taught to read in Spanish by her mother. Alazne Pilar remembers sitting on her lap while her mother went over and over lines of text in a book until she learned to read. Teaching her to read before kindergarten was an example of a ‘concerted cultivation’ parenting practice, evidenced by Alazne Pilar's mother investing directed time and activity towards developing individual

potential and abilities in her child. Although she had little formal education and was of lower socioeconomic means, Alazne Pilar's non-English speaking mother enthusiastically taught her to read at an early age. Alazne recalled never hearing others speaking Spanish in school, kindergarten through third grade. Moreover, she explained: "But then, fourth grade I remember, because I was placed in fourth grade with a separate group and that's when I noticed, 'Hey, we're all brown.' That's when I noticed." Alazne's segregated placement lasted all of fourth grade, and she distrusts that it was founded on accurate pedagogical reasoning.

She met her husband in high school, a place where she liked her teachers, and where she earned good grades that would send her to a nearby four year college on scholarship. As an only child she felt bad about leaving her parents to attend post-secondary education, so she lived at home navigating both worlds. She recalled, "...they didn't want me to move out." Alazne remembered, "So college was not a very happy time, but, again, it's that parents don't quite understand what you're doing."

While growing up Alazne observed a salient absence of Latinx cultural representation in her community in comparison to current times. She stated, "There wasn't such a big population of Hispanics as it is now. So the population wasn't as big. Like, we would go to stores. Smitty's was big in my time. And Smitty's, you know, there was no Hispanic food section, you know what I mean?" Evincing that local Latinx population had grown over the years, Alazne pointed out that current existence of billboards in Spanish show an abundance of business is being transacted in Spanish. Further, she stated, "Spanish wasn't the norm, you know, where now you can find translators, you can literally go to a store and find somebody to translate for you, you

know?” Having far fewer Spanish speakers available a few decades ago necessitated Alazne participating as a translator for her parents beginning at five years of age. Alazne communicated the following perspective on immigration:

And, you know, I think for the most part, people that come, immigrants, legal, not legal, part of me is very grateful and loving of this country, and I wish some people would understand that. And nobody's trying to take over, either. You see all this Spanish and you see all of these languages, but it's just because it's people, and there's money, and there's business to get done.

Concluding Comment

Although portraiture research methodology is not classified as scientific inquiry in the strictest sense of the term (Lincoln, 2005), it is an arts-based technique that has been popular in educational psychology. Most recently it has been used for promote social justice awareness via cultural humility training for university students (Story Saur & Lalvani, 2017).

In the participants’ portraiture above, the ways that some of the parenting practices may be classified as concerted cultivation are indicated. The next chapter will explore this parenting style in more depth across intergenerational parenting practices from life narrative of mothers. Intergenerational aspects of parenting are manifest throughout the portrayals. Although rare, intergenerational parenting can be found in the literature base documenting mothers’ from non-dominant cultures experiences (Gutiérrez, 2016; Sotello Turner, Harris, & Sotello Garcia, 2006). Both Sotello Turner, Harris, and Sotello Garcia (2006) and Gutiérrez (2016) observed social inequities and marginalization of family members and others in community contexts of development,

yet intergenerational strengths inherent in non-dominant culture families are evident. Within these accounts, families' resources and efforts were generatively applied to the outlets of teaching, scholarship, and activism toward a more just society.

Miller-McLemore (2003) explained that generativity can be defined as “concern for establishing and guiding the next generation...” (179) Miller-McLemore (2003) further asserted that, “The *strength of the generations* ...depends on it.” (179) In the next chapter, I analyze these narratives in relation to parenting practices and a redemptive framework.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

Chapter 5 is organized sequentially according to the order of the following research questions. My research questions were:

1. How do Mexican American mothers who have high academic achievement narrate their life stories?
2. What developmental influences do highly educated Mexican American mothers mention as supporting their academic success?
3. How do Mexican American mothers' experiences compare with the concerted cultivation parenting style?

As previously noted in Chapter 1, I undertook this dissertation research project to learn phenomenological understandings and hear about lived experiences on the topics of intergenerational mothering, parenting, and schooling from 6 Latina mothers as they remembered and imparted life stories during semi-structured life narrative interviews. What is more, I was interested in the choices they made about parenting and how they were parented.

Mothers' Foremost Pattern of Storytelling

How do Mexican American mothers who have high academic achieved narrate their life stories? From my phenomenological, multiple case study dissertation investigation, this research question sought to determine if there was a coherently distinct manner across all six case studies about how life story narratives were conveyed. An important finding was that this group of Mexican American women who have achieved

high academic success navigate meanings of challenge and suffering from a redemptive³ standpoint. As compared to before this study, what we now know is that espousing a redemptive outlook may be strategic in achieving high academic success for Latina women from working and middle-class families who have been first and second generation attendees in higher education. I use the term “high academic achiever” in this dissertation study to mean that the participant has earned at least one master’s degree beyond the bachelor’s degree.

Narrating one’s life with redemptive sequences demonstrates a person’s redemptive standpoint, an aspect of personality that remains stable over time (McAdams, 2006; 2013). This is a character strength associated with greater well-being, better health outcomes, and it is an outlook that leads to improved future benefits (McAdams, 2006; 2013). High academic achievement is associated with a redemptive outlook for this group of Latina women. As evidenced in the distinct, optimistic manner that their stories were narrated, what we now know after this research has been conducted is that a group of academically successful Latina mothers of Mexican heritage identify their life stories within a redemptive perspective. These results align with similarly-aged generative adults from McAdam’s (2006; 2013) narrative life research. What is more, these mothers’ voices add a Latinx perspective to this body of research that has been primarily conducted with White and African American adult participants.

³ The psychological definition of redemption employed within this manuscript (McAdams, 2006; 2013) differs entirely from dictionary and religious definitions of redemption. To be clear, usage of the term redemption herein does not connote sin. There is no connection to religion, spirituality or religious beliefs with its use. Further, usage of the term does not signify transactions, whether material or abstract, pertaining to purchase or payment.

Redemptive stories materialized throughout participating Latina mothers' life narratives and regularly appeared without prompting from a directed question on the interview protocol. For example, while Alazne Pilar and I spoke at the outset of our third meeting before interview questions were asked, Alazne Pilar penciled in Concerted Cultivation form I has presented to her. Spontaneously, she imparted a traumatic life event by way of redemptive language. This story, along with a sample of the mothers' stories narrated in distinguishably redemptive manner are presented below. Specific interview questions that preceded each story are provided; if redemptive narratives did not directly follow from a question prompt, I describe the context from which the redemptive story emerged.

Mothers' Redemptive Narratives

These intergenerational stories cover a variety of topics to include: parenting challenges Frida faced during her sons' adolescent years, a problem Margarita confronted with her son's schooling, and the story of Reyna's father's pivotal hospitalization. Lastly, Alazne Pilar narrates the loss of her mother in a redemptive sequence. Each story presented was naturally told by the speaker within a redemptive framework (McAdams, 2013)—each mother spontaneously narrated the story in this manner. In other words, mothers used the redemptive story-telling frame of finding growth or a positive outcome while narrating negative life events. A few examples of redemptive story-framing include: a) having a bad job, yet then ending up with a new position that was better overall, b) realizing from illness that one has come to a better understanding, and c) challenges and stress lead one to espouse a positive outlook on life.

The story-telling style reveals, to some degree, the way speakers make sense of adversity. We begin with Esme's statement that she shared during our first session. Her response stemmed from a specific question within the interview protocol: Please describe the single greatest challenge that you've faced.

What has been challenging? There have been many things that have been challenging. A lot of things have been challenging, but I've always had the—I guess the drive to like, okay, you got to move on. I don't like dwelling in the past. I guess I have this disposition, belief that if I don't keep going, the train will run me over, so I got to just keep going, even though things get rough and tough.

(Esme)

McAdams (2013) asserts that people who are redemptive thinkers are, "...people who find ways to grow and move forward in life." Moreover, his research illustrates that those who transform trauma and adversity into redemptive life narratives reap benefits of improved health and greater well-being, along with continued beneficial outcomes whilst facing future bad events (McAdams, 2013). In the next scene Margarita describes a negative event in her son's elementary schooling. The response was narrated after being asked the following question from the protocol from interview one: Next, I'll ask you to describe an important key event or scene which stands out to you that is related to being Latinx and to your child's formal schooling.

I want to make sure that he fits in, but I also want to make sure that as a mom I do get involved, more than my mom used to. She did her best. I'm not complaining or anything, I'm so grateful. I want to be part of the society too as a mom. I don't want to be like I used to be, like, "This is too hard, this is too challenging. I'll just

go back to Mexico." I want to be involved, and I want my son also to be part of this world and see him be part of it.

He was in this gifted program in first and second grade, but his second grade teacher didn't like him at all. Sometimes I wondered could it be because he's Mexican? Could it be because ... Why? It took me years to understand that if he feels, or he used to feel, threatened in an atmosphere he's going to act up. The more intimidated he felt by the teacher, the more he would act up. It was a vicious cycle. I wanted him so badly to be part of that program because it was for gifted kids, and my son is gifted. I spoke with the principal, and the principal didn't seem to care at all. I took him out of the school. It's okay now. Thanks to that, I moved schools, and he landed in a much better environment. The teacher was an angel. She liked him. She actually appreciated a lot of things in him, like his creativity, his intelligence. (Margarita)

This school involvement advocacy sequence, relayed by Margarita in a redemptive manner, demonstrates what McAdams (2013) refers to as a generative task of parenting, "encouraging their children's individuality and uniqueness" (p. 158). Further, Margarita's actions depict parenting behaviors that may be labeled as concerted cultivation. Annette Lareau (2012) uses the term concerted cultivation to describe intentional efforts and actions by parents made on behalf of and in support of helping their child develop to achieve her or his individual potential.

The next passage conveys Reyna's response to the following question from interview two's protocol: Looking back over your entire life, please identify and describe

a scene or period in your life, including the present time, wherein you or a close family member confronted a major health problem, challenge, or crisis.

My dad was in the hospital a lot. He would just not stop drinking alcohol. He wouldn't stop. This was when I was in my twenties. This is when it got really bad. So it was like November where he was really, really sick. We went to the hospital and were there with him, and the doctor was there, and his liver, he was showing how big my dad's liver was and how hard it was. It was really bad. My wedding was in January, and they told us he might not even make it. That's how bad it was.

He did. He made it. Yeah. He's sober now, so ... I want to say two years now. It's changed my awareness of what I put in my body and how I take care of myself. He's not a healthy person. So I see all of that, and it's like well that's a part of me, too. I don't want to be like that, so have to do the best I can do to take care of myself. (Reyna)

The above story of healing can be categorized as using recovery language, one of six distinct languages of redemption that McAdams (2013) has documented with people in the U.S. Recovery, enlightenment, and development are the three languages of redemption that were utilized by mothers. Their narratives consisted of only these three of the six total types of languages of redemption. Enlightenment stories consist of a redemptive move from ignorance to knowledge and developmental stories include psychological growth or moral development and are grounded often in the domain the parenting (McAdams, 2013).

In my dissertation project's interviewing protocol, the final question in interview two reads, "In your life, how do you understand being a parent? What meaning do you make about being a parent?" Frida responded to this enquiry with the following redemptive narrative.

It's probably the most important role that I play in my life. I have to say. With adult children, I still take that role. If my kids aren't doing well, I don't feel I'm doing well. My belief is that society does judge you. That if when your kids don't do well, that it's like "What did you do as a parent?" When my kids got in trouble or when they were having their alcohol and drug issues, I felt like people looked at me and said, "What did you do" or "What didn't you do" as a parent, as a mom to cause your kids to be abusing drugs or alcohol. I feel like there was a lot of judgment.

But I also now believe that my kids are alive and well because I learned where the resources were and I wasn't afraid to ask for help. I wasn't embarrassed to say, yes, my kid needs counseling for substance abuse or alcohol. Then, also too, to I think not be so hard on myself and accept that genetics was a huge part of it. My mom and dad did not drink, but their siblings did and there were issues. So I think I've been more forgiving with myself as I read things and realized how much genetics, what a huge role genetics have to play. (Frida)

In Frida's redemptive story we can pinpoint two of McAdams's languages of redemption, both enlightenment as well as development. Regarding the development language in her story, Frida reveals that she did what it took to be an effective parent, overcoming possible judgment of others by seeking out and providing support on behalf of her sons'

health and well-being. Considering risks involved with teen substance abuse and/or alcohol dependency, their being alive and well may well be fully attributed to her prompt and thorough parenting efforts. Frida's discovery of the hereditary nature of alcoholism can be categorized as an enlightenment language of redemption, a story of insight (McAdams, 2013).

The next redemptive narrative took place while Alazne Pilar and I chatted at the outset of our first interview, prior to any questions from the protocol being announced. Alazne Pilar narrated the story as she sat across from me, penciling in the demographic form I presented. Alazne Pilar named her second child Gloria for her mother who died unexpectedly and early from a sudden brain aneurysm when Alazne Pilar was pregnant with her first child. Alazne Pilar conveys this loss within a framework of redemption.

It was just a matter of hours for my mom. It was just a matter of hours. I was able to see her, help her. But, you know what? My mom was a very strong woman, very, very strong, very strict woman. Just very stoic, and so she tried to bring me up that way. There was rules to follow. But, I always felt loved. She wasn't very huggy. She didn't show it, but for some reason, I just knew that. When she passed away, I figured she wouldn't want me to just be weak and crying, so I figured okay, I had to honor her, like everything she had taught me, I had to put into practice. It was very hard, because in an instant, you have to grow up. You just have to be.

But like I said, I would just remember and then I would tell myself what would my mom do? Then, I would think back to her life. She didn't drive. She was here, but she didn't drive. When things would get hard for me, I remember

thinking okay, okay. Your mom did all this without driving, without English. Then, I would say you can drive. You have all this. You can do it. Now, it's like let's move on. Let's keep going. Let's keep going, and so that was a big help. That was a big, big help all the time. As hard as it was, I would tell myself she wouldn't want you to break down crying and show all this emotion. It's like you've got to continue and it's going to be okay. It was. Little by little, it was. It was.

(Alazne Pilar)

Considering the range of the mothers' ages (thirty-six to sixty-three years old), it is remarkable that all six narrated stories using a redemptive frame, although generativity is indeed Erikson's (1964) prescribed developmental goal for adults spanning these ages according to his lifespan identity theory. Two mothers, Esme and Helen, each referenced either how she lived according to a redemptive perspective (Esme), or how she perceived an abundance of good at the ratio of 10:1 as an outcome after a negative occurrence (Helen). Four other mothers' stories on topics of loss, parenting challenges, family illness, and children's school circumstances have been presented here as an illustration of data to support the research conclusion.

McAdams (1999) pointed out that most narrated events *are not* told in a redemptive framing. Nonetheless, throughout each of the six cases, many experiences were told in redemptive frames. To be clear, not every story told during each interview was relayed in a redemptive frame. This is demonstrated with the next example. When I asked Margarita what her greatest challenge in life had been, Margarita conveyed the story of the death of her mother who had passed away when her son was one-year-old,

approximately 13 years prior to the interview. Margarita ended this story by stating that she felt she hadn't personally done enough related to this incident prior to its occurrence. Because she did not conclude the event as having a beneficial ending, Margarita did not narrate this particular life event within a redemptive frame. As shown in the excerpt below, there was no mention of a positive outcome, nor was personal growth experienced at the story's conclusion.

It was the death of my mother. You know why it's so hard? Because I had a dream before. I've always been intuitive and I dream things. Anyway, with my mom I did have this dream. A man was in my dream, and he said, "I'm here to take your mom. I'm death, and I'm here to take your mom. I won't, but I'll be back in two years." Then I kind of doubted it. I kind of doubted God. I said, "What if she doesn't die? What if it's ..." Shame on me because I knew it. If it's a dream, then it is true, but I doubted it. I doubted it because I made selfish decisions, very selfish. I knew it, and that ... I carried that burden for a year or more, that guilt that I knew it, why didn't I do more? Why didn't I do this, why didn't I do that? (Margarita)

Resonant Claim

In this phenomenological, multiple case study investigation, Latina women who have high academic achievement can be said to accommodate challenge and suffering from a positive standpoint according to redemptive narrative data sequences (Sarbin, 1986). As compared to before this study, what we now know is that espousing a redemptive outlook may be strategic in achieving high academic success for Latina

women from working and middle class families who have been first and second⁴ generation attendees in higher education. Given the dearth of Latina women's voices within the realm of narrative life history, the fact that this group of generative Latina mothers' narrations were told within a redemptive framework as aligned to the literature base offers an important contribution to the literature.

In McAdams's (2013) description of adults who are highly generative and who have a redemptive self, he stipulates that in both white American and African American life narratives, the individual narrating possesses a sense of early advantage or of being special. Interestingly, this was the case in a single mother out of the six cases in my study wherein the mother expressed that in early life she felt special, chosen or that she had an advantage. The one mother, Helen, stated that she was labelled as gifted during elementary school. Helen remembered being pulled from class to participate in individual testing activities specifically designed for her and that she demonstrated high performance on these verbal assessments. It's possible that had McAdams's life story interview not been modified according to specific research questions within my dissertation study, a theme of feeling special, chosen, or of having had an advantage early in life would have emerged in the mothers' life narratives.

A current study by a communications scholar (Horstman, 2018) using a 90% white sample (two percent of mother-daughter dyads were Latina and eight percent were of other ethnicities; no other demographic information was given) utilized resilience theory to frame sequences of difficult life events that daughters were asked to write about

⁴ Reyna's father completed a bachelor's degree and Margarita's older brother attended college while she was in high school.

and then prompted to discuss with their mothers. Horstman's (2018) results showed that mother (ages 40-66) and daughter (ages 18-33) communication increased sequences of resilience (redemption) within daughter's narratives of difficult life events. Horstman's (2018) experimental findings suggest interpersonal socialization is a mechanism that can build one's strength-based approach of attributing meaning within a redemptive lens. Horstman's conclusion (2018) aligns with the intergenerational feature of the Chicana M(other)work framework and may be particularly connected with Chicana M(other)work's *in vivo* application of verbal micro-affirmations in support of mothers observed engaging in difficult circumstances (Caballero et al., 2017) in contextualized settings.

Crystallization of Resonant Claim

Credibility of findings is supported when researchers enlist crystallization techniques (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). One crystallization technique is to employ additional data points that serve to increase credibility of findings (Tracy, 2013). Chicana M(other)work Framework (Caballero et al., 2017) is a framework based upon both Collins's (2005) intersectional mothering and Chicana feminism and includes ideals of mothering being composed of care work that is: intergenerational, carves space, heals mothers' selves, is an imaginary, and that makes their labor visible. Personal narratives within their recent article (Caballero et al., 2017) employ redemptive storytelling frames that match mothers' narratives from my dissertation study in redemptive, generative quality and manner as illustrated by the following examples. Michelle Téllez opens the article by discussing the negative event of not being granted tenure at her prior institution. Characteristic of the redemptive storytelling frame, she then pinpoints two

strengths that emerged from experiencing this negative life event. First, she renewed her commitment to be a present, supportive and caring parent to her daughter, but secondly, she also forged a commitment to herself, to remain dedicated to her own writing and work as an academic (Caballero et al., 2017) now that she was employed on a tenure track appointment at a different Research I university. Dr. Téllez's coauthor, Christine Vega, shared the following redemptive quote, "Because I don't belong, I organize and fight for systematic and academic changes for all parenting students on my campus..." (55; Caballero et al., 2017). Also within this article by Caballero et al. (2017), Judith Pérez-Torres narrates her story in a redemptive manner. Judith Pérez-Torres described having developed a wiser understanding from her current perspective after having initially internalized leaving work in the academy as being a personal failure. Whereas now she accepts, advocates, and values the female care work of mothering her children as being exactly what she is supposed to be doing--equally as much as her previously privileged calling to pursue scholarship.

Caballero et al. (2017) was written by a collective of five high academic achieving Chicana mothers who grew up in working class families of origin. Each mother-author of the Chicana M(other)work collective (Caballero et al., 2017) had earned a PhD, or was enrolled in the active process thereof. Two important things are made possible by exploring Chicana M(other)work. Chicana M(other)work (Caballero et al., 2017) represents a framework for exploring Latina mother narratives that includes history and power relations, acknowledging contextual influence from institutions as well as stigmatizing master narratives from the macrosystem as contributing to identity development. Second, findings that another group of high academically achieving

Mexican American mothers' narrative life stories are conveyed in redemptive storytelling manner serves to crystallize findings and the claim made in my dissertation research study. Personal narratives shared from each of the five authors within (Caballero et al., 2017) not only employ redemptive storytelling frames that match mothers' narratives from my dissertation study in redemptive, generative quality and manner, but in an additional dimension, that of a micro-affirmative interactional pattern described in their article as being key within the Chicana M(other)work Collective. This interactional pattern was displayed within the following mother's narrative life story data from my dissertation research study.

Chicana M(other)work (Caballero et al., 2017) explained that micro-affirmations are an illustrative example of mothering that is practiced and encouraged within their framework. The following excerpt from my dissertation study's narrative data reveals Esme encountered support from another mother in her community via micro-affirmations during a time of need. This example shows further alignment between the two groups of high academic achieving mothers of Mexican heritage. Also, Esme described offering a verbal micro-affirmation in support of another mother in the throes of experiencing a challenging mother moment:

I saw this young girl at the church, she was crying, "I don't like yelling at my kids but I get so overwhelmed sometimes and I feel like I'm a horrible mom." I said, "You know what? That's normal. It's normal to feel that way but you're not a horrible mom."

I remember feeling one day really frustrated with my son. One day we were at a baby shower or something and this older woman from the church

community, she walked by me and she said, "Hi." And then she must have seen my face because she said, "Are you okay?" I said, "Yeah." She said, "He'll get over that phase." I felt like she understood me. She said, "Don't ever let anyone make you feel weird about how you're raising your son. Before you know it he'll grow out of that. You're going to raise him however you want to raise him." She told me these words. (Esme)

Chicana M(other)work's (Caballero et al., 2017) *in vivo* application of verbal micro-affirmations in support of mothers observed engaging in difficult circumstances in contextualized settings directly aligns with Esme's personal narrative of doing, and of being the recipient of similar practices. The giving and taking within Esme's narrated story embodies collective practices foundational within a Chicana M(other)work perspective.

Concerted Cultivation Parenting Style

This study was designed to access intergenerational life story narratives on parenting styles both from mothers' families of orientation along with the mothers' current parenting practices within their families of procreation. To answer the research question, How do Mexican American mothers' experiences compare research regarding the concerted cultivation parenting style? Data was first analyzed deductively according to chunked components of Lareau's two types of parenting: natural growth and concerted cultivation. Subsequent rounds of analysis then took place wherein transcripts were read repeatedly to inductively glean 'deliberate' parent socialization practices ancillary to concerted cultivation, but that extended beyond the style that Lareau described as natural growth. In particular, parenting practices that were implemented with an intention of

deliberately championing growth and/or skills development of potential in the target child were coded as concerted cultivation.

A key element of concerted cultivation is emphasizing and developing individual skills or talents that the child is inherently motivated and interested in pursuing. Reyna stated that one thing that is different from her family of orientation is that in her family of procreation she and her husband are sure to engage in: "...taking the time out to look at the kids' interests and find things that they want to do." This parental intentional interest in trying to discover what particular interests an individual child has and then supporting the interests with resources such a one to one expert guidance (e.g., music tutoring) is a hallmark of the concerted cultivation parenting style. This philosophy of parenting and the concomitant parenting behaviors are associated with Lareau's parenting style of concerted cultivation. As aligned with the existing literature base on White and African American families, this study extends the scholarly knowledge base by being one of the first investigations illustrating that Mexican American mothers with high academic achievement engage in the parenting style of concerted cultivation as would be expected for mothers of the levels of education and income that the participants within my study held. As compared to before this study, what we now know is that concerted cultivation is a parenting style that this group of Mexican American mothers of high educational attainment engage in with their children.

Further, an important finding was that narratives reveal that within mothers' families of orientation sequences of deliberate parent behaviors and socialization practices of an intentional nature that extended beyond acceptance of the child's natural growth trajectory as per Lareau's natural growth style of parenting seen in working class

and low income families in Lareau's in-depth ethnography with White and African American families (2003; 2011). This study extends the scholarly knowledge base as compared to before this study because what we now know is that seedlings of a type of concerted cultivation parenting style were evidenced within families of orientation of this group of Mexican American mothers of high educational attainment. The parents within mothers' families of orientation held low levels of formal education and controlled limited amounts of resources, yet the parents of the highly academic achieving mothers in this study practiced deliberate parenting in efforts to maximize their children's potential. Musicality was a theme that permeated throughout each case study in an intergenerational manner both within families of orientation and also families of procreation.

Musicality and Musical Instruments

While growing up in a small town in rural Mexico, Esme's mother, Maria, was celebrated for her compelling singing voice. She sang at town celebrations and at church events. She was skilled at remembering lyrics, and although there wasn't formal schooling available in her community, the town pooled funds to pay for Maria's enrollment and attendance at a nearby school up through sixth grade as a special privilege. Maria was the only female child in the town who was afforded this extensive level of schooling. Esme describes her mother, Maria, as someone who still loves to read.

Esme enjoys playing multiple instruments. She taught herself how to play them at home, independently, during childhood. While a youth, Esme's high school band teacher taught her to formally read music. As a mother, Esme arranges for one to one musical tutoring, on a weekly basis for her daughter. These private music lessons are something Esme didn't have access to. However, Esme learned how to play multiple instruments in

her family of orientation by self-instructing. She had this to say about her daughter's choice of instrument:

I always wanted her to be in Mariachi. I tried to convince her to play the violin. No, she wanted to play the saxophone. I was pushing all these things that I'm so proud of, it's a part of traditional cultural things. I love Mariachi music. I love speaking Spanish. Because that's connected to my mom's family. (Esme)

Following up on comments Reyna shared previously in this section about discovering inherent interests within her children that she could supportively develop, Reyna stated:

Probably involving the kids in activities that they enjoy. Music is a big one. We always listen to music and talk about music and the kids are familiar with that kind of stuff, so keeping that music vein through our family and encouraging that. If they want to play an instrument, we'll definitely support it, that kind of stuff, buying them musical instruments. Just keeping that musical vibe in the family. (Reyna)

Intergenerationally, the importance of music as well as presence of musical ability is revealed in Reyna's narratives: she earned a flute musical scholarship that sent her to college and her father was in a band throughout her youth. The person who Reyna stated had the greatest positive influence on her story was Reyna's grandfather. His musical ability was discovered at a young age. At under ten years old he was taken to Mexico City to be formally trained. He is currently 94 years old and living in Thailand. Reyna elaborated:

He was a musician. He had a band like Ricky Ricardo. He was the singer and then he had the orchestra behind him kind of thing. That was his thing. He traveled. He is in the Tejano Music Hall of Fame. After that he worked, again, for the Air Force as a civilian and did stuff there. He's just a really neat person. He is just an amazing person. I always want to make him proud. He has been very successful in his life. (Reyna)

Intergenerational ‘Concerted Cultivation’ of Heritage Language

Parents across a few of the mothers’ families of orientation engaged in structured, deliberate practices to support heritage language development, maintenance and to instill bilingual capabilities in their children. Both Esme’s and Frida’s families of orientation adopted similar effective strategies that promoted bilingual language development. As one of their parents was stronger in English (for Esme, her father and for Frida, her mother) children in the family communicated in specific language, one to each parent. In the following excerpt, Esme talked about her mother and father’s early communication together. She also describes the parenting practices that her parents designed to maintain and promote bilingual ability in her family of orientation:

They connected. She came here. She moved here. My mom knew zero English, and my dad knew Spanish, but very choppy Spanish. They got together. My dad learned so much Spanish, and my mom learned English. We were raised in a home where with my mom, to today, I speak Spanish. I turn to my dad, I speak English. My mom never let us mix them. You're speaking to me in Spanish. Speak only Spanish. Don't mix it. We all became very bilingual. I don't remember

learning English or Spanish first. I remember learning two at the same time.

(Esme)

A similar situation was conducted in Frida's household. Frida explained:

There was a rule in my family; that you only spoke English at school, and Spanish at home, because my dad didn't speak very much English. My mother did, because she went to school a little more than my dad. So, he only spoke Spanish, so in order to be respectful to my dad, we spoke Spanish at home and English at school. That was very important, for my family to keep the language, but to also learn English.

The rule Frida described was effective for her and for each of her younger siblings, as they all grew up bilingual, and remain fluent Spanish-speaking adults. Alazne Pilar was the sole English speaker in her family of orientation and an only child. She spoke Spanish at home with her parents and English at school with peers and teachers. Alazne Pilar's mother was successful in teaching Alazne Pilar to read and write, in Spanish, before her daughter entered kindergarten. Alazne Pilar wondered if that was a way for her mom to sustain the culture of Mexico, her country of origin. Alazne Pilar explained:

I have a strong foundation in Spanish. I went into Kinder, I knew how to read and write in Spanish. Spanish is easy. Sah, say, see, so, sue. And, you've done it. I remember my mom sitting with me and just showing me, showing me, showing me. Again, I don't know if that was part of I don't want you to lose your Spanish, you know? (Alazne Pilar)

Each of the following three bilingual mothers in this dissertation study, Esme, Frida, and Alazne Pilar, were enthusiastic about establishing an intergenerational

‘concerted cultivation’ of heritage language skills and ability in their children within current families of procreation. Parenting practices were deliberately undertaken in efforts to support Spanish language development and maintenance in each family. When describing her parenting approach to supporting her sons’ learning about their dual heritages Frida stated:

In some ways, I probably just kind of shoved it down their throats. I was extra sensitive given the fact that they were raised with two cultures, their Irish culture and mine. Because their dad didn't really push it so I would. When Grandma would come to stay for the holidays for a couple of weeks, I'd make sure that she would tell them stories and share things about her culture and Grandpa's culture. They only got to see that part of the family once or twice a year, whereas my family was very involved in their lives. Grandma babysat them. They spent the night at Grandma's. So she and my dad also did a lot of the culture things. But I think probably my kids would say, "Oh, yeah. Mom shoved it down our throats." Their receptive language ability, even when they were little, was always much better because Grandma always spoke to them in Spanish. They're both bilingual now. (Frida)

Esme chose to enroll her daughter in a dual language immersion program when it was time for her to enter school. Esme recalls her daughter’s surprise upon learning this in the following excerpt:

She looked at me and then she just started crying. She said, "But I'm not a Spanish girl." And then it hit me and I thought oh my gosh. She didn't feel like she was ...

She didn't feel any connection to the Spanish language. Even though from the time she was born her dad as always spoke to her in Spanish. That was our agreement. You will teach them, you will speak to them only in Spanish because I was raised that way. My dad to this day, English. My mom Spanish. And so that made me realize that she was not connected to it. She started crying, she said, "But I don't want to be a Spanish girl." I said, "Babe, you're going to be in dual language like now. You don't have a choice. (Esme)

As a reflection and result of each child's preferences and interests as well as each families' unique situations and circumstances, the mothers' spouses and children enacted varying levels of acceptance or resistance with this endeavor. Alazne Pilar explains:

My husband was born in Mexico, and he doesn't speak to them in Spanish. That's always been a struggle between us. I tell him please speak to them in Spanish. Spanish is your first language. I really think a lot of children don't pick up the language from their parents, because the parents don't want to struggle.

You have to wait for them to think about it, answer you in Spanish, cause they're at that level. They're still okay, how do you say it? Then, they think about it. Then, they say it, right? If a person's very impatient like my husband, he doesn't want that waiting period. Then, I speak to them in Spanish and he speaks to them in English. He's from Mexico. You would think he would want them to learn Spanish, right? But, that's been a struggle. Gloria, I think she can read it, Spanish, and understand it. Manuel is probably the one that has the harder time, because remember, I've always had these issues with him learning to read. But again, before, because that was always my fear that he would be resistant, that he

would fight it, so I always took him to Mexico. I just always tried to present it how I saw it, and it was always in a positive manner, right? To me, it was just a beautiful thing, so if Manuel took very well to his cousins then oh my god, we've got to take a trip and go and play with them and be with them, you know? That love could continue. Then, he loved Hermosio from the get go. I think he loved the independence. Let's say another person would take their children, right? They want them to be part of the culture, right? But, then you take your ideas like children shouldn't cross a street alone, whereas I'd be like you're going to go with your cousins. They're a little bit older, but this is their territory. You're going to be fine, and go. I'd let him. He liked that independence. He experienced freedom, and he experienced different things. You know, it is hard. You sit there and you wait. You're like the store's right around the corner, right? There's traffic and stuff and you sit there. But, then he comes back and he's counted money and he has Mexican money, and he's talking. What are you eating? You like that? You know? He had to have been starting from age five, six. Kids in Mexico do things a lot younger than they do here. You as a parent are not scared either. Sometimes parents are like if that happened to you, it's because you weren't paying ... The kid from a very young age has to learn to be smart and be savvy, whereas here in the US, it's like here, let me do that for you. You're not ready for that. Whereas in Mexico, it's like you better be ready, cause life is coming at you. (Alazne Pilar)

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study offers information on parenting practices from life histories of Latina mothers of Mexican origin who have high academic achievement. The research design included in depth, phenomenological exploration of 6 narrative life history case studies. Munro (1998) directs the researcher in collecting life narrative histories to remain cautious and suspicious, engaging a reflexivity such that the researcher is always aware that meaning is being co constructed by a partnership of researcher and researched. Miller (2005) states that when conducting educational autobiographical research methods that it is important to “...resist closure or paralysis around issues of identity and agency.” The six women who participated in this research investigation are a heterogenous group of multifaceted, complex, and diverse women who invited us to share a portion of their lived experiences. Miller (2005) shares an imaginary that although narrative autobiography offers partial and incomplete information, its value to “disrupt rather than reinforce static and essentialized versions...” underscores the use of this methodology as a valuable and important avenue of scholarship. Small (2009) further defends empirical use of case methodology, reminding one to not apply findings as knowledge that can represent others than whom participated in the scientific exploration, but to value the discovery in answered research questions that ventured to seek a nuance and saturated understanding.

In his book, McAdams (2006; 2013) explains that the redemption story is an artifact present throughout the history of the U.S.—that it is indeed an American style. McAdams (2013) notes that the redemptive self is often couched in bootstraps thinking, a master narrative within society. Bootstraps thinking is a master narrative that explains

life's successes, and by definition its mishaps, as being a result of individual effort with little or no acknowledgment of influences of contextual or structural, institutional components present within one's environment. Bootstraps thinking is similar to the American dream ideal that in the U.S. anything is possible for anyone who commits oneself to these tenets: individual wherewithal, hard work, and perseverance.

Horstman (2018) used resilience theory to frame personal narrative stories that McAdams labelled as redemptive. Though both are similar frameworks, a key difference is that with resilience theory, “a resilient individual makes sense out of chaos to bestow order” (3; Horstman, 2018). For McAdams (2013), the redemptive story is a framing that is told most often by generative adults, people who score high on psychological measures of generativity (i.e., caring and helping people). Both frameworks purport personal life narratives match cognitive meaning structures and that such storied portrayals are associated with greater measure of well-being. McLean and Syed (2015) caution resilience theorists to refrain from operating via a victim-blaming of individuals with ‘low levels of resilience’ who are caught within structural poverty systems. Shaw, McLean, Taylor and Swartout (2016) suggest that by employing specific methodology such as participatory-action research designs, resilience theorists can move towards attending more to system-level variables.

The theme of working hard was present in my dissertation study narratives, it was mentioned by more mothers than ones who did not—within a majority of the case studies mothers refer to an ethic of hard work. An integrative framework for understanding personal life story narratives in light of influences of master narratives and alternate narratives is introduced by McLean and Syed (2015). Authors' intent is to move narrative

researchers beyond a “relatively exclusive examination of the individual to an examination of the intersection between self and society.” (p. 318; McLean & Syed, 2015) Hammock furthers their discussion by prescribing for increased valuing of and active collaboration between post-positivist scientists such as McLean and Syed along with interpretive qualitative scientists who all study life story narratives to, “mutually enrich knowledge on the relationship between selves and societies” (p. 360; Hammack & Toolis, 2015).

This research study extends the current literature on parenting styles and intergenerational parenting practices. As compared to before this study, what we now know is that seedlings of a type of concerted cultivation parenting style were evidenced within families of orientation of this group of Mexican American mothers of high educational attainment. The parents within mothers’ families of orientation held low levels of formal education and had access to limited amounts of resources, yet the parents of the highly academic achieving mothers in this study practiced deliberate parenting in multiple ways. One parenting practice to maximize their children’s potential was that musical instruments were purchased and provided in homes as a resource available to support children’s potential. In quantitative studies, measures of concerted cultivation have included a count of books in the home as an indicator of parental investment. A recommendation from this study’s findings is that number and type of musical instruments in a family’s homes could serve as a measure of parental investment in children’s growth and development. Musicality was a theme that permeated throughout each case study in an intergenerational manner both within families of orientation and also families of procreation.

Limitations

One specific goal of this study was to develop an increased phenomenological understanding from a small group of Latina mothers' contextualized and intergenerational life history narrative accounts. Inclusion of a negative case analysis by conducting study interview procedures with a Latina mother *without* a completed college degree may have been fruitful. Likewise, although beyond the scope of this investigation, supplementary information gleaned from observations and/or interviews with participants' spouses or adolescent children would be illuminating. Considering that participants herein completed Umaña-Taylor and Fine's (2004) FES youth report measure, having participants' adolescent youth complete the same measure would be of interest. Voices of fathers of Mexican heritage are particularly missing from the literature on Latinx parenting (Suizzo, 2015).

Future Directions

Individuals of Mexican origin represent the largest group of Latinx in the U.S. (i.e., approximately 60%), yet it is important to remember that the pan-ethnic minority group of Latinx persons consists of diverse individuals from a range of countries that differ according to historical treatment and other factors. Future investigations might explore narrative life story indices from Latina mothers from other countries of origins. Umaña-Taylor and Bámaca (2004) conducted focus groups with women of Guatemalan, Puerto Rican, Mexican, and Columbian heritage and found that there were more differences than similarities among mothers' accounts of experiences and barriers to practices of carrying out ethnic socialization with their adolescents.

When recruited, many individuals revealed that they were unaware of the documented benefits of familial ethnic socialization. When informed, many showed visible positive affect and verbally wholeheartedly agreed. Because participants were unacquainted with empirical findings demonstrating promotive and protective factors of familial socialization practices that could inform parenting, this indicates an obstruction in academic findings being relayed to laypersons which are key stakeholders in the developmentally supported parenting practice. A large quantitative survey conducted with Latinx parents would ascertain levels of parental awareness of beneficial effects of familial ethnic socialization, and would indicate if there is, indeed, a need for widespread dissemination of supportive developmental effects of parenting practices of familial ethnic socialization.

Teachers and other adults working with ethnic minority youth often avoid conversing with diverse young people about ethnic and racial topics in their sites of practice (Umaña-Taylor and Rivas-Drake, in press). This is sometimes due to a lack of a familiar pedagogy for how to engage the topic, or sometime due to a false belief in the acceptability of a colorblind approach to teaching. Social scientists Umaña-Taylor and Rivas-Drake's upcoming book was for written laypersons (e.g., parents, community workers, and educators). In efforts to promote healthy ethnic and racial identity formation, authors designed this book as a conduit for relaying scholarly findings on the developmental importance of youths' ethnic racial socialization to an audience of parents, classroom practitioners, and laypeople who work in a professional capacity with ethnic minority youth.

The American Psychological Association (APA) has designed layperson materials to inform parents, siblings, other family members, teachers, other school personal, neighborhood residents, media, and society about age-appropriate racial ethnic communication and socialization practices. APA also maintains a racial ethnic socialization website offering resources for parents and interested parties designed to, “uplift families through healthy communication about race,” (Parent Tip Tool, no date). Considering that ethnic racial minority children and youth persistently report troubling levels of stereotyping and experiences of discrimination in school settings and in communities (Umaña-Taylor, 2016) it is important that scholars continue to build contextualized knowledge of FES via qualitative enquiry to determine applied implications of the promotive factor of FES and, to further support caring adults as they embrace ethnic socialization practices that serve to promote and protect ethnic minority children and youth from detrimental outcomes attributed to pervasive environmental risk factors.

In direct connection to study finding on the redemptive story telling frame, future research could compare testimonials of Latinx mothers to learn more about culturally diverse narratives implying resilience as compared to the redemptive frameworks. As noted within this study, testimonios from the academic mothers of the Chicana m(other)work collective were narrated in a redemptive manner. In addition, further exploration of parenting practices in context, across generations that investigate the mutual constitution of person and context and their reciprocal interaction would be of merit.

Implications

As an educator in inner city K-12 schools with over eighty-five percent Latinx student populations I came a) to expect hearing language by a number of teachers slighting our Latinx parents, and b) to observe stigmatization of youth via racist practices by largely well-meaning adults working in service of students (e.g., students from minoritized groups being a) given harsher grading criteria or b) segregated into inappropriately restrictive special education environments). Special education students are served in a variety of service delivery models within schools, and over my lengthy years of experience teaching these students in such multiple settings, I collaborated with countless teachers across content areas. The two examples of stigmatizing practices listed above (i.e., inequitable grading and segregation) were observed enacted upon non-dominant students participating in remedial courses and those receiving special education services. I egregiously assumed such practices were born of faculty members' worn patience in response to direct displeasing encounters with the individuals whom had learning, behavioral, or interpersonal difficulties.

Therefore, stigmatization heralding of racism and unfair practices manifest in academically high achieving mothers' life story narratives of their experiences throughout K-12 schooling was an unanticipated finding that left me sorrowful and confused. Individually, each of the six mothers recalls being well-behaved⁵ and earning good grades without instances of personal academic difficulty. Nonetheless,

⁵ An exception to this pattern of excellence in-school behavior was one of the six mothers stating that she occasionally was in trouble in school for talking too frequently with peers.

‘marginalization through stigmatizing experiences’ emerged consistently within academically high achieving mothers’ life narratives of K-12 schooling.

Reflecting upon my experiences teaching high school, I recalled the following schoolwide restroom pass procedure, in place for over three years, that illustrated a predominant faculty perspective towards all students attending our school. Fluorescent mesh safety vests were given to and used by teachers for the student restroom passes. Each student, ranging in age from fourteen through eighteen, was expected to fully don this vest, securing the zipper front closed before embarking to the restroom after gaining teacher permission. Checking in with several colleagues to discover their interpretations about such a practice in hopes of seeking a policy change, I was surprised to learn the undignified practice was readily accepted. One white male English teacher, when asked if he would want his daughters wearing the vest as a restroom pass--a clothing article that had visited the restroom multiple time with multiple youth, casually replied, “My children would *never* go to school here.”

Dr. Pedro Noguera’s prescribed standard of excellence is for a teacher to operate one’s classroom and professional practice by making choices according to the criteria that one’s very own child patronized the school and your classroom, so then you can be certain that your choosing well (Lecture, 2018). Practices of the above school’s disrespectful restroom policy and individual viewpoints like the one shared by the aforementioned English teacher not only contradict Noguera’s prescribed standard of excellence, but reflect stereotypical and harmful macro system attitudes (Díaz McConnell, 2018; McLean & Syed, 2015; Syed, Santos, Yoo, & Juang, 2018) that effect

youth development and well-being in schools (Ladson-Billings, 2013; Umaña-Taylor, 2016).

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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Consent form- Dissertation Anne Mulligan

The purposes of this form are to provide you (as a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research and to record the consent of those who agree to be involved in the study. We expect about 20 people will participate in this research study.

Anne Mulligan and Kathryn Nakagawa from Arizona State University would like to invite you to take part in our project titled Successful Career Professional Latina Women's Engaged and Involved Parenting Style. It concerns gathering information regarding Latina parenting styles both from your family of origin as well as your current parenting practices.

If you agree to take part in this research, we will meet for an interview at a designated location of your choice on two to three occasions that will last approximately 50 minutes each. The two to three interviews will each be set at a time and place that is convenient for you. I would like to ask you some questions about parenting practices from your family of origin along with gather information on your current parenting practices. If you authorize it, the conversations will be audio-recorded. Also, at the beginning of each of our first two interview sessions, I will ask you to complete a brief survey.

There are no foreseeable risks to you from participating in this research with the exception of possible discomfort you may experience in recollecting an unpleasant experience while recounting past life events. A potential benefit for you would be the opportunity to reflect upon, and share your personal journey of success while comparing it to current parenting practices. There will be no costs to you, other than your time involved.

To compensate you for your time participating in this project, once the interviews are completed, I will give you a \$20 gift card.

All of the information that is obtained from you during the research will be kept confidential. I will store all of the information I get from you on secure, restricted computer files. You will not be identified in the notes. We will not use your name or other identifying information in any reports of the research.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You are free to refuse to take part. You may refuse to answer any questions, ask us to stop for the day, and may cease taking part in the project at any time. In addition, if at any time you need to take a break from participating but want to continue it at a later time, we can do so.

If you have any questions about this project, you may contact Anne Mulligan, at (602) 614-1364 or at mulligan.am@asu.edu or Kathy Nakagawa at (480) 965-0582 or at nakagawa@asu.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk; you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

This form explains the nature, demands, benefits and any risk of the project. By signing this form you agree knowingly to assume any risks involved. Remember, your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit. In signing this consent form, you are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. A copy of this consent form will be given to you.

Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in the above study.

I understand the consent form and consent to participate in the study.

Name (please print) _____ Date _____
Signature _____

I grant consent for my statements—without any identifiable connection to my name—to be used in reports for the project.

Name _____ Date _____
Signature _____

I grant consent for two to three interviews with me to be audio recorded for research purposes only. These audio files will be destroyed once they have been coded for the research analyses.

Name _____ Date _____
Signature _____

INVESTIGATOR’S STATEMENT

"I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by Arizona State University to the Office for Human Research Protections to protect the rights of human subjects. I have provided (offered) the subject/participant a copy of this signed consent document."

Printed name of Investigator obtaining consent _____
Signature of Investigator _____ Date _____

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW 1 AND INTERVIEW 2 PROTOCOLS

Interview One Protocol

Please give me an outline of the story of your life as a book with chapters. Tell me only the titles of the chapters, listing at least three but no more than seven.

II. Now, I'll ask you to describe four important, key events or scenes which stand out to you that are related to being Latina and/or related to *your* formal schooling. Please list one positive and one negative for each stage if possible.

1. During childhood
2. During adolescence
3. During adulthood

Can you pinpoint or explain any role of Familial Ethnic Socialization in your academic success?

III. Thinking of your school experiences as a child, describe the relationships between your parents and teachers or other personnel in your schools. Describe your parents in relationship to your school. What was their role? What did they do at the school? What did they do at home to help you in school?

IV. Next, I'll ask you to describe important, key events or scenes which stand out to you that are related to being Latinx and/or related to *your child's* formal schooling. Please list one positive and one negative for each stage if possible.

1. During elementary school
2. During high school or middle school

IV. Life Challenge: Please describe the single greatest challenge that you have faced in your life. How have you dealt with this challenge? Have other people assisted you in dealing with this challenge?

V. Influences on the Life Story: Positive and Negative

1. Positive - Please identify the single person, group of persons, or organization that has had the greatest positive influence on your story. Please describe this person, group of persons, or organization and the way in which she, he, it or they have had a positive impact on your story.
2. Negative - Please identify the single person, group of persons, or organization that has had the greatest negative influence on your story. Please describe this person, group of persons, or organization and the way in which she, he, it or they have had a negative impact on your story.

VI. Stories that may have influenced your life story, are important to you, or that represent something important to you.

1. Stories watched.
2. Stories read
3. Stories heard.

VII. What else should I know to begin to understand your life story regarding the following three areas:

1. the parenting that you received
2. familial ethnic socialization (both current family and family of origin)
3. experience with schooling (both your formal schooling across your lifespan and as a parent with a child in school)

Note: The structure and wording within this questionnaire is borrowed from McAdams (1995/2008) *Life Story Interview*, and has been blended with methodology as well as wording from Seidman (2006) *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*.

Interview Two Protocol

I. Tell me about each of your children. For example, you can list characteristics, concerns, favorite things about her/him. What is your expected future occupation for her/him? How are her/his grades? What are the benefits of any organized activities that you have her/him enrolled in?

II. Routines: Please tell me about a typical school day for *your children* during: a) elementary school, b) high school. Please include what typically happens before school hours, and after.

Next, tell me about a typical school day for *you* during: a) elementary school, b) high school, and c) college.

Please include what happened before school hours, and after.

III. Think of parenting experiences regarding your child's school. Describe your relationship to your child's school. What is your role? Describe the relationships between you and teachers or other personnel in your child's school. What do you do at the school? What do you do at home to help your child in school? What role does Familial Ethnic Socialization play in your parenting?

IV. Health Challenge: Looking back over your entire life, please identify and describe a scene or period in your life, including the present time, wherein you or a close family member confronted a major health problem, challenge, or crisis. Please describe in detail what the health problem was and how it developed. Please describe any experience you had with the health-care system regarding the crisis or problem. Also, please describe how you coped with the problem and what impact this health crisis, problem or challenge has had on you and your overall life story.

V. Personal Ideology

1. Consider the religious or spiritual dimensions of your life. Please briefly describe your religious beliefs or the ways in which you approach life in a spiritual sense.

2. How do you approach political and social issues? Do you have a particular point of view? Are there particular issues or causes about which you feel strongly? Describe them.

3. Please describe how your religious, moral, and/or political views and values have developed over time. Have they changed in important ways? Please explain.

4. What is the most important value in human living? Explain.

5. What else can you tell me that would help me understand your most fundamental beliefs and values about life and the world? What else can you tell me that would help me understand your overall philosophy of life?

VI. Life Theme: Looking back over your entire life story can you determine a central theme, message, or idea that runs through the story? What is the major theme of your life story? Explain.

VII. Given your life before you became a parent, and given your experiences as a parent:

1. How was the parenting you received influential in your life? What practices have you kept; what have you changed?

2. In your life, how do you understand *being a parent*? What is the meaning you make about being a parent?

VIII. Reflection: Thank you for participating in these interview sessions. For my last question, I was wondering if you might reflect about what these interviews have been like for you. What were your thoughts and feelings during the interview? How do you think the interview affected you? Do you have any other comments about the interview process?

Note: The structure and wording within this questionnaire is borrowed from McAdams (1995/2008) *Life Story Interview*, and has been blended with methodology as well as wording from Seidman (2006) *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*.

APPENDIX C
QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Interview 1 Familial Ethnic Socialization Survey

Please rate (between 1 and 5) how much you agree with each of the following items.

1 = Not at all 5 = Very much

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. My family teaches me about my ethnic/cultural background. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. My family encourages me to respect the cultural values and beliefs of our ethnic/cultural background. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. My family participates in activities that are specific to my ethnic group. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Our home is decorated with things that reflect my ethnic/cultural background. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The people who my family hangs out with the most are people who share the same ethnic background as my family. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. My family teaches me about the values and beliefs of our ethnic/cultural background. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. My family talks about how important it is to know about my ethnic/cultural background. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. My family celebrates holidays that are specific to my ethnic/cultural background. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. My family teaches me about the history of my ethnic/cultural background. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. My family listens to music sung or played by artists from my ethnic/cultural background. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. My family attends things such as concerts, plays, festivals, or other events that represent my ethnic/cultural background. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. My family feels a strong attachment to our ethnic/cultural background. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

(Umana-Taylor & Fine, 2004)

*Do you think the importance of having a good education has changed over the years?
Circle one: less important same more important much more important*

G. You are a certain kind of person, and there is not much that can be done to really change that.
1 2 3 4 5

ALAZNE PILAR. No matter what kind of person you are, you can always change substantially.
1 2 3 4 5

I. You can do things differently, but the important parts of who you are can't really be changed.
1 2 3 4 5

J. You can always change basic things about the kind of person you are.
1 2 3 4 5

K. Your intelligence is something very basic about you that you can't change very much.
1 2 3 4 5

L. You can learn new things, but you can't really change how intelligent you are.
1 2 3 4 5

M. No matter how much intelligence you have, you can always change it quite a bit.
1 2 3 4 5

N. N. You can always substantially change how intelligent you are.
1 2 3 4 5

(Dweck, 2016)

APPENDIX D
QUESTIONNAIRE 2

Concerted Cultivation

1. Please list your children's names and ages:

2. Do (Did) your children participate in organized activities, sports, or lessons outside of their school day? Please list names and activities.

Child A:

Child B:

Child C:

3. As a child or youth, did you participate in organized activities, sports, or lessons outside of your school day? Please list.

If none, was there one (or more) that you had wanted to participate with? Please list.

4. What is the household family structure that you grew up with? (ex: single, married, blended)? _____

5. What is your current household family structure? (ex: single, married, blended) _____

6. What is the ethnicity and birthplace of your spouse/birth-parent partner?

7. What schools do (did) your children attend?

8. How did you select this/these schools?

9. Have you had to contact your child's school for any reason over the past year?

10. Are the interactions between you and your child's teacher and other staff at the school satisfactory?

11. Did you ever have to intervene due to a concern/issue you or your child had with a school or organized activities outside of school? If yes, please describe.

12. Do did you discuss your child's interests, school experiences, help her/him with homework, discuss friend issues, or talk about the future with your child?

Always Often Sometimes Not often Never

Please list:

13. Do you go to your child's school to participate in a) parent/teacher conferences b) open house, c) volunteer, d) attend school event, and/or e) participate in PTA or school fundraising? Please circle.

Always Often Sometimes Not often Never

Please list:

14. Have you travelled outside of Arizona or outside of the country with your children? Do you attend museums or musical events?

Always Often Sometimes Not often Never

Please list:

15. When you were a child, did you travel to another state or outside of the country? Did you attend museums or musical events?

Always Often Sometimes Not often Never

Please list:

Thank you for your participation.