

Culture, Parenting Style, and Engagement in PCIT

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Latinos are one of the fastest growing minority groups in the United States (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010), and yet still comprise much of the country's underserved population for mental health services (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2010). Recent research has revealed that Spanish speaking, less acculturated Latinos are more likely to drop out of treatment than more acculturated, English-speaking Latinos (Keyes et al., 2012). Research into reasons why Spanish-speaking Latinos drop out of mental health services more than English-speaking Latinos is very limited, however some researchers point to a possible discrepancy between cultural practices in parenting and treatment delivery (Keyes et al., 2012). Past researchers have categorized Latinos as employing parenting strategies consistent with an authoritarian style of parenting (Knight, Virdin & Roosa, 1994; Rosello & Bernal, 1996; Parke et al., 2004) such as leading with direct verbal commands and focusing on obtaining compliance (Livas-Dlott et al., 2010).

Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) was developed based on the concepts that when parents are nurturing, their attention will be rewarding to their children, and their children will want to obey. Commands and questions are discouraged verbalizations and parents are coached to not use these strategies in interactions with their child.

The purpose of this study is to examine Spanish-speaking and English-speaking Latinos in regards to their different parenting styles and explore how this affects whether they stay in PCIT. Twenty seven Spanish speaking Latino mother-child dyads and 66 English speaking mother-child dyad's verbalizations were coded to evaluate their verbalizations as they relate to their parenting strategies. Results showed that there were no overall differences in treatment completion between the groups; however, mothers who used more questions at pre-treatment were more likely to drop out of treatment regardless of acculturation level.

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