



Published in final edited form as:

J Fam Psychol. 2011 October ; 25(5): 731–740. doi:10.1037/a0025128.

Cultural Influences on Positive Father Involvement in Two-Parent Mexican-Origin Families

Rick A. Cruz,

Department of Psychology, University of Washington

Kevin M. King,

Department of Psychology, University of Washington

Keith F. Widaman,

Department of Psychology University of California Davis

Janxin Leu,

Department of Psychology, University of Washington

Ana Mari Cauce, and

Department of Psychology, University of Washington

Rand D. Conger

Department of Human and Community Development, Department of Psychology, University of California Davis

Abstract

A growing body of research documents the importance of positive father involvement in children's development. However, research on fathers in Latino families is sparse, and research contextualizing the father-child relationship within a cultural framework is needed. The current study examined how father's cultural practices and values predicted their fifth-grade child's report of positive father involvement among a sample of 450 two-parent Mexican-origin families. Predictors included Spanish and English language use, Mexican and American cultural values, and positive *machismo* (i.e., culturally related attitudes about the father's role within the family). Positive father involvement was measured by child's report of his/her father's monitoring, educational involvement, and warmth. Latent variable regression analyses showed that fathers' *machismo* attitudes were positively related to child's report of positive father involvement and that this association was similar across boys and girls. The results of this study suggest an important association between father's cultural values about men's roles and responsibilities within a family and his child's perception of positive fathering.

Keywords

Father involvement; Mexican American families; Machismo; Cultural Values

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Rick A. Cruz, Department of Psychology, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195. cruzr1@uw.edu; Phone: 206-543-2199.

Publisher's Disclaimer: The following manuscript is the final accepted manuscript. It has not been subjected to the final copyediting, fact-checking, and proofreading required for formal publication. It is not the definitive, publisher-authenticated version. The American Psychological Association and its Council of Editors disclaim any responsibility or liabilities for errors or omissions of this manuscript version, any version derived from this manuscript by NIH, or other third parties. The published version is available at www.apa.org/pubs/journals/fam

After more than a century of research where parenting was almost exclusively defined by mothering, the last few decades have witnessed substantial growth in the study of fathers (Cabrera & Garcia-Coll, 2004; Marsiglio, Amato, Day, & Lamb, 2000). Despite differences in methodology, age groups, and family constellations examined, most studies conclude that fathering matters. The father-child relationship is related to important developmental outcomes, including cognitive development (Amato, 1998) social competence (Pleck, 1997), and psychopathology (Phares, 1996, 1997; Phares & Compas, 1992). Moreover, fathers appear to make unique contributions to their children's development over and above the contribution of mothers in terms of child depression (Videon, 2005), behavior problems (Amato & Rivera, 1999), and more long-term adjustment such as happiness, life satisfaction, and psychological distress (Amato, 1994). Both quantity (Amato, 1994; Amato & Rivera, 1999) and quality (Parke, 1996; Pleck, 2010) of father involvement appear to be important in shaping these diverse child outcomes, and Pleck's (2010) revised conceptualization has stressed the importance of combining these two dimensions to capture *positive father involvement*.

Although the importance of fathers has been established, the majority of research on fathering is based on data from middle-class European American families and research on ethnic minority fathers, especially Latino fathers, has lagged significantly behind (Cabrera & Garcia-Coll, 2004). This is a shortcoming of the literature for two reasons. First, Latinos are the largest ethnic minority group in the United States, making up 16% of the population (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011), and the size of this group is expanding rapidly, as Latinos are predicted to make up 30% of the U.S. population by the year 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). Second, a number of cross-cultural studies have demonstrated that Latino fathers are involved in some aspects of childcare to the same (Hofferth, 2003) or possibly greater extent (Toth & Xu, 1999; Yeung, Sandberg, Davis-Kean, & Hofferth, 2001) than their European-American counterparts. Although these cross-cultural studies provide us with informative comparisons, these studies rarely examine how cultural values and beliefs play a role in Latino fathering, focusing instead on simple ethnic differences between White European-Americans, African-Americans and Latinos.

Importantly, the father-child relationship is embedded within a broader sociocultural context, including cultural and social beliefs regarding the father's role within the family (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000; Marsiglio, Day, & Lamb, 2000). Thus, cultural variation in these beliefs is expected to shape parenting behavior (Marsiglio, Amato, Day, & Lamb, 2000). Yet, little research has examined how this variation is related to the parenting of Latino fathers (Cabrera & Garcia-Coll, 2004; Parke & Buriel 1998). This study aims to provide a more in-depth test of cultural factors hypothesized to influence father's parenting behavior using data from a large-scale study of Mexican-origin families who, at 64%, make up the largest subgroup of Latinos (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007).

Theoretically, variation in Mexican origin fathers' cultural characteristics arises due to increasing exposure and adaptation to American culture during the *acculturation* process. We conceptualize the acculturation process using Schwartz et al.'s (2010) integrative framework. Acculturation is defined as changes in *cultural identity* across both heritage (i.e., Mexican) and receiving (i.e., American) culture statuses, which have also been labeled as enculturation and acculturation, respectively (e.g., Gonzales et al., 2002). Cultural identity is further divided into separate components with multiple dimensions, including practices (dimensions include language use, media preferences, and social affiliation), values, and identifications (i.e., ethnic and national identity), which are thought to change during the acculturation process; the degree and rate of change may vary across dimensions and may depend on characteristics of the receiving and heritage culture. The current study draws on

Schwartz et al. (2010) by examining English and Spanish Use (cultural practices) and Mexican and American cultural values, which reflect components of fathers' American identity and Mexican identity that have been linked, theoretically or empirically, to their parenting behavior. In the next section we review evidence for such links. However, it is important to note that this literature is underdeveloped. Furthermore, existing studies have used different labels (e.g., acculturation, cultural orientation, and cultural identification) and different measures, which may explain why findings have been inconsistent.

Initial empirical investigation of the influence of acculturation on father involvement examined the predictive value of demographic variables. For example, Buriel (1993) showed that Mexican-American father's childrearing practices, such as degree of autonomy, control, permissiveness, and support, varied depending on generational status. More recent research has examined the influence of cultural practices, particularly language use, on father-child relationships. Although some evidence (Smokowski, Rose, Bacallo, 2008) with a diverse group of Latinos (61% Mexican-origin) suggests that endorsement of American cultural practices (English use, food, recreation, and media preferences) may be related to more positive family dynamics, other past studies have found that American cultural practices, specifically greater English language use and preference, relative to English use, is associated with a higher degree of family conflict in Mexican-American families (Gonzales, Deardorff, Formoso, Barr, & Barrera, 2006; Pasch, et al., 2006). This suggests that fathers who primarily speak English tend to be involved in a less positive way with their children, while those who speak Spanish are more positively involved. Investigating the effects of father Mexican cultural practices and identity on father involvement, Coltrane and colleagues (2004) found that more Mexican-identified men (operationalized as a combination of Spanish language use, Mexican ethnic identity, and social affiliation with other Mexican-identified individuals) engaged in a higher proportion of child supervision hours. Although generational status, cultural practices, and Mexican identification (broadly speaking) do predict father involvement, they are thought to be proxy measures of cultural values that change during the acculturation process (Arends-Toth & van de Vijver, 2006) and cannot explain *why* positive father involvement varies. Researchers (e.g., Gonzales et al., 2006) typically attribute the increased negative family interactions to deterioration of traditional cultural values, in particular the loss of traditional family strengths that characterize Mexican-origin families. However, few researchers have directly tested the influence of varying levels of father cultural values on positive father involvement.

Importantly, many of the values ascribed to traditional Mexican culture revolve around maintaining positive family relationships, including familism (i.e., beliefs about strong family bonds; e.g., Baca Zinn, 1994; Knight, et al., 2010) and *respeto* (respect for parents and elders; Cauce & Domenech-Rodriguez, 2002). Strong family bonds are illustrated in part by the high rate of two-parent homes in Mexican-origin families (74% in past estimates; Bean & Tienda, 1987), which also accentuates the importance of fathers in their children's development. Coltrane et al. (2004) showed that father's higher endorsement of family rituals (a proxy for familism values) predicted greater monitoring and involvement with their children. Moreover, German, Gonzales, and Dumka (2008) showed that father familism values had the strongest protective effect (relative to mother and adolescent familism) on the relation between adolescent deviant peer affiliation and teacher report of externalizing symptoms. Thus, some (albeit limited) empirical evidence, combined with a strong theoretical rationale, suggests a positive relation between traditional Mexican values (with its emphasis on positive family relationships) and positive father involvement. At the same time, no research to date has examined the influence of Mexican-American fathers' American values on their positive involvement with their children. We explore any potential effects of father American values in this study, as it is important to represent both axes of cultural identity (i.e., receiving and heritage culture) in empirical investigations (e.g.,

Schwartz et al., 2010). As greater theoretical weight has been ascribed to maintenance of traditional Mexican values in promoting more positive family relationships (e.g., Gonzales et al., 2006), we might expect that endorsement of American values has relatively limited effects on children's perception of positive father involvement.

Much of the discussion in relation to Mexican-origin men within the family context has centered not on the potential positive influences of traditional cultural identity, but rather on the negative stereotypes of father *machismo* values. A popular cultural stereotype of Latino men, *machismo* is frequently thought to have negative connotations such as excessive masculinity, aggression, and chauvinistic behavior (Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008; Baca-Zinn, 1994; Ortiz & Davis, 2009). The *machismo* stereotype leads to the portrayal of a father as a dominant, withdrawn, and tyrannical disciplinarian (Mirandé, 1988, 1991). However, little data support this claim (Saracho & Spodek, 2007, 2008), and other studies contradict these stereotypical gender role boundaries. In fact, Latino men are involved with their children (Toth & Xu, 1999), and Mexican-origin fathers who are more Mexican-identified are more likely to engage their children in "feminine-typed" activities such as reading (Coltrane, et al., 2004). Indeed, researchers have recently stressed the positive aspects of *machismo* (also known as *caballerismo*; Arciniega et al., 2008; Glass & Owen, 2010), which includes dignity, honor, respect, and the importance of familial responsibility and the father's role as a provider (e.g., Arciniega et al., 2008; Falicov, 2010; Mirandé, 1991; Ortiz & Davis, 2009; Saracho & Spodek, 2007, 2008). This positive conceptualization reflects the intersection of changing gender role attitudes for Mexican-heritage families (Hirsch, 2003) and changes in the U.S. and Mexican ideals and expectations for father responsibilities and practices (Guttman, 2007), which logically leads to the hypothesis that Mexican-origin fathers who endorse higher levels of positive *machismo* are likely to be more involved and have more positive relationships with their children.

A recent study by Glass and Owen (2010) with a diverse group of Latino fathers (24% Mexican-origin) indicated a negative association between stereotypical macho attitudes (e.g., "real men never let down their guard") and degree of father involvement; however, positive *machismo*, or *caballerismo*, was unrelated to father involvement, which may be due to study limitations (small sample size, and not examining potentially salient differences between Latino subgroups) making it difficult to uncover small effects. Despite these limitations, this recent study is important in that it is one of the few to attempt to understand how several dimensions of *cultural identity* influence fathering, and the first to investigate whether positive *machismo* may uniquely influence aspects of fathering.

The Current Study

The goal of the current study was to build upon previous work, including Glass and Owen (2010), and address gaps in prior literature by testing the association between two components of cultural identity—language use and values—on aspects of the father-child relationship within a sample of two-parent Mexican-origin families. Specifically, this study examined how fathers' English and Spanish use (cultural practices), traditional American and Mexican cultural values, and positive *machismo* (which we conceptualize as a specific constellation of Mexican values) were related to positive dimensions of fathering as perceived by the child. Positive fathering was defined in terms of paternal monitoring, warmth, and involvement with their child's schooling, given the large body of literature that show that firm control, warmth, and involvement lead to more positive developmental outcomes (Marsiglio, Amato, Day, & Lamb, 2000; Parke & Buriel, 1998; Pleck, 2010). In order to provide a strong test of cultural influence, factors such as father age and education, family income, and marital relationship quality were controlled for in analyses. If cultural

influences are important, they should predict variation in positive fathering over and above these father and family characteristics. In addition, we hypothesized that children would perceive their father's parenting as more positive when fathers endorsed lower levels of English use and higher Spanish use, traditional Mexican cultural values, and positive machismo, while we expected that American cultural values would be less important for positive father involvement. We also predicted that father cultural values would be more predictive of positive father involvement relative to language use, given that cultural values serve as a primary vehicle of cultural transmission.

Method

Overview of Research Design

Data for the present study were taken from the California Families Project, an ongoing longitudinal study of Mexican-origin families in a metropolitan area of northern California. Participants in the study were of Mexican-origin, as determined by their ancestry and their self-identification as being of Mexican heritage. The sample for the current study (450 two-parent families) was drawn from a larger sample consisting of Mexican-origin fathers, mothers, and their 5th grade child from 674 single and two parent families. Children and their families were drawn at random from rosters of students in two school districts in a large metropolitan area in Northern California. First-, second-, and third-generation children of Mexican-origin living with their biological mother were eligible for the study. Families were interviewed during 2006–2008.

Participants were recruited by telephone or, in cases where they did not have a telephone, by a recruiter who went to their home. Out of the eligible families, 72.2% agreed to participate. Trained research staff interviewed the participants in their homes using laptop computers. They visited the families on two separate occasions within a one-week period. Visits lasted approximately three hours during which each participant was interviewed separately by one of two interviewers. Families were paid for their participation; parents each received \$75, and children \$50 total for two visits. Interviews were conducted in Spanish or English based on the preference of the participant.

Participants

These analyses are based on those 450 Mexican-origin two-parent families with fathers who participated in data collection, and their fifth grade children, with at least partial data on the variables of interest in this study. Of the 450 children included in the current sample, 50% ($n = 226$) were male, and children had an average age of 10.30 years ($SD = 0.56$). Children in this sample had an average of two siblings ($M = 2.10$, $SD = 1.10$). Fathers averaged nine years of education, and median family income (which was reported in \$5,000 increments) was between \$35,000 and \$40,000 ($SD = \$15,000$), although there was a wide range of income levels (<\$5,000 – \$95,000). Eighty-seven percent of fathers were employed and 73% of fathers reported working between 40–50 hours per week. The majority of men in this sample were blue-collar workers employed in construction, agriculture, labor and skilled labor.

The large majority (88%) of fathers were born in Mexico, whereas most (70%) of their children were born in the U.S. This was reflected in their interview language preference: Eighty-three percent of fathers completed the majority of the interview in Spanish, and 84% of the children completed the majority of the interview in English. Fathers in this sample were 20.34 years old on average ($SD = 9.82$) when they moved to the US, and they had lived in the US for 19.44 years on average ($SD = 6.21$).

Measures

Three dimensions of father-child relationship quality were used to create a latent *positive father involvement* factor based on child's report. Fourteen items tapping paternal *monitoring* scale (Small & Kerns; $\alpha = 0.92$) assessed the degree to which the father was aware of his child's activities and knew who his child's friends were. The child's perception of their father's *warmth* (10 items; $\alpha = 0.82$) was measured using the Behavioral Affect Rating Scale (Kim et al., 2003). The warmth scale asked the child to report how often his/her father did specific actions including expressing care and actively supporting the child. The monitoring and warmth measures used frequency ratings (almost never or never; sometimes; a lot of the time; almost always or always). Father's involvement in his child's education (*educational involvement*) during the past year was assessed using four items ($\alpha = 0.78$) adapted from Epstein and Salinas (1993), e.g., "You encouraged your child to study." This scale had four options: "never", "once or twice", "a few times", and "many times."

Five English use/preference items ($\alpha = 0.86$), and five Spanish use/preference items ($\alpha = 0.85$) from the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican-Americans– II (ARSMA–II; Cuellar, Arnold, & Maldonado, 1995) were used to create mean indicators for *English* and *Spanish* use. Items assessed the frequency that fathers spoke each language, language preferences for media, as well as writing and thinking in each language using a four-point frequency scale. English and Spanish use mean indicators, which were correlated at $r = -.54$, were utilized to create a latent *language use* factor.

Similarly, we used two indicators to create a latent *cultural values* factor reflecting orientation towards both American and Mexican values. We used the mean of 14 items from the American Cultural Values (ACV) scale ($\alpha = 0.77$) and the mean of 36 items Mexican Cultural Values (MCV) scale ($\alpha = 0.88$) from the Mexican American Cultural Values Scale (Knight, et al., 2010); both measures used a four point Likert rating scale. The items from the ACV scale measured father's values about self-reliance, material satisfaction, competition, and independence. The items from the MCV scale measured traditional values including gender-role attitudes, religion, respect, and three forms of familism: support, obligations, and family as referent. Although both MCV and ACV are composite scores of multiple subscales, Knight and colleagues (2010) indicated that the stability of individual subscales varied and recommended using the overall means. As in Knight et al.'s work (2010), ACV and MCV were positively correlated in the current study ($r = .55$).

Positive machismo was defined in this study as values and beliefs about father's roles and responsibilities in the family. Positive machismo was assessed using seven items ($\alpha = 0.96$) from an unpublished 11-item measure developed by California Families Project contributors (Larsen-Rife, Heylen, & Widaman) using a four-point Likert scale. The seven items used in the study analyses were selected after two steps. First, we qualified whether all items in the scale were most representative of positive or negative connotations of machismo. Factor analytic procedures were then used to test a one factor model with all items and a two factor model with positive (seven items) and negative (four items) machismo factors. Item loadings for the negative items were non-significant in both the one-factor and two-factor model, and iterative removal of non-significant items in the one-factor model caused loadings for other negative items to become non-significant. This left us with a one-factor model of seven positive machismo items; the model provided a good fit of the data, $\chi^2(14) = 32.63$, $p = .003$; CFI = .96, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .06, with standardized loadings ranging from .47 to .74. The final items are listed in Table 3.

We included father education (in years) and age as covariates. As father-child relationships may also be influenced by the marital relationship (e.g., Formoso, Gonzales, Barrera, & Dumka, 2007), we also controlled for the father's perception of maternal warmth (9 items;

$\alpha = 0.91$) and hostility (13 items; $\alpha = 0.81$), assessed using the BARS (Kim et al., 2003). Given associations between income and fathering in European American studies (e.g., Conger, Ge, Elder, Lorenz, & Simons, 1994), we also controlled for family income in analyses. Finally, child gender (0 = male and 1 = female) was examined as a covariate and, in *post hoc* analyses, as a potential moderator of the relation between cultural factors and positive parenting.

Analytic plan

We used SPSS 16.0 (SPSS Inc. 1989–2006) to obtain descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations for all study variables. Mplus 5 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2010) was used to test the hypothesis that cultural practices and values were related to father's parenting quality. We first predicted the latent positive father involvement factor with a "covariates only" model in order to provide a comparison to the full model. Next, we examined a full model with cultural factors and covariates (including gender) predicting positive father involvement, and examined changes in model fit, estimates, and variance explained across both models. Finally, we examined child gender as a potential moderator by conducting a multi-group analysis using nested models, where regression paths for cultural factors were constrained to be equal across gender versus freeing those regression paths; all covariates were assumed to be equivalent across gender in the nested models.

Missing data were handled in Mplus 5 using full-information maximum likelihood (FIML) estimation assuming ignorable missingness at random (Little & Rubin, 1987; Muthén & Muthén, 1998, pp. 363–364). FIML uses all the data available (rather than the covariance matrix) simultaneously to calculate parameter estimates (Kline, 1998). FIML has been demonstrated to be superior to ad-hoc missing data techniques (such as similar response pattern imputation and listwise and pairwise deletion) in terms of aspects of model estimation, bias and efficiency, and relatively equivalent to multiple imputation techniques (Enders, 2001). We used maximum likelihood with robust standard errors (MLR) for estimation of parameters. Model fit was assessed using the likelihood ratio chi-square, supplemented by the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), and root-mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) to supplement the chi-square test based on the guidelines provided by Hu and Bentler (1999) and the cautions of Marsh, Hau, and Wen (2004). Chi-square difference tests to examine moderation in nested models were performed with the Satorra-Bentler adjusted chi-square and the scaling correction factor according to standard procedures (Bryant & Satorra, in press; Satorra and Bentler, 2001).

Results

Missing data analyses showed that 417 children and 398 fathers had complete data; overall, 386 cases (father-child dyads) had complete data. Examination of patterns of missing data indicated that some data were missing due to fathers not participating in either the first (missing age, income, and machismo variables) or second home visit (missing all other measures). Children who missed the second visit were missing all data for the fathering variables. Other missing data appeared to be missing at random. Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for all variables used in the analyses.

We next examined correlations among all variables used in the analyses (see Table 2). Results indicated significant zero-order correlations among different aspects of fathering as perceived by the child (i.e., monitoring, educational involvement, and warmth). Correlations between positive aspects of fathering ranged from $r = .44$ to $r = .63$ (all $ps < .001$); these high inter-correlations provided additional support for the creation of a latent factor of positive fathering. Father education was positively related to children's perception of increased father involvement in his or her education. Father's endorsement of positive

machismo values was positively related with domains of fathering (monitoring, warmth, educational involvement); of the cultural variables, positive machismo was associated only with Spanish use suggesting that these values related to the father's role are orthogonal to the American and Mexican cultural value measures.

Predicting Positive Father Involvement

We first tested a model predicting the latent positive involvement factor from the covariates (father age, education, family income, child gender, and fathers' ratings of mother warmth and hostility). Model fit indices suggested that the model fit the data well, $\chi^2(12) = 8.42$, $p = .75$; CFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.02, RMSEA = 0.00. Of the covariates, greater father education ($\beta = .13$, $p = .02$) and less family income ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .05$) were related to a more positive perception of fathering, explaining 5% of variance in the latent factor.

We next added the cultural variables as predictors of the positive involvement factor. Model fit indices suggested that model fit was generally good; $\chi^2(131) = 202.53$, $p < .001$; CFI = .95, TLI = .94, and RMSEA = .04. The factor loadings for the four latent factors were all moderate to large in magnitude (See Table 3). Adding the cultural predictors explained an additional 4% of the variance in positive fathering. Positive machismo ($\beta = .20$, $p < .001$) was the only cultural factor related to fathering, such that fathers who endorsed greater positive machismo attitudes were perceived by their children as more positive, involved fathers. This held true in *post hoc* analyses when we limited the Mexican values variable only to the three measures of familism, removing the gender-role attitudes, religion, and respect components from the computed MCV scale score (an approach supported by Knight et al., 2010), to try to probe for an effect of general family values.

Finally, we examined whether the effects of the cultural variables on fathering differed by child gender using a multiple-groups SEM approach. Satorra-Bentler chi-square difference tests indicated that fixing the regression effects across males and females did not significantly reduce the fit of the model relative to a model that freely estimated their effects across gender ($\chi^2_{\text{difference}}(df = 3) = 2.81$). Thus, there was no evidence of moderation by gender in the current data.

Discussion

Few studies have focused on the ways in which both language use and cultural values relate to Latino father's parenting, and only one previous study has examined the influence of positive machismo. The current study examined the relevance of English and Spanish language use, traditional Mexican and American cultural values, and positive *machismo* as related to children's report of positive father involvement in Mexican-origin families. Supporting our hypothesis, results suggested that fathers with higher levels of positive *machismo* values (or *caballerismo*) had children who reported greater positive father involvement. This finding diverges from Glass and Owen (2010), as they did not find effects of positive machismo on quantity of father involvement. The reason for the divergent finding may be that positive machismo does not necessarily have effects on father involvement when the quality of the interactions is not taken into account. Another explanation may be that the current study utilized a larger and more homogeneous sample, which may have uncovered small effects of positive machismo on positive involvement. Regardless, the results of the current study are the first to suggest that positive machismo predicts child report of positive father involvement. This finding reflects the trend towards redefining the father's role with his children in the U.S. and Mexico (Hirsch, 2003; Pleck, 2010), suggesting that father's endorsement of more positive values about the father's role in the family is related to higher quality parenting.

Given the stereotypes surrounding machismo in Latino males (see Falicov, 2010; Mirandé, 1991, 1998; Ortiz & Davis, 2010; Saracho & Spodek, 2007, 2008), these findings might be considered somewhat surprising. However, the measure of machismo used in this study was based on more contemporary and more positive definition of machismo. It is also important to note that the positive machismo construct used in this study, conceptualized as a traditional Mexican value, has substantial overlap with the American definition of positive fathering developed and increasingly endorsed over the past few decades (Pleck, 2010); this overlap may be common when trying to make distinctions between sets of values across two cultures (Hunt, 2004). Operationalizing machismo using a more negatively stereotyped definition of machismo would likely yield different results as in Glass and Owen (2010). Unfortunately, our items measuring negative machismo did not show adequate fit in confirmatory factor analyses, so we could not test the effect of negative machismo on positive fathering.

Conversely, neither bivariate correlations nor latent regression models uncovered associations between overall American or Mexican cultural value orientation and children's perception of fathering quality, which did not support our hypothesis that father Mexican values would relate to positive father involvement. It was especially surprising that we did not find an effect in *post hoc* analyses when we limited the Mexican values variable to familism and respect. This suggests that, at least within Mexican-American families, the degree to which a father values American or Mexican ideals (including the emphasis on familism) plays little specific role in the quality of their parenting as perceived by the child. Also surprising was the lack of effect of father English or Spanish use on child's perception of father's positive parenting, which did not support our hypothesis that greater English use and lower Spanish leads to less positive relationships. It may be that language use predicts family conflict and cohesion (as shown in prior studies, e.g., Gonzales et al., 2006), rather than child's perception of parenting behaviors and quality. Overall, this analysis may suggest that it is not father cultural identity that is important for child's perception of parenting, but potentially the degree of difference in cultural identity between father and child as illustrated in studies on the acculturation gap (e.g., Martinez, 2006; Schofield, Parke, Kim, & Coltrane, 2008).

In spite of the strengths of this study, including a large sample size, the use of father and child report, and the use of latent variable models, a number of study limitations may limit generalizability. We used cross-sectional data and a single reporter for positive father involvement variables. Future studies might explore longitudinal, multiple-reporter models to examine how cultural factors influence child, father, and mother perception of positive father involvement across time. Moreover, we explored only positive relationship dynamics whereas prior studies (e.g., Pasch et al., 2006) have found associations between language use and father-child conflict. Hence, conflict may be more strongly associated with cultural identity factors, whereas positive aspects of parenting are less culture-driven. Finally, our findings showed small correlations and modest standardized regression estimates suggesting that, although culture is influential, its impact may not be resoundingly large. Thus, it is still necessary to look at other father factors (e.g., cultural stress, depression, and substance use), and perhaps how they interact with cultural factors, to explain additional variation in positive fathering.

Finally, the findings of this study may be of use when working with Mexican-American fathers in clinical settings. Echoing Falicov (2010), these findings suggest that it may be particularly important to address the positive aspects of machismo, such as a strong commitment of the father to the family unit, and potentially even more important than general familism values. Psychosocial intervention with Mexican American children and their families should strive to include fathers as an important figure in the child's life, and

address the ways in which cultural factors influence fathering skills, motivation, and identity. Father engagement in intervention may be improved by focusing on familial responsibility and positive interactions with their children as aspects of machismo.

Acknowledgments

Support for this work was provided by a grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (DA017902). This article was developed from Rick A. Cruz's Master's Thesis at the University of Washington.

References

- Amato PR. Father-child relations, mother-child relations, and offspring psychological well-being in early adulthood. *Journal of Marriage & the Family*. 1994; 56(4):1031–1042.
- Amato, PR. Men's contributions to their children's lives. In: Booth, A.; Crouter, A., editors. *Men in families: When do they get involved? What difference does it make?*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum; 1998. p. 241-278.
- Amato PR, Rivera F. Paternal involvement and children's behavior problems. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 1999; 61(2):375–384.
- Arciniega GM, Anderson TC, Tovar-Blank ZG, Tracey TJG. Toward a fuller conception of machismo: Development of a traditional machismo and caballerismo scale. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. 2008; 55:19–33.
- Arends-Tóth, J.; van de Vijver, FJR. Issues in the conceptualization and assessment of acculturation. In: Bornstein, MH.; Cote, LR., editors. *Acculturation and parent-child relationships: Measurement and development*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum; 2006. p. 33-62.
- Baca Zinn, M. Adaptation and continuity in Mexican American families. In: Taylor, RL., editor. *Minority families in the United States: A multicultural perspective*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall; 1994. p. 64-94.
- Bean, F.; Tienda, M. *The Hispanic population of the United States*. NY: Russell Sage Foundation; 1987.
- Bryant FB, Satorra A. Principles and practice of scaled difference chi-square testing. *Structural Equation Modeling*. (in press) Retrieved from <http://www.econ.upf.edu/~satorra/dades/BryantSatorraInPressSEM2011.pdf>.
- Buriel R. Childrearing orientations in Mexican American families: The influence of generation and sociocultural factors. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 1993; 55(4):987–1000.
- Cabrera, NJ.; Garcia Coll, C. Latino fathers: Uncharted territory in need of much exploration. In: Lamb, ME., editor. *The role of the father in child development*. 4th ed.. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley; 2004. p. 98-120.
- Cabrera NJ, Tamis-LeMonda C, Bradley RH, Hofferth S, Lamb ME. Fatherhood in the twenty-first century. *Child Development*. 2000; 71:127–136. [PubMed: 10836566]
- Cauce, AM.; Domenech-Rodríguez, M. Latino families: Myths and realities. In: Contreras, JM.; Kerns, KA.; Neal Barnett, AM., editors. *Latino children and families within the United States: Current research and future directions*. Westport, CT: Praeger; 2002. p. 3-25.
- Coltrane S, Parke RD, Adams M. Complexity of father involvement in low-income Mexican-origin families. *Family Relations*. 2004; 53:179–189.
- Conger RD, Ge X, Elder G, Lorenz FO, Simons RL. Economic stress, coercive family process, and developmental problems of adolescents. *Child Development*. 1994; 65:541–561. [PubMed: 8013239]
- Cuellar I, Arnold B, Maldonado R. Acculturation rating scale for Mexican Americans-II: A revision of the original ARSMA scale. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*. 1995; 17:275–304.
- Enders CK. The performance of the full information maximum likelihood estimator in multiple regression models with missing data. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*. 2001; 61:713–740.

- Epstein, JL.; Salinas, KC. Surveys and summaries: Questionnaires for teachers and parents in the elementary and middle grades. Baltimore: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University; 1993.
- Falicov CJ. Changing constructions of machismo for Latino men in therapy: "The devil never sleeps." *Family Process*. 2010; 49:309–329. [PubMed: 20831763]
- Formoso D, Gonzales NA, Barrera M Jr, Dumka LE. Interparental relations, maternal employment, and fathering in Mexican-origin families. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 2007; 69:26–39.
- German M, Gonzales NA, Dumka L. Familism values as a protective factor for Mexican-Origin adolescents exposed to deviant peers. *Journal of Early Adolescence*. 2008; 29:16–42. [PubMed: 21776180]
- Glass J, Owen J. Latino fathers: The relationship among machismo, acculturation, ethnic identity, and paternal involvement. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*. 2010; 11:251–261.
- Gonzales, NA.; Knight, GP.; Morgan-Lopez, AA.; Saenz, D.; Sirolli, A. Acculturation and the mental health of Latino youths: An integration and critique of the literature. In: Contreras, JM.; Kerns, KA.; Neal-Barnett, AM., editors. *Latino children and families in the United States*. Westport, CT: Praeger; 2002. p. 45-76.
- Gonzales NA, Deardorff J, Formoso D, Barr A, Barrera M. Family mediators of the relation between acculturation and adolescent mental health. *Family Relations*. 2006; 55:318–330.
- Gutmann, MC. *The meanings of macho: Being a man in Mexico City*. Berkley, California: University of California Press; 2007.
- Hirsch, JS. *A courtship after marriage: Sexuality and love in Mexican transnational families*. Berkley, California: University of California Press; 2003.
- Hofferth SL. Race/ethnic differences in father involvement in two-parent families: Culture context or economy. *Journal of Family Issues*. 2003; 24:185–216.
- Hu L, Bentler PM. Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling*. 1999; 6:1–55.
- Humes, KR.; Jones, NA.; Ramirez, RR. Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin: 2010. 2011. Accessed at <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-02.pdf>
- Hunt LM, Schneider S, Comer B. Should "acculturation" be a variable in health research? A critical review of research on US Hispanics. *Social Science & Medicine*. 2004; 59:973–986. [PubMed: 15186898]
- Kim IJ, Ge X, Brody GH, Conger RD, Gibbons FX, Simons RL. Parenting behaviors and the occurrence and co-occurrence of depressive symptoms and conduct problems among African American children. *Journal of Family Psychology*. 2003; 17:571–583. [PubMed: 14640806]
- Kline, RB. *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling*. New York: Guilford Press; 1998.
- Knight GP, Gonzales NA, Saenz DS, Bonds DD, Germán M, Deardorff J, Updegraff KA. The Mexican American Cultural Values Scale for adolescents and adults. *Journal of Early Adolescence*. 2010; 30:444–481. [PubMed: 20644653]
- Little, RJA.; Rubin, DB. *Statistical analysis with missing data*. 2nd edition. New York: Wiley; 1987.
- Marsh HW, Hau K, Wen Z. In search of golden rules: Comment on hypothesis-testing approaches to setting cutoff values for fit indexes and dangers in overgeneralizing Hu and Bentler's (1999) findings. *Structural Equation Modeling*. 2004; 11:320–341.
- Marsiglio W, Amato P, Day RD, Lamb ME. Scholarship on fatherhood in the 1990s and beyond. *Journal of Marriage & the Family*. 2000; 62:1173–1191.
- Marsiglio W, Day RD, Lamb ME. Exploring fatherhood diversity. *Marriage and Family Review*. 2000; 29:269–293.
- Martinez CR. Effects of differential family acculturation on Latino adolescent substance use. *Family Relations*. 2006; 55:306.
- Mirandé, A. Chicano fathers: Traditional perceptions and current realities. In: Bronstein, P.; Cowan, CP., editors. *Fatherhood today: Men's changing role in the family*. Oxford, England: Wiley; 1988. p. 93-106.
- Mirandé, A. Fatherhood and ethnicity. In: Bozett, FW.; Hanson, SMH., editors. *Fatherhood and families in cultural context*. New York: Springer; 1991. p. 53-81.

- Muthén, LK.; Muthén, BO. *Mplus User's Guide*. Sixth Edition. Los Angeles, CA: Muthén & Muthén; 1998–2010.
- Ortiz, FA.; Davis, KG. Machismo. In: De La Torre, MA., editor. *Hispanic American Religious Cultures*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO; 2009. p. 339-341.
- Parke, RD. *Fatherhood*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; 1996.
- Parke, RD.; Buriel, R. Socialization in the family: Ethnic and ecological perspectives. In: Damon, W., editor. *Handbook of child psychology*. Vol. 3. New York: Wiley; 1998. p. 463-552.
- Pasch LA, Deardorff J, Tschann JM, Flores E, Penilla C, Pantoja P. Acculturation, parent-adolescent conflict, and adolescent adjustment in Mexican American families. *Family Process*. 2006; 45:75–86. [PubMed: 16615254]
- Phares, V. *Fathers and developmental psychopathology*. Oxford, England: John Wiley; 1996.
- Phares, V. Psychological adjustment, maladjustment, and father-child relationships. In: Lamb, ME., editor. *The role of the father in child development*. 3rd ed.. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley; 1997. p. 261-283.
- Phares V, Compas BE. The role of fathers in child and adolescent psychopathology: Make room for daddy. *Psychological Bulletin*. 1992; 111:387–412. [PubMed: 1594718]
- Pleck, JH. Paternal involvement: Levels, sources, and consequences. In: Lamb, ME., editor. *The role of the father in child development*. 3rd ed.. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley; 1997. p. 66-103.
- Pleck, JH. Paternal involvement: A revised conceptualization and theoretical linkages with child outcomes. In: Lamb, ME., editor. *The role of the father in child development*. 5th ed.. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley; 2010. p. 58-93.
- Saracho ON, Spodek B. Challenging the stereotypes of Mexican American fathers. *Journal of Early Childhood Education*. 2007; 35:223–231.
- Saracho ON, Spodek B. Demythologizing the Mexican American father. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*. 2008; 7:79–96.
- Satorra A, Bentler PM. A scaled difference chi-square test statistic for moment structure analysis. *Psychometrika*. 2001; 66:507–514.
- Schofield TJ, Parke RD, Kim Y, Coltrane S. Bridging the acculturation gap: Parent-child relationship quality as a moderator in Mexican American families. *Developmental Psychology*. 2008; 44:1190–1194. [PubMed: 18605845]
- Schwartz SJ, Unger JB, Zamboanga BL, Szapocznik J. Rethinking the concept of acculturation: Implications for theory and research. *American Psychologist*. 2011; 65:237–251. [PubMed: 20455618]
- Small SA, Kerns D. Unwanted sexual activity among peers during early and middle adolescence: Incidence and risk factors. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 1993; 55(4):941–952.
- Smokowski PR, Rose R, Bacallo ML. Acculturation and Latino family processes: How cultural involvement, biculturalism, and acculturation gaps influence family dynamics. *Family Relations*. 2008; 57:295–308.
- Toth JF, Xu X. Ethnic and cultural diversity in fathers' involvement: A racial/ethnic comparison of African American, Hispanic, and White fathers. *Youth and Society*. 1999; 31:76–99.
- U.S. Census Bureau. *American community survey reports*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce; 2007. *The American community– Hispanics: 2004*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2007pubs/acs-03.pdf>
- U.S. Census Bureau. *Projections of the Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: 2010 to 2050 (NP2008-T4)*. 2008. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/summarytables.html>
- Videon TM. Parent-child relations and children's psychological well-being – do dads matter? *Journal of Family Issues*. 2005; 26:55–78.
- Yeung WJ, Sandberg JF, Davis-Kean PE, Hofferth SL. Children's time with fathers in intact families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 2001; 63:97–113.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Variables Used in the Analysis

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>
Father Monitoring [†]	3.38	0.35	1 – 4
Father Education Involvement [†]	3.25	0.75	1 – 4
Father Warmth [†]	3.17	0.53	1 – 4
Father Education (years)	9.38	3.69	1 – 20
Family income (reported in \$5,000 increments)	\$35,000–\$40,000	\$15,000	\$5,000 – \$100,000+
Father Age	39.42	6.08	27 – 65
Mother Warmth [†]	3.39	0.56	1 – 4
Mother Hostility	1.41	0.33	1.00 – 2.77
Father Machismo [†]	3.43	0.39	2.14 – 4.00
Father American Cultural Values (ACV) [†]	2.80	0.44	1.36 – 4.00
Father Mexican Cultural Values (MCV) [†]	3.41	0.31	2.08 – 4.00
Father English Use [†]	2.46	0.73	1 – 4
Father Spanish Use [†]	3.31	0.70	1.20 – 4.00

Note: DVs= child report, IVs= father report.

[†]Indicates measures based on four-point scale with four being highest possible value.

Table 2

Correlations among Study Variables

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Monitoring	-												
2. Education Involvement	.49***	-											
3. Warmth	.63***	.44***	-										
4. Father age	-.03	-.04	-.04	-									
5. Father education	.06	.13**	.09	-.07	-								
6. Family income	-.09	-.05	-.05	.01	.31***	-							
7. Mother Warmth	.09	.11*	.06	-.08	-.04	-.18***	-						
8. Mother Hostility	-.09	-.09	-.10	-.03	-.03	.08	-.43***	-					
9. Father English	.01	.04	-.01	.02	.34***	.27***	.07	-.02	-				
10. Father Spanish	.03	.04	.04	-.01	-.25***	-.24***	.16**	-.05	-.54***	-			
11. Father ACV	-.02	-.06	.00	.13**	-.32***	-.23***	.00	.05	-.08	.13**	-		
12. Father MCV	.04	-.03	.02	.12*	-.31***	-.20***	.12*	.02	-.06	.10*	.55***	-	
13. Father Machismo	.16**	.12*	.14**	-.04	.06	.01	.14**	-.04	.06	.10*	-.04	.08	-

Note: N= 450.

*
p < .05;**
p < .01;***
p < .001

Table 3

Final Latent Regression Model of Positive Fathering on Cultural Variables: Factor Loadings

Parameter	Standardized Factor Loading (λ)	95% CI
<i>Positive Parenting</i>		
Monitoring	.83	[.73, .93]
Educational Involvement	.58	[.48, .67]
Warmth	.76	[.68, .85]
<i>Cultural Values</i>		
American Cultural Values (ACV)	.72	[.65, .84]
Mexican Cultural Values (MCV)	.79	[.65, .93]
<i>Language Use</i>		
English	.95	[.72, 1.18]
Spanish	-.62	[-.80, -.45]
<i>Machismo</i>		
“It is important for a man to guard his wife and daughters from other men”	.52	[.40, .64]
“It is a man's job to discipline his children to be upright, honest, and hardworking”	.47	[.37, .57]
“It is important for a man to sacrifice anything for his family”	.67	[.58, .76]
“A man must maintain his family's importance, honor, and respect”	.73	[.65, .81]
“A man's # 1 priority is his family”	.80	[.74, .87]
“A man should be proud to provide for his family”	.72	[.59, .85]
“A man is responsible for the welfare of his family”	.61	[.50, .73]

Note: All factor loadings significant at $p < .001$, CI =Confidence Interval, SE= Standard Error

Table 4

Final latent regression model of positive fathering on cultural variables

Model 1 (Covariates)	β	95% CI	z
Father Age	-0.02	[-0.13, 0.10]	-0.27
Father Education	0.13	[0.02, 0.25]	2.34*
Family Income	-0.12	[-0.23, 0.00]	-2.01*
Child Gender	0.10	[-0.01, 0.20]	1.77
Mother Warmth	0.07	[-0.06, 0.19]	1.03
Mother Hostility	-0.09	[-0.22, 0.05]	-1.30
	R²	95% CI	z
Positive Fathering (Latent Factor)	0.05	[0.00, 0.10]	2.03*
Model 2 (Covariates + Predictors)	β	95% CI	z
Father Age	-0.01	[-0.13, 0.10]	-0.24
Father Education	0.14	[0.01, 0.28]	2.09*
Family Income	-0.12	[-0.24, 0.00]	-1.90 [^]
Child Gender	0.09	[-0.02, 0.19]	1.61
Mother Warmth	0.03	[-0.10, 0.16]	0.50
Mother Hostility	-0.09	[-0.22, 0.03]	-1.46
Cultural Values (Mexican and American)	0.04	[-0.11, 0.19]	0.52
Language Use (Spanish and English)	-0.03	[-0.16, 0.11]	-0.36
Machismo	0.20	[0.09, 0.31]	3.50***
	R²	95% CI	z
Positive Fathering (Latent Factor)	0.09	[0.01, 0.14]	2.68**

Note:

[^] p < .06;

* p < .05;

** p < .01;

*** p < .001.

CI = Confidence Interval, SE = Standard Error.

Model 1 fit statistics: $\chi^2(12) = 8.42, p = .75$; CFI = 1.00; TLI = 1.02; RMSEA = 0.00.Model 2 fit statistics: $\chi^2(131) = 202.53, p < .001$; CFI = .95; TLI = .94; RMSEA = .04.