

Chapter 4

Dominican Parenting and Early Childhood Functioning: A Comparison Study of Immigrant Families in the USA and Families in Their Country of Origin

Esther J. Calzada, Carolina Hausmann-Stabile,
R. Gabriela Barajas-Gonzalez, Keng-Yen Huang, and Miguel E. Hernandez

It is widely recognized that the ways in which parents raise their children, and the impact that these parenting practices have, depend in part on the ecological context within which development occurs (Bornstein, 1995). While ecology is by definition multifaceted, culture (e.g., cultural group norms, values, and behaviors within the home) and socioeconomic status (e.g., poverty) arguably define some of its core characteristics (García Coll et al., 1996). Research with poor and non-poor children in their country of origin relative to those living in immigrant families in the USA presents an opportunity to further understand the ecological context within which children develop (Bird et al., 2006). In the present study, we use this approach to examine parenting and its association with early childhood functioning among Dominican-origin families. As one of the largest Latino immigrant populations in the USA (Motel & Patten, 2012), and one whose children and youth are at high risk for behavior problems, depression, suicide, and academic problems largely due to social and economic inequities (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008), a better understanding of parenting and its association with child functioning in families originating from the Dominican Republic (DR) is clearly warranted.

E. J. Calzada (✉)

School of Social Work, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, USA

e-mail: Esther.Calzada@austin.utexas.edu

C. Hausmann-Stabile

School of Social Work, College of Public Health, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA, USA

e-mail: chausmanns@brynmawr.edu

R. G. Barajas-Gonzalez • K. -Y. Huang

NYU School of Medicine, New York, NY, USA

e-mail: RitaGabriela.Barajas-Gonzalez@nyumc.org; keng-yen.huang@nyumc.org

M. E. Hernandez

New York City Department of Education, New York, NY, USA

e-mail: miguelhernandez112@gmail.com

© Springer International Publishing AG 2018

S. S. Chuang, C. L. Costigan (eds.), *Parental Roles and Relationships in*

Immigrant Families, Advances in Immigrant Family Research,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-71399-1_4

Parenting Across Cultures

Much of what is known of parenting and child development is based on empirical studies from Westernized societies (Gershoff et al., 2010; Kagitcibasi, 2012). This literature emphasizes two primary dimensions: parental nurturance (i.e., responsiveness, acceptance, warmth) and demandingness (i.e., control, discipline; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). A recent meta-analysis that included studies from Westernized and non-Westernized countries confirmed the universal importance of parenting, and parental acceptance in particular, for children's optimal development (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012). Other researchers document the direct and considerable effects that discipline practices have on child development (Landry, Smith, & Swank, 2003; Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 1997). Still, while parental acceptance appears to promote optimal development across cultures (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012), parental discipline and its effects on child development may be more likely to vary across cultures. Lansford and colleagues (2005) showed that parental discipline practices varied across nine countries (e.g., China, Italy, Kenya, Thailand). The use of threats and corporal punishment, for example, was highest in Kenyan families and lowest in Italian families, who endorsed the most frequent use of yelling/scolding. Moreover, those discipline practices that were perceived as normative had less robust associations with child functioning, supporting what is known as the *cultural normativeness hypothesis*, or the idea that when harsh parenting is viewed as normative, its impact on developmental outcomes is attenuated (Lansford et al., 2005).

In a parallel line of research, scholars of immigrant parenting in the USA consistently describe the parenting practices of minority families as distinct from those of middle-class White families. Specifically, *authoritarian* parenting (e.g., that combines low responsiveness with high demandingness) may be normative and in some cases optimal for development among ethnic minority families (Varela et al., 2004). The conceptualization of authoritarian parenting practices emerged from studies with White middle-class families (Baumrind, 1967) and in contrast to *authoritative* parenting (e.g., that combines high responsiveness with high demandingness) was long regarded as detrimental to healthy child development. Later studies challenged the universality of these conclusions, citing evidence that highly demanding parenting practices that often relied on harsh or physical discipline were not only consistent with cultural norms but also potentially adaptive for ethnic minority families (Deater-Deckard, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 1996). In support of this notion, Luis, Varela, and Moore (2008) found that parental control, in the form of a high number of commands, was related to greater anxiety for the Mexican youth in Mexico but to lower anxiety for Mexican American youth in the USA. The researchers posited that for Mexican American children living in the USA, direct commands from parents may serve an adaptive function, enhancing deference to authority and making the family a more cohesive unit "facilitating unified responses to external challenges faced as ethnic minorities" (p. 1018). Thus, parents may endorse authoritarian practices that stress obedience among youth in poor neighborhoods in an attempt to protect children from high-risk environments marked by violence and poverty.

Although rates of poverty are high among immigrant and ethnic minority families living in the USA, immigrant parenting is shaped by a confluence of factors beyond socioeconomic disadvantage. For example, as parents acculturate, or adapt, to mainstream culture, parenting goals, values, and practices are expected to shift (Calzada, Fernandez, & Cortes, 2010; Fuller & García Coll, 2010). Some evidence suggests that these changes may occur for some immigrant groups but not for others. For example, Bornstein and Cote (2004) compared the parenting cognitions (attributions and self-perceptions) of middle-class Japanese and South American immigrant mothers in the USA to mothers from their countries of origin (Japan and Argentina), as well as to nonimmigrant White mothers. South American immigrant mothers' cognitions tended to resemble those of nonimmigrant White mothers in the USA, whereas Japanese immigrant mothers' cognitions tended to be similar to those of Japanese mothers in Japan. Consistent with Bornstein and Cote's (2004) findings, other studies with Latina mothers show that less acculturated (e.g., foreign-born, Spanish-speaking) mothers tend to use authoritarian practices more than acculturated mothers, who tend to use authoritative practices (Dumka, Roosa, & Jackson, 1997; Parke et al., 2004). Collectively, this literature suggests that an authoritarian approach to parenting may be consistent with pan-Latino cultural values of child rearing (Calzada et al., 2010).

Parenting in Dominican-Origin Families

Given the lack of research attention to Dominican-origin families, little is known about normative parenting practices among Dominicans, the extent to which they differ according to contextual characteristics such as poverty and migration (i.e., parenting in the USA as an immigrant vs. in one's country of origin) and how they are associated with child functioning. Based on a few studies to date, Dominican mothers in the USA appear to value interdependence (and more specifically, familism and respect for authority; Calzada et al., 2010; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007) and to be highly responsive with their children (Calzada & Eyberg, 2002; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). During teaching interactions, Dominican American mothers have been shown to rely on physically directive and nonverbal strategies with their toddlers (Planos, Zayas, & Busch-Rossnagel, 1995, 1997). There is less consensus over the use of discipline strategies; Dominican American mothers report low levels of physical discipline on parenting questionnaires (Calzada & Eyberg, 2002), but qualitative studies suggest a culturally-sanctioned reliance on corporal punishment (Calzada et al., 2010; Calzada, Basil, & Fernandez, 2012). Finally, contradicting the cultural normativeness hypothesis, there is some evidence that authoritarian parenting is associated with higher externalizing and internalizing problems, at least among families of young (4–5-year-old) children (Calzada et al., 2012; Calzada, Barajas-Gonzalez, Huang, & Brotman, 2017).

Parenting in the Context of Poverty

In the Dominican Republic (DR), 41% of the population lives in extreme poverty, with the highest rate (55%) among children ages 0–5 (Oficina Nacional de Estadística [ONE], 2014). In New York City (NYC), 26% of Dominicans live in poverty, and, as in the DR, the poverty rate is highest, at 33%, among children (Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies, 2011; PEW Hispanic Center, 2009). Living in poverty affects parenting and child outcomes (Bornstein & Bradley, 2014; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). In the USA, across ethnic groups, stress and depression commonly occur in the context of poverty (McLoyd, 1998), compromising the use of authoritative practices (e.g., explaining the reasons for a rule) and increasing the use of authoritarian practices (e.g., scolding or spanking in response to misbehavior) (Barajas-Gonzalez & Brooks-Gunn, 2014; Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002). For example, in a national dataset that compared the home environments of poor and non-poor families, poor Latino families were observed to use harsh discipline practices more often compared with non-poor Latino families (Bradley, Corwyn, McAdoo, & García Coll, 2001a, 2001b).

Most of what is known about Dominican families is based on research with primarily low-income samples in the USA, but in a unique study that took place in the DR, the role of poverty was examined through a comparison of poor, rural families and middle-class, urban families (Foucault & Schneider, 2009). The authors found that relative to Dominican mothers from middle-class communities, mothers living in poverty were more likely to value conformity over self-direction in their children, and they were observed as less engaged, cognitively and emotionally, during parent-child interactions.

The Present Study

Parenting serves as the most proximal influence on children's development, particularly during early childhood when the role of peers and other extrafamilial networks is limited. Parenting scholars generally decry authoritarian practices as harmful, but authoritarian practices may be normative within Latino culture and/or adaptive for Latinos living in the USA as a minority group. Mothers may intentionally use an authoritarian parenting approach that stresses obedience to protect children from negative influences outside the home, especially in poor neighborhoods (Deater-Deckard et al., 1996; Luis et al., 2008; Pinderhughes, Nix, Foster, & Jones, 2001). The extent to which these findings can be generalized to the early childhood developmental period, however, remains unknown. In the present study, we focused on families of young children to examine authoritarian parenting given the long-lasting scholarly debate regarding its effects across cultural groups (Chao, 1994; Deater-Deckard et al., 1996; Steinberg, 2001).

Our specific aims were to address several issues in families of young children: (1) whether authoritarian parenting is normative in Dominican culture by comparing parenting practices of mothers in the DR with those in the USA, considering poverty status (poor and non-poor), and (2) whether authoritarian parenting is adaptive by examining its relation to child functioning across levels of risk defined by poverty status and country of residence (living as a minority family in the USA or living in their country of origin, the DR). For Aim 1, we hypothesized that authoritarian parenting would be more commonly reported among Dominican mothers raising their children in the DR relative to those raising their children in the USA. For Aim 2, we hypothesized that the association between authoritarian parenting and child functioning would be moderated by both poverty status and country of residence, such that the relation would be attenuated for children living in poverty and those living as minority children in the USA.

Methods

Participants

Participants were 672 Dominican female caregivers of children between the ages of 3 and 5 recruited in two separate studies in New York City in the USA ($n = 332$, USA) and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic ($n = 340$, DR). In both studies, families were drawn from schools (11 in the USA; 12 in the DR) that offered prekindergarten and kindergarten classes. Children were 4.38 ($SD = 0.70$) on average, and approximately half were boys. In the immigrant sample, mothers had lived in the USA an average of 12.80 years ($SD = 8.05$). Family and child characteristics of the two study samples, by poverty status, are shown in Table 4.1. Mothers were more likely to be married or living with the child's father and more likely to have completed high school, if they were non-poor and living in the USA. In addition, child internalizing and externalizing problems were highest in the DR poor sample compared to the DR non-poor sample, the US poor sample, and the US non-poor sample.

Measures

Family demographic characteristics. Mothers completed a demographic form that assessed maternal and child age, maternal education level, and household composition. In NYC, mothers also reported on their income and family size, which was used to determine family poverty status, as described below.

Family poverty status. Our measure of family poverty status differed across studies. In the USA (NYC), poverty status was determined using the US Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines, which considers income relative to family size (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2013). For example,

Table 4.1 Sample characteristics and comparisons by country and poverty status

	Total sample (<i>N</i> = 672)	USA (<i>n</i> = 332)	DR (<i>n</i> = 340)	USA, non-poor (<i>n</i> = 142)	USA, poor (<i>n</i> = 179)	DR, non-poor (<i>n</i> = 236)	DR, poor (<i>n</i> = 102)
	M (SD)/%	M (SD)/%	M (SD)/%	M (SD)/%	M (SD)/%	M (SD)/%	M (SD)/%
Family demographics							
Mother's age	33.58 (6.86)	33.47 (7.30)	33.69 (6.40)	32.32 (5.98)	34.48 (8.21) ^d	34.36 (5.92) ^d	32.13 (7.21) ^{e, f}
Two-parent home	66.8%	60.20% ^b	73.20%	66.90%	53.60% ^d	81.50% ^d	53.90% ^{d, e}
Mother completed HS	80.6%	77.00% ^b	84.10%	88.70% ^c	68.50% ^d	97.90% ^d	52.50% ^{d, e, f}
Child characteristics							
Child's age	4.38 (0.70)	4.46 (0.58)	4.29 (0.80)	4.42 (0.56)	4.51 (0.58)	4.07 (0.81) ^d	4.82 (0.43) ^{d, e, f}
Child gender (male)	53.2%	50.00%	56.40%	49.30%	52.50%	57.40%	53.90%
Externalizing problems ^a	15.90 (9.22)	15.36 (9.01)	16.43 (9.35)	15.57 (8.96)	15.19 (9.19)	15.62 (7.25)	18.26 (12.73) ^{d, e, f}
Internalizing problems ^a	21.57 (8.82)	20.63 (8.63)	22.32 (8.98)	21.27 (8.69)	20.43 (8.53)	20.36 (6.94)	26.62 (11.24) ^{d, e, f}
Parenting practices							
Authoritarian ^a	1.80 (0.51)	1.71 (0.46)	1.90 (0.55)	1.74 (0.50)	1.70 (0.43)	1.77 (0.43)	2.19 (0.67) ^{d, e, f}
Authoritative	4.21 (0.55)	4.26 (0.56) ^{b, c}	4.16 (0.54)	4.34 (0.50)	4.18 (0.61)	4.22 (0.48)	4.03 (0.66)

Note. NYC New York City; DR Dominican Republic; HS high school. Mean-level differences were examined for all variables. A country-by-poverty interaction was examined for child externalizing and internalizing problems and for authoritarian and authoritative parenting

^aIndicates a significant interaction term. ^bindicates a significant difference between the USA and DR samples; ^cIndicates a significant difference between poor and non-poor samples; ^dIndicates a significant difference compared with the US non-poor sample; ^eIndicates a significant difference between the DR poor and DR non-poor samples; ^fIndicates a significant difference between the US poor and DR poor samples

the income threshold in 2013 was \$23,550 for a family of four. Based on mothers' report of their annual household income and family size, families were classified as "poor" if their annual income was below the poverty guideline level in the year of their participation and as "non-poor" if their annual incomes surpassed that level.

In the DR, family poverty status was measured using a proxy variable of "school type." Specifically, families who were recruited at the public schools were classified as poor, and those recruited through private schools were classified as non-poor. These schools were located in diverse neighborhoods, ranging from slums to upper-middle-class areas, and private schools' tuition ranged from moderately expensive to expensive. Public schools were all located in poor neighborhoods and were free of tuition.

Parenting practices. The Parenting Styles and Dimensions (PSD; Robinson, Mandleco, Olsen, & Hart, 1995) questionnaire is a 32-item self-report measure of parenting practices with three orthogonal factors corresponding to Baumrind's (1995) authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting style constructs. The PSD has been standardized for parents of young children and has been used with samples from various countries and of various ethnic backgrounds including Latina mothers from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico (Calzada et al., 2017; Calzada & Eyberg, 2002). The permissive scale, which revealed low internal consistency in past studies with Dominican mothers, was not used in the present study. Sample items for the authoritative scale included "I give comfort and understanding when my child is upset" and "I give my child reasons why rules should be obeyed." The authoritarian scale included items such as "I use physical punishment as a way of disciplining my child" and "I use threats as punishment with little or no justification." Parents respond to each item on a 5-point Likert scale anchored by "never" and "always." In the present samples, internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) were 0.83 and 0.80 on the authoritative scale and 0.66 and 0.74 on the authoritarian scale, for the NYC and DR samples, respectively.

Child functioning. The Behavior Assessment System for Children-Parent Rating Scale (BASC PRS; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004) is a widely used, well-validated measure of child behavior and emotional functioning for children between the ages of 2.5 and 18 years. The BASC PRS is available in both English and Spanish based on translation and standardization by the measure developers with a sample of 386 Latinos (specific ethnic groups not described; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004). In the present study, we used the anxiety and depression subscales to create a composite ($\alpha = 0.81$ and 0.80 for NYC and DR samples, respectively) as a measure of child internalizing problems. We also used a composite of the hyperactivity and aggression subscales ($\alpha = 0.88$ and 0.89 for the NYC and DR samples, respectively) as a measure of child externalizing problems.

Procedures

In the USA (NYC), Dominican-origin mothers of 4–5-year-old children enrolled as prekindergarten or kindergarten students in 1 of 11 public elementary schools in the city were eligible to participate. At partner schools, research staff, fluent in Spanish and English, attended parent meetings and were present during daily school drop-off and pickup times to inform parents of the study. Seventy-three percent of mothers approached agreed to participate. Interested mothers were scheduled for an interview that took place at the school. Participating mothers were asked which language they preferred to be interviewed in (Spanish or English) before beginning research activities. The majority of mothers (92%) chose to be interviewed in Spanish. Interviews lasted 2 h and mothers received a stipend for their participation.

In the DR, mothers of 3–5-year-old children enrolled as prekindergarten or kindergarten students in 1 of 12 elementary schools in Santo Domingo were invited to participate. After distributing fliers advertising the study, research staff attended school events (i.e., parent workshops) to inform mothers of the study in person. Because the

study was described to groups of potential participants, we were not able to determine the participation rate. Interested mothers were consented in person and then given the choice of completing the questionnaires on their own or with research staff. Mothers who completed the questionnaires on their own returned the packet to school staff in a sealed envelope; no information on the return rate was available. All study activities were conducted in Spanish (e.g., recruitment, interviews). Interviews lasted approximately 45 min, and mothers received a small stipend for their participation.

Data Analyses

Aim 1 was to compare parenting practices (i.e., authoritarian, authoritative) by country of residence (USA, DR), poverty status (poor vs. non-poor), and a country \times poverty interaction. To address this aim, we first conducted a MANOVA to examine whether there were significant interaction or main effects. To follow up, we conducted ANOVAs to examine significant interactions. Aim 2 was to examine the association between parenting and child functioning across contexts. To address this aim, we conducted multivariate linear regression analyses that included parenting practices, country of residence, and poverty status. Models were conducted separately for child externalizing and internalizing problem outcomes. To test for moderation, interaction terms between parenting and (1) country of residence (USA = 0, DR = 1) and (2) poverty status (non-poor = 0, poor = 1) were included. All models controlled for child gender and age. Because the sample had a modest amount of cases with missing data on key variables (e.g., poverty) that did not allow for imputation, we employed a listwise deletion approach to handle missing data.

Results

Descriptive statistics of the variables are shown in Table 4.1. In examining parenting across contexts, results from the MANOVA showed main effects for country of residence, $t(1, 655) 9.134, p = 0.003$, and poverty status, $t(1, 655) 14.797, p < 0.001$, but no significant country \times poverty interaction, $F(1, 655) 0.156, p = 0.693$, on authoritative parenting. As shown in Table 4.1, authoritative parenting was significantly higher among non-poor compared to poor mothers and among US mothers compared to DR mothers. For authoritarian parenting, results from the MANOVA showed a significant country \times poverty interaction, $F(1, 655) 21.933, p < 0.001$. A follow-up ANOVA showed significant differences in the use of authoritarian practices between DR poor mothers compared to other mothers, including DR non-poor, US poor, and US non-poor mothers. There was no difference on authoritarian parenting between the US mothers based on poverty status.

Results of model testing to examine parenting as a predictor of child functioning are presented in Table 4.2. We found that authoritarian parenting was a significant predictor of child internalizing problems (Model 1) and that the relation was moder-

Table 4.2 Regression results for test of the relation between parenting and child behavior problems by poverty status and country

	Internalizing problems (Model 1)			Externalizing problems (Model 2)		
	Beta	SE	<i>p</i>	Beta	SE	<i>p</i>
Child's age	1.093	0.478	0.023	-1.147	0.486	0.019
Child's gender	1.412	0.641	0.028	-2.108	0.651	0.001
Authoritative parenting	1.685	1.110	0.130	-1.360	1.129	0.229
Authoritarian parenting	5.339	1.169	0.000	7.373	1.191	0.000
Poverty status	1.208	0.711	0.090	-0.117	0.724	0.872
Country of residence	0.788	0.685	0.250	-1.005	0.698	0.150
Authoritative parenting × poverty status	0.123	1.189	0.918	-0.561	1.204	0.642
Authoritative parenting × country of residence	-0.869	1.168	0.457	-0.571	1.187	0.631
Authoritarian parenting × poverty status	3.490	1.283	0.007	2.404	1.299	0.065
Authoritarian parenting × country of residence	-1.686	1.300	0.195	-1.641	1.320	0.214
	$\Delta R^2 = 0.19$			$\Delta R^2 = 0.22$		

Note. Child gender is coded such that 0 = male, 1 = female. Country is coded such that 0 = USA, 1 = Dominican Republic. Poverty status is coded such that 0 = non-poor, 1 = poor. Models included a poverty × country interaction term. Three-way interactions that included parenting, poverty status, and country of residence were nonsignificant.

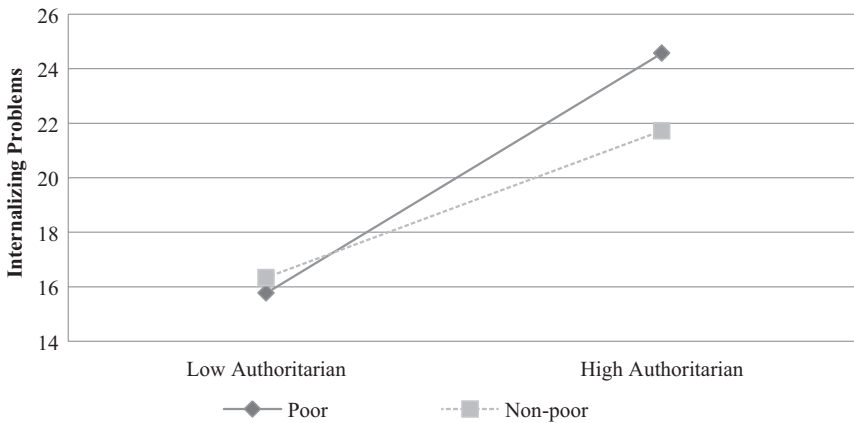


Fig. 4.1 Interaction between authoritarian parenting and poverty status on child internalizing problems

ated by poverty status. Specifically, as shown in Fig. 4.1, the strength of association between authoritarian parenting and internalizing problems was greater among poor children relative to non-poor children. Authoritarian parenting was also a significant predictor of child externalizing problems (Model 2), but this association was not moderated by country of residence or poverty status. Authoritative parenting was not associated with either child outcome.

Discussion

Current theories suggest that parenting is deeply rooted in culture at the same time that it is shaped by a family's contextual characteristics (García Coll et al., 1996). In the present study, we focused on one cultural group of mothers, Dominicans, who were raising their children in very distinct contexts to provide a more nuanced examination of parenting and its association with early childhood functioning. Specifically, we compared poor and non-poor Dominicans living in their country of origin with those living in the USA, allowing us to consider whether and how country of residence and poverty status are related to parenting. Our findings indicate the potential ways in which culture and context interplay to influence Dominican parenting practices and, in turn, young children's development.

In line with previous research on Dominican parenting (Calzada & Eyberg, 2002), we found that in both the DR and the USA, mothers reported greater use of authoritative than authoritarian parenting practices, suggesting that Dominican parenting of young children is characterized by high levels of nurturance and acceptance. In comparing parenting across contexts, however, we found more frequent use of authoritarian practices by mothers in the DR compared with those in the USA. This discrepancy was expected given the cultural emphasis in the Dominican Republic on hierarchical parent-child relationships, respect for authority figures, especially parents, and the subjugation of individual needs to those of the group (e.g., family; Calzada, 2010; Calzada et al., 2010). For parents raising their children outside of their countries of origin and acculturating to a new set of cultural norms and behaviors, as was the case for the Dominican mothers in the USA, shifts are likely in both child-rearing values and practices (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2007), leading to a less authoritarian approach to parenting (Dumka et al., 1997; Parke et al., 2004). Beyond societal norms, it may also be that Dominican parents in the USA were attuned to the potential legal consequences of using corporal punishment, making them less willing to reinforce their authority using physical means. In contrast, parents in the DR may not be deterred—legally or otherwise—from using authoritarian practices.

We also found more frequent use of authoritarian practices among poor, relative to non-poor, mothers in the DR, corroborating past studies in the USA that indicate that positive parenting may be compromised in the context of poverty. This may be because poor parents experience high levels of stress leading to a reliance on authoritarian practices (McLoyd, 1998). In contrast, no differences based on poverty status were found in the USA. It is not clear why we did not observe more authoritarian parenting among NYC Dominican mothers living in poverty, but the literature on the immigrant paradox may be relevant. According to the paradox, immigrant populations tend to fare better than their US-born counterparts on indicators of mental health, a pattern that may be attributable to resilience and strength factors that buffer foreign-born individuals from the stressors of socioeconomic disadvantage (Vega et al., 1998). In the US sample of immigrant Dominican mothers, it is possible that despite experiences of poverty, they were less vulnerable to stress and depression—

potentially as a function of immigrant optimism (Bacallao & Smokowski, 2007; Viruell-Fuentes, 2007)—and thus less likely to use harsh practices with their children (Parke et al., 2004; Riley et al., 2009).

It is also possible that we did not find a link between poverty and authoritarian parenting in NYC, in contrast to the DR, because of neighborhood characteristics. Past studies suggest that parents living in poverty intentionally adopt an approach that stresses unquestioning obedience to authority figures or guardians to protect their children from negative influences outside the home (Luis et al., 2008; Pinderhughes et al., 2001). Parents who are raising children in environments perceived as less threatening (e.g., middle-class neighborhoods) may feel less compelled to demand obedience from their children as a means to protect them from environmental risks and more compelled to foster independence and autonomy in their children. Some research shows that rather than poverty itself, residence in unsafe communities may be a more proximal predictor of parenting practices (Kelley, 1988). Perhaps, then, the neighborhood environments of poor children in the DR were more dangerous than those of poor children in the USA. In that case, the DR mothers living in poverty may have been more likely to directly experience environmental stressors that influenced their parenting.

It bears noting that the difference between poor and non-poor neighborhoods was likely greater in the DR than in the USA. In the DR, the non-poor group included middle- and upper-class families attending moderately priced or expensive private schools. In the USA, household incomes in the Dominican population are skewed toward poverty so that sampling from middle- to upper-class families is not feasible. As a result, the non-poor group included working and middle-class families attending the same public schools as the poor group. To the extent that the non-poor groups across the two countries were qualitatively distinct, caution is warranted in drawing firm conclusions from these comparisons. More research is needed that oversamples non-poor Dominican families in the USA to understand the effects of poverty in this population.

Our second aim was to explore the relation between parenting and child functioning across contexts, and we found that authoritarian parenting was associated with both externalizing and internalizing problems for all children. Evidence is mixed regarding the effects of authoritarian (or harsh) parenting, with many studies finding no relation in Latino families (Hill, Bush, & Roosa, 2003; Ispa et al., 2004). Importantly, though, past research has focused primarily on older children, and it may be that authoritarian practices such as spanking produce stronger negative effects for younger Latino children than for their older counterparts (Bradley et al., 2001a, 2001b), underscoring a potential vulnerability to harsh practices during early childhood. For example, in contrast to school-aged children or adolescents, young children may not have the cognitive skills to understand the potentially normative or adaptive nature of authoritarian practices. Also from a developmental perspective, authoritarian parenting, with its emphasis on obedience, may be particularly harmful in early childhood when children are acquiring developmental competencies and require parental guidance to master foundational behavioral and emotional skills. Cross-sequential studies are warranted to explore these potential three-way interactions between child age, parenting practices, and developmental outcomes.

Contrary to the *authoritarian as adaptive parenting* hypothesis, which would predict an attenuated association in families experiencing poverty-related stressors (e.g., dangerous neighborhoods), authoritarian practices were related to externalizing problems regardless of context and to internalizing problems to a greater extent among families living in poverty. These unexpected findings may be a function of child age, especially considering the relatively limited exposure that young children have to influences outside of the home and school. Without an immediate need to protect young children from neighborhood gangs, for example, authoritarian practices may be more likely to reflect parental stress than protective parenting. Future studies are needed to identify the correlates of parenting practices, but what seems clear from the present study findings is that authoritarian practices in early childhood may serve only to undermine the parent-child relationship with no accompanying adaptive purpose.

There are several limitations to the present study. First, as noted above, our assessment of poverty was different across studies and, in the DR sample, was based on a proxy measure (public vs. private school attendance) rather than household income. Better measurement of poverty status would be especially useful in further exploring whether authoritarian parenting possibly exacerbates the negative effects of poverty on Dominican early childhood development. Second, we relied on maternal report of parenting practices and child functioning, contributing to reporter bias, especially because mothers who are authoritarian may also be less tolerant of child misbehaviors (Canino & Guarnaccia, 1997). Future research should include teacher ratings and/or observational data to examine the robustness of associations found in the present study.

We also did not collect data on fathers. Latino children, regardless of their country of residence (DR or USA) or poverty status, often come from two-parent homes, and fathers' involvement and parenting practices have a significant and direct influence on children's development. Future studies should include data from fathers with the aims of providing a more nuanced picture of the family context of Dominican children and of identifying potential buffering effects that father involvement may have on the development of young children living in poverty. In addition, longitudinal work is needed to understand the influence of authoritarian parenting on Dominican children, especially in light of a robust literature showing the bidirectional effects of child behavior on parenting, with child misbehavior eliciting authoritarian practices that further exacerbate child misbehavior (Fite, Colder, Lochman, & Wells, 2006; Sameroff, 1975). Finally, our results may not generalize to Dominican families living outside of the unique contexts of NYC and Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic (Foucault & Schneider, 2009).

Despite these notable limitations, the present study is innovative in its focus on Dominican parenting and early childhood functioning in families living in vastly different contexts. Its significance is underscored by the virtual absence of research on Dominicans, who represent the fifth largest Latino subgroup in the USA and number approximately 1.5 million residents of the USA (US Census Bureau, 2011). Our findings suggest a number of strengths in this population, including a greater reliance on authoritative than authoritarian practices, and among immigrant moth-

ers in the USA, potentially less vulnerability to the stressors of poverty (i.e., the immigrant paradox). Specifically, no differences in parenting or child functioning were found between poor and non-poor Dominican families in the USA, despite a wealth of evidence that poor children present with more externalizing and internalizing problems than their non-poor peers (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Xue, Leventhal, Brooks-Gunn, & Earls, 2005). Indeed, in the DR, the effects of poverty appeared profound. Regardless of poverty, though, authoritarian practices seem to serve as a risk factor for young Dominican children's mental health. Given the relatively low reliance on this approach across families, it may be that harsh practices contribute to early childhood mental health problems even at a low "dose." Efforts to promote healthy child development, then, may focus on teaching parents alternatives to authoritarian practices and, for those in the USA, identifying and leveraging immigrant strengths that contribute to positive parenting.

References

- Bacallao, M. L., & Smokowski, P. R. (2007). The costs of getting ahead: Mexican family system changes afterimmigration. *Family Relations*, *56*(1), 52–66. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2007.00439.x>
- Barajas-Gonzalez, R. G., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2014). Income, neighborhood stressors, and harsh parenting: Test of moderation by ethnicity, age, and gender. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *28*(6), 855–866. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038242>
- Baumrind, D. (1967). Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behavior. *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, *75*, 43–88. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0024919>.
- Baumrind, D. (1995). Child rearing dimensions relevant to child maltreatment. In R. Lerner (Ed.), *Child maltreatment and optimal care giving in social contexts* (pp. 55–73). New York, NY: Garland.
- Bird, H. R., Davies, M., Duarte, C. S., Shen, S., Loeber, R., & Canino, G. J. (2006). A study of disruptive behavior disorders in Puerto Rican youth: II. Baseline prevalence, comorbidity, and correlates in two sites. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, *45*, 1042–1053. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.chi.0000227879.65651.cf>
- Bornstein, M. H. (1995). Form and function: Implications for studies of culture and human development. *Culture & Psychology*, *1*(1), 123–137. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067X9511009>
- Bornstein, M. H., & Bradley, R. H. (Eds.). (2014). *Socioeconomic status, parenting, and child development*. Mahwah, NJ: Routledge.
- Bornstein, M. H., & Cote, L. R. (2004). Mothers' parenting cognitions in cultures of origin, acculturating cultures, and cultures of destination. *Child Development*, *75*(1), 221–235. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2004.00665.x>
- Bradley, R. H., Corwyn, R. F., McAdoo, H. P., & García Coll, C. (2001a). The home environments of children in the United States part I: Variations by age, ethnicity, and poverty status. *Child Development*, *72*(6), 1844–1867. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.t01-1-00382>
- Bradley, R. H., Corwyn, R. F., McAdoo, H. P., & García Coll, C. (2001b). The home environments of children in the United States part II: Relations with behavioral development through age thirteen. *Child Development*, *72*(6), 1871–1879. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.t01-1-00383>
- Brooks-Gunn, J., & Duncan, G. J. (1997). The effects of poverty on children. *The Future of Children*, *7*, 55–71. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1602387>
- Calzada, E. J. (2010). Bringing culture into parent training with Latinos. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, *17*(2), 167–175.

- Calzada, E. J., Barajas-Gonzalez, R. G., Huang, K. Y., & Brotman, L. (2015). Early childhood internalizing problems in Mexican- and Dominican-origin children: The role of cultural socialization and parenting practices. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 46*(4), 551–562. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15374416.2015.1041593>
- Calzada, E. J., Basil, S., & Fernandez, Y. (2012). What Latina mothers think of evidence based parenting programs. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice, 20*(3), 362–374. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cbpra.2012.08.004>.
- Calzada, E. J., & Eyberg, S. M. (2002). Self-reported parenting practices in Dominican and Puerto Rican mothers of young children. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 31*, 354–363. <https://doi.org/10.1207/153744202760082612>
- Calzada, E. J., Fernandez, Y., & Cortes, D. (2010). Incorporating the cultural value of *respeto* into a framework of Latino parenting. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 16*, 77–86. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016071>
- Canino, G., & Guarnaccia, P. (1997). Methodological challenges in the assessment of Hispanic children and adolescents. *Applied Developmental Science, 1*(3), 124–134. https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532480xads0103_3
- Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies. (2011). *Mexicans in New York City, 1990–2009: A visual data base*. Retrieved from <http://clacls.gc.cuny.edu/files/2013/10/Mexicans-in-New-York-City-1990-2009-A-Visual-Data-Base.pdf>.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2008). *Youth risk behavior surveillance – United States, 2007 (MMWR Report # 57)*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/ss/ss5712.pdf>.
- Chao, R. (1994). Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development, 65*, 1111–1119. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.1994.tb00806.x>
- Deater-Deckard, K., Dodge, K. A., Bates, J. E., & Pettit, G. S. (1996). Physical discipline among African American and European American mothers: Links to children's externalizing behaviors. *Developmental Psychology, 32*(6), 1065–1072. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.32.6.1065>
- Dumka, L. E., Roosa, M. W., & Jackson, K. M. (1997). Risk, conflict, mothers' parenting, and children's adjustment in low-income, Mexican immigrant, and Mexican American families. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 59*, 309–323. <https://doi.org/10.2307/353472>
- Fite, P. J., Colder, C. R., Lochman, J. E., & Wells, K. C. (2006). The mutual influence of parenting and boys' externalizing behavior problems. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 27*(2), 151–164. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2005.12.011>
- Foucault, D. C., & Schneider, B. H. (2009). Parenting values and parenting stress among impoverished village and middle-class small city mothers in the Dominican Republic. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 33*, 440–450. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025409340094>
- Fuller, B., & García Coll, C. (2010). Learning from Latinos: Contexts, families, and child development in motion. *Developmental Psychology, 46*, 559–565. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019412>
- García Coll, C., Lamberty, G., Jenkins, R., McAdoo, H. P., Crnic, K., Wasik, B. H., & Vázquez García, H. (1996). An integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in minority children. *Child Development, 67*(5), 1891–1914. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1131600>
- Gershoff, E. T., Grogan-Kaylor, A., Lansford, J. E., Chang, L., Zelli, A., Deater-Deckard, K., & Dodge, K. A. (2010). Parent discipline practices in an international sample: Associations with child behaviors and moderation by perceived normativeness. *Child Development, 81*(2), 487–502. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2009.01409.x>
- Guilamo-Ramos, V., Dittus, P., Jaccard, J., Johansson, M., Bouris, A., & Acosta, N. (2007). Parenting practices among Dominican and Puerto Rican mothers. *Social Work, 52*(1), 17–30. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/52.1.17>
- Gutman, L. M., Sameroff, A. J., & Eccles, J. S. (2002). The academic achievement of African American students during early adolescence: An examination of multiple risk, promotive, and protective factors. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 30*(3), 367–399. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1015389103911>

- Hill, N. E., Bush, K. R., & Roosa, M. W. (2003). Parenting and family socialization strategies and children's mental health: Low-income Mexican-American and Euro-American mothers and children. *Child Development, 74*, 189–204. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.t01-1-00530>
- Ispa, J. M., Fine, M. A., Halgunseth, L. C., Harper, S., Robinson, J., Boyce, L., ... Brady-Smith, C. (2004). Maternal intrusiveness, maternal warmth, and mother-toddler relationship outcomes: Variations across low-income ethnic and language groups. *Child Development, 75*, 1613–1631. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2004.00806.x>
- Kagitcibasi, C. (2012). Sociocultural change and integrative syntheses in human development: Autonomous-related self and social-cognitive competence. *Child Development Perspectives, 6*(1), 5–11. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-8606.2011.00173.x>
- Kelley, M. L. (1988). *Conceptions of parenting in low-income, black urban mothers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Houston, TX.
- Khaleque, A., & Rohner, R. P. (2012). Pancultural associations between perceived parental acceptance and psychological adjustment of children and adults: A meta-analytic review of worldwide research. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 43*(5), 784–800. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022111406120>
- Landry, S. H., Smith, K. E., & Swank, P. R. (2003). The importance of parenting during early childhood for school-age development. *Developmental Neuropsychology, 24*(2–3), 559–591. <https://doi.org/10.1080/87565641.2003.9651911>
- Lansford, J. E., Chang, L., Dodge, K. A., Malone, P. S., Oburu, P., Palmérus, K., ... Quinn, N. (2005). Physical discipline and children's adjustment: Cultural normativeness as a moderator. *Child Development, 76*, 1234–1246. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2005.00847.x>
- Leventhal, T., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2000). The neighborhoods they live in: The effects of neighborhood residence on child and adolescent outcomes. *Psychological Bulletin, 126*(2), 309. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.126.2.309>
- Luis, T., Varela, R. E., & Moore, K. (2008). Parenting practices and childhood anxiety reporting: A comparison of Mexican, Mexican American, and European American youth. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders, 22*, 1011–1020. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2007.11.001>
- Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, J. A. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction. In E. M. Hetherington (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology: Socialization, personality, and social development* (pp. 1–101). New York, NY: Wiley.
- McLoyd, V. C. (1998). Socioeconomic disadvantage and child development. *American Psychologist, 53*(2), 185–204. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.53.2.185>
- Motel, S., & Patten, E. (2012). *The 10 largest Hispanic origin groups: Characteristics, rankings, top counties*. Washington, DC: PEW Research Center.
- Oficina Nacional de Estadística. (2014). *República Dominicana: Porcentaje de personas en pobreza monetaria extrema y general (línea oficial) según región de planificación, 2000–2013*. Retrieved from <http://www.one.gob.do/index.php?module=articles&func=view&catid=330>
- Parke, R. D., Coltrane, S., Duffy, S., Buriel, R., Dennis, J., Powers, J., ... Widaman, K. F. (2004). Economic stress, parenting, and child adjustment in Mexican American and European American families. *Child Development, 75*, 1632–1656. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2004.00807.x>
- Pettit, G. S., Bates, J. E., & Dodge, K. A. (1997). Supportive parenting, ecological context, and children's adjustment: A seven-year longitudinal study. *Child Development, 68*(5), 908–923. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1132041>
- PEW Hispanic Center. (2009). *Between two worlds: How young Latinos come of age in America*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/reports/117.pdf>
- Pinderhughes, E. E., Nix, R., Foster, E. M., & Jones, D. (2001). Parenting in context: Impact of neighborhood poverty, residential stability, public services, social networks, and danger on parental behaviors. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 63*(4), 941–953. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2001.00941.x>
- Planos, R., Zayas, L. H., & Busch-Rossnagel, N. A. (1995). Acculturation and teaching behaviors of Dominican and Puerto Rican mothers. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 17*, 225–223. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07399863950172006>

- Planos, R., Zayas, L. H., & Busch-Rossnagel, N. A. (1997). Mental health factors and teaching behaviors among low-income Hispanic mothers. *Families in Society*, 78, 4–12. <https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.732>
- Reynolds, C. R., & Kamphaus, R. W. (2004). *BASC-2: Behavioral assessment system for children manual* (2nd ed.). Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.
- Riley, A., Coiro, M. J., Broitman, M., Colantuoni, E., Hurley, K., Bandeen-Roche, K., & Miranda, J. (2009). Mental health of children of low-income depressed mothers: Influences of parenting, family environment, and raters. *Psychiatric Services*, 60(3), 329–336. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.60.3.329>.
- Robinson, C., Mandlco, B., Olsen, S. F., & Hart, C. H. (1995). Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting practices: Development of a new measure. *Psychological Reports*, 77, 819–830. <https://doi.org/10.2466/pr0.1995.77.3.819>
- Sameroff, A. (1975). Transactional models in early social relations. *Human Development*, 18, 65–72. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000271476>
- Steinberg, L. (2001). We know some things: Parent–adolescent relationships in retrospect and prospect. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 11(1), 1–19.
- Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., Way, N., Hughes, D., Yoshikawa, H., Kalman, R. K., & Niwa, E. Y. (2007). Parents' goals for children: The dynamic coexistence of individualism and collectivism in cultures and individuals. *Social Development*, 17(1), 183–209. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9507.2007.00419.x>
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2011). *Hispanic or Latino by specific origin. 2011 American community survey 1-year estimates*. Retrieved from <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmmk>.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2013). *Poverty guidelines*. Retrieved from <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/13poverty.cfm>.
- Varela, R. E., Vernberg, E. M., Sanchez-Sosa, J. J., Riveros, A., Mitchell, M., & Mashunkashey, J. (2004). Parenting style of Mexican, Mexican American, and Caucasian-non-Hispanic families: Social context and cultural influences. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 18(4), 651. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.18.4.651>
- Vega, W. A., Kolody, B., Aguilar-Gaxiola, S., Alderte, E., Catalano, R., & Caraveo-Anduaga, H. (1998). Lifetime prevalence of DSM-III-R psychiatric disorders among urban and rural Mexican Americans in California. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 55, 771–778. <https://doi.org/10.1001/archpsyc.55.9.771>
- Viruell-Fuentes, E. A. (2007). Beyond acculturation: Immigration, discrimination, and health research among Mexicans in the United States. *Social Science & Medicine*, 65(7), 1524–1535. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2007.05.010>
- Xue, Y., Leventhal, T., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Earls, F. J. (2005). Neighborhood residence and mental health problems of 5-to 11-year-olds. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 62(5), 554–563. <https://doi.org/10.1001/archpsyc.62.5.554>