

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

SPOTLIGHT ON THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION AND ACCULTURATION: A
WORKSHOP FOR IMMIGRANT FAMILIES AND THE 1.5-GENERATION

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By

Glenda Josefina Moghim

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The graduate project of Glenda J. Moghim is approved:

Shari Tarver-Behring, Ph.D.

Date

Stan Charnofsky, Ed.D.

Date

Luis A. Rubalcava, Ph.D., Chair

Date

California State University, Northridge

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents whose courage and vision led to our immigration to the United States, in very disturbing economical circumstances. I appreciate my parents, my first life teachers, who guide me and prepare me for my life journey, who gave me strength, support, and motivation to persevere. I am forever indebted to you both for giving me the chance to have a better life and helping me become a strong skeptical woman with a passion for the possible. I admire you both for showing me that we can be immigrants if we work hard, we can achieve our most passionate goals.

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ABSTRACT

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Master of Science in Counseling,
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This master's project reviews literature on how migration, separation, and acculturation affects immigrant families and their 1.5-Generation of children. Central-American immigrants continue to enter the United States, but the pre and post effects of the migration process have been widely ignored. Largely ignored has been the wellbeing of the 1.5-Generation (1.5-G) of immigrant children and their families. Little is known about the migration and acculturation process that the 1.5-generation of Central-American immigrant children or adolescents navigate. Migration and acculturation concerns and the unique psychosocial, psychological, and behavioral problems that emerge as Central American families adapt to a new culture will be explored.

Mental health and social work professionals overlook the pre and post effects following the migration process. Hence, they are not mindful of how to intervene or treat this population. A lack of cultural sensitivity makes it more problematic to meet the needs of this population. Workshops that address the negative effects of migration and

acculturation on Central-American immigrant families are limited. This master's project objective is to design a workshop intended to disseminate the effects of migration and acculturation to Central-American immigrant families.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Migration is a human drive for survival. In most cases, push and pull factors, including war, a lack of opportunities or economic stability, force people to migrate. However, research shows that migration presents numerous challenges for immigrant families, which include displacement, loss, separation, family dysfunction, acculturative stress, and financial hardships. Immigrant families immigrate to new countries searching for a better future. However, without anticipation of the challenges, the effects of migration and acculturative stress may make the search for better opportunities more difficult to obtain.

The United States Hispanic population is growing fast. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2013), since July 1, 2011 and July 1, 2012, 1.1 million Hispanics were added to the nation's population. The Latino population was at 53 million in 2012 and will continue growing at an accelerated rate. It is projected that by the year 2060 the Hispanic population will constitute 128.8 million, or 31 percent of the nation's population. Hispanic children represent 22% of all children, under the age of 18, in the United States. Among all Hispanics, nearly 40% are foreign-born. Among Hispanic children, approximately 11% are foreign-born and live at poverty level. A Pew Research Center report conducted by Krogstad & Lopez in 2014 shows that about 12.3 million Hispanics ages 5 and older (26%) speak English at home. The cut off is 39% between born in the United States and 4% foreign born. One-third of all Hispanics (33%) report not speaking English very well. Krogstad and Lopez point out that a language gap exists between children and adults. For example, 70% of immigrant children between ages 5

and 17 speak only English, whereas, only 32% of immigrant adults report they speak only English or speak it well (The Pew Research Center, 2014). The Hispanic population is widely spread out throughout the nation but the majority is highly concentrated in four destinations: California, Texas, Arizona, and Florida.

The top three Hispanic groups in the United States are Mexican (78.0%), Salvadorian (7.6%), and Guatemalan (4.9 %). In 2011, there were approximately 11,691,632 Mexican and 3,085,859 Central American foreign-born immigrants (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). California holds the largest Mexican and Central American population. For the purpose of this project, Central America includes the seven nations of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. However, this paper will focus only on the following four Hispanic groups; Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

Thus, who is the new wave of immigrant families in the United States today? They are people who leave their poverty-stricken and crime infested countries in search of a safe haven, better employment opportunities, and better economic conditions. These families migrate to the United States in “stepwise fashion with the intention of reunification in the future” (Suarez-Orozco, Todorova, & Louie, 2002, p. 626). In many cases, only the father or the mother emigrates while the rest of the family is left behind. The Suarez-Orozco et al. qualitative analysis of a sample of 385 immigrant children demonstrates that among Central American families, approximately 80 percent of the children were separated from both parents due to stepwise migration.

The children of this new wave of immigrants have been labeled as the 1.5-generation. According to Hirschman (1994), the 1.5-G arrived as “ young adults who

were socialized and educated in their country of origin but they were largely educated and socialized in the United States” (p.703).

Research shows that immigration, separation, and acculturation present multiple disadvantages to the 1.5-G of children and their families. Hirschman notes that the 1.5-G “encounters more adjustment problems than young immigrants who arrived at a younger age and who began their education at a young age in American schools” (p. 703). He suggests that the length of living in the United States, the age upon arrival, the standard of living, school environment, and peer relations are variables that may promote the 1.5-generation “becoming American” (p. 703).

The 1.5-G tends to feel lost between two cultures, not knowing which one they belong to. The ambivalence of being caught between two worlds may cause ethnic identity confusion and various negative effects. Miller, Barnes, and Hartley (2009) study demonstrates a link among acculturation, ethnic marginalization, and gang affiliation. Miller et al. qualitative study with a sample of 1633 Mexican American adolescents found that less acculturated adolescents are prone to gang affiliation because they perceived exclusion and marginalization by the dominant group. Therefore, they activate a strong ethnic identity by joining a gang for support, to “satisfy psychological needs” and for a sense of belongingness (p.335).

Research also indicates that it is adaptive for immigrant families to become bicultural rather than assimilate to the host society. Coatsworth and Maldonado-Molina (2005) conducted a study with a sample of 315 Hispanic immigrant adolescents to illustrate the link between acculturation patterns and indicators of psychological and socio-cultural adaptation. The result of their analyses demonstrated that bicultural youth

tend to show an adaptive pattern of functioning across multiple sociocultural domains. When discussing the results, the authors claimed “bicultural youth showed more academic competence, less problem behavior, and have more resources in the family domain” (p. 169).

The events surrounding parental separation and the migration trauma are factors contributing to behavioral problems in immigrant adolescents. In addition, discrepancies in acculturation between Hispanic immigrant parents and their adolescents may contribute to intergenerational family conflict and problematic behavior. Unger, Ritt-Olson, Soto and Baezconde-Garbanati (2009) performed a study with a sample of 1,683 second-generation Hispanic adolescents in Southern California. Results demonstrated that acculturation discrepancies between Hispanic parents and their adolescents are associated with risky behaviors including cigarette smoking, substance use and abuse, sexual activity, and use of recreational drugs, particularly marijuana. Literature also points at inappropriate child rearing practices Hispanic parents adopt in the United States may have a negative impact in the child-parent relationship. Moreover, the experience of migration combined with the stress related to institutionalized inequalities (e.g. low income and low status), produce gender role reversal and partner relational problems. As a result, as noted by Cunradi, Caetano, and Schafer (2002), “immigrant couples are at high probability of intimate partner violence” (p. 386).

Scholars advocate for mental health professionals and policy makers to adjust their practices and policies so they can ensure appropriate treatment to the unique experiences Hispanic immigrants encountered in the United States. A holistic understanding of the Hispanic immigrant family worldview will help professionals to

serve this population better and avoid cultural bias. This project focuses on understanding family system dynamics in undocumented Central-American families after they arrive to the United States. Of primary focus are children from the parents of the 1.5-generation.

Statement of problem

Currently, interventions available to immigrant adolescents who fall into the child protection system do not focus on or address the core underlying ailments affecting these families. Most of these programs target the symptoms or problems of the adolescent. These problems include substance abuse, delinquent/conduct disorder, school and other behavioral problems, and both externalizing and internalizing symptoms. However, these interventions do not include the family as a unit in the treatment plan. For instance, Multidimensional Family Therapy (MDFT) has been found to have a high success rate in the child welfare system. The success rate of this evidence-based program is rated high, but it does not show how effective these programs are for Hispanic immigrant families. This program does include the family in the treatment unit but it does not tap into all facets affecting these families.

The psychological ailments of Central-American immigrant families have not always been considered, nor have been the problems that affect their native-born children. Most immigrant families do not seek psychological support unless they enter into child protection services. In most cases, they are mandated by family court to seek counseling or enrolled in intervention programs such as parent education classes, prevention of domestic violence, or other preventive programs. For this purpose, the goal is to create a workshop for Central American immigrant families that addresses the core phenomenon affecting family structure and dynamics with the hope that these families

would gain insight and more likely seek mental health services or preventative programs before falling into child protection services.

Purpose of the project

The purpose of this project is to design a workshop for immigrant families, while highlighting the multiple cultural and familial stressors that these families will face. It is important to identify the challenges that immigrant children and their families encounter during the process of acculturation, and effectively respond to the specific needs of the family unit. Early identification of their challenges is crucial since investing in helping these families to integrate to mainstream life prevents many societal ills in the future. In this project, I will design a workshop for Central-American-Hispanic immigrant parents of the 1.5-G, with the intent to disseminate awareness of the impact of the migration and acculturation processes. Specifically, the workshop will focus on issues such as the step-wise migration process, the 1.5-generation, separation, acculturative stress, the acculturation gap, couple relational stressors, and protective factors, including acculturation, ethnic identity, language, biculturalism, and cultural values. The goal is to provide awareness, enlightenment, encouragement, support, and hope to immigrant families. This will then allow them to regroup their family system and build stronger bonds. The workshop is designed to be used in schools, and counseling centers by school counselors or marriage and family therapists to relieve parent (s) and adolescent conflict and prevent behavioral problems among the 1.5 cohort.

Definitions

Hispanic is a term used to refer to Spanish-speaking immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries including Spain, and other Spanish territories (Rice-Rodriguez & Boyle, 2006).

Immigrant refers to a person who leaves his or her country of origin and settles in a host country (Rice-Rodriguez & Boyle, 2006).

Stepwise migration refers to “the migration pattern of family members who immigrate alone while leaving members behind in their country of origin with the intention of reunification in the near future” (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002, p. 626).

1.5 Generation “is used to describe immigrant children or adolescents who were born and socialized in another country and immigrated to the United States” (Hirschman, 1994, p. 703).

First-generation refers to non-native or foreign-born individuals. The terms foreign born, first generation, and 1.5-generation, are used interchangeably in this report.

Second-generation refers to individuals born in the United States, with at least one first-generation parent.

Third-generation refers to individuals born in the United States, with both parents born in the United States.

Acculturation refers to “the process of cultural and psychological change that results following meeting between cultures” (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 472).

Assimilation is the term used when “individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures” (Berry, 1997, p.9).

Acculturative stress is the “stress reaction in response to life events that are rooted in the experience of acculturation” (Berry, 2005, p. 708).

Couple relational stress refers to the condition when gender roles reverse or when unique customs change due to acculturation creating couple relational stress.

Intergenerational conflict refers to family conflict due to “cultural differences in values and behaviors between ethnic minority children and their parents” (Lee & Liu, 2001, p. 410; Lau, Jenewall, Zane, & Myers, 2002).

Ethnic identity refers to “self-identification, a sense of belonging, and pride in one’s group” (Phinney, 1990, p. 507).

Assumptions

The assumptions made during this project are identified and analyzed. One assumption made when developing this project was that the leader and team facilitators must be bilingual English-Spanish and have experience with the immigration and acculturation processes in order to efficiently interact and relate with the target population. A second assumption states that participants can afford the workshop fee. A third assumption is concerned with presenting the information regarding the need for immigrant parents to acculturate more into American culture by changing authoritarian parenting practices into more appropriate styles to avoid rebellion and parent-child conflict. Given that many Hispanic immigrant parents prefer to hold on to their old rigid cultural ideals, they may perceive the workshop as reinforcing a more “American mentality” rather than betterment. As a result, lower attendance may be the case. Furthermore, the assumption that participants would have access to transportation to attend the workshop was made. After analyzing the mentioned constraints, a plan on how to managed them, if they are ever encountered, was analyzed, and documented in case there is a need for implementation.

Limitations to this project

This project attempts to educate Central-American immigrants and the 1.5-generation about the impact of immigration and acculturation processes, and the effects of parent-child separation related to the immigration process. A few limitations are anticipated. One limitation to this project is the concern with the cultural significance application of attachment theory. To date, little research has been conducted that reviews cases where attachment theory was used to explore attachment between immigrant families and their children, especially, among Central-American immigrants.

Literature points at several areas in which the theory cannot be generalized. For instance, Field (1996) argues that attachment theory has several limitations. She suggests, “the model is based on behaviors that occur during momentary separation rather than during non-stressful situations” (p. 543). She adds that the model “defines the mother as the primary attachment figure during impending separation and following reunion” (p. 544). She also notes “the list of attachment behaviors is limited to those that occur with the primary figure, typically the mother” (p. 544). Field’s limitations of the attachment model can be considered when working with the Hispanic population.

For instance, the first limitation of attachment theory is based on the assumption that the primary attachment figure is the mother, however, immigrant children have attachments to primary figures other than their mothers. A second limitation to this theory is involved with the type of attachment behaviors a child may display. The behaviors displayed towards the mother during separation or reunification may not necessarily be the same behaviors that may be displayed to other attachment figures. For example, immigrant children may become resentful and angry toward their mother, assuming

abandonment, but for a father or other family members, they may justify these absences without showing emotional distress. A third limitation to this theory is based on the behaviors that may occur during non-stressful as opposed to stressful situations. For example, some parents secretly leave the country without telling their children, assuming it will cause them less distress, whereas other parents tell their children that they will be leaving in search of a better life. Both of these situations may precipitate different outcomes. This limitation is to be considered when doing research with those immigrant families who do not harbor abrupt departures.

A fourth limitation to this project is based on participants' low socio-economical status. Many Hispanic immigrant families may not be able to afford to pay the workshop fee, thereby limiting attendance for the target population. Some other resources to help pay the fee may be considered, for example, state funds, grants, or other financial programs. A fifth limitation is based on the assumption that immigration and acculturative stresses may be experienced differently among other Hispanic immigrant sub-groups. Finally, providing that there are significant limitations to attachment theory, more research will need to be conducted to explore attachment theory from a multicultural perspective in order to highlight adaptive considerations for Central American immigrant families.

Bridge to next section

In the following chapter of this graduate work, I present literature to support the intended workshop. I present a review of the current research on the issues that immigrant families encounter pre and post immigration, the impact of acculturation, and immigration related separation. The literature review begins with a brief historical review

of migration. It traces the reasons why people migrate and the shift of migration patterns throughout the early years since the first wave of immigrants landed in the United States. In particular, I review stepwise migration, a trend of migration involving the Central-American immigrant move northward. I will discuss immigration related separation and its impact on family dynamics. This is followed by a discussion on couple relational and intergenerational conflict, and acculturative stress. I will present topics such as changes in family structure and dynamics resulting from family separation, as well as parenting practices immigrant parents adopt as a by-product of the immigration process.

I draw from attachment theory and from John Bowlby (1969) concepts on separation and loss. I also draw from the Berry (1997) acculturation model to show the acculturation process and the various levels of acculturation an individual reaches. With this model, I also show how high or low levels of acculturation may produce desirable or undesirable results or negative or positive adaptive symptoms. Language and Hispanic cultural values as protective factors will be reviewed. In addition, the critical issue of immigration-related child welfare involvement will briefly be discussed. Finally, the literature review will demonstrate the need for a workshop to educate Hispanic immigrant families, specifically, from Central America origins, on the potential pitfalls that may arise out of the sometimes-conflicting migration and acculturation processes.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on the unique challenges Central American immigrant families experience while adapting and integrating into the United States society. This section will explore the historical events that triggered their migration to the United States, and the symptoms that precipitated or are aggravated by the migration and acculturative processes. Important and significant issues such as: the Spanish conquest, the Central American crisis, stepwise immigration, the 1.5-generation, family separation, acculturative stress, couple relational and intergenerational conflict, acculturation, language, ethnic identity, biculturalism, migration and child protective services, and cultural values as protective factors, will be covered. The role that each of these issues play in the Hispanic immigrant family will be discussed.

First, I will present a brief historical background of historical events that precipitated migration to the United States, and the shifting trends in migration patterns that were institutionalized throughout the years. I will explain the stepwise migration pattern, explore, and discuss the 1.5-generation to gain an understanding of their dreadful and stressful migratory experiences. The literature review of the 1.5-generation is fundamental because it outlines some unique problems this cohort encounters in the host country. For instance, besides having difficulty adapting to the new host country, a child who is left behind in his country of origin and years later reunifies with his parents may have feelings of abandonment, loss, grief, fear, anger, and feel resentful toward his or her parents. During reunification, unresolved abandonment issues may surface and override

the joyful and peaceful reunion bringing about parent-child conflict (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002).

Relational stresses brought about by family separation and the acculturation process will then be presented. I will highlight Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth's attachment theory to explain some immigration-related separation effects on the parent-child relationship. This is followed by a discussion of acculturative stress, couple relational stress, and intergenerational conflict. Next, parenting styles are discussed with the intention to illustrate to the reader that parenting practices shift as a by-product of the migration process.

Lastly, literature on acculturation, ethnic identity, biculturalism, and Hispanic cultural values, especially, familism, respecto, and educacion, will be discussed as protective factors that can mitigate the afflictions related with stepwise migration. The Phinney, J. S. (1990) three-stage model of ethnic identity development in adolescence and Erikson (1968) identity crisis psychosocial developmental stage will briefly be discussed. The objective of discussing both frameworks is to show that the 1.5-G of adolescents not only suffer from the impact of migration stressors, but also from the effects of the psychological conflict of having to negotiate a cultural identity. I anticipate that an overview of the literature can widen the scope of Marriage and Family therapists and other professionals so they can begin addressing the migration and acculturation processes as a family issue, rather than an individual psychological phenomenon.

Historical background

Migration is a constant drive of human existence for survival. In its most simple definition, migration refers to moving out from one's country of origin and moving into a

foreign country. Examples of migration through time include the movement of people from East Africa to the spreading around the world. The reasons for migration during this period include trade, seeking raw material, or making war. The decision to migrate is complex yet two predominant factors that premeditate people to migrate are “constraining or exclusionary or facilitating or enabling,” or also referred as push and pull factors (Berry, 1997, p. 16). Push factors (constraining or exclusionary) refer to negative conditions like lack of professional opportunities, famine, and war. While, pull factors (facilitating or enabling) relate to positive conditions like better economic stability, and better opportunities. Migration can be classified as voluntary (e.g., moving for better job opportunities, and economic stability) and forced (e.g., forced to move due to war, political conditions, or environmental conditions) (Goddard, 2004).

The first wave of immigrants came from Europe. This period, the “Age of Mass Migration,” saw a massive scale flow of immigrants from different backgrounds than those of the present influx of immigrants. Political and religious persecution, war, and environmental conditions forced European immigrants from Northern and Western hemispheres to flee their countries. In an in-depth analysis aimed to obtain a conclusive number of migrants that entered during the period of mass migration, Bandiera, Rasul and Viarengo (2012), estimated that “approximately 24 million migrants passed through the Ellis Island station, New York between 1892 and 1924” (p. 2).

Central America conquest, crisis, and migration pattern

The Spaniards colonized Central America in the 1500s. Colonial expansion, and the spread of the Catholic faith to the indigenous people, initiated the Spanish colonization. During the colonial period, “the indigenous habitants were oppressed,

marginalized, enslaved, and exploited by the Spaniards who stole their resources, devalued their cultural traditions, and imposed a Western European culture” (Hernandez, 1996, p. 215). Most of Central America gained independence by 1825 but the Spanish invasion only left destruction and devastation. The region and citizens were left to struggled for survival and progress in the region’s infrastructure and economy was very slow. During the 19th Century and part of the 20th Century small scale change occurred in the region’s infrastructure and economy when export crops such as coffee and bananas were introduced (Mahler & Ugrina, 2006). The United States and Great Britain expanded their political influence in these countries around the 20th century. Both countries advocated economic growth and infrastructure development, however, the standard of living for many Central Americans did not improve (Hernandez, 1996).

The late 20th century was a time of political turbulence and economic instability for Central America. This period was known as the Central American crisis, which began in the late 1970s, and ended by 1996. It was a period of war and state violence; including “physical and psychological torture, intimidation, massive killings, and persecution of individuals” (Hernandez, 1996, p. 216). The poverty-stricken citizens were forced out of their lands and thousands became displaced, forcing them to leave their countries. According to Menjivar (1999), during the “politico-economic stability” thousands of Salvadorian, Guatemalan, and Nicaraguan citizens were forced to migrate to nearby countries such as Mexico and the United States (p. 602). The total number of Central Americans crossing the southwestern border during the crisis is not well documented. Torres-Rivas and Jimenez (1985) found the following:

It is estimated that from 1960 to 1980 approximately 325,000 Guatemalan

immigrants arrived in the United States (p. 26). In addition, between late 1970s and mid-1980s as many as 500,000 Salvadorians arrived to the United States (p. 26). Nicaraguans began arriving to the United States before the crisis, right after the 1972 earthquake. It was estimated that 50,000 Nicaraguans lived in the United States (p. 27).

By the end of the civil unrest, many Central Americans returned home, but others migrated to the United States or Canada. The Central America crisis was a period of devastation, terror, and uncertainty, which dislocated thousands of Central American citizens and caused families to grieve the death of many war victims who lost their lives during the painful and traumatic ordeal. The Central America conflict did something more than cause devastation and fear. It “mobilized a new migration pattern to El Norte” (Mahler & Ugrina, 2006, para. 6). A phenomenon scholars have termed stepwise migration is the new trend of migration for this group.

Stepwise migration

No attention is given to how migration affects the lives of Central American immigrants in the family domain. Hispanic immigrants have been discredited as being a culture of poverty and accused of hurting the U.S economy. However, these are not the only issues that are of concern. Presently, there is a political debate regarding the fate of unaccompanied children from Central America. The attention is focused on immigration reform laws and sending thousands back to their country of origin. However, the emotional and psychological issues affecting these children while being detained and separated from their families are largely being ignored.

Central Americans have been confused with other Hispanic groups because of

their similar characteristics and close origins. In general, the intervention programs available for other Hispanic subgroups are used with Central Americans. Nevertheless, subtle differences between other Hispanic subgroups and Central American immigrants exist and must be addressed appropriately. One major difference is seen in the pattern in which Central American immigrants arrive to the United States. The migration pattern is known as stepwise migration.

The first observation of stepwise migration was registered by E. G. Ravenstein (1885). In his article titled *The Laws of Migration*, he illuminates the process of “migration by stages” as one in which “a migrant in search of work moves from town to town and settles down at each place for a time, until he reaches the intended destination by stages” (p.188). Ravenstein’s interpretation connotes a difference in migration processes: migration that takes place step by step. Dennis Conway (1980) suggested a schema of stepwise migration as well. He proposed that stepwise migration was “a process of human spatial behavior in which individual or families embark on a migration path of acculturation, which gradually takes them by way of intermediate steps from a traditional rural environment to the modern-urban environment” (p. 8).

As of the present, there is not a unified definition of stepwise migration among researchers. However, Suarez-Orozco et al. (2002) gave it a working operational definition. They referred to stepwise migration as “the stepwise fashion” migration pattern of family members who immigrate alone with the intention of reunification in the near future” (p. 626). This is the definition this project will use when referring to Central-American immigrants migration pattern.

Given that the United States is a first-world country that offers many

opportunities and is nearby Central America, this is the first choice destination for thousands of Central American families. The breakdown of the Hispanic family structure because of migration is a major problem in all countries where large numbers of people flee from poverty at home. Despite the financial rewards the U.S. offers, family separation is a painful decision resulting in emotional distress for both those who leave and those left behind to grieve the loss. The need to repair the shattered bond is so strong that parents often expose their children to the dangers of traveling as undocumented migrants, often putting them at risk for abuse, or even death.

When these families migrate, they enter a new society with different values, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and new language. In despair, they seek a safe haven, without taking into consideration the path of acculturation. However, for many immigrant parents, acculturation is not a choice because they tend to maintain a strong cultural and ethnic identity. The contact with a novel culture can be a challenging process. It is difficult for them to integrate the cultural characteristics of the majority group with their traditional cultural beliefs and values. On the other hand, children tend to sail on the acculturation process leading to “intergenerational discrepancies in cultural values” (Phinney, Ong, & Madden, 2001, p. 528; Lau, Jernewal, Zane, & Myers, 2002, p. 202). Such discrepancies cause stress in family relationships, leading to family dysfunction or psychopathology. Scholars have termed these cultural differences as the generation gap, which lead into intergenerational conflict.

Human needs theory posits that there are certain needs and desires that will be satisfied, even at the cost of social disruption. In the absence of physical safety, due to war and economic safety, migration then becomes fundamental for meeting those needs.

Physiological and safety needs take precedence for poverty stricken and war torn families. While temporarily overriding their interpersonal needs, Central American immigrants go on in search of a safe haven and do not foresee that separation through stepwise migration may have profound ramifications to the child-parent relationship.

Separation

Separation has become a common pattern among Central American families because of poverty, political turmoil, and lack of job opportunities in their countries. These families are forced to travel separately because of undocumented and low socioeconomic statuses do not allow these families to travel together.

Traditionally, males initiate the immigration process while the women remain to take sole responsibility of raising the children and making ends meet. However, throughout the past years, a gender role reversal shift occurred, which changed the traditional migration pattern in stepwise migration. Scholars contend that poverty and lack of work opportunities among families has led to the "feminization" of emigration. McGuire and Martin (2007) note "the increasing feminization of migration from Oaxaca, Mexico due to economic globalization has profound implications for the emotional and psychological health of indigenous transnational immigrant women, who often arrive in the United States after having left family members of their children behind in the care of relatives" (p. 178).

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean reported and validated the increased feminization of the migration trend. According to the report:

Most women are travelling alone as their family's primary income earner because of social and economic transformation. The reasons they migrate is to improve their

living conditions and family formation and reunification. In Latin American countries (e.g., Guatemala, Mexico, and Costa Rica), migration is linked to singleness and the absence of a male partner (The Economic Commission for Latin America, 2006 [ECLA] p. 8).

The current trend is alarming because research shows that when the bond between the primary caregiver, usually the mother, is disrupted, the entire family unit undergoes a traumatic shift. Children in stepwise migration experience prolonged periods of parent-child separation, which can cause psychological problems (Mitrani, Santisteban, & Muir, 2004). For example, Suárez-Orozco et al. (2002) conducted a study in which the experiences of 385 adolescents from Central American, Haitian, Dominican, Asian, and Mexican origins were examined. Qualitative data was collected from parents and teachers while the rate of separation was documented. The findings demonstrated that children who reunified with one or both parents after an extended period of separation significantly experienced higher incidence of depression than those who did not separate from their parents. In addition, depressive symptoms increased in accordance with the duration of separation and if separation occurred from both parents. Descriptive data showed that almost 80% of all the adolescents suffered a separation from their fathers, and 55% were separated from their mothers. Ethnic differences between groups were also observed in regards to the rates of separation and depressive symptoms (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2002). Of all the Hispanic adolescents, 90% were found to have experienced separation from at least one parent (Mitrani et al., 2004). Hence, Central American adolescents significantly experienced separation from both parents.

Attachment theory

The work of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth, known as attachment theory, is one of the major theoretical developments of the parent/child bond in the history of developmental psychology. The theory emerged in the 1930's and was largely derived from parent/child dyad observation and interview. Attachment theory explains normal and abnormal emotional attachment development.

Bowlby (1969) noted that attachment behavior to a primary figure, usually the mother, appears to start developing during the first year of life. However, the child-mother bond seems to be firmly established “during the second and third years of life” (p. 257). He suggests that a bond between infant and caregiver is biologically pre-programmed and infants are born with “five preset responses such as crying, smiling, following, clinging, and sucking” which help ensure proximity-maintaining, and contact with their attachment figure (p. 208). Bowlby contended, “attachment is not derivative from traditional rewards of food and warmth” (p. 218) but rather from the capacity to make intimate emotional bonds.

In fact, Harlow and Zimmerman's (1959) work on the effects of maternal deprivation in rhesus monkeys also demonstrated that attachment is not dependent on the need for food. In their experiment, they deprived monkeys of maternal contact as soon they were born and substituted their mothers with one clothed and one wire surrogate mother. It was observed that the monkeys clung to the clothed mother in times of distress for comfort and security. Whereas, they sought the wired mother only to satisfy their hunger drives. Harlow and Zimmermann concluded that “contact comfort” was extremely

important for establishing “affection responses,” while, the “primary function of nursing ensures frequent and intimate body contact of the infant with the mother” (p.503).

Although, attachment theory mainly focused on early infant and mother attachment development, Bowlby stressed the fact that attachment “plays a vital role in the life of man from the cradle to the grave” (Bowlby, 1982, p. 208), meaning that forming and maintaining attachments with mother is the building block to attachment with others.

Ainsworth (1989) notes that attachment relationships involve “maintaining proximity, distress upon separation, pleasure or joy upon reunion, grief at loss, and involves a primary figure who is never replaceable by another” (p. 711). However, the major criterion is the “experience of security and comfort received from the relationship” (p.711).

Mary Ainsworth’s collaborative work with Bowlby began in the 1950’s with her groundwork of infant-mother attachment. Ainsworth’s research was in the security theory (Bretherton, 1992). The main criterion of the theory is that “infants and young children need to develop a secure dependence with their caregiver before going out into unfamiliar situations” (Bretherton, 1992, p. 760). It is the secure attachment formed early in life with parents that drives infants into feeling secure enough to explore novel environment and conversely, returning to their safe base for comfort and protection when feeling distressed.

Mary Ainsworth’s observations with her work with Ganda infants, in 1963, helped her identify two patterns of attachment behavior during child-mother separation. She called this experiment the Strange Situation and her observations led her to two

patterns of attachment behavior, which she labeled “secure and anxious insecure attachment” (Bowlby, 1969, p. 334). She designed the following three attachment styles: secure, avoidant, and resistant/ambivalent. The three attachment patterns are discussed according to Ainsworth’s findings. Infants identified as having a secure attachment seemed to display little protest behavior or separation anxiety. During separation, mother and child showed no distress and both could “explore the world and expand their horizons to include other attachments” (Bowlby, 1969, p. 334). The avoidant infants “failed to greet their mother upon reunion or else mingled avoidant behaviors with their greeting behaviors” (Lamb, 1980, p. 69). In the resistant/ambivalent style, infants “responded to reunion by proximity and contact seeking alternated with anger and resistant behavior” (p. 69). Years later, Ainsworth and colleagues designed a fourth style termed disorganized/disoriented. In this pattern, infants show resistance such as clinging or no affect while approaching the parent. These four distinguish between a secure or insecure attachment.

The literature previously presented sheds insight to how a secure attachment develops, but what is most relevant, for the purpose of this project, is the work of Bowlby in regards to separation and loss. In addition, the “internal working model concept of attachment” (Bowlby, 1973, p.204) is also important. These issues are relevant for this project as it addresses the consequences of separation and loss. In addition, Ainsworth’s attachment pattern known as anxious-ambivalent is also applicable and relevant.

Bowlby continued investigating the “instinctual nature” of the infant-mother dyad, which led him to the writings of two well-documented works on separation anxiety and attachment and loss. On his work, *Attachment and Loss: Attachment* (Bowlby, 1969

vol. 1) and *Attachment and Loss: Separation* (Bowlby, 1973 vol. 2): Bowlby argued that when children experienced multiple separations from dysfunctional homes, they suffered “serious long-term emotional consequences such as anxiety state, phobia, pseudophobia, overdependence, and sleeping problems” (Bowlby, 1973, p. 223 & p. 258).

In regards to loss, Bowlby (1973) identified three phases of response to separation: first, anger is a response to separation (p. 245); second, anger is a response to despair, loss, and grief (p. 247); third, anger or detachment toward the attachment figure is a defense mechanism to discourage further separation; Bowlby proposed that “anger acts to promote, and not to disrupt the bond”(p. 248).

Bretherton (1992) suggests two types of stimuli elicit fear in children: “the presence of unlearned and later of culturally acquired clues to danger and/or the absence of an attachment figure”(p. 767). Bretherton suggests that humans strived to maintain an ongoing balance “between attachment to a protective figure and to familiar home sites, (familiarity-preserving, stress-reducing behaviors), and withdraw from strange or new situations (antithetical exploratory and information-seeking behaviors)” (p. 767).

Bowlby (1969) concept of internal working models is analogous to cognitive maps or mental representations. He believed that an individual constructs one internal working model of the world or others, one of the self, and another of the relationship between the two. According to Bowlby, the working model of the world one constructs involves a main character, which is usually the primary attachment figure. The mental representation of the primary figure is one who is responsive, and accessible. Similarly, in the working model of the self, the notion of the self depends on how one is perceived, as acceptable, unacceptable, or good or bad, by the attachment figure. Bowlby claims that

through experience the child gains trust and confidence that the attachment figure would respond to him when needed. On the contrary, lack of confidence means a primary figure would not be responsive, accessible, or available to his needs. Bowlby notes that knowing that a primary figure would be available is a dominant variable during the third year of a child's life. Consequently, after a child's third birthday, a child learns to "forecast" or predict his caregiver availability or unavailability. Furthermore, after puberty an attachment figure "availability or unavailability becomes the dominant variable" (Bowlby, 1973, p. 204). Internal working models can describe the experiences of the 1.5 Generation of children or adolescents after prolonged periods of separation from their parents. Therapists can explore the mental representations or the internal working models of self and others the 1.5-generation of children construct during the separation period. Exploring these mental representations may prevent manifestation of affective and behavioral problems as well as relational conflict.

The above literature provides a thorough understanding of secure attachment development and emphasizes the importance of the role of the parent in providing a secure and comforting environment for their child. It shows that attachment is adaptive and crucial to survival. Moreover, the attachment system is viewed as a continuous process in which balance between safety versus threat must be consistently monitored to prevent dysfunction. Although attachment theory primarily focuses on infants and children, it also emphasizes that attachment processes continue through adulthood. In addition, the working models of self in relation to attachment provides an understanding of the origins of dysfunctional internal working models of self and attachment figures.

Lastly, the three phases of response to separation and loss indicate that anger, despair, loss, grief, and detachment are dysfunctional or sometimes functional responses exhibited when danger or threat to the bond are perceived.

Usually, immigrant children are not notified of their parents' decision to depart the country and they are left behind asking and longing for their parent(s) to return home. Implicitly, this condition causes underlying feelings of loss and abandonment, which in later years manifests into anger and resentment. According to Bowlby, anger towards a caregiver is best understood as a response to loss and he goes on to state "the most violently angry and dysfunctional responses of all are elicited in children and adolescents who not only experience repeated separations but are constantly subjected to the threat of being abandoned" (Bowlby, 1973, p. 249). Hence, anger is a response to separation and turns into despair if attachment is not restored with primary attachment figures. In respect to immigrant children, the pattern in which their parents migrate many times causes immigrant children repeated separations from various attachment figures. Not to mention, the anxiety they are subjected to once reunified by being subject to the fear that their parents may be deported and that they may be left behind or abandoned once again. Such conditions accordingly to Bowlby, precipitate "underlying feelings of anger and despair" (p. 247).

"Dónde está mi mami?" pregunta Enrique llorando una y otra vez." Where is my mom?" asks Enrique crying over and over." (Nazario, 2006, p. 5).

Sonia Nazario (2006), a Hispanic journalist, wrote a Pulitzer Prize winning book entitled *Enrique's Journey*, in which she recounts a quest of a Honduran boy who makes the dangerous journey to cross the Mexico-USA border in search of his mother. In her

book, she does not only teach a greater knowledge and understanding of the difficult journey many immigrant children are exposed to, but she also reveals the lasting emotional damage of the immigration trajectory and family separation (Nazario, 2006). The words, cited above, of Enrique asking for his mother can relate to the voices of many Central-American children who are currently left behind.

Bowlby, Ainsworth, Boston, and Rosenbluth (1956), theorized that children who are “continuously deprived of care and attention of a mother or mother substitute, are not only temporarily disturbed by such deprivation but may in some cases suffer long-term effects which persist” (p. 211). Nazario validates Bowlby’s view with her character Enrique’s, separation experience from his mother at age five. She shows that some children grow into adulthood and never forgive their parents for having abandoned them. Moreover, those who forgive and forget move on with their lives but are often inflicted by addiction or other coping methods.

Suarez-Orozco et al. (2002) acknowledged that reunification with one or both parents after prolonged periods of separation due to the immigration experience tend to lead to more suffering from depression as opposed to those who do not separate from their parents. Their observations showed that depressive symptoms increase with duration of separation and how separation occurred. In their study, about 80% of a sample of 77 Central American adolescents had suffered separation from both parents and 96% of the Central American families were separated from their fathers (p.632).

Bowlby et al. (1956) study the effects of mother-child separation. The study compared delinquents with a number of non-delinquent children. The findings reported higher rates of delinquency among those children who experienced prolonged separation

from their mothers starting from the first five years of life. Secondly, several of the delinquents were found to have trouble in sustaining healthy, mutually satisfying relationships. Research also suggests that when there is a disruption of attachment, children tend to experience traumatic stress and related issues (Suarez-Orozco et al. 2002).

Lastly, Nazario pointed out one more issue among Central American immigrant families: reunification. In her book review, Nazario notes that reunification for both children and parents is shattered by a reality check because, like many children who travel north to reunify with their parent(s) in the United States, they created unrealistic expectations. Research shows that prolonged separation creates parent-child relational problems upon reunification and the impact is collateral. Family conflict and possible drug and alcohol use as means of coping with disappointment and stress may result. Smokowski, David-Ferdon, and Stroupe (2009) in-depth literature review about the link between acculturation and aggression among Hispanic youth found that less acculturated adolescents are prone to exhibit aggressive behavior. In addition, to deal with the effects of acculturative stress, they are more prone to use illicit drugs. Smokowski et al. (2009) note that familism and family pride mediated against these effects.

Studies have found a correlation between the age at which separation occurred, the length of separation, and the severity of negative psychological effects on children and their parents upon the reunification period. For example, Suárez-Orozco et al. (2002) Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation study found that the average length of parental-separation appears to be about five years among Central American families. The survey collected longitudinal data on 407 immigrants, ages 9 through 14, from San

Francisco and Boston areas. Suarez-Orozco et al. use a mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) to study many aspects of the lives of immigrant children from Central America, China, Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Mexico. The findings suggest that the average age at which separation often occurs is about seven years. Suárez-Orozco et al. reported that separation is significantly higher for Central American immigrants as opposed to from their Chinese, Dominican Republican, Haitian or Mexican counterparts. In addition, separation from both parents was the norm for Central American youths.

Mitrani et al. (2004) acknowledged that the younger the child is at the time of separation, the greater the psychological impact. Attachment theory argues that disruption in bonds with parental figures can have profound negative psychological and developmental ramifications later in life. With no secure attachment formed, early in life, a child or adolescent later in life lacks the physical and emotional ability to survive in a strange and frightening context. Given that Central American adolescents are more prevalent to be separated from both parents at a very early age and the duration of parental separation is longer than other groups. The findings from the Suárez-Orozco et al. survey imply that Central American adolescents are more prone to severely suffer from psychological impact.

The trauma related to the migratory experience is another issue that must be addressed and discussed. The experience of the separation and immigration process can be very traumatic. For instance, the parents usually do not tell the children about their plan to leave. Immigrant parents assume they are protecting their children from emotional distress and secretly depart the country. The sudden disappearance of a parent is traumatic and causes confusion. The child's world shatters when he or she comes to the

realization that the parent(s) are missing and distorted thoughts ruminate over worst-case scenarios. In addition, feelings of insecurity, fear, mistrust, loss, and grief begin to surface. The condition also creates a sense of abandonment, loss, and neglect (López-Pozos, 2009). According to López-Pozos, “the unresolved grief, loss, and the trauma surrounding the separation implicates the parent-child relationship upon reunification” (p. 87). Pauline Boss (1999) suggests that immigrants in general experience “ambiguous loss.” She defines ambiguous loss as the “inability to mourn and heal after losing a beloved one in the case of someone who is physically absent but psychologically present” (p. 4). Immigrant children experience “ambiguous loss” after parental separation and when they leave their substitute caregivers, extended family, and friends in their country of origin.

The trauma experienced during the immigration trajectory by crossing the U.S.-Mexico border can also negatively complicate reunification. Many children and adolescents are exposed to danger and even death while crossing the border. The burdens that immigrant children encountered can significantly constrain them to succeed in the United States as well as lead to emotional distress and have an impact on parent-child relationships and their behavior.

1.5 Generation

We often listen to stories about undocumented Hispanic youths being detained at the U.S. borders or witnessing and surviving robberies and falling victims to brutal attacks and sexual assaults. We hear politicians’ rhetoric advocating for immigration reforms to permit undocumented immigrants to stay in the United States but at a higher price. On June 15, 2012, The DREAM Act was first initiated by Obama’s administration.

The act is a deferred action initiative for unauthorized youth brought to the United States as children. While it offers a window of hope, the act has many pit falls. The act offers sanctuary to immigrant adolescents from ages fifteen and older. It promises a work permit and the chance to attend college at higher state tuition fees. Without means of legalization, they cannot work, or attend college and must continuously deal with the threat that they or their family members can be deported.

Who are the “DREAMERS?” The undocumented immigrants the DREAM Act refers belong to a cohort identified by researchers as the 1.5-generation (1.5-G). Rumbaut (2004) classified the 1.5-generation as children and pre-adolescents from "ages 6 to 17 who have learned to read and write in their mother tongue at schools abroad, but whose education is largely completed in the United States” (p.1167). The 1.5 G migrate in stepwise fashion. Usually their parents hired a smuggler to guide their children across the border. In other cases, children traveled unaccompanied in search of their parents. The 1.5-generation of children are forced to cross through remote deserts and exposed to many dangers, including death. They struggled with hunger, illness, and witnessed fellow migrants being killed while jumping off cargo trains. In her book, Nazario not only narrates the life of her main character but also of many young Central American youth, and their quest to reunite with their parents. Nazario exposes the devastating realities of migration similar to thousands of real life cases.

Some of the reasons the 1.5-G leave their home country are documented by the Women’s Refugee Commission (2012) report. The non-profit organization advocates for the rights and best interests of unaccompanied minors. The report titled “*The Lost Boys and Girls of Central America*”, explores the reasons immigrant children from Central

American countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras migrate alone. The research was conducted by fellow interns Rachel Jordan and Amy Elmgren. The research gathered field and desk data to get a clear scope of the factors that motivate unaccompanied children to migrate to the United States. According to the report, in April 2012, U.S. immigration agents had apprehended about 10,005 unaccompanied alien children. The detained children were mostly from three Central American countries. Descriptive data reported that about 35% of the children detained were from Guatemala, 27% from El Salvador, and 25% from Honduras.

When interviewed and asked the reasons they migrate to the United States, many responded, “poverty, unemployment, lack of educational opportunities, and recent increase violence in their countries precipitated their migration northward” (p. 1). Male children from all three countries reported that the growing influence of gangs and drug cartels are the main reason for leaving (pp.1 & 10). Similarly, girls cited “gender-based violence, in the form of rape as a tool of control, being the main reason they leave” (pp. 1 & 11). Escape for survival is the reason these children flee their home countries. In addition, the report not only asked children the reasons they move northward but the report also looked into how “the U.S. government managed the care and custody of these unaccompanied minors” (pp. 19-23). Many serious concerns about the conditions after being apprehended by border patrol officials, including mistreatment and emotional abuse were detected, however, going into detail regarding these findings is beyond the scope of this work and will not be discussed.

The tightened security in the United States-Mexican borders and new immigration reform laws have made it much harder for immigrant youth to cross the borders. This

being the case, immigrant parents rely on coyotes to guide their youth across the border without realizing of the extreme dangers their children can be exposed to. The effects of the terrifying migration ordeal combined with the painful separation can seriously debilitate the mental condition of these youth, making it more difficult to cope and adjust to their new environment.

Portes and Rivas (2011) claim that the DREAM Act did not delivered the promises to grant the 1.5-generation access to opportunities. They call for Congress to act and help the 1.5-generation before it “devolves into a self-fulfilling prophecy in which youths barred from conventional mobility channels turn to gangs and other unorthodox means of self-affirmation and survival” (p. 239).

Acculturative stress

According to Williams and Berry (1991), acculturative stress results when individuals experience difficulties arising from the acculturation process. These include perceived discrimination, racism, and feelings of pressure to assimilate to the demands of the dominant culture. Kuperminc, Henrich, Meyers, House, & Sayfi (2007) propose that the pressure to adapt results in “feelings of disconnectedness from the culture of origin and parent/child relational problems due to conflicts between personal and parental values and attitudes” (p. 223). Discrimination and racism, according to Falicov (2007), appeared to be main contributors to stress among immigrant families. Theorists posit parents and children undergo different rates of acculturation leading to stress in family relationship, which leads to family conflict, disruptive behaviors, and maladjustment (Portes & Rivas, 2011). Miranda and Matheny (2000) explored the socio-psychological factors that may procure acculturative stress among Hispanic immigrant adults. In their

study, a random sample of 197 Hispanic participants completed a demographic questionnaire aimed to assess family cohesion and adaptability, acculturation, acculturative stress, and stress coping-resources effectiveness.

The analysis showed that all variables accounted for 48% of the variability in the acculturative stress of adult Hispanics. The findings suggest that the acculturative stress experienced by Hispanic immigrants is significantly dependent on the following variables: efficacy of stress-coping resources, degree of acculturation, family cohesiveness, language use, and length of residence in the United States. Studies show that Hispanic youths are more likely than their Black or non-Hispanic White counterparts to have suicidal ideations or attempted suicide. They also engaged in more risky behaviors, including, alcohol, and illegal drugs (Gil, Wagner & Vega, 2000), and experience more conflict with their parents as they defy authority (James, 1997; Lau et al. 2002). Rumbaut (1994) performed an analysis of middle school minority students from Southern California and Florida schools. With a sample of about 5,000 teenage immigrant children from Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, he investigated the formation of ethnic identities.

Results showed that acculturation strongly affects the process of identification. For example, second generation adolescents assimilate and fluently speak English. On the contrary, the 1.5 generation or foreign born, preferred to speak in the parental mother tongue and associate with their national-origin identity. Second, perception of discrimination defines their ethnic identities; those who are exposed to discrimination are less likely to identify as American and feel excluded and rejected. This group of adolescents is more likely to have “higher levels of depression and greater level of

parent-child conflict” (p. 789). In addition, “children’s psychosocial adaptation is shaped by the family context: the children’s ethnic self identities tend to mirror the perception of their parent’s like a reflection in an ethnic looking-glass” (p. 790).

Furthermore, Hovey (2000a) performed two studies to explore levels of acculturative stress among Central American immigrants. In the first study, a correlation with high levels of depression and suicidal ideation among Central-American immigrants was found for those low in acculturation. In addition, family dysfunction, lack of social support, an unpredictable future, low religiosity, low levels of education, and low income were all link to depression and suicidal ideation. In the second study, Hovey found that Central American immigrants, Guatemala, and El Salvador, who experience high levels of acculturative stress, also suffer from depression. However, the findings found positive outcomes. For example, family cohesiveness, social network support, and an optimistic perspective toward the future are protective factors against suicide and mood disorders among Central American immigrants during the acculturation process (Hovey, 2000b).

The acculturation gap between Hispanic immigrant adolescents and their parent’s has been found to heighten the tension between the child-parent dyad and creates problematic behaviors for the adolescent (Unger et al., 2009). There are differences in acculturation outcomes between Hispanic parents and their children. The rate in which individuals acculturate depends on the amount of exposure and the age of the child during arrival to the new country. According to Birman (2006), immigrant children acculturate at a fast rate because they socialize more with the large society and due to school attendance and contact with peers. Furthermore, Birman investigated how acculturation gaps in language use, identity, and behaviors affect family function. Findings showed that

only acculturation gaps in U.S. identity are related to family conflict because “immigrant children identified with the host culture and less with the native culture of their parents” (p. 584).

Couple relational stress

Research shows that migration transforms family dynamics and patterns. After establishing in the United States, immigrants adopt beliefs, customs, and behaviors from the new culture. Batalova and Terrazas (2013) migration research shows that in 2011, about 23 percent of Central-American born immigrants lived at poverty level with an annual income below the federal poverty line than among native born (15 percent). Immigrants from Honduras, and Guatemala ranked the highest. Overall, Central-American immigrants live below the poverty line by 30 percent and 27 percent respectively. Such conditions precipitate for women to become wage earners and to work outside the home for extended hours in order to contribute to the family’s household income. In Central-America, gender polarization is the norm. Therefore, working outside the home and giving women a sense of financial independence and empowerment can be seen as a threat to male gender role stereotypes. In return, Hispanic males may exert more control over their wives, which may lead to marital conflict, and even domestic violence.

In addition, research with Central American immigrants has shown that when roles reverse and women become primary breadwinners, there is a drastic change in gender relations. For example, Menjivar (1999) contended that the way Salvadoran men cope with their frustration of role reversal is to “turn to drinking and domestic violence” (p. 610). In contrast, it was observed that Guatemalan male immigrants perceived working women as an advantage for personal growth and economic mobility. Menjivar

adds that women do not benefit from the salary they bring home, on the contrary, “women observed behaviors, patterns, and child rearing practices from the families they work and incorporate these into their own routines” (p. 619). However, this may ultimately create partner relational problems because Central-American male immigrants are not accustomed to the demands in the gender division of labor.

Intergenerational conflict

Intergenerational conflict refers to the cultural conflict between parents and children because parents retain their old, rigid cultural ideals in an attempt to control their children (Lau et al.2002, p. 2). Lau et al. note, “in addition to the acculturative stress immigrant families experienced, increased levels of intergenerational conflict may lead to family conflict” (p. 202). The conflict is associated with parental disapproval of their children adopting American values and behaviors while the parents retain their rigid cultural ideals in an attempt to control their children’s behavior and continuation of their ethnic heritage.

Traditionally, adolescence has been viewed as a stage of differentiation and increased separation from parents. Bowlby and Ainsworth’s ideals regarding infants and the exploratory system and the secure attachment pattern may be applicable to adolescents. For example, adolescence is the developmental stage of gaining autonomy, separation from parents, and exploration. If a secure attachment with a primary figure has developed, adolescents go on exploring new surroundings, however, when they feel threatened, they returned to their safe base for support and safety. However, this child-parent dynamic is only achieved when a secure attachment has been developed. Given that the attachment bond of immigrant families is disrupted due to migration related

separation, this dynamic is fragmented. Hence, when immigrant adolescents wish to exert their autonomy, they may face more restrictions and rigid disciplinary actions from their parents. In addition, Western society values individualization and independence whereas for Hispanic parents, this is against their values and child rearing practices. Lau et al. point out cultural risk factors such as rigid disciplinary practices and youths exerting individuation and independence result in parent-child conflict (p. 202).

When working with parents from El Salvador and Guatemala, I observed that they have difficulty accepting their youths' differentiation, which is viewed a normal developmental psychosocial stage in an individualistic Western society. This may be related to the fact that these societies are strongly collectivist countries and parents perceive the pursuit to gain differentiation as a threat to family cohesion. Maintenance of strong family ties is in part due to socioeconomic hardship in immigrant families. Participation and economic collaboration by family members is an expected filial duty for survival of the family unit. Filial duty is linked to the cultural value of familism that is a characteristic of strong commitment to family life versus that of non-Hispanic whites.

As mentioned earlier, parents expect their children to consider the family as the central source of support and loyalty. Tension builds up as children experience conflict between parental expectations and the values of the new culture, which emphasizes autonomy and independence (Lau et al. 2002, p. 202).

Szapocznik and Kurtines (1993) conducted a study that proposed the need to view the immigrant family within the macro-environment in which it lives. They coined the concept of "nesting," in which the individual is viewed as "being within the family and the family within the culture" (p. 401). This view helps understand how family dynamics

develop within a multicultural environment and how changes in family dynamics lead to emerging problems with immigrant adolescents. According to Szapocznik and Kurtines (1993):

Families exposed to culturally diverse environment develop a classic Ericksonian challenge: a family struggle in which some family members (the youth) struggled for autonomy and other (the elders) for family connectedness. This struggle usually develops in families around the same time of adolescence, but in this case, the magnitude of the struggle was considerably exacerbated by acculturation differences across generations. As a result of this struggle, children lose emotional and social support from their families and parents lose their positions of leadership. The impact of a culturally diverse environment on these families resulted in the emergence of conflict-laden intergenerational acculturation differences in which parents and youths developed different cultural alliances (Hispanic and American). These intergenerational related cultural differences added to the usual intergenerational conflicts that occur in families with adolescents to produce a much compounded and exacerbated intergenerational and intercultural conflict. (p. 403).

Moreover, since immigrant children tend to adapt more easily than their parents to the new language, children serve as interpreters for their parents. This shift of role reversal “threatens parental authority” (Velez & Ungemack, 1995, p. 99). Bowlby (1973) makes a note of the psychopathology of families. He claims that when a mother “inverts the relationship with her child by requiring him to care for her, it is because the mother is dealing with unresolved emotional issues” (p. 267).

To conclude this section, the literature review points out that intergenerational conflict not only harms family cohesion but it also can distress the emotional and psychological well being of minority youth. Lau et al. propose some risk factors for suicidal attempt and ideation in minority adolescents. They suggest that instability with caretakers, parental support, and prolonged separations from a parent are risk factors for suicide. They add that disciplinary crisis between parent and child is the most common precipitating factor for suicide. Smokowski and Bacallao (2007) investigated

acculturation risk factors, internalizing behavioral problems, and self-esteem among 323 first-generation Latino adolescents in North Carolina. They found similar results like those of Lau et al., which claim that parent-adolescent intergenerational conflict is a risk factor of adolescents internalizing problems and low-self esteem.

Parenting styles

In order for the reader to have a clear understanding of the parenting styles that immigrant parents adopt once in the United States, it is necessary to provide the reader with information regarding the types and differences among the four parenting patterns, their dimensions, and outcomes. The four parenting styles presented and discussed in this work are the four parenting styles proposed by Baumrind (1971).

Parenting styles or practices refer to the unique techniques or parental interactions parents adopted to control or respond to their children behavior. Wood, Mcleod, Sigman, Hwang & Chu (2003) conceptualized parenting style as “a general pattern of caregiving that provides a context for specific episodes of parental childrearing behaviors; but it does not refer to a specific act or set of acts of parenting” (p. 135). Although this traditional Western framework describes parenting styles, it fails to identify “core cultural values that may play a central role in parenting among Latino families” such as familismo and respeto (Calzada, 2010, p. 168).

Although immigrant parents adapt parenting behaviors and childrearing practices in response to the impact of acculturation, research shows that they either maintain their traditional childrearing practices or they adopt a rigid parenting approach. Although, research points out that an authoritarian approach to parenting may be counterproductive because an excessive disciplinary approach produces a negative effect; this is the

parenting practice that many Central-American immigrant parents (as well as Mexican parents) used. In a new society, which is filled with uncertainty and fear, parents may perceive it as threatening and may stop their youth from undergoing the process of gaining autonomy and independence. They also worry about their youth acculturating to the new society; hence, immigrant parents may shift to rigid disciplinary practices to exert authority. This type of fear and control functions as a defense mechanism toward survival of the culture, but unconsciously it disrupts family dynamics.

Baumrind (1971) formulated four categories of parenting styles: *authoritative* (high support and responsiveness), *authoritarian* (low in responsiveness and support; high in control), *permissive* (high responsiveness and low levels of control), and *neglectful or disengaged* (low responsiveness and low levels of control). For the purpose of this work, all the four parenting styles will be investigated. Also based on two dimensions of support and control as suggested by Driscoll, Russell, and Crockett (2008), the four types of parenting styles will be labeled as such for this work. The first parenting style to be discussed is the authoritative/democratic parenting practice. In general, parents who use this parenting approach are warm, nurturing, and supportive and promote positive emotional well being (Baumrind, 1971; Gupta & Theus, 2006). They use reflective listening, provide options and consequences, set clear goals and requests, and make decisions with consideration to their child's needs. These parents are high in control and encourage autonomy (Baumrind, 1971). They are firm and consistent in setting limits and boundaries and establish mutual respectful parent(s)-child relationships.

These parents approach their parenting role as one in which they provide guidance, protection, and facilitate psychosocial development. They resolve conflict

situations as a win-win resolution, leaving both parties satisfied (Gonzalez-Mena, 2006). They provide praise and complements to their children's' achievements, and encourage communication. Thus, the overall outcome of authoritative parenting results in: psychological well-being, higher self-reliance and social competence, lower psychological distress and problem behavior among adolescents (Baumrind, 1966; Gonzalez-Mena, 2006; Gupta & Theus, 2006).

The authoritarian approach is the punitive kind. These parents are demanding and controlling. They are the "my way or the highway" parents and rules are strict and punitive. The strict authoritarian parent adopt this style to instill in their children respect for authority or "simply because this is the only style of parenting they know" (Gupta & Theus, 2006, p. 23). Authoritarian parents approach parent-child conflict as a win-lose situation. They set unrealistic high standards and expectations of the child (Gonzalez-Mena, 2006). Mussen, Conger, Kagan, and Huston (as cited in Gupta 2006, p.23) add, "parents use an authoritarian style out of feelings of hostility or because they cannot be bothered with explanations and arguments." Thus the overall outcome results in: poorer psychological and behavioral outcomes, dependency, anger, rebellion, lack of confidence, social inhibition, low self-esteem, distrustful, and low in achievement motivation (Baumrind, 1966; Baumrind, 1971; Gupta, 2006).

The next parenting style is the permissive style. Permissive parents, on the other hand, are non-demanding and non-controlling. These are the easy-going parents. They are highly receptive to their children's basic and emotional needs but never exert direction or control. According to Gupta (2006), this approach "refers to parents who are relaxed and liberal" about their children's behavior (p. 24) and do not set clear boundaries and

guidelines. These children are left to self-regulate, and self-controlled their own needs (Baumrind, 1971). The parents yield to the child's demands and endorse or allow unpleasant behaviors, such as tantrums and manipulation. The overall outcome results in: low self-control, impulsiveness, and short temper, low respect for adults, no adherence to rules and lack of sympathy toward others, low in achievement, and seeks instant gratification (Baumrind, 1966; Baumrind, 1971; Gonzalez-Mena, 2006)

The last parenting style is the neglectful or uninvolved parenting style. These parents are low in support and low in control. As the name implies, these parents are totally disengaged and emotionally uninvolved in their child's well being. These parents are too busy or self-indulged to their own needs and desires neglecting those of their child. Often these parents provide only the basic physiological needs such as food and shelter. They disengage in their children's academic achievement; do not express love, or positive communication. Developmental psychologist Diana Baumrind from some of her studies based on the dimensions of "parental responsiveness and demandingness" notes that the uninvolved parent is low in parental responsiveness and low in parental demandingness" (Baumrind, 2005, p. 62). The overall outcome results in: teens are at risk for poor mental health and low in academic attitudes and achievement, lack of self-control, loneliness, emotionally withdrawn from social situations, disengagement from family, and high risk for drug-alcohol addiction, low-self esteem, prone to develop fear, anxiety, and stress disorders, and defy authority (Baumrind, 1971; Shucksmith, Hendry, & Glendinning, 1995).

There is limited research that examines attachment and family separation or parenting practices among immigrant families. However, the limited research suggests

that immigrant parents adopt new parenting styles and practices when migrating to the United States. When doing research on attachment and family separation with immigrant families, Urban, Carlson, Egaland, and Sroufe (1991) found significant differences between secure and insecure attachment in Central American immigrant children. Children rated higher on the insecure anxious-avoidant and insecure anxious-ambivalent or resistant attachment patterns. The work of Driscoll et al. (2008) shed light on how parenting practices adopted by immigrant parents can perpetuate negative or positive outcomes on adolescents' well being. Driscoll et al. posit that " parenting practices and styles are linked to the behavioral and emotional development of teens, while at the same time, immigration and acculturation processes affect parent's childrearing styles and parent-child relationships" (p. 186).

Driscoll et al. examined generational patterns of parenting styles (e.g., permissive, disengage, authoritative, and authoritarian parenting) and adolescent well being among youth of Central-American, and Mexican origins, and the role of generational parenting style patterns in explaining generational patterns in youth behavior (e.g., delinquency and alcohol problems) and psychological well-being (e.g., depression and self-esteem). Their study sample consisted of respondents who were aged 12 to 18 years old from Central-America and Mexican origins. By using several measurements, they assessed for alcohol problems, delinquency, depression, and self-esteem. The key independent variables in the study were immigrant generation and parenting styles. The immigrant generation consisted of first-generation immigrants (born in their country of origin and moved to the United States), second-generation (born in the U.S.A. to at least one foreign-born parent), and third-generation (born in the U.S.A to two U.S. born parents). The multivariate

results of the study demonstrated: the proportion of teens with permissive parents increased with generation whereas other parenting styles declined; the rate of behavioral problems increased with generation; self-esteem improved with generation; depression scores showed to be stable across generations. Overall, the findings showed that behavioral outcomes and depression levels were worse for third generation teens from permissive parents than from first and second-generation of teens.

For the purpose of this work, the findings from Driscoll et al., (2008) will be further elaborated with the intent to demonstrate the study findings as it pertains to the first-generation of immigrant teens, or also known the 1.5-generation. In regards to parenting practices, the authors found generational shifts in parenting styles. For instance, findings showed that a higher percentage of immigrant parents, as opposed to native parents, “exercise firm control over their adolescents, a parenting related aspect to behavioral outcomes” (p. 203). On the other hand, parents from the third-generation tend to practice permissive parenting practices. A generational pattern in behavioral problems suggests that first-generation teens of authoritarian parents have higher behavioral problems as opposed to second and third generation. On the other hand, third-generation teens with permissive and disengaged parents, have worse behavioral problems than do their counterparts with immigrant parents.

Deosaransingh et al. (as cited in Driscoll et al., 2008) claim that the increase in behavioral problems among the third-generation results from teens “who may be more acculturated and are more exposed to the attitudes of the larger teen culture, and are less likely to experienced the firm control that could counteract negative outside influences” (p. 203). First generation teens of permissive and authoritarian parents had the lowest

level of self-esteem as opposed to the second and third generation of teens. Levels of depressive symptoms, delinquency, and alcohol-related problems were low across all generations of teens of parents who used an authoritative parenting style. However, third-generation of teens had lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of problem behaviors (e.g., delinquency & alcohol-related problems) than did the children of immigrant parents or the first-generation (1.5-G) who adopted a disengaged parenting practice. The findings for depression showed that third-generation teens with permissive parents experienced higher levels of depression than did the first-generation of immigrant teens. However, first generation teens of authoritarian parents had the highest levels of depression. These findings suggest that a permissive parenting style may be more effective in protecting the 1.5 generation of teens when exercised by immigrant parents (p. 204). Their study supported the hypothesis that “generational changes in parenting styles appear to play a role in generational patterns of emotional well-being and problem behavior” (p. 206). Furthermore, research has highlighted parenting practices and the transmission of ethnic identity (Phinney, 1996).

To conclude, this session of the project reviews literature addressing several conditions, which affect parent(s)-child relations causing extreme stress and conflict between them. In addition, parenting practices used among first, second, and third generation of immigrant parents are discussed and the negative or positive outcomes when adopting these practices are addressed. An interesting finding is one that suggests that a more permissive parenting approach adopted by immigrant parents will benefit the first-generation of immigrant teens (1.5-G). One more point made by Driscoll et al. is the one pertaining to the differences of problem behavior between third-generation and first

generation of immigrant teens with permissive and disengaged parents. The authors pointed out that the lower likelihood of having parents who exercise firm control, combined with the greater exposure to external negative influences, result in a higher chance of worse behavior outcomes among third-generation teens. The authors concluded that first and second generation of teens experience more control and oversight from extended family members and community than do third-generation teens and proposed that “extra-parental resources of control may serve to protect teens from involvement in risky and unhealthy behaviors” (p. 205).

Another important point made in this session is the one that refers to the changes of parenting style among immigrant parents; the authors suggest, “Immigration and acculturation processes affect parents’ childrearing styles and parent-child relationships” (p. 186). Hence, change is one of the unexpected by-products of acculturation. Driscoll et al. also note that “parent’s own acculturation plays a crucial role in their children’s well being” (p. 202). The authors stressed that parental acculturation levels are to be taken into consideration when assessing generational patterns of emotional wellbeing and problem behaviors among immigrant youths. In addition, education and socioeconomic status often play a role in parenting practices and parenting styles as well.

Immigration: A red flag for child welfare involvement

Profiling Central American parents of the 1.5-generation of immigrant youths as bearers of problematic parenting practices is groundless. Without proper assessment of the complexity of the life trajectories of immigrant families, this ethnic profile can be counterproductive. It conceals the unique needs of immigrant children and their families and impedes effective, preventive services to this population. The stress and pressure

experienced by the migration and acculturation process often put children of immigrant families at high risk of maltreatment. Furthermore, the stress due to the ongoing fear of deportation combined with cultural differences in parenting and authoritarian discipline expose these families to greater risk. Overall, these factors affect the safety and well being of children of immigrants leading to involvement with child protection agencies.

Data from 2010-2011 of the census bureau shows that about 4,782,000 Hispanic children resided in the State of California (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). California houses 493, 000 foreign-born children of immigrant parents ranging from ages one to seventeen. About 376,000 of the population of foreign-born children are from Central America. About 9,800 of foreign-born children live in one-parent household and 279,000 live in a two-parent household. National data indicates that the percentage of Latino children in the child welfare system has risen over the past several years. Data confirmed that children victims of maltreatment have steadily increased from 14.2% in 2000 to 17.4% in 2005. A 2013 report from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services cited that in 2012 about 11,344,422 (17.8%) Hispanic children, ranging from ages one to seventeen, were victims of child maltreatment. In the state of California, this accounted for 41,224 substantiated open cases. As data shows, there has been a steady increased from 14.2% in 2000 to 17.4% in 2005 to 17.8% in 2012.

Hovey (2000) emphasizes five stressors associated with sociocultural changes that may ensue. Due to multiple sociocultural stressors, Central-American immigrant families fall prey to child protection agencies. These include; financial burden, unemployment and marginalization; and, finally, the loss of a social network and extended family. When working with Central American parents, I have observed that most of their open cases

with child protection services are due to child neglect and maltreatment. Parents' reports are consistent with the sociocultural changes Hovey emphasizes. Nevertheless, current parenting education programs are not properly designed to intervene with the unique problems immigrant families' face.

In examining the data, it is clear that something is happening within the population that is causing its fall out. What are the factors affecting this population? What is been done to help these families? What is been done to reunify these families? What preventative programs are in effect? What is the efficacy of the preventative programs already in effect? How is the community reaching out to this population? Is this population getting a non-bias treatment by law enforcement departments, court, and child protection agencies? Are child protective service agencies trained to do assessment on the unique dimensions, which affect these families? Do social workers know what programs or treatment work best for these families? Is the Department of Child Safety maintaining and stabilizing these families, or are they further separating these families? Are marriage family therapists using the appropriate evidence based approaches shown to be effective when working with immigrant families? Are marriage family therapists treating the family as a unit? These and many questions come to mind when trying to help these families. Research has already explored and provided answers for some of these questions, however, not much is been done to provide the right services to this population. An important question to ask ourselves as new therapists who are prepared to go out in the mental field and provide our services to this community must be "What can we as Marriage and Family therapists do to help and advocate for these families?"

Protective factors and cultural assets

Acculturation

Acculturation refers to the process of “cultural and psychological change that results following meeting between cultures” (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 472). There are several acculturation models describing different stages of acculturation, however, John W. Berry model would be selected for this project. Berry (2005) notes that acculturation, assimilation, separation, and integration connote different meaning. For instance, assimilation is the process when an individual completely detached from his cultural identity and seeks constant interaction with other cultures. At the other end, separation refers to complete immersion into one’s cultural heritage while avoiding contact with other cultures. Integration refers to having interest in both cultures; in this stage, an individual is devoted to his culture of origin, while at the same time, participation is largely invested with the host culture. Berry notes that there is a difference between assimilation and integration. The difference is found in attitudes and behaviors. He claims that integration is a complex process for immigrants because it depends on the receiving society willingness and openness to adapt an orientation toward cultural diversity. He notes, “the integration strategy can be achieved only in societies that value cultural diversity and have low levels of prejudice and discrimination” (p.619).

According to Berry (2005), acculturation occurs at a group or individual level. At a group level, it involves changes in social structures and institutions, and cultural practices. The transformations that occur at an individual level include acculturative stress, and behavioral changes (Berry, 1997, p. 699). Acculturative stress refers to the negative outcomes that occur during acculturation, as previously discussed in this work. Berry notes that acculturation is a long-term process, “sometimes it takes years,

sometimes generations or centuries” (p. 699). Berry’s concept about acculturation being a long-term process and its experience at the group level can explain the dynamics in immigrant families’ function. For example, within a family unit there may be first, second, and third generation members who have acculturated at a fast rate whereas others have not. In return, this generation gap creates family conflict. Hence, acculturation generates changes in three levels of functioning; behavioral, affective, and cognitive (Berry, 2005). Berry formatted four different strategies that represent various levels of acculturation and are used to identify the level of acculturation an individual has reached: Assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization.

According to Berry, the four levels are as follows:

1. *Assimilation* occurs when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural heritage and seek daily interaction with other cultures (known as the “*melting pot*” when imposed by the dominant group).
2. *Separation* occurs when immigrants place a value on holding on to their original culture while avoiding interaction with others (known as *segregation* when imposed by the dominant group).
3. *Integration* occurs when there is an interest in maintaining the original culture and engaging in daily interactions with other groups. Integration is synonymous with *biculturalism*.
4. *Marginalization* occurs when there is little possibility or interest in cultural maintenance and little interest in having relations with others (known as *exclusion* when imposed by the dominant group).

Portes and Rivas (2011) attest, dissonant acculturation across generations deprives youths of cultural capital. By this, they referred to the fact that by losing ties with their parents' culture and their mother tongue they may facilitate "joining an amorphous mainstream, but often at the cost of abandoning those social and social psychological resources that may assist their structural mobility" (p. 240). They added "preserving the linguistic and cultural heritage of the home countries often helps migrant children move ahead in America" (p. 240).

Smokowski, Rose, and Bacallao (2009) examined how parental acculturation relates to adolescent aggression. The sample consisted of 256 Latino adolescents, 66% were foreign-born or 1.5-G, and 34% were born in the United States. The findings showed that higher levels of acculturation conflict between parents and adolescents increase the risk for adolescents to display high levels of aggression. On the other hand, findings also suggested a decrease of aggressive behavior overtime. This positive outcome is due to adopting behaviors, norms, and attitudes of the host country, which "allow them to fit into the host society" (p. 603).

Research shows that acculturation is a protective factor and either high and low levels of acculturation may produce desirable or undesirable results. The negative effects of low acculturation levels are associated with: depression, social withdrawal, family disengagement, depression, anxiety, aggression, and suicidal. On the other hand, more acculturated immigrant teens may display negative behavioral outcomes: higher levels of alcohol-and-drug use, and delinquency (as previous mentioned). Furthermore, parent-child relational problems (e.g., impaired communication, overprotection, rigid discipline action) may occurred among Hispanic adolescents due to disagreements about adopting

new belief, attitudes, customs, and lifestyles of the new culture (Driscoll et al., 2008, p. 191). In addition, “partner relational problems” (e.g., negative communication, unrealistic expectations, disengagement), and “familial abuse” may occur due to different levels of acculturation between the couple (Berry, 2005, p. 708). An example of partner relational problems may be if one of the partners has been residing in the United States for several years whereas the other partner stays in the country of origin. Obviously, in this case, it is expected that the couple be at different levels of acculturation, resulting in marital difficulties.

Ethnic identity

There is no widely agreement among scholars upon the definition of ethnic identity. The definition that is widely used by researchers and scholars is the one conceptualized by psychologist Jean Phinney (1990). She notes that ethnic identity formation consists of the following elements “is dynamic, appears that self-identification, a sense of belonging, and pride in one’s group are the key aspects of ethnic identity that are present in varying degrees, regardless of the group” (p. 507). Phinney goes on to add that, “ethnic identity is not a fixed categorization, but rather is a fluid and dynamic understanding of self and ethnic background. Ethnic identity is constructed and modifies as individuals become aware of their ethnicity, within the large setting” (Phinney, 1990, p. 502). Phinney developed a three-stage model of ethnic identity development based on a study with minority adolescents from junior and high school.

Phinney focused on the process of ethnic identity formation. According to Phinney, an individual moves to various stages searching for his or her ethnic identity. *Unexamined ethnic identity* is the first stage. This stage is characterized by diffusion or

foreclosure. At this stage, an individual has not yet begun to question his identity. *Ethnic identity search/moratorium* is the second stage. This stage is characterized by encounter and exploration. The individual is receptive of his or her ethnic identity during this stage and begins the exploration process. This process may be initiated by a traumatic experience. This stage is compatible with that of Erikson (1968) “ego identity” referring to the identity crisis, or the “storm and stress” crisis. According to Erikson, this is a “necessary turning point, a vital moment, when development must move either way, marshaling resources of growth, recovery, and further differentiation” (p.16). *Ethnic identity achievement* is the final stage. This stage is characterized by acceptance and internalization of one’s ethnicity. In this stage, an individual has resolved any discrepancies and has cemented his or her ethnic identity.

Adolescence per se is a vulnerable stage together with the process of identity crisis and cultural identity confusion can further exacerbate outcomes that are more negative. Erickson (1968) coined the term identity crisis, which is one of eight developmental psychosocial stages on Erickson’s model. According to Erickson, adolescents experience a series of changes and crises while developing his or her identity. Ego identity vs. role confusion is a major stage in adolescence. This stage occurs around adolescence between ages twelve and eighteen. During this stage, an adolescent begins to re-examine his or her identity by exploring possible selves. Failure to establish a sense of identity can lead to role confusion. The ending result of role confusion is identity crisis in which an adolescent may rebel.

Kwak (2003) claims “the impact of sociocultural changes on immigrant adolescents can be distressful because difficulties and disagreement in socialization and

because the family tends to be separated for many reasons, including economic issues, acculturative stress, and migration” (p. 121 & p. 130). Immigrant adolescent’s development is profound because not only they progressed through developmental stages but because they also go through other series of changes including; the search for ego-identity, conflict due to cultural identity confusion, and linguistic changes (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001).

A vast area of research demonstrates that ethnic identity mitigate the effects of acculturative stress and psychological distress among Hispanic immigrants (Greig, 2003). A positive ethnic identity has been shown to buffered the negative associations of perceived discrimination with self esteem and depressive symptoms among immigrant and U.S. born youth Hispanics, primarily of Mexican origin (Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007). Phinney, Romero, Nava, & Huang (1999) study with a diverse sample of 216 adolescent participants from Armenia, Vietnam, and Mexico from a Los Angeles school demonstrated that ethnic language, parental involvement, and ethnic peers are significant contributors to the ethnic identity of adolescents in immigrant families. These findings suggest that a strong identification with their traditional Hispanic cultural values and family cohesiveness may protect Hispanic youth from risky behaviors.

One other study performed by Guzman, Santiago-Rivera and Haase (2005) investigated a link among ethnic identity, other-group orientation, and fatalistic attitude toward academic achievement. Guzman et al. demonstrated a significant positive interplay of cultural beliefs and identity processes and academic achievement. In this study 222 youth participants, average ages of 16 years, with at least one parent of Mexican origin participated. Findings showed that one of the strongest predictors of

academic achievement and positive school attitudes was a positive other group orientation and both attitude and GPA. These findings suggest that academic achievement and positive school attitudes depend on how these youth's perceived and interact with other ethnic groups. A positive relationship among Mexican students with other ethnic groups may lead to academic success.

To conclude, Phinney's stage model of ethnic identity development may be useful to work with immigrant youth. For example, when they arrive to the U.S. they undergo a process of ethnic identity. Before their arrival to the U.S, they have no notion of their ethnicity. However, once they start school and encountered a diverse number of students, they may become confused, and begin the process of exploration and questioning. Marriage family therapists may use the stage model to work with adjustment issues with the 1.5-generation. By finding the stage, the adolescent is at; therapists may help them get through the distressful process of searching and achieving their ethnic identity.

Language

Language can not simple be conceptualized as a learned behavior involving a stimulus and a response or that is development is biologically predetermined as B.F. Skinner and Chomsky argued early in the century (Schopler & Mesibov, 1985, p. 19). Although these facts are substantiated, language is a very complex subject and the key features are not as simple as Skinner and Chomsky define it a century ago. Edward Sapir (1939) suggested, " language does not exist apart from culture, that is, from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determine the texture of our lives" (p.220).

Immigration per se predisposed immigrant families to many difficulties but one of the most important changes brought about by immigration is the need to learn the language of the dominant group. This fact represents a threat since as Spector-Bitan (2007) notes, “the new language stamps its imprint on the national identity” (p. 1). She notes that when an individual migrates to a new country, he confronts a different society with distinct ethnic and cultural “dispositions.” This condition invites the immigrant to question his or her “linguistic and cultural membership” and to carry out a process of negotiation among his or her national identity, the country of origin, and of the country of immigration” (p. 2).

The present literature suggests that for immigrants the risk of losing or weakening their Hispanic identity through acquiring the dominant language may be one reason for restraining to learn it. Spector-Bitan (2007) proposes a metaphor to describe, as she notes, “ the movement between the previous culture and the new in the situation of immigration” (p. 3). In her metaphor, she describes the immigrant’s psychological state as he or she struggles to keep the bond between culture and language in an effort to keep his or her identity so it does not fades away.

La metáfora del puente

El puente es imaginario, y se encuentra en lo que Winnicott (1973:1) denomina 'espacio transicional'. En ese espacio, entre la realidad y el sueño, se erige mi puente, envuelto en nubes, con tramos de sol y canto y otros de tormenta y lágrimas. El inmigrante sale de su tierra y sube a ese puente, del que nunca bajará. El acento extranjero indica que nadie desea renunciar a su pasado, bajándose del puente para perderse en la multitud (Spector-Bitan, 2007, p. 3).

The fact is that immigrants to integrate into U.S. society need to acquire the dominant language (English) to function in the new society. Furthermore, immigrant children proficiency in English is critical for successful participation in U.S. society. Luis

A. Rubalcava, Ph.D. (2004) in his essay title *The Death of the Bilingual Self and Academic Achievement* demonstrates, as he notes, “ how the denigration of the Spanish speaking self by English monocultural schools forces many students to suppress and negate their Spanish speaking self” (p.1).

Dr. Rubalcava describes the journey of a Latino student through his or her academic achievement in the U.S. somehow as a process of grief and mourning; loss and never-ending longing as they acquire a new “English cultural self” and suppress their “Spanish self.” He also gives an account on how both sociocultural and political context promotes Latino students’ academic failure. Furthermore, he advocates and supports a multicultural education by suggesting that such approach would remove the “affective barriers to learning” while at the same time “facilitates the resolution of cultural mourning.” Similar to Rubalcava’s view, many researchers stress the importance of Hispanic youths to become proficiency in both English and Spanish.

However, for many immigrant youth learning a second language is difficult and it takes time. Hill (2004), acknowledge that youths who arrived to the U.S. after age 17 appeared to have the most difficulty with learning the English language. In a comparative sample of first-generation immigrant youth, Suárez-Orozco and Carhill (2008) demonstrated that first-generation of immigrant youth who had resided in the United States for about seven years only about 7% have developed English skills as opposed to their native-born English-speaking peers. Other researches point to similar findings, Hill (2004) navigated through the profiles of first-born Hispanic immigrant youth in California. Hill reports that first-born generation of Hispanics tend to arrived to the United States by age ten. She notes that the arrival of firts-generation youth increases

with age. For instance, at ages 13-15 about one-quarter of Hispanics are foreign-born, but by ages 19-24 that figure rises to one-half. She adds that the outcomes for later arriving youths are poor.

Hill refers to late arrival to those who arrived after the age of 17 and who are the least likely to attend U.S. high schools. Hill also provides calculations by generation and age groups of Hispanic youth ages 13 to 24 who are not fluent in English. For example, among the first generation of Hispanic youth who arrived at age eighteen and above, more than 83% are not fluent in English. Whereas among those who arrived between ages 10-17, about 53% are not fluent in English, and those youth who arrive at age ten or less, only 11% are not fluent in English. Hill notes that overall, at the national level, California first-generation of Hispanic immigrants are less likely to be fluent in English. On the other hand, second and third generation of Hispanic youth appear to be fluent in English. These statistics show that first-generation of Hispanics are having difficulty in becoming proficient in English. However, retention of learning a second language is not due to the old allegory that speaking only Spanish in the home causes a barrier to learning English. More precisely, this is more of a political and social issue that calls for implementing culturally competent education and resources for this generation of youth.

Phinney, Ong, and Madden (2000) conducted a study to demonstrate the importance of ethnicity, language, parents, and ethnic peers as facilitators to the ethnic identity of immigrant adolescents. The sample in the study consisted of 471 immigrant families from Mexico (171), Armenia (197), and Vietnam (103). Ethnic language proficiency, parental cultural maintenance, ethnic identity, in-group peer social interaction was measured. The correlation matrix suggested the following results; ethnic

language proficiency has a positive impact on ethnic identity among all three groups; social interaction with peers from same ethnic group was significantly related to ethnic identity; and parents' behaviors promote cultural maintenance of ethnic identity. This study asserts Rubalcava's (2004) point of view, in which he notes "language, then, develops and acquires its meaning and significance in relation to important people in our lives" (p. 3).

Gandara (2006) explored intervention programs that help narrow the educational achievement gaps among Latino students. She found that the state of California has the largest number of English learners who scored consistently lower than all other children on achievement tests. She notes "Hispanic students must grapple with the handicap of not knowing sufficient English when they begin the school curriculum" (p. 233). She argues for early intervention programs to help Latino students leap over the academic achievement.

English seems to place first-generation immigrant students at a great advantage (Hao & Woo, 2012). Nevertheless, for immigrant children to succeed, school support is needed to help them master both languages. How can this be achieved? As suggested by Rubalcava (2004) and other researchers, helping Hispanic youth succeed academically means moving toward a more multicultural education curriculum. Gandara (2006) claims "there is no reason for early readiness skills to be taught in English for children to benefit fully from the experience" (p. 228). Hence, a more pluralist multicultural educational curriculum, which is taught in both Spanish and English, will help Hispanic youth, specially the first generation, gain confidence and perform better.

Furthermore, usage of the mother language may benefit Hispanic youth or their parents in other dimension of functioning. For instance, Ainslie, Harlem, Tummala-Narra, & Barbanel (2013) when doing an extensive literature review to examined the ways the mother language can be beneficial in treatment. They found that when the patient, the analyst, or both are immigrants “speaking in one’s mother tongue allow one to connect more immediately and directly with the emotions that surround childhood memories and experiences” (p. 668). They further elaborated and suggest that it may be easier to express thoughts and feelings in one’s second language than in one’s mother tongue because, “emotionally, the patient is not as affectively connected to those feelings in the second language” (p. 668). This suggests that using the second language to express underlying feelings is less damaging and “permits an evasion of the superego” (p. 668). The authors’ psychoanalytic perspective and observation about the functionality of language as it relates to working with bilingual clients is relevant because research in this area is very limited. To summarize this section, literature review shows that biculturalism can serve as a protective factor. First, literature shows that fluent bilingualism is associated with higher cognitive development, and high self-esteem. Second, High self-esteem is associated with both higher educational goals and higher academic performance (Portes & Rivas, 2011). Third, bilingualism is associated with higher academic performance. Fourth, intervention in one’s mother tongue appears to be beneficial.

Biculturalism

There is not a definite definition of biculturalism but most generally it has been define as the ability to affiliate and interact in both ethnic and mainstream U. S. culture (Phinney, 1996).

Immigrant children are often described as living between two worlds or that they are split between two cultures. This implies that immigrant children struggle between two cultures without identifying with either ethnic group. Sam (1992) states that immigrant children adopt “the norms, values, and customs their parents promote, but on the other hand, they also promoted those values, norms, and beliefs of the host society” (p. 22). He suggests that the feeling of not belonging transcends through the second-and third generations, dooming these generations to continue an intertransgenerational pattern of not adapting to mainstream culture. He describes the split between two cultures in the following way:

Growing up in a society where their parents’ values apply to a minority group, these children can experience an acute sense of shame in practicing their parents’ culture in a society where mainstream people have different values and norms. Nevertheless, to reject their parents and their norms can be painful and result in extreme emotional problems. The child may experience guilt feelings, anxiety, and loneliness. On the other hand, rejecting the society and taking sides with the parents may also create another form of loneliness, alienation, inability to integrate different cultural norms and values, with the child impelled to choose (or reject) sides, makes the maintenance of the ego identity difficult and the child susceptible to identity disorders” (p.23).

Park (1928) also argued that “living in two cultures is psychologically undesirable because managing the complexity of dual reference points generates ambiguity, identity confusion, and normlessness” (as cited in LaFromboise, Hardin, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993, p. 395). On the contrary, Goldberg (1941) suggested a “marginal man,” referring to a mixed racial ancestry individual, who lives within two cultures may benefit from both. He suggested that an individual has several advantages in living between two cultures. He provided certain beneficial ways in which an individual could benefit from living within two worlds. According to Goldberg:

A marginal person may (a) share his or her institutional practices that are shared by other “marginal” people; (b) engage in institutional practices that are shared by other “marginal” people; (c) experience no major blockage or frustrations associated with personal, economic, or social expectations; and (d) perceive himself or herself to be a member of a group” (p. 53).

These facts suggest conflictual opinions, however, early research confirms that biculturalism serves as a protective factor for immigrant children. For instance, La Fromboise, Hardin, Coleman, and Gerton (1993) stressed the importance of adopting both cultures. According to La Fromboise et al. (1993):

Bicultural competence has several dimensions which include knowledge of cultural beliefs and values, positive attitudes toward both groups, a sense of efficacy in both cultures (i.e. biculturalism efficacy), communication ability, role repertoire (i.e. a range of culturally appropriate behaviors), and a sense of being grounded (i.e. some sense of identity or belonging). An individual must possess a competence in these arenas in order to manage the process of living in two cultures” (pp. 403-407).

Hao and Woo (2012), professors of sociology at John Hopkins University, drawing data from several National studies did a longitudinal study with a national representative sample of 10,795 foreign first-born or 1.5 generation and second-generation Hispanic children and adolescents in Grades 7-12 or ages 13-17. The children were followed for thirteen years. Hao & Woo analysis demonstrated that the 1.5 generation significantly did better on academic achievement, sociobehavioral, cognitive, and psychological well being than the second or third generation of Hispanic youth. The findings suggest, as they note, that several protective factors including, family support and cohesiveness, same ethnic community support, and the “dual culture” foreign-born immigrant children inherent by having to live in two cultures are all protective factors. They add “children of immigrants are oriented to take advantage of the better of the two

cultures” (pp.1625 & 1636), and able to combine the best of two cultures to navigate toward academic achievement and the future American labor force” (p. 1636).

Suárez-Orozco & Carhill (2008) similar to other researches, contribute such resiliency to “the dual frame of reference between the country of origin and the new setting as well as hope” (p.90). Suárez-Orozco & Carhill further add, “ the 1.5 generation may be more vulnerable as a result of developing and growing up in the face of a negative social mirror and social disparagement that reflects back a distorted negative image of their worth and potential” (p. 90).

Overall, studies point out that the first-born generation of Hispanic children do significantly better in a variety of indicators of well being than their second, or third generation of peers (Hao & Woo, 2012). Smokowski et al. (2009) strongly argued that practitioners and policy-makers should put more interest in the mental health and well being of Latino adolescent. They suggest the focus should be on “helping Hispanic families to develop bicultural competence to reduce internalizing problems and low-self esteem” (p. 290).

Cultural values as strengths and assets of Hispanic immigrant families

Contrary to what research suggest about traditional values been obstacles rather than assets for Hispanics, the literature review confirms that cultural values are strengths that ameliorate the impact of immigration and acculturation stresses. Sabogal, Marin, and Otero-Sabogal (1987) investigated the effects of acculturation on familismo in 452 Hispanics compared to 227 white non-Hispanics. The sample consisted of Hispanics from Cuba, Mexico, and Central America backgrounds. The results from the study

demonstrated that despite differences in acculturation there is a high level of perceived family support among the three Hispanic groups. The results also found that the first-generation or 1.5-generation of Hispanics appeared to have a strong sense of familismo, which continues “throughout the stressful migration process” (p. 408). Sabogal et al. strongly support the argument that “familismo is a core value of Hispanic culture” (p. 408). Hence, familismo has been highlighted as a cultural factor that empowers and connects immigrant families.

Literature shows that cultural values serve as protective factors, however, literature claims that the three following values, familismo, respeto, and educación are important for understanding parenting behavior and childrearing values among Hispanics (Calzada, 2010). Gonzalez-Ramos, Zayas, and Cohen (1998) attest to the fact that “the relationship between culture and values is evident in child-rearing behaviors” (p. 377). For example, familismo refers to a strong desire to maintain family bonds, a sense of responsibility, loyalty, honor, and commitment to the family over individual autonomy (Calzada, 2010; Triandis, 2001). The studies mentioned above show that Hispanics have higher levels of family cohesion (Rumbaut, 2001), which can be a source of emotional support and personal identity, and in return family cohesiveness is attributed to personal growth and academic achievement.

Respeto and educación are values that influenced child rearing and child socialization among Hispanic families. Respeto emphasizes that “children should be highly considerate of adults and should not interrupt or argue” (Calzada, 2010, p. 169). It denotes self-respect, and respect for authoritarian figures including, parents, and blood elders as well as those elders from the large society (Gonzales-Ramos et al., 1998).

Educación reflects moral standards and good judgment. As children progress into adolescence, they begin questioning authority, beliefs, cultural values, and moral standards. They also value autonomy and independence, and express their opinions. Immigrant parents lacking knowledge of adolescence cognitive maturity, they interpreted mental leaps as bad conduct or behavioral problems.

Studies suggest that there are cultural differences in how families approach autonomy development (Kagitcibasi, 2005; Kwak, 2003). Kwak (2003) notes that immigrant families from collectivistic countries “delay their youth self-reliance process due to economic hardships” and because it is inconsistent with their cultural values and childbearing practices (p.126). The acculturation process and the shift toward a more individualistic worldview can also be perceived as a threat to cultural beliefs and alienation from the family. Because of these unorthodox ideals, parents’ may adopted a more authoritarian disciplinary practice and use corporal punishment (Calzada, 2010).

Gonzalez et al. stressed the need for “clinicians treating children and families in multicultural contexts to be aware that the variety of child-rearing values, preferred behaviors, and parenting approaches they encounter pose challenges for delivering effective, culturally interventions” (p. 378).

Despite their ideals, immigrant parents need to adjust their childbearing practices. They need to have a thorough knowledge of the basic needs of children and adolescents, and the tasks confronting them at each stage of physical and cognitive development. Without doubt, it is crucial to help children developed a philosophy of life over the course of their developing years, like moral standards and guiding beliefs such as educación and respeto. However, it is also fundamental that immigrant parents

understand that adolescents need to achieve a sense of competence and autonomy.

Immigrant parents must change their methods of control, their attitudes, and their way of relating to encourage autonomy and independence in order for their youth to become healthy and emotionally stable adults.

A vast quantity of research has suggested that success or social mobility in the United States will come as immigrant families fully assimilate to the dominant culture. This suggestion implies that “cultural genocide” would be the end goal for Hispanic immigrants to fully assimilate and be accepted into the dominant society, however, the literature review for this work shows differently. It shows that cultural-based protective factors including internalization of cultural values and beliefs, family bonding and involvement, ethnic identification, language, and development of a bicultural identity are factors that may promote psychological resilience among immigrant Hispanic youth and their families.

Summary

The literature review clearly shows that the effects of migration and acculturation are detrimental to the immigrant family. As literature shows, a large number of studies over the past years have highlighted key challenges that immigrant families face upon arrival to the United States. Several studies have also helped identify protective factors that may buffer the negative effects of migration and acculturation. In addition, several scholars and researchers argue that most of the current preventative programs are solely to treat the identifying patient, which is usually the immigrant child or adolescent.

However, an overview of research findings highlights the need to address the migration

and acculturation processes as a family process, rather than as merely an individual psychological phenomenon (Falicov, 2007).

Mental health and social work professionals overlook the prior and post effects following the migration process. Hence, they are not mindful to how to go about to intervene or treat this population. It is hoped that the literature review will also provide valuable information to marriage family therapists and other mental health professionals so that they may be able to see immigrant families through different lenses. A lack of cultural sensitivity narrows the scope of the needs of this population. Thus, awareness will help identify and assess factors necessary for implementation of effective treatment.

Furthermore, there are currently no workshops available for Central-American immigrant families that address the negative effects of the migration process upon the family unit. It is my hope that this workshop will illuminate the immigrant parents' of the 1.5-generation about the phenomenon that quietly and slowly is disintegrating their families. It is the hope of the author that this literature can be used to treat and educate the afflicted and others. The lack of knowledge in the Central-American immigrant community regarding the experience of the migration process combined with the stressors afflicting this community further exacerbates the challenge facing this population.

Final note, the literature emphasizes that for better and worse, immigration is a family affair, and that the greatest challenges and problems face are not in a vacuum but rather seem to occur within the family unit.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The literature review for this project was obtained from various resources including, journals, articles, textbooks, and from various national data collection reports as well as from personal experiences from fieldwork site. The present chapter introduces a project on a workshop on migration-related issues aim at educating Hispanic immigrant parents about the factors pertaining to the impact of migration and acculturation. The focus is on Central American parents of the 1.5-generation of immigrant adolescents' from ages nine to seventeen. The workshop is intended to open discussion as well as to educate immigrant families of the high risk factors brought about by the immigration process including; separation, immigration and acculturation stresses, mental health, and emotional problems. The workshop will also discuss child rearing practices and parenting styles that immigrant families adopt in the host country that may either aggravate the parent-child relationship or may cultivate and reinforce family cohesiveness and connectedness.

In my early work as a marriage family therapist trainee, I have done fieldwork with the Hispanic community, especially from Guatemala, El Salvador, & Honduras. I lead and co-facilitated domestic violence groups as well as parenting classes. I noticed that most of the clients who are referred to the center have open cases with child and family protection agencies and have pending family court cases. Through their personal statements, it appears that the stressors associated with immigration and acculturation, as early described in the literature review, increase the risk for child welfare involvement.

Currently there is an increased number of immigrant families who have come in contact with child welfare agencies due to various allegations including; maltreatment, use of excessive discipline, poor parenting styles, domestic violence, and high family stress (Dettlaff, Earner, & Phillips, 2009). While national and state data indicates a rising trend involvement with child welfare agencies, the number of immigrant families currently in contact with these agencies is unknown. It is a fact that immigrant families are considered at increased risk to fall into the child welfare system due to the high stress and pressure experienced resulting from migration and acculturation processes (Segal & Mayadas, 2005). As a result, then it is crucial that this information should be disseminated to the affected population so they can take necessary measures to prevent contact with child welfare agencies. One way to provide these families as well as professionals with the awareness of the migration phenomenon is through informative workshops. The workshop will facilitate information, guidance, and direction so immigrant families will be more likely to identify the negative factors of the migration process so they may become active agents towards reconstructing the family system and mend shattered bonds. It will engaged Central-American immigrant families and their 1.5-G of teens to engage in the process of cultural awareness and appreciation of their culture as well as make the Central-American families feel more welcome in the community.

Inevitably, access to workshops in their native language to address these issues or guidance toward preventive services and treatment are limited. Research shows that immigrant families have great challenges understanding, navigating, and gaining access to the U.S. systems (Coatsworth, Pantin, & Szapocznik , 2002). This is greatly related to

their limited English proficiency and difficulty integrating into American society. The barriers that discourage immigrant parents from participating and integrating are partly due to programs that address immigrant parents' direct needs, are not offer in the parents' primary language. The present workshop will overcome this barrier not only because it will be conducted in their language but also because this may be one of the few workshops that introduces the topic of immigration and acculturation. Currently, there is a lack of Spanish workshops that highlight the issues presented in this work. Most of the workshops address literacy issues, promote parents' involvement in their children education, discuss behavioral or psychological issues, teach parent education skills, or address the risks factors for failing in academics. Although these workshops are of great importance to immigrant families, hence, they do not tap on the underlying issues or factors affecting the dynamics or structure of the family system or the negative mental health outcomes related to immigration. Furthermore, the workshop will address and facilitate discussion about the trauma, grief, and disruptions surrounding the separation, the migration trajectory, and family reunifications.

Examination of the literature has also shown societal cost associated with the high number of immigrant children and their families involvement in the child protection system. The type of services delivered to a specific family are based on case-to-case depending on the family's assessed needs. In general, the types of services delivered by child welfare agencies to high-risk families, whose cases are opened for ongoing services, include case management and supervision, often supplemented by other services. According to a report from the Department of Health & Human Services (USDHH, 201), post-investigation services may include, individual and family counseling, family-based

services, family preservation, parenting education, domestic violence programs, substance abuse treatment, foster home care, daycare, homemaker help as well as court services. As data shows, child protective agencies use a broad range of intervention services for those families who go into the system. In general, the state, federal programs, and local agencies may fund the prevention services by providing grants to contracted agencies. Most of the literature on preventative services currently used to intervene focus on the efficacy rate; however, literature about cost analysis of these programs is very limited. The literature points that immigrant families are at high risk to fall into the child welfare system, however, little is being done to prevent for this happening. It is my belief that such expenditure may be more effective and less costly if it is allocated for prevention-focused programs and activities designed to strengthen, support and enable these families to remain together.

An intervention appropriate for immigrant families is one developed by Paul Smokowski and Martica Bacallao (2009) called *Entre dos Mundos*. This is a bicultural skill training intervention which helps immigrant families developed bicultural skills and to understand the acculturation process as well as address family conflict and mental health fall out resulting from separation and reunification. *Entre dos Mundos* is a Bicultural Effectiveness Training (BET) intervention approach, which foundations are based in risks and protective factors theory, family systems theory, acculturation research, and alternation theory (Smokowski & Bacallao, 2009). Briefly, altercation theory suggests that acculturation is a more beneficial protective factor than assimilation. This intervention appears to be appropriate because it is a multifamily therapeutic approach that taps on many dimensions, discussed in this work, affecting this population.

It incorporates group therapy concepts, family therapy techniques, as well as role-play reversal, mirror, and re-enactment of traumatic events in immigrants' family life. In addition, it highlights topics such as family changes and balancing demands from two cultures, cultural conflict, family reactions, and worries for family members.

The following reviews intended audience, project materials, facilitator qualifications, materials and environment, the workshop outline, organization and cost, and advertising the workshop, and evaluation and follow-up.

Intended audience

The design of this workshop is experimental in nature. It is designed for Central-American immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation of high school age youth. Since literature shows that Central-American immigrants migration trend is in a pattern of stepwise migration and are apt to separate from their youth, and the first-generation are their offspring whom they reunify with in later years, then these immigrant parents and their 1.5- generation of youth are the ideal candidates to participate in the workshop. Research also identifies that Mexican immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation of youth experience the migration and acculturation process in similar ways as Central-American families do. For this reason, this population may also benefit from the workshop. In addition, any professionals or students are welcome to participate. In general, the school system is one of the first institutions that Immigrant children encounter. Therefore, the school will be the perfect place to recruit recently arrived Hispanic immigrant children and their parents to attend the workshop.

Hence, referrals will be accepted by school counselors, by teachers, staff and school administrators. In addition, referrals will be accepted from health and social

services, from community agencies, and counseling centers. A criterion for participants is to be Hispanic immigrant parents, preferable from Central-American countries from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. The workshop is to run from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturday. The day and time accommodates both parent's work schedule and their youth. The workshop is to take place at a counseling center or any other available professional and spacious office setting with the capacity to hold 15-45 participants. The workshop will be a 1 session, three hours workshop with one-hour break.

Qualifications

Facilitating the immigration and acculturation process of immigrant families requires cultural sensitivity and specific immigration and acculturation related knowledge. In view of this fact, it is important that particular factors are taken into account in the planning process. Foremost, the facilitation team members should be bilingual, must have previous facilitation experience and knowledge of the subject area under discussion, as well as have experience working with the Hispanic immigrant community. Preferable, if the lead facilitator is of the same cultural background and is an immigrant or born from immigrant parents. This is to ensure a sense of relatedness, cohesiveness, and universality with the participants. Similarly, to have knowledge of the subject area is important, as the facilitator will have to be able to select and use analysis tools appropriate to the workshop tasks. Equally important is the facilitator's proficiency in Spanish language; this will facilitate communication and engagement with participants in their mother tongue while creating a sense of cohesiveness and belonging. Another important point to consider is that the lead facilitator, in the same way as the facilitation

team members, should engage in self-reflection about their own potential biases or consequently it will contaminate the workshop's objective.

Additionally, the lead facilitator should be a Marriage and Family Therapist and/or a School Counselor who holds either a Pupil Personnel Services credential or a National Certified credential. According to the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), a Marriage Family Therapist is require to have met core courses of human development, and family development and processes in order to advance the welfare of individuals and families. Similarly, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) require that School Counselors should have knowledge in human growth and development, social and cultural competency, and career domains. The present workshop on illuminating Hispanic immigrant families about the immigration and acculturation processes is designed to provide immigrants with information and tools to assist them in their efforts to integrate into the mainstream of U.S. life by preventing the fall outs brought by the factors presented in this work.

Materials and Environment

The workshop is design to take place at any available space or classroom with a maximum capacity of 45 participants. The room setting should be spacious enough to allow participants to see facilitators, see one another, see the screen, and to facilitate individual and group participation. An islands setting is preferable. Projectors, videos, and microphones and any other functional equipment appropriate to do the task will be used. In each participant and presenter's table a supply of nametags, pads, index cards, and pens should be available. Free babysitting, coffee and water will be provided.

In addition, a Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanic parents (SASH) (Marin, Sabogal, Marin, Otero-Sabogal, & Perez-Stable, 1987), and one Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanic youth (SASH-Y) would be used for this project (Barona & Miller, 1994). Both acculturation scales are brief self-reports and include items assessing different domains. The short acculturation scale for Hispanic parents (SASH), for example, is a 12 items 5-point Likert scale and assess behavioral and cultural values aspects of acculturation on three factors: (1) language use (items: 1-5); (2) media (items: 6-8); and (3) ethnic social relations (items: 9-12). The score ranges from *only Spanish* (1) to *only English* (5) for assessing language and media preference. When assessing for ethnic social relations, the score ranges from *all Latinos/Hispanics* (1) to *all Americans* (5). To get an overall score, the items are added across the 12 items and divided by the number of items answered. Total scores range from 1 to 5. An average score of 2.99 is used to differentiate the less and more acculturated respondents. A respondent is less acculturated if the average score is between 1 and 2.99, and is more acculturated if the average score is greater than 2.99.

The SASH-Y is a 12-item 5-point Likert scale assessing three domains: Extra familial language use (items 2, 3, 9), familial language use (items 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8), and ethnic social relations (items, 10-12). The options for item 1 are *only Spanish* (1), *Spanish better than English* (2), *both equally* (3), *English better than Spanish* (4), and *only English* (5). The options for items 2-9 are *only Spanish* (1), *more Spanish than English* (2), *both equally* (3), *more English than Spanish* (4), and *only English* (5); the response options for items 10-12 are *all Hispanics* (1), *more Hispanic than White* (2), *about half and half* (3), *more White than Hispanic* (4), and *all White* (5). Responses are

added across all 12 items and a composite score ranging from 12 to 60 is acquired. Higher scores indicate higher acculturation to US society.

The workshop agenda will be displayed to participants on a Power Point presentation (Appendix A). A handout listing the topics under discussion will be provided (Appendix B). A short acculturation scale for Hispanic parents (Marin et al., 1987), and a short acculturation scale for Hispanic youth (SASH-Y) (Barona & Miller, 1994) [Appendix C] would be handle as well. A vignette case study (Appendix D), and a learning evaluation questionnaire (Appendix E) would be provided. All items would be handle to participants during registration. Since the workshop is for Hispanic speakers, the PowerPoint presentation, handout, and other material will be presented and written in Spanish at the actual workshop. A welcome greeting and a brief 10-15 minutes overview session to introduce the major themes for discussion will begin the presentation.

Project outline

The proposed project is a three-hour session for Central-American immigrants and their 1.5-generation of youth. It is intended to provide information to immigrant families about the challenges the family can face due to the migration processes, in the hope that early awareness may help these families prevent family dysfunction. This information will hopefully have them rethink any false assumptions they may have about the conditions that may be undermining their family dynamics, structure, and functioning. Hopefully, the transfer of knowledge regarding the link between migration and presentation will help these families seek appropriate help to ameliorate the effects of the migration syndrome as well as it will stimulate further attention to other social and mental health professionals, more specifically, social workers and marriage family

therapists, who may attend the workshop. To the end, that the information revealed would empower and transmit a sense of hope to immigrant families.

Topics such as a brief historical background, the types and trends of immigration, the separation process, the 1.5 generation, the migration trajectory, acculturative stress, couple relational stress, generational stress, parenting styles and practices, child welfare involvement, and cultural assets and protective factors will be discussed. In addition, an open discussion about participants' perception, opinions, and personal experiences regarding the migration and acculturative processes will be part of this workshop agenda. Since the topics and open discussions are all related to the migration experience, workshop facilitators should have a clear understanding and knowledge about such concepts and experiences in order to present and answer questions related to the topics.

The workshop first begins by welcoming participants and introducing the leader and team facilitators. Secondly, the topic will be introduced and the purpose of the presentation and afterwards the presentation begins. The first part and second part of the session will both consist of 45 minutes presentation followed by 45 minutes of open discussion. During open discussions, participants will be provided with a short acculturation scale for Hispanic parents (Marin et al., 1987), and one short acculturation scale for Hispanic youth (Barona & Miller, 1994). The acculturation scale objective is for participants to gain an understanding of the acculturation gap and to facilitate insight about how much acculturated to US society they or their children are. It would also serve as a starting point to begin open discussions. Furthermore, participants would be asked to form groups and each group would be provided with a different case study. The participants would be asked to discuss the case study among them for fifteen minutes.

Afterwards, they would be asked to reflect on or discuss the case with team facilitators.

This activity would give them the time to reflect on the activity and talk about it with others in the group and to ask team leaders questions they may have. There would be a thirty-minute break. During open discussion participants will be asked about their thoughts and their perspectives towards immigration, acculturation process, and their families and children challenges upon arrival to the United States; lead by an open discussion of their thoughts. In order to facilitate proper information and feedback, group leaders should have updated knowledge of studies, interventions, and a great understanding of the link between migration and mental health, and migration and the impact on family dynamics.

For the purpose of the project, it is strongly recommended that marriage and family therapists should facilitate the workshop. Equally, it is of great importance for group leaders to tailor and simplify the literature so that participants comprehend the information. At the end of the presentation, participants would be invited to share one of the following: Something they learned, and an opinion or attitude that was changed. Adequate time would be allowed for answers and for participants to fill out the learning evaluation questionnaire. The handout highlighting the important points of the presentation will be provided to take home and the team leader will thank the participants for attending and will bring the workshop to an end.

The topics covered in the PowerPoint presentation are as follows:

Outline of presentation

1. Goals
2. Relevance of topic

3. Terms and definitions
4. Historical background and facts
5. Central America conquest, crisis, and migration
6. Stepwise migration
7. 1.5-Generation
8. Pre-migration and migration risks
9. Separation
10. Attachment theory
11. Attachment styles
12. Parenting styles and practices
13. Acculturative stress
14. Couple relational stress
15. Intergenerational conflict
16. Immigration: Red flag for child welfare involvement
17. Protective factors and cultural values as strengths and assets
18. Acculturation, ethnic identity, language, and biculturalism
19. Familismo, respeto, and educacion
20. Ending note

Organization and costs

The workshop is designed to be approximately three hours long, with time for open discussion and thirty minutes brake. The information is provided as a PowerPoint presentation that requires a computer, projector, and a screen. In addition, microphones and Internet access may be needed. Many facilities have Internet services, however if it is

not available, the cost of this service will be considered. In addition, the rental fee for the office space in which the workshop would take place will be negotiated. To begin with, the goal is to negotiate rental space fees with non-profit organizations and churches with the hope that the rental fee per hour will not exceed more than \$90.00.

Advertising the workshop

Several methods can be used to advertise the workshop. The workshop event information can be posted on Hispanic community centers where immigrant families congregate including, churches, and cultural events. Printed material about the workshop may also be placed in counseling centers, medical clinics, community colleges, supermarkets, and schools. A Facebook account can also be created to advertise the workshop. Another option may be to advertise in Hispanic radio stations, advertisement magazines, and newspapers.

Evaluation and follow-up

An evaluation of the presentation will be discussed after the workshop takes place to learn if the overall learning objectives have been met, or if there is a need to adjust or add any content or materials to the workshop. The participants' learning evaluation questionnaire will serve as a guide for making any appropriate changes or adjustments to the workshop. Through their feedback, adjustments can be made to future workshops to better meet the needs of the target population. Schools where immigrant children attend could also be useful in providing input as well as community leaders. Facilitators' own reflection on the presentation and what each participant has or has not learned will also help for future adjustments. Furthermore, the feedback from the participants and facilitation team would help decide if there is a need for organizing clinic sessions. The

clinics will be useful to cover additional topics related to the workshop or to go more into depth with specific topics covered in the presentation. If there is a need to develop clinic sessions, these will be designed and experienced facilitators will be employed. A PowerPoint presentation consisting of forty-seven slides (supplemental document) and appendixes accompany this project. The appendixes include; A handout in Spanish (Appendix A); A Short Acculturation Scale for both parents and youth (Appendix B), a learning evaluation questionnaire (Appendix C), and sample of two case vignettes that would be used as an activity during open discussion (Appendix D).

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Summary

The aim of this graduate project is to illuminate Central-American immigrant families about the immigration and acculturation processes and the impact on the family dynamics. The presentation is to also provide support; understanding of the process of acculturation as related to family dynamics; understanding of how immigrant families are at high risk of falling into child protection agencies due to adopting rigid parenting behaviors and childbearing practices; and understanding that the family can be the only resource of support and help in the treatment process; as well as to bring awareness of community resources, and to facilitate tools so they can identify dysfunction in the family unit brought about from immigration related stresses.

Workshops are the preferred mechanism for migration and acculturative stress awareness. Hence, by attending the workshop, the information revealed to participants and their own-shared personal experiences during the open discussions will help participants' process, explore, and examine interpersonal relationships within other participants. Their immigration and acculturation experiences shared during open discussion will be validated, the imparting of information by some participants may encourage others to access treatment or access to community services, participants may feel a sense of belonging, acceptance, and validation, and self-understanding. They may be inspired, encouraged, and empowered by other participants who have overcome the impact of the migration processes with which they are still struggling. Furthermore, discussion facilitates understanding of the disrupted child-parent bond and its impact on

parent-child relationship. Through open discussion, participants may gain insight on how to go about repairing the broken bond that already exists by personal stories shared by other participants. In addition, they may gain insight about the level of acculturation they and their adolescents are when doing the acculturation scale during open discussion. Subsequently, research shows that the process of migration brings about many stresses upon the family but ample evidence also suggests that first generation of immigrants seemed to suffer less from negative mental health outcomes than do the second generation, and native-born. Researchers attribute such positive outcomes to the “immigrant paradox” because, cultural values, ethnic identity, language, and biculturalism seemed to be protective factors that mitigate against immigration related stressors. In addition, by introducing Berry’s acculturation model, immigrant parents can have a clear understanding of the acculturation gap; and be cognizant that during the stages of acculturation conflict can manifest. Thereby, parents’ would be better prepared on how to handle it or seek professional counseling services. Emancipating this information to participants can create hope, a sense of self-worth, a sense-of control, and empowerment over having some tools to work with in case they encountered any of the topics presented in the workshop.

Furthermore, the literature review offered a broad view to assist marriage and family therapists and child welfare workers to consider culturally sensitive ways and programs when working with this population. Consequently, if the child protection agencies cannot contribute to increase the health and development of this community, then families will continue to fall into the system and their children will continue to be

removed from their families and communities. Helping this population restructure and develop is the main goal of the community as well as mental health professionals.

To conclude, literature shows that immigrants become socially disengaged, isolated, and marginalized because they do not trust the new social systems. The present workshop will transmit the message to participants that the community cares for their wellbeing by facilitating the awareness to help them become proactive in their healing process. The project will help them re-connect with their own community and wider society and gain trust.

Expert Evaluation and Recommendations

The proposed workshop was evaluated to be an important and must needed awareness tool that will benefit Central-American immigrant families and the 1.5-generation. Four experts in the field of marriage and family therapy provided the support and motivation to construct this project. Two experts have 20-35 years of experience working with immigrant families from Central-America and Mexico. They both have a Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and are licensed therapists working for a counseling center in the San Fernando Valley. The center specializes in working with victims of domestic violence, batterers, and court cases related with child maltreatment and abuse. The first expert is the center's clinical director and my supervisor. The other expert is my mentor an admired facilitator among the Hispanic community. He leads domestic violence groups in Spanish and has had about thirty-five years of experience working with the Hispanic community.

Their long time experience working with the Hispanic population lends them to believe that the project will greatly benefit the families. Both experts agreed that English

proficiency and shift in parenting practices are two important elements that will help immigrant families navigate and succeed in the United States. They also agree with the acculturation gap in being a factor causing relational conflict between immigrant parents and their youth. The other two experts are my individual case supervisors working for another San Fernando Valley community counseling center located in the Northridge area. One holds a Ph.D., has a Marriage and Family Master's degree, and is licensed. The other received her Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and is licensed.

The experts in the field believed that the proposed project is in great need and its implementation is worthwhile. They feel that it is important to provide appropriate information to immigrant families and develop close working relationship with these communities. Nevertheless, currently, there is not enough awareness in the Hispanic immigrant community about the issues and problems cited in this work. The experts also pointed out that the reason Hispanic immigrant families do not seek help and do not engaged in therapeutic alliance is the language barrier. For this reason, the project would be presented in their mother tongue, and they all believed it would be a great asset for this community. The experts also agreed with the fact that immigrant families experienced multiple traumas and faced many challenges on their arrival to the U.S. that may produce systematic changes in family dynamics, structure, and functioning. The first two experts, who had intensively worked with the Hispanic immigrant community, believed that the loss of one or both parents by the immigration process, the separations and traumatization on one or all members, and the conditions experienced back in their war and crime infested countries, can pathologically affect all family members. All experts agree that

the ailments of the immigration phenomenon must best be approached through family awareness and community level prevention and intervention.

They suggest that one of the first institutions that immigrant families' encounter is the school system; hence, they recommend that this is the main location in which this work should first be implemented. Finally, experts suggested to plan in organizing clinic sessions to cover additional topics related to the workshop. This will be useful if participants' interest is to go more in depth on topics covered in the larger presentation that currently may be affecting their family dynamics or just for further awareness or personal growth. The clinics under consideration for future implementation will depend on the immediate need of this population.

Implications

Implications for this type of workshop with immigrant families include issues on confidentiality. Immigrant families have learned to be uninvolved and to stay in the background because of their illegal status. They have developed a deep suspicion and mistrust of the host country and its social systems. These suspicious attitude and lack of trust may prevent them from signing up to this type of workshops. Subsequently, participants may be unwilling to share personal information during open discussion because they may not trust the team facilitators with family issues. Another implication may be in the area of suggesting an integration of a new bicultural reality. This may present a challenge given that Hispanic cultural practices, values, and beliefs, are valuable aspects of their ethnic identity, the acculturation and biculturalism suggestions may not be perceive as been aspects of protection but rather as a threat to their Hispanic heritage. They may be reluctant to assist assuming that the workshop objective is

suggesting them to acquire an “American mind.” For this reason it is important to emphasize that acculturation is not the same as assimilation. That is, the definition of assimilation versus acculturation must be well defined because this population has a hard time distinguishing between the two terms.

Participants may also be reluctant to ask questions, even when they do not understand concepts. This may be due to their cultural belief known as *respeto* and asking questions can be perceived as being disrespectful and disobedient to their superiors. According to Hofstede (1980), Hispanics value greater power distance; hence, the concept of power distance may hinder participation. To avoid this issue precaution should be taken into consideration. For example, identification of the lead facilitator as an immigrant can help equalize power distance in that way participants feel comfortable to talk or participate in the workshop. Cost and time related and poor transportation may inhibit participation.

Conclusion

The literature review on the impact of migration and acculturation processes on immigrant children and their families shows valuable research regarding the link between immigration-related separation, acculturative stress and migration, relational strains in family dynamics, and challenges in identity formation, and the stresses of the migratory experience and mental fall-out. (Suarez-Orozco & Carhill, 2008). While literature review focused on developing an understanding of the important factors affecting immigrant families’ transition to the United States, the project has also identified the need for further research that addresses the unique needs of immigrant families and their children.

Although, research reveals that immigrant families experience many challenges,

especially when considering the process of acculturation as related to family dynamics, and struggled to function as family systems, little effort has been done to ameliorate their condition. Suarez-Orozco and colleagues (2008) claimed that research on immigrant families remains understudied and researchers often become pathological towards immigrant children, adolescents, and their families. Seeing them as problem or model minorities while overlooking the complexity of race, gender, documentation, language, and ignoring contextual challenges. The authors referred to contextual challenges to social contexts including poverty, neighborhood, schools, relational contexts, illegal status, and language. They suggest more development of culturally sensitive tools or approaches to capture the experiences of immigrants with a variety of backgrounds.

Research has properly addressed many areas affecting the Hispanic immigrant population and several scientific based cultural-bond approaches have been developed to intervene with this population, although, their implementation has not been strongly reinforced. Some area for future research would be to investigate the reasons of such neglect. Nevertheless, research has shed light on important areas that serve as a framework for marriage family therapists to work with this population. So far what has research presented is an orientation toward understanding the immigrant family within the context of family systems therapy. As Falicov (2007) quotes, “works with immigrants require a better integration of cultural and sociopolitical approaches with foundational aspects on the family therapy field” (p. 158).

The challenges Central American families faced are greatly compounded by the migration process and becoming alienated in a new society. When working with

immigrant families, one must focus not just on the traumatic migration process and its impact on these families, but also consider how their structure and dynamics have been changed. As marriage and family therapists, we can guide immigrant families to successfully transition into society, our therapeutic task, therefore, is to provide a context in which previous family bonds can be recovered and new ones can be developed. For this population of clients, this involves addressing the separation process; addressing the effects of the migration trajectory; addressing the stressors involved in the acculturation process, including the discrimination that are encountered in the new society; and providing new meaning to restructure their families.

In my experience of doing group work and individual counseling with Central-American immigrants, I have developed an understanding of the need in helping immigrant families integrate into a new society. In working with this population, I have developed a passion in facilitating them with a deep insight to the phenomenon affecting them. Through my experiences and my research for this work, I feel an immense duty to facilitate any possible help for this population. For this reason, I plan to conduct a workshop specifically for Central-American immigrant families to make them aware of the potential pitfalls that may arise out of the sometimes-conflicting migration and acculturation processes. Immigrant parents could benefit from discussions about how to manage the dynamics of acculturation within the family. In addition, the workshop may bring a sense of motivation, hope, and purpose. I believed it is vital to implement intervention programs that reach out to immigrant families. Programs similar to that of *Entre dos Mundos*, discussed earlier in this work, will be an appropriate approach for immigrant families as it is a multifamily therapeutic approach. It focus on the family as

the unit of treatment as opposed to other prevention programs that focused solely on targeting children's or adolescents' conduct disorders. I believe that early prevention programs similar to *Entre dos Mundos* are crucial to the well being of immigrant families and their children.

Working with immigrant families can be very challenging, because therapists need to have a thorough knowledge of the Hispanic diverse family structures, the multiple trauma experience, and the constant tensions brought out by the migration and acculturation processes. It is crucial to address the unique psychological experiences of Hispanic immigrant families and their children. The following recommendations are to be taken into consideration when working with immigrant families and their 1.5-Adolescents. 1) Focus on the role of the child-parent relationship, 2) get to know the family's cultural beliefs, 3) focus and address parenting practices and behavior, 3) address immigration experiences, 4) focus on the intergenerational transmission of trauma, 5) facilitate coping strategies to help them cope with pain, loss, anger, frustration, loneliness, fear, anxiety, confusion, and adversity, 6) explore the rates or levels of acculturation of each family member, 7) suggests a social network within their communities, 8) facilitate psycho-education so they can understand the impact of the migration and acculturation processes, and the positive outcomes of biculturalism, 9) recognize the importance of the mother language in their lives, 10) reinforce parents to transmit the values and behaviors that may help facilitate their children's adaptation to the host society, 11) suggests parenting education classes, 12) provide a sense of identity and purpose in their lives, 13) and most importantly see children and caregivers in dyadic sessions or include the whole family unit in the treatment plan.

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Appendix A

Handout

SPOTLIGHT ON THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION AND ACCULTURATION: A WORKSHOP FOR IMMIGRANT FAMILIES AND THE 1.5-GENERATION

Welcome to SIMPATIA Project!!

Program content

Introduction:

1. Goals
2. Relevance of topic
3. Terms and definitions
4. Historical background and facts
5. Central America conquest, crisis, and migration
6. Stepwise migration
7. 1.5-Generation
8. Pre-migration and migration risks
9. Separation
10. Attachment theory
11. Attachment styles
12. Parenting styles and practices
13. Acculturative stress
14. Couple relational stress
15. Generational stress
16. Immigration: Red flag for child welfare involvement
17. Protective factors and cultural values as strengths and assets
18. Acculturation, ethnic identity, language, and biculturalism
19. Familism, respecto, and educacion
20. Ending note

Appendix B

Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics – English Version

Response categories: *Items 1–8*: 1 = Only Spanish; 2 = Spanish better than English; 3 = Both equally; 4 = English better than Spanish; 5 = Only English.

1. In general, what language(s) do you read and speak?
2. What was the language(s) you used as a child?
3. What language(s) do you usually speak at home?
4. In which language(s) do you usually think?
5. What language(s) do you usually speak with your friends?
6. In what language(s) are the TV programs you usually watch?
7. In what language(s) are the radio programs you usually listen to?
8. In general, in what language(s) are the movies, TV, and radio programs you prefer to watch and listen to?

Response categories: *Items 9–12*: 1 = All Latinos/Hispanics; 2 = More Latinos than Americans; 3 = About half and half; 4 = More Americans than Latinos; 5 = All Americans

9. Your close friends are;
10. You prefer going to social gatherings/parties at which the people are;
11. The persons you visit or who visit you are;
12. If you could choose your children's friends, you would want them to be.

Information gathered from: Marin, G., Sabogal, F., Marin, B.V., Otero-Sabogal, R., & Perez- Stable, E.J. (1987). Development of a short acculturation scale for Hispanics. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 9, 183–205.

Short acculturation scale for Hispanic youth (SASH-Y) – English Version

Response categories: Item 1: 1 = Only Spanish; 2 = Spanish better than English; 3 = Both equally; 4 = English better than Spanish; 5 = Only English

1. What languages do you read and speak?

Response categories: Items 2–9: 1 = Only Spanish; 2 = Spanish better than English; 3 = Both Equally; 4 = English better than Spanish; 5 = Only English

2. What languages do your parents speak to you in?

3. What languages do you usually speak at home?

4. In which language do you usually think?

5. What languages do you usually speak with your friends?

6. In what languages are the TV programs you usually watch?

7. In what languages are the radio programs you usually listen to?

8. In what languages are the movies, TV, and radio programs you prefer to watch and listen to?

9. In what languages do your parents speak with their parents?

Response categories: Items 10–12: 1 = All Latinos/Hispanics; 2 = More Latinos than Americans; 3 = About half and half; 4 = More Americans than Latinos; 5 = All Americans

10. Your close friends are;

11. You prefer going to parties at which the people are;

12. The persons you visit or who visit you are.

Information gathered from: Barona, A., & Miller, J. (1994). Short acculturation scale for Hispanic youth (SASH-Y): A preliminary report. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 16*, 155–62.

Appendix C

SIMPATIA Workshop – Evaluation/Feedback

Date: _____

Participant Name (optional): _____

Instructions

Please circle your response to the items. Rate aspects of the workshop on a 1 to 5 scale:

1 = "Strongly disagree," or the lowest, most negative impression

2= "Disagree"

3 = "Neither agree nor disagree," or an adequate impression

4= "Agree"

5 = "strongly agree," or the highest, most positive impression

Choose N/A if the item is not appropriate or not applicable to this workshop.

Your feedback is appreciated. Thank you.

The Workshop (Please circle your response to each item)

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. The workshop objectives were clearly spelt out. | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A |
| 2. The workshop lived up to my expectations. | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A |
| 3. The content was relevant to me/my job. | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A |
| 4. The workshop stimulated me/my learning around change. | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A |
| 5. The workshop was easy to follow and understand | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A |
| 6. The workshop was appropriate for me. | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A |

The Workshop Facilitator (Please circle your response to each item)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| 7. The facilitator was well prepared. | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|

8. The facilitator was helpful. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

9. The facilitator was able to answer all my change questions. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Feedback for SIMPATIA Workshop

10. The facilitator was able to refer my queries appropriately 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

11. The facilitator heard my/our concerns. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

The Workshop Outcomes (Please circle your response to each item)

12. The objectives of the workshop were met. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

13. I will be able to use/apply what I learned in this workshop. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

14. The workshop was a good way for me to learn about change. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

15. I benefited the most from?

16. I benefited the least from?

17. Any other comments?

Thank you!

Appendix D

Case vignettes

The mother of a 13-year-old Nicaraguan boy disclosed: We are getting used to each other. We are both beginning a different life together. The kids are jealous of each other and my husband is jealous of them. Jealousy exists between those who were born here and those who were not. My son says: “You already spent a lot of time with her or his younger sister born in the United State.”

A Central American mother of a 13-year old girl: Our relationship has not been that good. We were apart for eleven years and communicated by letters. We now have to deal with that separation. It is been difficult for her and for me. It is different for my son because I have been with him since he was born. If I scold him, he understands where I am coming from. He does not get angry or hurt because I discipline him but if I discipline my daughter, she takes a completely different attitude than he. I think this is a normal way to feel based on the circumstances.” (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008, pp. 244, 246).