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Los Angeles

Study of Latina Mothers' Coping Processes While
Their Young Adult Sons Are Incarcerated

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Nursing

by

Teodocia Maria Hayes-Bautista

2013

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Study of Latina Mothers' Coping Processes While
Their Young Adult Sons Are Incarcerated

by

Teodocia Maria Hayes-Bautista

Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing

University of California, Los Angeles, 2013

Professor MarySue V. Heilemann, Chair

ABSTRACT

Projected rapid Latino population growth in California from 15 million to 25 million by 2060, and a Latino overrepresentation in the state's criminal justice system will drive a rapid increase of Latinos in the state's prisons. A gap exists in the literature on the coping processes of Latina mothers whose sons have been incarcerated. This qualitative research study of 17 low income, Spanish-language-dominant mothers in Southern California was undertaken to fill that gap and to sensitize future studies to the nuances of coping experienced by Latina mothers whose sons were incarcerated. Data collection and analysis of open-ended interviews were done using a constructivist grounded theory methodology.

Findings revealed that the initial response of the mothers to their son's incarceration resulted in perceptions of devastation, leading to pain, crying, lethargy, loss of sleep, and suicidal thoughts; the combination of which brought the mothers to the point of "dejarse caer," or giving up, falling to pieces or falling down. Three motivators would engage them to move towards "No dejarse caer," or not giving up, not falling to pieces, and not falling down. These motivators included their other children who still needed them, their now incarcerated sons, and their earlier image of themselves as capable mothers. Once they had come to the decision of "no dejarse caer", they would engage two key processes.

The first was "self-care," which described how these mothers, with extremely limited access to mental health care, developed three mechanisms to give care to themselves: working the mind, working with others, and working with God. The second process was mothering which consisted of nurturing, providing and protecting. They continued to mother their non-incarcerated children as before, but had to develop new ways to mother their incarcerated sons. These two core concepts were integrated in a circular fashion. The mothers engaged in self-care in order to engage in mothering and conversely, the mothering behavior kept them engaged in self-care. The implications for nursing practice and future research is touched upon.

The dissertation of Teodocia Maria Hayes-Bautista is approved.

Adeline M. Nyamathi

Sally Maliski

Vilma Ortiz

MarySue V. Heilemann, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2013

DEDICATION

I dedicate this effort to mothers who “no se dejan caer.”

Thank you for teaching me about coping.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background / Statement of the Problem

Latino adolescents are 40% more likely to be incarcerated than non-Hispanic white teenagers (California Attorney General, 2010). According to the California Attorney General (2010), the Latino arrest rate of 8,139 per 100,000 is 37% higher than the Non-Hispanic White rate of 5,921. As the Latino population in California grows to a projected 25.3 million by 2060, if the current over-representation of incarceration is not changed, the number of Latino adolescents in the juvenile justice system will increase dramatically as driven by twin dynamics of population growth and prison over-representation (California Department of Finance, 2013).

This growth in the number of incarcerated young adults means an increase in the number of mothers who will have to cope with the effects of their sons' incarceration. These mothers will probably have little professional mental or health care resources to draw upon. First of all, many Latinas do not have health insurance, or regular source of health care, much less mental health care. Second, in this context, they will also not have the discretionary income to pay out of pocket for professional mental or health services (Pew Hispanic Center, *Statistical Portrait of Hispanics in the United States, 2008*, Table 37 and 38).

The Purpose of This Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe the coping processes of Latina mothers who have a young adult son in custody. There is a paucity of literature that provides in-depth perspectives of low-income immigrant Latina mothers who have shared their thoughts, feelings and actions when their sons were initially incarcerated and over time. The method of naturalistic inquiry both in terms of data collection and analysis, best suited to construct a model

of mothers coping processes was constructivist grounded theory (CGT). The specific aims of this project were:

1. To explore and describe the perceptions and experiences of Latina women during the time when their adolescent and young adult sons were incarcerated.
2. To identify, explore, and describe Latina mothers' cognitive and emotional responses during the initial awareness of their sons' incarceration and over time.
3. To identify, explore and describe Latina mothers' behavioral coping processes during the initial awareness of their sons' incarceration and presently.
4. To Identify, explore, and describe Latina mothers' intrinsic and extrinsic resources for coping while their sons were incarcerated.
5. To generate an understanding of the coping processes grounded in the voices and narratives of Latina mothers who were coping with the experience of having a son in custody.

Research Approach

The theoretical underpinnings of Symbolic Interaction (SI) guided this exploratory study, from a philosophical base of pragmatism using the methodology of Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT). CGT is a qualitative method based on classical grounded theory (Glazer & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), which has been advanced by Charmaz (2006). It assumes no single interpretative truth but it honors multiple interpretive standpoints from multiple communities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 23).

This research approach is respectful of the unique, local interpretations of low income Latina mothers, and recognizes that different communities will hold their own criteria for evaluating a situation such as a the incarceration of a young adult son. This approach recognizes

the researcher's position as an overt observer and required the researcher to examine and take responsibility for biases and assumptions.

Rationale and Significance of Research

Despite the number of Latina mothers that need to cope with the stress of incarcerated sons, the ways in which they attempt to cope with their stressors is not known. A recent literature search on Latino mothers of incarcerated sons on PubMed and Google Scholar yielded only one research article on a study conducted among African-American women (Green, Ensminger, Roebertson, & Juon, 2006). The studies that were most relevant to the topic of this dissertation were those focused on families, partners and wives of prisoners (Daniel & Barrett, 1981; King, 2004; Lowenstein, 1984; Miller, Browning, & Spruance, 2001; Moerings, 1992; Woodward, 2003), children of incarcerated women and parents ((Hagen & Myers, 2003; Harper & McLanahan, 2004; Hayward & DePanfilis, 2007; Nesmith & Ruhland, 2008;) and incarcerated mothers as prisoners (Celinska & Siegel, 2010; Greene, Haney & Hurtado, 2000; Loper & Tuerk, 2011; Thompson & Harm, 2000).

The significance of the current study is that it informs the science and practice of nursing and provides a knowledge base and a deeper understanding of the coping processes in this population. An improved ability to cope can facilitate engagement in other health-promoting interventions for both mother and family. Interventions at the community level can also help to develop parenting skills and bring awareness of the need to prevent juvenile incarceration. At a more macro societal level, findings from this study may encourage participation in the improvement of policies and practices involving the juvenile justice system.

Overview of Dissertation

Chapter Two 2: The literature review. This qualitative study on the coping processes of low-income Latina immigrants is contextualized first by giving the reader an overview of the literature which was reviewed in depth at the beginning and at the end of this research project. However, throughout the research process, any literature considered helpful to expand and deepen the researcher's understanding of the coping process or contextual factors was also included.

Chapter Three 3: Philosophical underpinnings: SI and pragmatism. SI is a theoretical framework that posits a way of understanding how individuals construct lines of action with themselves and with others through social interaction. This framework is grounded in the philosophical tenets of pragmatism, which hold as important the process of working out solutions to problems, the results of which meet the objectives sought. The discussion of this theoretical framework and its philosophical underpinnings is presented in Chapter Three.

Chapter Four: Methods. A recent development within the family of grounded theory methodologies is CGT. This variant of grounded theory most closely follows the work of Kathy Charmaz (2006), who locates herself more in line with the interpretivist researchers than with the original version of grounded theory developed by Glaser and Strauss in the 1960's. Interpretivist researchers view the researcher as having a role in the results of naturalist inquiry through their interpretation of findings and their subsequent construction of the conceptual models that present a situation specific understanding of the phenomenon studied. In addition to presenting the reader with an explanation of the methodology used in this dissertation, the procedural details of this research project and a demographic profile of study participants are included in this chapter.

Chapter Five: Findings. This chapter provides a detailed description of the core categories, self-care and mothering. Both were developed and related in a conceptual model, constructed as an emergent theory, from the analysis of the rich text produced through the in-depth interviews conducted with research participants. The properties that characterized and defined each category are presented, as well as the variants or dimensions that support each property.

Finally, a discussion of the findings and its implications for the practice of nursing is offered in Chapter Six. The incarceration of an adolescent/young adult son affects a mother deeply and to cope, mothers constructed specific lines of action. These lines of action made up a process of coping that has not been described previously in the literature. An awareness of these specific lines of action or coping processes can help nurses who are working with immigrant mothers to manage the stress of an incarcerated son. However, this model of coping processes may also prove to be helpful in managing other similar stressful situations experienced Latina immigrant mothers. Ultimately, the goal of any health care provider should be to prevent stressful situations. In this case, helping immigrant mothers and their sons to live healthy, productive lives without the experience of incarceration is the goal.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A focused approach was taken to review the background literature for this study designed to explore the coping processes of Latina mothers whose sons are incarcerated. The pertinent literature involves factors of concern that range from individual and family issues, to community level concerns, to system level phenomena and theories. Each level has the potential to influence the experience of Latina mothers whose sons are incarcerated. To help organize this broad range of factors in the literature, the central schema of a public health nursing practice model by Smith and Bazini-Barakat (2003) was used.

Nearly a decade ago, Smith and Bazini-Barakat (2003) created the public health nursing practice model as an improved articulation of the tripartite focus of public health nursing; it focuses on assessments of patients as individuals, groups, and large populations. The overarching dynamic of the model involves an expansion of the “nursing process” to be implemented by public health nurses in practice. This model which nurses use to make assessments and plan nursing interventions was useful for organizing the literature for the current study. This model is represented by three overlapping circles depicting the individual/family level, the community level, and the systems level (Smith & Bazini-Barakat, 2003, p. 45).

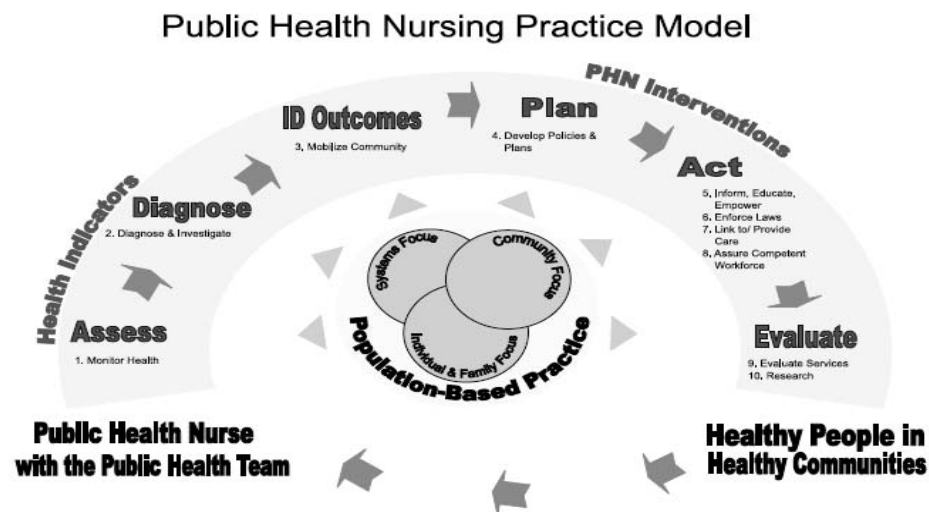


Figure 1. Los Angeles County Public Health Nursing Practice Model.

Individual/Family Level

The public health nursing model indicates that the individual/family level is a primary focus (Smith & Bazini-Barakat, 2003). The topic of the current study is the stress and coping processes of Latina mothers with incarcerated sons. Using qualitative research methods, this research focused on the individual experience of Latina mothers whose sons were incarcerated and the ways they constructed coping with this situation. While there is a paucity of literature on this topic, these factors helped inform this study.

Factors of concern described in the research literature at the level of the individual or family include psychological distress, stigma, and shame (Green, Ensminger, Robertson, & Juon, 2006) and were applicable to Latina mothers of incarcerated sons. However, a major drawback is that no literature was found that specifically focused on Latina mothers of incarcerated sons. The current research appears to be the first to focus on Latina mothers of incarcerated youth.

Therefore, a review of the extant literature included a focus on the families of incarcerated

individuals, primarily the wives of incarcerated men or the children of incarcerated mothers, and helped to sensitize the research focus.

Wives of Incarcerated Men

A review of the literature focused on the wives of men who were incarcerated revealed a great deal of suffering by wives and families. Daniel and Barrett (1981) conducted a study with 35 wives of men in the Kansas State Industrial Reformatory, a maximum-security prison. Of the 35 women, only two were Latina: 21 were Non-Hispanic White and 11 were African American. The quantitative, descriptive study (the data are presented as straight percentage responses, with no tests of significance) found that these wives had special needs in four areas: information, financial help, managing grief and dealing with relationships. Wives needed information on definitions of technical terms, learning where their husbands would be physically located, learning about the length of time their husband would be incarcerated, and accessing the rules for visitation and correspondence. Wives also needed financial help with the necessities of life, such as food, clothing and housing, as well as transportation help to make visitation trips while their husbands were in custody. Wives further needed help managing their grief and severe sense of loss due to their husband's arrest, conviction, and incarceration. Finally, wives needed help dealing with friends and family relationships, which grew in complexity while their husbands were in prison. Paternal incarceration introduces destabilizing effects on families already fragile, and the children are placed at great disadvantage (Geller, Garfinkel & Western, 2011).

When the impact of incarceration, probation or parole was assessed among African American families, Miller, Browning, and Spruance (2001) revealed how a "wedge" was driven between men and their mates, their children, and their families by criminal justice personnel within the criminal justice system (p. 3). They concluded that the rate of African American

incarceration is nearly at epidemic proportions, yet efforts to maintain ties between the families and incarcerated fathers are nearly non-existent, harming the families in ways ranging from psychological to financial loss.

King (2004) examined the grieving patterns of families of murder victims in his qualitative study of 17 families of unspecified ethnic background living in a midwestern and a northwestern state. He discovered that the need for the family members to be involved in the legal criminal proceedings, which can take years for resolution, distorted Kubler-Ross's grieving stages by not allowing the reactions to fade. King further found that both police officers and other personnel were ignorant about the grieving process and lacked compassion for the family members.

Studies conducted outside the United States (US) also provide some suggestions for the research. In an Israeli study described as quantitative, wherein cluster-analysis was conducted with 143 wives of prisoners, findings revealed that a wife's level of education, an egalitarian pattern in the division and practice of domestic labor in the home, as well as the length of her husband's prison sentence affected the wife's ability to effectively cope with her husband's incarceration (Lowenstein, 1984). In the Netherlands, Moerings (1992) noted that 14 Norwegian wives underwent a series of role transitions that created role strain (e.g. from a housewife to a "prisoner's wife"). Each woman enacted a variety of roles, such as homemaker, mother of children, employee, member of a sports club, etc. Some roles may have disappeared (for example, a woman may cease being a sports club member as she is no longer able to pay the dues); others may have been given new content (such as going from simply being a mother to a "heavy mother" who must provide much of the father's role as well). All had the potential to take place in a new context of stigmatization.

The Australian Government's Department of Family and Community Service (Woodward, 2003) developed a policy-oriented literature review identifying issues and difficulties experienced by families of prisoners, especially those affecting the children and caregivers for the children. The review noted that a number of substantive issues had been researched—ranging from estimates of the number of children of prisoners in the country, and their social, economic and emotional stress—but that very few policies and programs had been developed to help the families of prisoners manage the experience. This paper stressed the importance of research, and of evaluating policy and practice to address the needs of family as well as community.

The Children of the Incarcerated

Other research focused on the children of incarcerated mothers or incarcerated parents. A qualitative study conducted with 34 children of incarcerated parents (20 African American, 7 Caucasian and 7 American Indian) provided valuable insights into the feelings and experiences of having a parent in jail from the child's point of view (Nesmith & Ruhland, 2008). Stigma was a central experience of the children who were hesitant to disclose to others that their parent was incarcerated. Children of incarcerated parents had an outward focus in that they were more attuned to their caregiver's emotional needs than to their own. In addition, they struggled with the dilemma of whether or not the consequences of their parent's illegal behavior was fair given that it had resulted in their incarceration and separation from the family. Harper and McLanahan (2004) found that the greatest single predictor of a youth's incarceration is the incarceration of the father.

In addition to what is known about the children of the incarcerated, studies on their caregivers has helped to bring attention to the complexities of their lives and the stigma with

which they live. In a study of secrecy and social support among 116 predominantly African American who attended a summer camp (Hagen & Myers, 2003), investigators found that among children whose parent was incarcerated, those who disclosed their parents' incarceration and had low social support were found to be at risk for developing behavioral problems. Because of the stigma attached to parental incarceration, children may need guidance about to whom this information was disclosed.

Family reunification problems were the key finding of Hayward and DePanfilis (2007) who worked with the national dataset, Adoption and Foster Care Administration Reporting System (AFCARS) that provided data on 45,284 foster children throughout the US and Puerto Rico. The majority (96%) of the children were either Caucasian or African American. These investigators discovered that children of incarcerated parents who were in the foster care system encountered more problems than children who did not have incarcerated parents, in reuniting with parents who had been incarcerated. Specific difficulties resulted from parental substance abuse, poverty, and length of time in care. Spending longer periods of time in a foster home away from their parents created difficulties when the children attempted to reunite with their parents.

Incarcerated Mothers

Among the few studies related to incarceration of mothers, Greene, Haney and Hurtado (2000) assessed the social history of 102 mothers incarcerated in three jails in central California (43% Latino, 32% European American and 7% African American). Findings illuminated a cycle of pain in the women's past that included physical abuse, sexual abuse, and violence experienced by themselves and/or their children. In response to these needs, program evaluation studies (Loper & Tuerk, 2006; Thompson & Harm, 2000) helping incarcerated mothers to parent behind

bars have shown that the quality of the parent-child relationship improves when interventions are focused on the type and frequency of interaction between child and mother. In a sample that contained 10% Latinas, Ferraro & Moe (2003) noted that mothers in their sample were often incarcerated for minor problems that arose in the conflict between work, child care and probation requirements. Celinska and Siegel (2010) found that among a sample of 74% black and 26% White incarcerated mothers, seven strategies were discovered that the mothers used to cope with their separation of their children. The seven strategies include being a good mother, mothering from prison, role redefinition, disassociation from prisoner identity, self-transformation, planning and preparation and self-blame.

Mothers of Incarcerated Youth

A vigorous search of the literature turned up only one research article that focused on the mothers of incarcerated youth. In 2006, Green and colleagues conducted an analysis of data collected from a subset of participants in a large longitudinal study in 1966-1967. The original sample included 1,242 African-American mothers living in Chicago, whose children were in first grade at the time of data collection. Subsequent interviews were conducted in 1975-1976, and again in 1997- 1998. By the third wave of interviews (1997-1998), attrition had reduced the sample to 615. In the reduced cohort, the authors identified 138 mothers whose sons had been, or were currently, incarcerated. Findings revealed that incarceration of a son was significantly related to an increase in a mother's level of stress. This paucity of publications suggests that there is a major gap in the literature.

Community Level

In his seminal article, Bronfenbrenner (1986) brought attention to the fact that the environment external to the family, or the extra-familial environment, can greatly affect the intra-familial dynamics involved in child development. In conducting his review of the research, this author offered a framework for bringing order to the various studies on the topics of extra- and intra-familial linkages. While the stress and coping experiences of a Latina mother of an incarcerated son would be most likely affected by extra-familial elements, a search of the literature was not able to locate any published studies that specifically focused on such community-level factors for this subgroup. Given that Public Health Nursing conceptualizes extra-familial inputs, as Community Level factors that may influence groups of individuals, (Smith & Bazini-Barakat, 2003) a discussion of possible factors at the community level, was guided by the framework devised by Bronfenbrenner (1986).

Bronfenbrenner (1986) was most interested in the healthy development of children; nevertheless, he noted that much could be learned by studying the environmental conditions that harm children's development. Vigil moved Bronfenbrenner's framework in precisely that direction, by adapting it to the inner-city environments experienced by Latino youth. Vigil (2003) offered a framework of "multiple marginalities" to conceptualize the community-level phenomena that have shaped the experiences of the young adults he observed. A factor is "marginalized" when it is operationalized in a Latino community such that it leads to negative development. For example, non-marginalized schools raise children's education level, which in turn leads to higher income. Marginalized schools, in Vigil's view, create school drop-outs and their associated behaviors. In brief, Latino immigrants have been "forced into isolated and physically substandard neighborhoods" (i.e. marginalized environments) for over a century; the

effects of which can lead to maladaptive development in their US-born children, and often leading to gang membership, criminal behavior and incarceration (Vigil, 2002, p. 97). Schools, for example, that can create upward mobility in an upper middle-class neighborhood, are often structured in Latino communities so as to become “dropout factories” instead. This term, “dropout factories” was coined by Balfanz and Legters (2004, p. 19). Vigil considers four areas of “multiple marginalities”: ecological, cultural, socio-psychological, and economic marginalities (1988/1994, pp. 172-174). A discussion below will focus on the ecological, acculturation, education, and economic marginalities in particular.

Vigil did not consider the experiences of mothers of boys socialized into gangs, but the environmental, extra-familial community factors that he conceptualized seemed to play a role influencing the mother’s stress and coping experience once her son was incarcerated. Vigil’s framework of “multiple marginalities” sensitized this researcher to potential community-level factors that were part of the lived experience of the mothers of incarcerated sons.

Ecological Marginalities

The environment surrounding individuals and their families may affect how mothers construct their coping processes. Vigil (1994) described the features of isolated and physically-substandard neighborhoods that Latino immigrants often live, and whose within family effects can lead to negative development in young males. Other researchers have noted the effects of visual blight caused by graffiti-covered buildings (Aneshensel & Sucoff, 1996), interspersed with numerous billboards advertising products such as tobacco and alcohol (Stoddard, Johnson, Sussman, Dent, & Boley-Cruz, 1998). A prime, measurable example of an element of the ecological marginalization is in the mal-distribution of park space for children to play. Wolch, Wilson and Fehrenbach's (2005) recent analysis of access to parks in Los Angeles pointed out

that children in predominantly Non-Hispanic White (NHW) neighborhoods enjoyed 193 acres of parkland per 1,000 children while children in predominantly Latino neighborhoods enjoyed only 1.6 acres of parkland per 1,000 children. Access to fresh food produce has been documented to be limited in minority communities. Algert, Agrawal and Lewis's (2006) analysis of food deserts in Pomona (Los Angeles County) showed that nearly half (48%) of food supplement program clients did not live within walking distance of a store that sold fresh produce. Environmental racism may also be part of the equation, with these marginal communities exposed to increased levels of environmental contaminants, such as traffic-generated air pollution (Ponce, Hoggatt, Wilhelm & Ritz, 2005).

Marginalized Acculturation

In the research literature, acculturation and assimilation are major explanatory variables in different Latino population segments and areas of behavior (Gordon-Larsen, Harris, Ward and Popkin, 2003; Jasso, Massey, Rosenzweig and Smith, 2004; Morales, Kington, Valdez, and Escarce, 2002; Welgers & Sherraden, 2001). However, the literature provides no insight into the acculturation experience of Latina mothers with incarcerated sons. "Assimilation," was defined by Gordon (1964, p. 81) as the structural integration of a minority group member into the "social cliques, clubs and institutions of core society," with intermarriage being the last, final step in such integration. The goal of structural assimilation into the US social and economic structure has been presumed to be achieved by the process of "acculturation," defined by Redfield, Linton and Herskovits (1936) as "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups."(p. 149).

In Vigil's model, the acculturative process experienced by many Latinos is a marginalized acculturation in that it does not lead to upward social mobility, but instead leads to a socio-economic mobility truncation (Vigil, 2004). Currently, measurements of acculturation have been utilized to quantify the amount of contrast between Latino and Anglo-American cultures. These measurements have become common in research projects involving many ethnic groups including Latino populations (Jones, Kubelka & Bond 2001; Orozco & Lukas, 2000; Unger & Molina, 2000). Acculturation measures are based on the assumption that an individual moves uni-directionally between two separate, discreet, identifiable cultures and the progress (or lack thereof) of acculturation to the new setting or culture could be measured by language use scales, food selection and choices of friends and associates (Cuellar, Harris, & Jasso, 1980; Szapocznik, Kurtines, & Fernandez, 1980). The very fact of shedding one culture and adopting another can be stress-inducing (Finch & Vega, 2003; Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987), which may require some coping response.

Some researchers have noted that many Latinos do not experience upward social mobility in spite of acculturation efforts, and have looked to other forces at work that may influence the acculturative process and subsequent assimilation. Berry (2005) criticized the idea of concentrating solely on individual adaptations, and suggested the need to understand how group interactions influence an individual. Arcia, Skinner, Bailey, and Correa (2001) found that Latino efforts at acculturation had to be accepted by mainstream society, via "perceived social acceptance" or else these efforts would not lead to upward mobility. Viruell-Fuentes (2007) elaborated on the concept of "othering", a subtle form of discrimination emanating from the "majority" population around a Latino community, to describe the experience of worsening health status among 19 second-generation Latinas in Michigan.

Providing data on three generations of Latino acculturation and assimilation, Telles and Ortiz (2008) created a portrait of the marginal acculturation dynamics that have impacted Latinos in Los Angeles for nearly three generations, from 1965 to 2000, in which they noticed that Latinos have acculturated significantly but have not yet been able to assimilate into Anglo-American social structure.

Taking advantage of the chance discovery of the original questionnaires used in the landmark 1965 study by Grebler, Moore and Guzman (1965), Telles and Ortiz re-interviewed 684 of the original sample and 758 of their children in Los Angeles and San Antonio. Their analysis contradicted the standard theoretical models of the "assimilating immigrant" models so often used in research on Latino population, and provides a fresh look at factors of concern at the marginal community level.

The typical assimilating immigrant model posits that by the third generation, the grandchildren of immigrants will have successfully and completely assimilated into American society and economy (Portes & Rumbaut, 1990; Sowell, 1983). However, in their research, Telles and Ortiz (2008) saw that Latinos did not follow this path, even after three generations. Rather, other dynamics appeared to be at work that remained to be conceptualized. Unlike European immigrants, third and fourth generation Mexican-American continue to exhibit low educational levels, by the third or fourth generation, these lower levels of education cannot be attributed to poor ability in English, lack of discipline, or low knowledge of American schools (p. 268). Telles and Ortiz (2008) end with a suggestion that there is a need for a historical-structural theory for Mexican immigration and Mexican American integration, and they suspect, even though they do not have direct data for it in their data set, that racism and nativism may play a role (p.285). "The problem is not that the unwillingness of Mexican Americans to adopt

American's values and culture but the failure of societal institutions, particularly public schools, to successfully integrate them as they did the descendants of European immigrant." (p. 292).

None of the above research focused on the effects of marginalized acculturation on the stress and coping processes of Latina mothers of incarcerated sons.

Education Marginality

Traditionally, education has provided an avenue for upward social mobility into structural assimilation. Vigil (2003) pointed out that schools in Latino communities often create a situation of educational marginality. Rather than serving as an avenue of upward mobility, public schools "have a poor record with poor, ethnic minority populations" (p. 234) with little or no communication between home and school, in part due to language differences. Vigil is not alone in perceiving this disconnect between schools and Latino communities.

Utilizing open-ended interviews with 45 Latino parents in Baldwin Park, Ramirez (2003) revealed that parents expressed frustration about lack of interpreters and lack of teacher availability to talk about their children's situations. In a thematic analysis of 10 Latina parents of children in the Texas-New Mexico border area, Salas (2004) discovered that although the parents wanted to be involved in decision-making about their children's schooling, they felt that they were effectively silenced and told that their voices were not valued. In her ethnographic work with 13 Latino parents in Whittier, Auerbach (2002) heard similar messages of bureaucratic rebuff during staff encounters, and also heard the parents' own narratives of attempts at achieving agency.

Data from the US Census illustrate that the educational system does not work as expected in Latino populations of Los Angeles County. First-generation immigrant-Latinos have far lower educational levels than NHW. In the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS) data for Los

Angeles County, nearly half (48.2%) of immigrant Latino young adults (age 25-34) did not complete high school. By contrast, only 4.5% of NHW did not complete high school. College level education is important for social mobility in a post-industrial society, and Latinos lag significantly as only 5.4% of first generation Latino young adults had completed college, compared to 48.4% of NHW. Observers such as Sowell (see above) would expect that the children and grandchildren of immigrants would improve greatly, perhaps even equaling NHW educational levels. However, this has not been the case with Latinos in Los Angeles. In spite of the fact that second-generation children of immigrants make huge educational gains over their parents, for third and fourth generation Latinos, educational gains actually have become negative, and the gap between Latino and Anglo educational achievement has increased (Telles & Ortiz, 2008). Overall, the educational system in Latino populations appears to be functioning in a marginalizing fashion, to truncate and/or reduce educational achievement rather than promote it.

According to Vigil (2002), acculturation to “American” norms means accepting the goal of economic success, but a marginalized educational experience frustrates the socially-acceptable means of achieving that goal; hence some Latino youth turn to gangs as an alternative social group, which may lead to criminal behavior and incarceration (Vigil, 2002). The stress and coping experiences of mothers of incarcerated sons may well be influenced by the mothers’ perceptions of the educational experience in their communities.

Economic Marginality

Economic data on Latino households indicate that Latino incomes are significantly lower than NHW incomes (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor & Smith, 2010), but no data exist about how Latina mothers with incarcerated sons perceive and act upon the situation of low income, or how it

affects their construction of coping processes. Based on Bronfenbrenner (1986)'s perspective, family income plays a greater role in US families than in European families, as the US has a much leaner base of resources and services for the health and well-being of family members than found in most European economies. Hence children's development is more directly dependent upon family income for access to developmental resources. For Vigil (2002), the economic situation of many Latinos—locked into low-paying, unstable jobs with few or no benefits—is a marginalized economic situation. While families earn wages rather than depend upon welfare, the base is not sufficient to provide the means for child well-being particularly in a situation of reduced public services such as education (Vigil, 2002, p. 103).

The US Census data (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2010) shows that Latinos suffer from economic marginalities—including occupational, industrial and income marginalities--- to a degree far greater than NHW. Data from the American Community Survey (ACS, 2008) for Los Angeles county show that a far lower percentage of first generation Latino young adults worked in the higher salary occupations, such as executive and professional positions (8.7%) compared to NHW (38.2%). Instead, first generation Latinos are over-represented in the lower paid occupations, with 30.7% working as laborers, machine operators and in craft positions, compared to 7.6% of NHW. A higher percentage of immigrant Latino workers worked in the recession-hit industries of construction and manufacturing (25.9%) compared to NHW workers (11.1%). By contrast, a lower percentage of immigrant Latino workers (14.0%) are in finance, entertainment and professional specialty industries, compared to 42.4% for NHW.

Systems Level

No research literature has been located that sheds light on how mothers of incarcerated sons perceive institutions and systems; however, the literature does suggest some pertinent system level elements. Among the systems that can influence the phenomena of Latinas' coping with their sons' incarceration are the juvenile justice system and the legislative system. Each helps shape the structures and services set up for juveniles in custody.

Overrepresentation of Minorities

In an overview study of the effects of incarceration on fragile families, Wildeman and Western (2010) stated that the US incarceration rate is about seven times higher than the West European average. They pointed out that in the 1970s, the US incarceration rate was only twice that of European countries. There have been more Latinos and Blacks incarcerated than whites and Asians (http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Juvenile_Justice/DJJ_Quick_Facts/Youth_Population_Breakdown.html); yet studies using statistical analysis to isolate the effects of race and ethnicity on decisions made to incarcerate have been unable to isolate these from non-ethnic factors to provide a better understanding of human judgment and discretion in juvenile confinement decisions (Austin, 1995). Cintrón (2006, p. 27) argued that the Juvenile Justice System lacks a systematic data collection process to understand the nature and extend of Latino over representation and the "cumulative disadvantage" as a result of Latinos receiving harsher and longer jail sentences.

Skiba and colleagues (2011) pointed out that at the national level, Latinos and African Americans were disproportionately involved in school disciplinary procedures. In a sample of 202 Latino youth ages 12-18 living in the state of Virginia (McGee, Barber, Joseph, Dudley, & Howell, 2008) male Latino youth reported experiencing more direct victimization (attacks) and

more external symptoms, such as delinquent behavior, than did female Latino youth, suggesting the need to explore further the linkage between gender victimization and delinquency.

Rios (2008) undertook a content analysis of the English-language media coverage around Proposition 21. He discovered that the public discourse played off public anxieties about race and crime, and after crime was racialized, the measure passed. In his analysis of magazine covers on immigration from 1965 to 2000, Chavez (2001) pointed out how Latino immigrants, and by extension Latinos in general, have been presented as a threat to the country's discourse on immigration and nation on the nation's newsstands. Maestro & Robinson (2000) conducted a systematic content analysis of primetime television over a 2-week period and found that police characters used excessive force more often against young minority perpetrators than they did against young Caucasian perpetrators. In their research to explore the association between media use and Latino adolescent self-esteem, Rivadeneyra, Ward, and Gordon (2007) found lower social and appearance self-esteem to be associated with those who reported more TV viewing. However, Rivadeneyra's (2006) study of Latinos adolescent's perception of images on television found that besides television viewing habits, gender and immigrant status were important factors in Latino youth's perception of negative stereotypes. He found Latino youth perceived Spanish-language television as providing a more balanced image of Latinos or a less negative stereotypical portrayal than did the English-language television.

Factors Influencing Mothers of Incarcerated Sons at the Individual/ Family Level, Community Level, and Systems Level

The current study focuses on Latina mothers of incarcerated sons, who live at the intersection of system, community, individual, and family factors in their unique situations and

contexts. Each Latina mother will confront a world with factors that may influence her at the individual/family level, at the community level, and at the systems level. Because these levels intersect and overlap, factors from any level may simultaneously impact Latinas' experiences of coping in daily life.

Stress. An example of a phenomenon that involves the overlap of many factors is stress. Stress may best be perceived as a process (rather than as a single event occurring once) that represents a web of relationships and interconnections including sources of stress, mediation of stress and manifestations of stress, all contributing to give shape and substance to a process of stress (Pearlin, Menaghan, Lieberman & Mullan, 1981). Ensel and Lin (1991) noted that the social environment played a critical role in the stress process. Pena and Frehill noted (1998) that the social and institutional contacts include religion, occupation, family, neighborhood and the more formal systems of policing, education and medical care.

An example of these factors together is illustrated by Green, Ensminger, Robertson & Juon (2006) who found that, in an African American sample, the incarceration of a son was a major source of stress for the mothers as measured by feeling nervous and sad and blue. However, it is possible that strength factors can also influence these factors in relations to stress. For example, the effects of financial strain on low-income employed and unemployed single African American mothers was studied by Gyamfi, Brooks-Gunn, and Jackson (2001) who found both employment-status groups experienced financial strain and depressive affect. By contrast, the role of hardiness (measured by dispositional resilience coping scales) and John Henryism (measured scales of active coping, named after John Henry, the legendary "steel driving man" railroad worker) was studied by Williams and Lawler (2001). These researchers compared 50 African American women to 50 Caucasian women with low incomes at or below the poverty

level and found hardiness moderated the stress-illness relationship but that John Henryism had no effect on stress related illness.

Depression. The literature is very clear on the fact that Latinos receive far less mental health care than NHW (Alegria, Mulvaney-Day, Woo, et al., 2007; Kouyoumdjian, Zamboang & Hansen, 2003; Ojeda & McGuire, 2006). This underutilization may be due to demographic characteristics, such as undocumented status (Berk, Schur, Chavez et al., 2000; Perez & Fortuna, 2005), language and/or literacy levels (DuBard & Gizlice, 2008; Bennett, Culhane, McCollum et al., 2007) or cultural orientations and beliefs (Nadeem, Lange, Edge et al., 2007; Cordero & Kurz, 2006; Garces, Scarini & Harrison, 2006; Martinez Pincay, & Guarnaccia, 2007). The literature on Latino depression compared to NHW is contradictory and complex. Some studies show that Latinas have a lower level of depression (Harris, Edlund & Larson, 2005), while others show that Latinos have a higher level (Kaltman, Green Mete et al, 2010). In one study, less acculturated Latinas have been shown to have higher levels of depression than US born Latinos (Shattell, Hamilton & Starr et al., 2008); however, they are shown to have lower levels of depression as compared to NHW in another study (Gamst, Dana, Der-Karabetian et al., 2002). Latinas receive fewer mental health services, but the literature provides no clear statement as to the relative prevailing incidence of depression among Latinas as compared to NHW.

Religion and Spirituality

In earlier literature, it has been seen that religion appears to play a larger part of daily life in Latino communities than in NHW communities. The United Way of Greater Los Angeles's survey of Latinos conducted in 2000 provided some trend data on religion among the various populations of Los Angeles County that was not available in the Census. Most Latinos in Los

Angeles were raised in the Catholic religion, that is, 87% of Latinos reported they were Catholic compared to 31% of NHW. Latinos were also more active in their faith community as 53% attend services two times or more per month, compared to 42% of NHW respondents.

Accordingly, NHW were more likely to be inactive, that is, 36% of NH White attended services one time per year or less, compared to 16% of Latinos in Los Angeles (United Way of Greater Los Angeles, 2003).

Not only were Latinos more actively engaged in religious organizational life, but Ellison, Finch, Ryan and Salinas (2009) found that Latino spirituality extended far beyond the boundaries of formal religion, reaching to a personal spirituality, much more meaningful, and more difficult to observe and measure. Ellison and colleagues (2009) remarked that the ubiquitous images of the Virgin de Guadalupe indicate the need for more nuanced analysis of Latino internal spirituality (p. 187); a suggestion given by other researchers including Dolan and Deck (1994), Matovina (2005), and Pena and Frehill (1998). Krause and Bastida (2011) conducted a large quantitative survey involving 1,005 Mexican-origin Latino elderly in the five Southwestern states. Nearly 80% (N = 795) of the respondents self-identified as Catholic and reported attitudes and beliefs about intercessory prayer as being directed to the Virgin of Guadalupe and various saints, rather than being directed to God. They discovered that those who engaged in more intercessory prayer reported a greater sense of God-mediated control and a greater sense of optimism, both of which can be related to health.

While undertaking the larger quantitative study, Krause and Bastida (2009) identified a smaller subsample of 52 elderly Latinos of Mexican origin in two counties in Texas (Hidalgo and Starr) for in-depth, open-ended interviews. Analysis of these qualitative data identified themes in the beliefs of the sample about the functions of pain and suffering in both religious and

daily life, serving to deepen their faith and helping them to identify with the plight of others. The identification with others stemmed from their perceptions of the pain and suffering experienced by Jesus and Mary, who suffered in silence. Krause and Bastida (2009) argue that the significance of relating pain experience to that suffered by Jesus and Mary as found in their qualitative research findings has yet to be explored or included in quantitative research.

Empirical studies have shown that higher degrees of religiosity are associated with better health outcomes (Hill, Pargament, Hood et al., 2000; Hill & Pargament, 2003). In addition, religiosity played a role in alleviating pain and discomfort associated with serious illness diagnoses among Latinos, such as with Latino cancer survivors (Campesino, 2009; Maliski, Husain, Connor, and Litwin, 2010; Wildes, Miller, San Miguel de Majors, and Ramirez, 2008), Latinos coping with stress (Farley, Galves, Dickinson, & Diaz-Perez, 2005; Pargament, Smith, Koenig, & Perez, 1998) and Latinos dealing with elderly issues (Hill, Burdette, Angel, and Angel, 2006; Maldonado, 1994). However, as with most research in religion and health, there is little agreement about the definitions and measurement of spirituality beyond observed participation, and the interior experience of spirituality may not have been adequately measured to date (Ellison, Finch, Ryan, & Salinas, 2009). Interestingly, one article encountered on religiosity and Latinas, described how recent Latino immigrants “reported collaborating with God to alleviate worries” (Dunn & O’Brien, 2009, p. 216).

Review of Historical Background and Theories of Juvenile Delinquency

Early in the 20th century, psychological models were developed to explain criminality. The notion that crimes are committed by persons with a low intelligence was developed after the introduction of Intelligence Quotient (IQ) testing. Following the publication of Goddard’s study

of a criminally-disposed family (1912), I.Q. scores provided a plausible explanation for criminality, but the nature-nurture controversy around a particular score muddied the waters as to whether the explanation was inherently one of genetics, or one of environment (Jensen, 1969).

More ecological models were developed in the mid-20th century that considered the relationship between urban social disorganization and delinquency. These theories emphasized the social over the psychological theories. Social disorganization was seen as the cause of criminality by Thomas and Znaniecki (1927). Merton (1957) applied Durkheim's theory of anomie, i.e. the breakdown of social cohesion in urban societies, to the situation of crime and delinquency in the US, and noted that criminality emerges when an individual accepted society's ends (i.e. becoming rich) but has been denied the means (i.e. access to education); hence had to resort to non-sanctioned means (i.e. criminality) to achieve the end (wealth).

In the latter half of the 20th century, theories about interpersonal and situational situations began to appear in which criminal behaviors are learned from a group of associates that supports and encourages "deviant" behavior (Matza & Sykes, 1961; Sutherland & Cressey, 1978). Among the various theories was the notion that gangs provided an alternative support system for the learning of delinquent behavior, which has been explored at depth by Vigil. Nearly twenty years ago Vigil and his colleague Moore (1989), noted that analysts needed to distinguish between gang membership and criminality: most gang members were not criminals, although the few criminals in an area were gang members. In his research, Vigil (1988) discovered that gangs provided an alternative socialization for alienated youth, but that the socialization was not necessarily a criminal one. Most Latino young adults navigate through life marked by multiple marginalities (Vigil 2003), and that most of the many possible paths do not lead to criminal behaviors.

The current emphasis in society today on incarceration sprang from the work of Bennett, DiIulio, and Waters (1996). They developed the theory of “super predator” juvenile delinquents in America who were “radically impulsive, brutally remorseless youngsters, including pre-teenage boys, who murder, assault rape, rob, burglarize deal deadly drugs, join gun-toting gangs and create serious communal disorders” (Bennett, DiIulio, and Walters, 1996, p. 27). Alarmed by this and other depictions of hyper-criminal youth, California toughened up its stance, and adopted a number of measures, such as the “three-strikes” ballot initiative which passed and became law in 1994. “Three strikes” refers to a California sentencing scheme that adds significant time to prior offenses (Tyler & Boechman, 1997).

Another development was the passage of California Proposition 21 (Taylor, 2001). “The Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention Initiative” or the notion of the “gang-associate,” emphasized gaining control over the problem of gangs by increased incarceration of those associated with gang or gang membership. California Proposition 21 gave prosecutors more power to decide if juveniles should be tried as adults. It also gave judges and police officers the ability to name juveniles "suspected" of gang association or affiliation on a list for a gang registry for purposes of tracking their activity for five years. Judges were also granted the power to "enhance" the sentence of juveniles involved in a crime if also found to be associated with gang members (Taylor, 2001, pp. 983-1020).

Review of Pertinent Theoretical Literature on Coping

Process of Coping

The coping process according to Lazarus and Folkman (1984) is a "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral effort to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are

appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person." (p. 141). Included in the cognitive effort to manage specific external and internal demands is an appraisal or cognitive mediational process that exists continually during waking life that gives meaning or significance to the interactions of a person as to whether they are happening internally within their psyche or externally in their environment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

According to Lazarus and Folkman a number of different types of appraisals exist: Primary appraisals (irrelevant, benign-positive or stressful); secondary appraisals (those with an outcome expectation or an efficacy expectation); and reappraisals that change an earlier appraisal because of new information from the environment or from the person (1984). They have simplified the coping process into three categories including—problem-focused, emotion-focused and avoidance coping—Lazarus and Folkman provided a definition of each category and also provided a somewhat satisfying analysis of the various types of relationship between the three categories. For example, emotion-focused coping can have both a beneficial as well as a negative effect on problem-focused coping. Lazarus and Folkman's work has spawned many studies that test the existence of one type of coping over another or that explore possible relationships between any of the three types of coping categories (Baesler, Derlega, Winstead, & Barbee, 2003; Bryant, Marosszeky, Crooks, Baguley, & Gurka, 2000; Moskowitz, Hult, Bussolari & Acree, 2009).

Complementing and assisting these studies on coping are a plethora of instruments to measure the coping process that are available today and have been used to study a variety of situations. Schwarzer and Schwarzer (1996) surveyed a variety of coping instruments and recommended that researches use multilevel instruments embedded in a multi-wave designs and run causal modeling analysis; this was based on the fact that coping is a multidimensional

phenomenon which is influenced by temporal factors and the individual's accumulation of previous coping experiences. Invoking phenomenology, Moskowitz and Wrubel (2005) further urge researchers to embrace the private, complex and unpredictable ways that individuals will interact with themselves and their environment to cope.

Review of the Comprehensive Health Seeking and Coping Paradigm

A Nursing Approach to Coping

The Comprehensive Health Seeking and Coping Paradigm (CHSCP) provide a nursing-oriented framework for viewing the coping of persons involved in stressful situations. As developed by Nyamathi (1989), the CHSCP builds upon the classic models of coping based on a psychological approach (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) by incorporating a nursing perspective, with the goal of working in tandem with clients to enhance their "motivation to attain and maintain...the highest possible level of health, function or productivity" (Nyamathi, 1989, p. 283). The CHSCP adds the aspects of health-seeking behaviors into coping behaviors, which involve problem-focused (what to do) and emotion-focused (how to manage feelings) responses. The nursing role is to assist clients in maximizing the coping and health seeking behaviors by encouraging, teaching, providing, communicating and nurturing (Nyamathi, 1989, p. 284). The goal of the nursing approach is to increase clients' control over illness recovery activities by assisting them to augment their coping resources. In a nursing approach, the onset of an illness or problem had the possibility of offering clients "an opportunity to learn new skills, and specific ways of dealing with its [illness's] demands" (Nyamathi, 1989, p. 285).

The current project adds to the CHSCP model by looking at a situation that is different from the physical health-seeking situation: it is one of a mother coping with the reality of an

incarcerated son. From a nursing approach, the future programmatic goal would be to increase the mothers' coping skills. However, first the mothers' coping situation should be understood from her perspective, which was the purpose of this study.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a focused approach to the background literature for this study designed to explore the coping processes of low income immigrant Latina mothers whose sons have been incarcerated. The literature has been identified that treats factors at the individual, family, community and systems levels. A key finding of this review was that a gap exists in relation to the topic of research. The following chapters will detail how this project will provide initial research to address this gap.

CHAPTER THREE
PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS:
SYMBOLIC INTERACTION AND PRAGMATISM

Introduction

This research project sought to understand the coping processes of Latina immigrant mothers while their sons were incarcerated. The basic philosophical framework of Symbolic Interaction provided the best approach to understanding how these mothers cope with the reality of having a son incarcerated.

Background to Symbolic Interaction

A group of scholars at the University of Chicago built upon the philosophy of pragmatism, and the theoretical approach to the study of society known as symbolic interactionism (SI). Because pragmatism developed before SI, the influence of pragmatism is quite noticeable in SI. As in many university academic departments, the founders of pragmatism, Charles S. Peirce, William James and John Dewey, disagreed sharply with one another over key elements. Their differences were so sharp that a recent scholarly book on pragmatism has come to the conclusion that pragmatism was never a school of thought unified around a single core of doctrine (Talissee & Aikin, 2011, p. 1). A German scholar, Hans Joas, who includes George Herbert Mead in the group of founding pragmatists, alerts his readers to the fact that sharp differences existed among all of the thinkers (Joas, 1993, p. 1). Haack observed in 2003 that there may have been as many versions of pragmatism as there were pragmatists (Haack 2003, p. 775). This chapter provides an overview of SI; it also points out the pragmatist roots of key

concepts that currently undergird SI, especially Herbert Blumer's development of Mead's ideas (Blumer, 1969).

In the view of Blumer, who gave SI its name, society is comprised of the self, the act, social interactions, objects and joint actions (Blumer 1969, p. 72). These elements are usually cited as being the basis for SI. As this research is based on an SI approach to the world, an exploration of the underpinnings of each of the elements will be needed to provide nuance, and at times conflicting definitions of these elements as they were developed over time by different thinkers.

Blumer's writings on SI stem largely from his analysis of the works of George Herbert Mead, who was Blumer's instructor at the University of Chicago in the late 1920s (Morrione, 2004, p. 1.) The difficulty for any scholar of Mead is that he published his thoughts in fragments, never publishing a systematic treatment of his insights (Cook, 1993, p. xii). His seminal work, *Mind, Self and Society* (Mead 1934) as an example, was not actually written by Mead; it was published posthumously from notes taken by students in his course of the same name (Cook, 1993 xvii.). Since Blumer's death (1981,) more of Mead's fragmented work has come to light and has been commented upon; with the result that considerable variation has emerged around Blumer's readings of Mead. Early on in the field of SI appeared to be coalescing around schools of SI though, for example between the Chicago school referred to as "the Blumerians" versus Iowa versions referred to as "the Kuhnians" (Meltzer, Petras & Reynolds, 1975, pp. 53-82). The Blumerians, were the phenomenologists, the participant observation researchers, who spoke of "sensitizing concepts" and the logic of discovery. In contrast to the Kuhnians' approach, which was linked to the logic of verification with paper and pencil instruments, such as the Twenty Statement Test (p. 190). Others made distinctions over methodologies, such as those described in

an article titled, “Origins of divergent methodological stances in symbolic interactionism”, in which Reynolds and Meltzer made three distinctions in SI methodology: an unorthodox group favoring participant observation, a semi-conventional group favoring positivism and a conventional group favoring a combination of methods. One author goes so far as to list eight variants of SI (Reynolds, 1993, p. 74). This chapter will serve to locate the philosophical underpinnings of this research in the growing and varied scholarship on SI.

The Self

The first basic element of the SI approach is the construct of the self. Blumer’s 1969 treatment of Mead is usually the starting place for those seeking to understand the notions of the self; thus, this chapter will also start with the most widely utilized approach. As presented by Blumer, the primary idea within Mead’s notion of the self was that a person could be the object of his own actions, thereby gaining the ability for self-interaction (Charon 2007, p. 73). Through the self interactions, a person can make designations and indications to herself and then can evaluate situations and develop actions (Blumer, 1969, p. 62).

Social Origin of the Self

Blumer’s 1969 work, in presenting Mead’s concept of the self, makes scant mention of a very important feature for Mead: the social origin of the self. Posthumously, Blumer did make brief mention that “group life precedes individual conduct” without developing that notion much further (Morrione 2004, p. 95). For Mead, a key element of his thought was that the “social self” arises out of social interaction with a group (Reck 1964, pp. 142-149.) Mead contended that “there can be no self apart from society,” (Coser, 1971, p. 334). An individual is formed and

shaped by their joint activities with others that gradually form and shape their mind, so that consciousness emerges out of the interaction. Thus, consciousness is not a given.

One of the items that pragmatists did agree upon was that the self had its origin in society. James felt the need to understand how human instincts were modified by socially learned habits (Meltzer, 1975, p. 3). Dewey posited that human behavior contained social elements (Meltzer 1975, p. 17). Mead developed Dewey's notion to conclude that human mind and personality were the products of social interaction (Cook, 1993, p. 167). Scattered throughout Mead's fragmented writings were four stages of the development of the self via interaction with others. These were organized by Charon as the preparatory stage, the play stage, the game stage and the reference group stage (Charon 2007, pp. 74-78).

Taking the Attitude (Role) of Others

The end-point of the social origin of the self is the ability of an individual to take on the role of the other. Mead expressed that the very process of thought was possible only by being able to take on the role of the others: this allowed individuals to talk, then to reply (Strauss 1956, p. 34).

In taking the role of the other, an individual also considers how the other perceives themselves. The assumed perception of the other leads to reflexivity, or self indication in Blumer's terms, and this self-indication is used to build up lines of action. Illustrating the process, Blumer notes that through self-indication, "the individual notes things, assesses them, gives them a meaning and decides to act on the basis of the meaning." (Blumer, 1969, p. 81).

This notion of taking the role of others is another pragmatist idea. John Mark Baldwin, a psychologist and a pragmatist scholar, developed an early version of this in his idea that a child

“ejected” feelings and interpretations onto others (Meltzer et al., 1975, p. 13). Cooley developed this notion into his method of sympathetic introspection and his metaphor of the “looking glass self”. The first of the three elements of this was how an individual imagines her appearance strikes the other. Second was the individual’s imagination of the judgment of the other of her appearance. The third element was a self-feeling, such as mortification or pride (Cosser, 1971, p. 306). Mead transformed Cooley’s notion into his theory of role-taking (Meltzer et al., 1975, p. 13).

Symbols

The ability to take on the role of the other was, for Mead, possible only through the use of language and of the “significant symbol” (Strauss 1956, p. 35). Blumer enlarged this thought in conceptualizing society as “symbolic interaction.” Instead of simply reacting to the others’ actions, humans were able to interpret the actions of each other and base their responses on the meanings attached to the actions. This moment of reflexivity was poised between the stimulus and the response, making human interaction vastly different from animal reaction This mediation is possible only because of the “use of symbols” (Blumer, 1969 pp. 78-79). A group interacting with itself does so via “symbolic interaction.”

The pragmatist, Dewey, had noted that abstract thinking in an individual was possible because she had learned to communicate through symbols as a result of being part of a social group (Cook, 1993, pp. 163-164). Mead transformed Dewey’s ideas through his notion of the “conversation of gestures,” by which a group creates significant symbols, which in turn facilitate taking the role/attitude of the other (Cook, 1993, p. 166).

The I and the Me

Mead's concepts of the "I and the Me" are important to the concept of self-interaction, However, Blumer scarcely mentioned Mead's concepts of the "I and the Me" in his widely-read 1969 book. In his later posthumous book (2004), he did make more detailed mention of Mead's version of self-interaction, noting that Mead was ambiguous about the use of the two terms (Morrione, 2004, 65.) While some theorists simply see the "I" and the "Me" as two aspects of a person, the subject and the object (Charon, 2007, p. 91), Mead himself was more nuanced. The "Me" was not that difficult for Mead to explain: the "Me" was the self appearing as an object, the same "Me" that was the object of others' social behavior and conduct (Reck 1964, pp.142-144). The "Me" is what the "I" assumed to be the appraisal and attitudes of others she was interacting with (Coser, 1975, p. 338).

However, Mead did have difficulty defining the "I." While Mead described the "Me" as the "stable reflection of the generalized other" (Coser ,1971, p. 339), the "I" was more elusive, conceptualized in different ways by Mead: as an "incalculable spontaneity" (Coser, 1971, p. 339); as that element of self "behind the scenes that answers to the gestures of the symbols that arise in consciousness" (Reck, 1964, p. 141); and as the self "that lies beyond the range of immediate experience" (Reck,1964, p. 140). Mead even went so far as to suggest that that the "I" might be thought of as "the transcendental self of Kant, the soul that James conceived behind the scene holding on to the skirts of an idea," (Reck, 1964, p. 141.) Clearly, the concept of the "I" was less well developed by Mead than the concept of the "Me." For this research, the appealing aspect of Mead's concept was the notion that the "I" can engage in an inner conversation about the "Me", thereby introspecting about the self (Reck, 1964, p. 146).

The Act

Constructed, not Released

Blumer went to great pains to distinguish the difference between the act in the SI perspective from the act in a more structuralist perspective. In the latter view, an act is released after a stimulus. In Blumer's terms, "the formula is simple: Given factors play on the human being to produce given types of behavior" (Blumer, 1969, p 65). For Blumer, building upon Mead, the act is "built up," not merely released, and is built up based on the meanings an individual attaches to the actions of others. As the meanings are enfolded in symbols, human action is possible because of the human use of symbols and interpretation of those symbols (Blumer 1969, p. 79). Blumer's notion of individual agency has deep roots in the pragmatist tradition. His predecessor James, in particular, described humans as very creative and active beings who were able to play a conscious role in controlling their lives and destinies (Meltzer et al., 1975, p. 7).

The Line of Action

Blumer defined a line of action in the following temporal terms: "The act has a career in that has a beginning, it is aimed toward an end, it extends over time...it is subject to interruption and it has the possibility of diverse development." (Morrione, 2004, p. 71). Blumer was not consistent in his use of terms to refer to action. At times, he used the terms "act" and at other times "line of activity" interchangeably: "The act...becomes a line of activity forged through a process of self-indication." (Morrione, 2004, p.74). He also termed the line of action "a line of behavior," (also using the terms "career" and "history" interchangeably) when referring to an act: "Each joint action must be seen as having a career or a history" (Blumer, 1969, p. 71).

The process of self-indication creates a line of action as a result of the ability that humans have to be able to “act back” and piece together an act, “defining it, checking it, reinforcing it, guiding it, sometimes struggling with it” (Morrione , 2004, p. 75).

Blumer pointed out that implicit in Mead’s work was the notion of two types of act: the individual act, and the social act (Morrione, 2004, pp. 69, 95). In the individual act, Blumer insisted that the act is built up by an individual who coped with the world: Through the individual’s self-indications and interpretations, she established objectives, created a possible line of action. In other words, by inserting the self into this process of self-indication, the act is no longer just a behavior initiated by an agent, but a process into which the self can intercede and guide its course (Blumer, 1969, p. 74).

In contrast, the social act involves two or more persons in a joint activity, the collective, group life-where individuals “meet and deal with the action of other people” (Morrione 2004, p. 95). For Mead the social act or the collective act “cannot be understood in terms of its individual components” (Morrione, 2004, p. 97).

Motivators to Act

Absent from Blumer’s interpretation of Mead was the notion of the motivator to act. In glossing over this fact, the pragmatist origins of Mead’s thought was given short coverage. However, Mead spent some time, and effort, in developing the notion of the motivators of human action. Posthumously, Blumer wrote about the individual act by which he referred to the events that emerge from Mead’s self indication (Morrione 2004, p. 74). In Blumer’s treatment, an individual act is the conduct of an individual toward an objective, such as brushing her teeth. Going beyond Mead, Blumer talked about the elements of the individual act, such as possessing a beginning and an end, and extending over time (Morrione 2004, p. 71); nevertheless, he

appeared to gloss over exactly why an actor would embark on a line of action (i.e., motivation to act).

Mead, by contrast, spent quite a bit of effort in contemplating the motivator of what Blumer would call an individual act. Mead saw the motivator to act stemming from what the pragmatists would call “a problem.” Starting with an almost Blumerian line of action, Mead described a situation in which an individual was moving smoothly towards her object, thus not needing to question the meanings she had for the object. However, at some point, she may have encountered a “problem,” and found herself unable to continue along the original line of action. At that point, her attention became focused on that object of her consciousness. She might have tried to reshuffle her original meanings in an attempt to find a solution. If that did not resolve the problem, she would have needed to move beyond her old meanings, and consciously try to resolve the problem by seeking new meanings (Cook 1993, p. 51).

It is in this conceptualization of the motivation for the act that Mead’s pragmatist inclinations are clear. Peirce felt that thought itself was a form of human behavior that sprang from an “irritation of doubt” that motivated an individual to seek some resolution to the doubt (Reynolds, 1993, p.19). Dewey saw that the act of knowing was set in process when a problem that had arisen in routine conduct. Dewey specified that the problem was that an individual would experience conflicting tendencies about how to respond to the problem. So, the individual would need to find out how to resolve the problem (Cook, 1993, p. 164). Mead codified this notion in the classic pragmatist tradition when he declared that the knowledge that was created as the result of an individual attempting to solve the problem that had arisen in daily behavior was to be validated strictly and solely by its ability to resolve the problem so that the routine behavior could be resumed (Cook, 1993, p. 162).

Social Interaction

The importance of social interaction dates from the early days of pragmatism. Cooley argued against the individualistic view in psychology, which held that humans were essentially non-social, all elements of the behavior (such as personality) were inborn and that society was primarily an obstacle to self-realization). Rather, Cooley held that social interaction is the key component of SI; indeed SI would not be needed if humans did not have to communicate with one another (Meltzer, 1975, p. 14).

Symbolic and Non-Symbolic Interaction

Blumer briefly introduced Mead's analysis of two forms of social interaction, that Blumer labeled non-symbolic and symbolic interaction.

In defining symbolic interaction, Blumer noted that it involves "interpretation, or ascertaining the meaning of actions or remarks of the other person". Delineating three properties of SI Blumer first noted that it was formative, and built up by the participants. Second, it was an on-going process, with many points along the way at which participants may redefine each others' acts. Third, the process of interpretation of each other's acts can be used to cover nearly every imaginable human association (Blumer, 1969, pp. 65-67.) In contrast, non-symbolic interaction was when humans responded directly to one another's actions, without reflecting on them. To illustrate the difference between non-symbolic and symbolic action, he used the case of a boxer who sees his opponent raise his fist as if to strike a blow. In non-symbolic interaction, the boxer ducked to avoid the blow. However, by interpreting the raised fist as a possible feint, the boxer is involved in symbolic interaction, by the act of interpreting the actions of the opponent (Morrione, 2004, p. 20).

Mead's Conversation of Gestures

Mead's 1909 paper provided more depth and nuance to Blumer's presentation on the difference between non-symbolic and symbolic interaction. In trying to understand how social interaction was possible, Mead used the concept of the "conversation of the gesture" to describe the difference between non-symbolic and symbolic interaction. When an individual responds directly to the gesture of another, it was a stimulus-response situation. If the other raises a club at the individual, and the individual had a stimulus-response of running away due to the impulse of self-preservation, then this was non-symbolic interaction. Mead also used the phrase "unconscious conversation of gesture" when referring to elementary cases of social interaction and individuals responded to each other's gestures without being reflectively aware of their meaning (Cook, 1993, p. 82).

In other words, when a human unwittingly responded to tones of the voice, bodily postures, or facial expressions, Mead regarded this as an unconscious dimension of social life. A conversation of gestures or non-symbolic interaction can be considered "basic to the formation and maintenance of collective emotional states of human groups, such as enthusiasm, apathy, insecurity, confidence, and excitement, and become pronounced in the 'crowd' behaviors (p. 22). Responses can be acquired through the "conditioning of response." They can also be learned without acquiring meaning or without being interpreted. Further, the process of learning responses through non-symbolic interaction is different from constructing responses through social interaction or symbolic interaction. Learning through symbolic interaction must involve indication and interpretation. Therefore, gestures such as utterances or physical movement, in non-symbolic interaction can become "significant" or "symbolic," when they are responded to on the basis of the meaning derived from indication and interpretation. In other words, an

indication made by one person, and an interpretation of the indication by that second person (p. 24). In addition, Reynolds & Metzger (1973) state, “the Chicago school recognizes the non-symbolic ‘conversation of gestures’ in human conduct, while the Iowa school does not.” (p. 190).

However, if the individual inserts her self between the stimulus and response, and takes the role of the other before her own behavior is likely to be modified and in that modification a gesture is likely to be produced. The conversation of gestures has just taken place, the first form of SI. (Cook 1993, pp. 80-84).

Objects

Mead began his work with the concept of “social object”; there were no objects independent of a social group and the meanings they had created for an object (Cook, 1993, p. 98). Blumer summarized Mead’s approach to objects by noting that an object was a human construct, whose nature was constituted by the meaning the object has for an individual. An individual, then, lived in a world of meaningful objects, but the meanings were socially produced (Blumer 1969, pp. 68-69.) As Charon noted, “Objects that we notice are defined by us according to their usefulness.” (Charon 2007, p. 32). The pragmatists held that knowledge was also a social object. James felt that knowledge was best evaluated by how well a particular solution solved a particular difficulty that had arisen in daily conduct. The conduct itself, the difficulty, and the resolution were all socially created. James argued that knowledge could not exist independently of the group (Cook, 1993, p. 162).

Joint Actions

Joint action is possible because of the ability of the individual to take the role of the other. This allows the various members of a group to fit together the individual actions into the

group action and into a line of action (Blumer, 1969, p. 82). Perhaps reacting to structuralist tendencies in American sociology in the post-war period, Blumer was quick to point out that society was composed of on-going activity processes; society was not a “posited structure of relations” (Blumer 1969, p. 71). Blumer saw that joint actions, like individual actions, had a trajectory—a beginning, a middle and an end (Blumer 1969, p. 71), but ultimately rested on the foundation that began when “participants take each other into account” (Blumer, 1969, p. 108)

Generalized Other and Joint Action

Mead had laid a foundation for Blumer with his concept of the “generalized other” and “generalized attitudes.” As seen in the above section on the Self, in Mead’s perspective, the development of a self depends upon the ability of an individual to assume the roles and attitudes of others. As the individual becomes more integrated in a group composed of others, she is able to take on the attitudes and roles of the group as a whole. Mead termed an individual’s perception of the group as a whole, the generalized other (Reck 1964, p. 284), whose chief characteristic is that it possessed a system of shared social meaning (Cook 1993, p. 93-94.) The generalized other has a history. In Mead’s view, a child is born into a world that has already been endowed with meaning by her parents, grandparents, and others before them, and their meanings will be part of what the child learns during her primary socialization (Reck 1964, pp. 284-285; Berger and Luckmann, 1967, pp. 129-137). As Blumer put it posthumously, “group life precedes individual conduct” (Morrione, 2004, p. 95).

Institutional Organization

Mead wrote that the emergence of large institutions was possible because of socially shared meanings and goals, acquired through taking the attitude of generalized others (Cook, 1993, p. 98). Berger and Luckmann extended Mead’s framework, developing a theory of how

large institutions and even symbolic universes arise out of the SI of ever-larger numbers of individuals. These authors also point out the difficulties when an individual raised in one particular symbolic universe, with its attendant institutions and shared meanings, moves to a different symbolic universe (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, pp. 104-116).

The pragmatists had long dealt with the issue of organizations and institutions as part of human life. Meltzer, et al. summarized the pragmatist view that human nature could be actualized only as a result of interaction with others in a social order (Meltzer et al., 1975, p. 7). Cooley went so far as to claim that the social order, far from smothering human freedom, was the only place where an individual created her individuality, via interaction (Meltzer et al., 1975, p. 14).

Summary and Conclusion

Blumer summarized the basic stance of SI. It assumes that society is composed of individuals who have selves; individual action is constructed up from the individual's interpretations of the situation she finds herself in, not merely released by a stimulus. The group action then emerges out of a number of individuals who interpret each other's positions to construct a joint line of action (Blumer 1969, p. 82). The basic philosophical framework of SI provided the best approach to understanding how Latina immigrant mothers cope while their young adult sons are incarcerated.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODS

Constructivist Grounded Theory methodology was used to explore the perceptions and experiences of low income, immigrant Latina mothers whose sons were incarcerated and to gain an understanding of their coping processes. The specific aims of the research were:

1. To explore and describe the perceptions and experiences of Latina women during the time when their teenage sons were incarcerated.
2. To identify, explore, and describe Latina mothers' cognitive and emotional responses during their initial awareness of their sons' incarceration and over time after incarceration.
3. To identify, explore, and describe Latina mothers' behavioral coping processes during their initial awareness of their sons' incarceration and over time after incarceration.
4. To identify, explore, and describe Latina mothers' resources for coping including intrinsic and extrinsic resources while their sons were incarcerated.
5. To generate an understanding of the coping processes grounded in the voices and narratives of Latina mothers who were coping with the experience of having a young adult son in custody.

Constructivist Grounded Theory

Constructivist Grounded Theory is derived from the research philosophy of interpretivism, and is based on the methodological advances of Charmaz (2006) and social constructionism. The philosophical approach of interpretivism, as opposed to a positivist or a

critical philosophy, is based on the ontological perspective that reality is socially constructed and cannot be understood independent of the actors who produce that reality (Urquhart, 2013, p. 59). Furthermore, working from an interpretivist philosophical base, the aim of the researcher was to construct interpretations of practices and meanings by studying phenomena within their social settings (Urquhart, 2013, p. 59). As elaborated by Charmaz (2009), this is a second-generation iteration (Morse, Stern, Corbin, et al., 2009) of the Grounded Theory method originally posited by Glaser and Strauss (1967).

Strauss was much influenced by the “Chicago School” of social science research, which at that time, had limited formal training in research methods; thus, most graduate students learned methods through an apprenticeship. When Leonard Schatzman was Strauss’s student at Indiana University, he asked Strauss to describe how he did his analysis, and Strauss’s answer was, “Watch me. Work with me...and you will see” (Bowers and Schatzman, 2009, p. 87-88).

While at the University of California San Francisco, Strauss began to work with Barney Glaser, who brought from Columbia University a rigorous background in quantitative methods and an interest in theory development (Stern, 2009, pp. 24-25). Together, they wrote the seminal book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (1967) to provide a systematic methodology for deriving theory from data. The main features of this first generation of Grounded Theory method were: The goal was to generate theory, rather than verify a deductive portion of a grand theory; the theory was to emerge from the use of the constant comparative method on data (Urquhart, 2013, pp. 4-5).

Glaser and Strauss considered that theory developed directly from data focused on an area would be at a substantive level. When a number of substantive areas had been analyzed, and

theory developed for each, researchers could combine them analytically into a higher-level formal theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, pp. 79-94).

Charmaz was a student of both Glaser and Strauss. After working under them, she began to filter Glaser and Strauss's methods through a social constructivist/interpretative lens. She observed that her former mentors were diverging in their Grounded Theory methods. Charmaz developed her own intellectual framework that would allow her to analyze this divergence and create new versions of Grounded Theory methods. For her, the new versions were based on modified assumptions about the nature of data and the involvement of the researcher in collecting and analyzing those data.

Charmaz described Glaser's approach to data analysis as stemming from his positivist development at Columbia in which an external world exists from which an unbiased, disembodied researcher discovers abstract realities. By contrast, Strauss appeared to have been increasingly influenced by his Chicago school pragmatism, and saw social reality as fluid and indeterminate, the result of people acting on their problems with multiple perspectives (Charmaz 2009, p. 128).

In defining Constructivist Grounded Theory, and differentiating it from other versions, Charmaz started with the assumption that the "real world" cannot be separated from the viewer, be he/she the researcher or the participant. The "data" a researcher collects about the "real world" are jointly constructed by the researcher and participant (Charmaz, 2009, p. 131). Broadening Charmaz's scope, Schwartz-Shea & Yanow (2012) called this type of research approach a "constructivist-interpretivist" methodology that was developed in the interpretivist tradition (p. 41). Charmaz herself contended that "constructivist grounded theory lies squarely in the interpretive tradition" (Charmaz, 2009, p. 130). In the interpretivist view, "data have no

prior ontological existence as data outside of the framework of a research project” (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012, p.79).

The data for constructivist-interpretivist research may be collected from many sources, of which the interview is only one. The data may also come in the form of documents, observations, and the like. Indeed, the very process of selecting those things that will be considered data are part of the researcher’s construct of the research process (Charmaz 2009, p. 130). Expanding on Charmaz’s notion of multiple types of data, Schwartz-Shea & Yanow (2012, p. 84) urged interpretive researchers to be open to considering a broad range of data.

In Glaser and Straus’s (1967) original formulation (pp.105-108), the conceptual development sprang from the use of the “constant comparative method,” applied systematically to the data. The emergent concepts led the researcher to discover the theoretical properties of the conceptual categories. In the constructivist-interpretivist view, theory does not simply “emerge” from the data (Dey, 1999, pp. 16-17), but instead is constructed by the researcher, and the analysis is a product of the researcher’s interpretive rendering (Charmaz 2009, p. 131).

Deduction, Induction, and Abduction

Glaser and Strauss considered that their grounded theory was inductive rather than logico-deductive (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 91). Charmaz, moving their method into the constructivist-interpretivist camp, noticed that the movement back-and-forth between coding and theoretical sampling could also be seen as an appropriate method for the more interpretivist goals of “abductive research,” and she elaborated extensively on this type of research process (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 103-104). Schwartz-Shea & Yanow (2012, pp. 27-29) provided a more complete description of the abductive research process. While logic-deductive research begins by deducing the hypotheses from more universal conceptualizations, and while inductive research

seeks to induce the more universal concepts from particular instances, abductive is not quite so linear in its goals. In defining abductive research, Schwartz-Shea & Yanow (2012) explained that the concepts constructed by the researcher from the data lead the researcher into further and further conceptualization, in essence “abducting” (as in kidnapping) the researcher into attempting to conceptualize the anomalies the researcher finds between the expectations of what he/she will find, at any given moment and experience in the field. Abductive inference leads the researcher to consider as many possible theoretical explanations for the anomaly, without privileging the development of general principles or a linear theory. This research project is more closely aligned with the abductive line of reasoning than with the classic Glaser and Strauss methods.

Hermeneutic Circle

The insights gained from the iterative-recursive nature of Constructivist-Interpretivist Grounded Theory development and evolution has been likened to the hermeneutic circle: “the whole should be understood from the part, and the part should be understood out of the whole” (Dobrosavljev, 2002, p. 607). Schwartz-Shea and Yarnow (2012) extended the imagery from a hermeneutic circle to a hermeneutic spiral to better describe the way in which the interpretive research process moves the researcher toward ever-deeper and ever-richer understanding (pp. 300-310). This project, in its initial phases as presented here, may seem to be more of an examination of the parts than an integration of the whole, but future iterations may move the focus to the larger “societal whole” within which these mothers and their incarcerated sons operate. Schwartz-Shea and Yarnow (2012) have provided guidance in this, as they take the position that there is no fixed “start point” nor fixed “end point” in the interpretive research process, only “momentary stopping points to collect one’s thoughts, as perhaps to publish.”

Theoretical Sampling

Glaser and Strauss (1967) viewed theoretical sampling as a way to delimit the number of participants needed to find enough commonality of experience so that theory could be more easily developed. At one point these authors claimed that a single case would be sufficient to “indicate a conceptual category or property,” (p. 30). From her movement into the constructivist-interpretivist tradition, Charmaz (2006) distinguished between “initial sampling,” which would be a somewhat arbitrary “start point” in a hermeneutic-circle sense, and “theoretical sampling.” Thus, the researcher begins to construct conceptual categories in an abductive way to explicate the categories more fully (pp. 99-101). The present project followed a constructivist grounded theory approach to sampling.

Intertextuality

In their quest to develop general theory that would apply to as many different situations as possible, Glaser and Strauss (1967) briefly alluded to the need to “accumulate a vast number of *diverse* qualitative ‘facts,’” (pp. 242-244). Interpretive researchers today speak of “diverse forms of evidence” that might be available for use, ranging from a newspaper to a committee report (Schwartz-Shea & Yarnow, 2012, pp. 84-89). These various forms of evidence can be read across one another to understand varying interpretations of a single event or person.

Reflexivity

In the constructivist-interpretivist framework, the researcher’s presence is assumed to affect the construction of the “data. That is, the researcher’s perspectives, positionality, privileges, locations, and interactions may influence the types and degree of data the participant is willing to share (Charmaz, 2009, p. 130; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012, p. 67). Rather than

ignoring the researcher's involvement in the construction of the data and analysis, Constructivist Grounded Theory leads a researcher to be reflexive about the nature of his/her involvement at all phases of the research, including developing the research design, constructing the data, the analysis of the data, and the write-up of the project. Charmaz urged that a researcher include reflexive statements about how his/her presence and positionality may have influenced the all phases of the research (Charmaz 2009, p. 32). The reflexivity of the researcher distinguishes Constructivist Grounded Theory from the more classic Glaserian model of Grounded Theory, in which the latter tended toward a positivist view of research and data. However, Charmaz felt that Constructivist Grounded Theory, while squarely in the interpretivist tradition, also did not arrive at a level of radical subjectivism or individual reductionism that recognizes the influences of location, interaction, position, or other elements of interest. This project is based on a Constructionist Grounded Theory approach.

Procedures

This study is solidly in the qualitative category of research with human subjects. The study relied on face-to-face interviews with invited, screened, and qualified participants who resided within Southern California. The researcher followed procedures established specifically for the conduct of qualitative studies with respect to sample selection, data collection, data coding, analysis, and summary.

Sample

The sample consisted of 17 low-income immigrant Latina women from the community at large in Southern California who met study inclusion criteria and completed one interview.

Setting

Participants were recruited in person by the researcher from the waiting rooms and classrooms of El Hogar Family Center (a pseudonym), which is operated by a non-profit social service agency to provide counseling and family life education, as well as service coordination to children, young adults, and families of disadvantaged communities throughout Southern California. Two additional sites were Catholic churches. All sites were approved by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Institutional Review Board (IRB). IRB-approved informational flyers were distributed at community and church events where Latino parents congregated. See Appendix A, which shows the script the researcher used to invite participation. Appendix B shows the Recruitment Flyer that was available for individuals interested in participating.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Eligibility criteria for entry into the study required the participant to be a Latina mother (origin in or descendent of parents from Mexico, Central or South America, or the Caribbean Islands); Spanish speaking; and whose adolescent or young adult son age 16 to 24 was under custody within the juvenile justice system at the time of the participant's interview. Appendix C shows the script used in response to inquiries by prospective participants.

Participants were low-income as determined by self-report of less than or equal to the 200% poverty thresholds for 2009 as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Alternatively, they were recipients of public assistant or they were active as clients of El Hogar Family Center, whose clients must be low income to enroll and had previously been screened and determined to be of low-income status.

Four prospective participants who responded to the recruiting effort were excluded from participation in the study because they did not meet the inclusion criteria or because their son was not currently in custody.

Informed Consent

The UCLA IRB-approved procedures were employed to identify and recruit the participants, and gain their informed consent. This included the interview guide, recruitment flyers, recruitment scripts, screening forms, demographic data sheet, and consent forms (UCLA IRB#G10-09-007-01). Flyers were handed out by the researcher inviting potential volunteers to call the researcher. Interested individuals contacted the researcher by phone. All participants signed an informed consent form (see Appendix D). To ensure that each participant clearly understood her rights as outlined in the consent form, the researcher asked each mother to repeat her understanding of the nature of the research and her rights as a participant. Each participant received a copy of the informed consent form. Each consenting participant was assigned a pseudonym. All potentially identifying information was stored in a locked cabinet, accessible only to the researcher and her faculty sponsors.

Under California law for the protection of human subjects, certain situations cannot be kept confidential such as any disclosure or endorsement of thoughts of self-harm or bringing harm to others and any information about sexual or physical abuse of a child or elder. These conditions are spelled out in the question and answer format of the Consent to Participate in Research form, under the heading, “Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?”

Incentives to Participate

A gift card incentive worth \$25 to Vallarta supermarket stores was given to participants in compensation for their participation in the interview. An incentive of \$25 was considered to be appropriate as an amount that was considered to be neither offensive nor coercive (Rojas, 2010).

Data Collection

At the scheduled interview times, the researcher requested each participant to complete a one-page profile sheet composed of 10 socio-demographic questions. The demographic profile capture form is shown in Appendix E in the English and Spanish versions. The mothers provided information about age at the time of the study, country of birth, matrimonial status, employment, occupation, years of education completed, type of school son last attended, number of school years completed by son, son's history of learning disability or mental health issues, and his date of incarceration.

Data Capture

All the interviews were conducted in Spanish by the researcher, who is an English-Spanish bi-lingual and bi-cultural nurse researcher. She is also familiar with *pochismo*, a speech pattern in which Spanish is mixed with English. Each woman was interviewed only once, and no interview session extended beyond 2 hours. After reiterating the purpose of the study and the conduct of the interview, the researcher informed participants when digital recording was begun and ended. The researcher's objective included being meaningfully engaged with each participant during the interview. To avoid distraction, she limited her note-taking during the interview.

Interview Guide

An interview guide (Appendix F) was designed to address the five specific aims listed at the beginning of this chapter. The researcher used the guiding questions to initiate the interview dialogue and as a checklist during the interview. However, the interview guide was often not needed because the participants usually responded fully to the items in the context of telling their stories. The mothers achieved fluidity in relating their experiences of coping with their sons' incarcerations. The researcher conveyed verbal as well as non-verbal prompts (such as nods, or tilting of the head) as needed to obtain clarity or encourage elaboration of a specific detail or subject.

Sample Characteristics

The median age of the 17 participants in the study sample was 42 years, with an age range between 38 and 59 years. Of these, 15 were born in Mexico and 2 were born in El Salvador. The majority of the women were married (9), 3 were single, 1 was divorced, 3 were separated, and 1 was in a common-law situation. Eleven of the 17 mothers had nine years of schooling or less; 2 were high school graduates and 4 had more than a high school education. Details of the mothers' characteristics are presented in Table 1. Details of the incarcerated sons' characteristics are shown in Table 2.

Data Security

The electronic file containing each recorded interview was appropriately labeled without identifying individual names and downloaded electronically into a password-secure laptop for coding and analysis. Confidentiality of the participants was preserved by assigning a pseudonym to each interview file in order to protect identity against accidental dissemination of findings. All

interviews were transcribed verbatim, and the recordings were permanently deleted from the laptop after the researcher verified the accuracy of the transcription.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Participating Mothers

| Mothers' Characteristics | Number | Percent |
|--------------------------|--------|---------|
| Nationality | | |
| Mexican | 15 | 88 |
| El Salvador | 2 | 12 |
| Marital status | | |
| Married | 9 | 52 |
| Separated | 3 | 18 |
| Divorced | 1 | 6 |
| Common law | 1 | 6 |
| Single | 3 | 18 |
| Education | | |
| 0-6 years | 7 | 40 |
| 7-11 years | 4 | 24 |
| 12 years | 2 | 12 |
| 13+ years | 4 | 24 |
| Employment | | |
| Yes | 10 | 59 |
| No | 7 | 41 |

Note: Mothers age (years): average 46.3, median 45

Table 2

Characteristics of Incarcerated Sons

| Sons' Characteristics | Number | Percent |
|-----------------------|--------|---------|
| Education | | |
| 0-6 Years | 0 | 0 |
| 7-11 Years | 11 | 64 |
| 12 Years | 4 | 24 |
| 13+ | 2 | 12 |
| Learning Disability | | |
| Yes | 6 | 35 |
| No | 11 | 65 |
| Mental Health Issue | | |
| Yes | 7 | 41 |
| No | 10 | 59 |

Note: Time incarcerated (months): average 19.5, median 14

Data Management

The process of making choices in the formatting of the data, and the decision to use the original Spanish language, as described by Erickson, was not simply preparing data for analysis, but actually was the beginning the analytic process itself. A transcription, itself, is a constructed object, and is not theoretically neutral (Ravitch & Riggan, 2012, p. 98). The participants were immigrant mothers whose natural language of expression was Spanish; hence the interviews took place in Spanish. The recorded interviews were transcribed by a native Spanish-speaker.

The computer program Atlas.ti was used for data management. CAQDAS (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) facilitates the management of qualitative data (Dey, 1993; Fielding & Lee, 1998; Friese, 2012; Kelle, 1995; Lewins & Silver, 2007).

Data Analysis

Coding is an emergent process, rather than one that occurs in a straight line or sequential fashion. The researcher interacted with the data, exploring and constructing meaning at each coding session. The coding process was iterative and involved initial, in-vivo, process, focused (selective coding), and theoretical coding, which were neither linear nor sequential.

The researcher immersed herself in the data to understand each participant's coping experience in light of the cultural and institutional (education, immigration, employment, policing, judicial, and penal system) influences on them. For example, in one coding session, focused coding was done after initial coding, but initial coding was conducted several times again after focused coding, and again after a session of axial coding and theoretical coding.

Initial Coding

Initial coding, also called "open coding" (Urquhart, 2013, p. 193), is carried out to carefully identify currents and undercurrents in the data. Charmaz (2006 pp. 47-48) suggested looking for actions occurring or described in the data. The initial codes were open and temporary so that they remain available to additional analytic possibilities. Actions were described by short codes.

Line-by-line coding was used to prompt the researcher to detect the nuances in the data. It helped to break the data into smaller components so that the actions in the data were clear (Charmaz, 2006, p. 50). Incident-to-incident coding proved quite useful at this stage of analysis, as many incidents were described over a number of lines of transcription.

Constant Comparative Analysis

Constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp. 101-115) was used to compare incident-to-incident activity in the transcriptions. At this stage, a few tentative major

categories of incidents were developed by the researcher. In addition, the researcher compared incidents within a rough or initial category to one another to generate leads for subsequent theoretical sampling (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 65).

In Vivo

In vivo codes are terms or phrases used by the participants themselves that help the researcher understand the participant's meaning of actions (Charmaz, 2006, p. 55; Saldana, 2009). During the initial coding, many in vivo statements were coded within each of the transcripts, such as *no dejarse caer* (never give up, or don't let yourself fall), *con el mundo en mis manos* (the weight of the world on my shoulders), and *soy luchadora* (I am strong, a fighter).

Focused Coding

Focused coding, also called "selective coding" in the Glaserian version of grounded theory (Urquhart, 2013, p. 193), uses the most frequent and significant earlier codes developed in the open coding stage. These provide a lens with which to examine the data previously coded, which helps to synthesize and understand ever larger units of data (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 57-60). This focused coding allowed the researcher to assess the analytic sense in the earlier coding.

Axial Coding

Axial coding begins the process of developing the properties and dimensions of the larger categories developed from the data (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 60-63). In a way, axial coding starts to reintegrate the data that had been fractured into separate pieces during the line-by-line and incident-to-incident coding. Corbin and Strauss (2008, pp. 198-199) felt there was no hard division between focused coding and axial coding, but emphasized the development of subcategories of the larger categories. These authors regarded axial coding as the development

of the larger categories themselves and suggested that it could occur simultaneously with focused coding.

Theoretical Coding

The researcher used theoretical coding to develop the relationship between the core categories constructed during the focused coding and elaborated in the axial coding (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63-68). At one point, Corbin & Strauss (2008, pp. 229-245) offered a matrix of conditions, contexts and consequences to be used at the theoretical coding stage. Similarly, Glaser (1978) offered an evolving set of theoretical codes to be used at this stage, ranging from his 6 C's (causes, context, contingencies, consequences, covariances, and conditions) up to a larger collection of 18 coding families (Glaser, 1978) to be used at the theoretical level. Charmaz counseled that these theoretical sets at best can be used as sensitizing codes that should not substitute for the researcher's own vision of clarity. They can be useful in sharpening the analysis, though, without forcing a framework (Charmaz 2006, pp. 63-66).

Trustworthiness

Qualitative research can be conducted in a rigorous manner. However, because a qualitative project entails a different nature of inquiry compared to a quantitative project, the methods for ensuring quantitative rigor cannot be applied to assure qualitative rigor (Miyata & Kai, 2009).

As suggested by Creswell & Miller (2000), the ability to be reflexive is critical to the research process. Bernard & Ryan (2010) suggested that the researcher repeatedly go back and forth between emic and etic perspectives by being alert to disagreement among knowledgeable consultants regarding the researcher's understanding of the phenomena under study, in this case

the coping processes of Latina mothers whose adolescent and young adult sons were incarcerated.

For example, the participants' reports of conditions for visitations to incarcerated sons were compared to non-participants' reports of policies and procedures (e.g. a prison chaplain). To experience the visitation process first hand, the researcher visited, on two separate occasions, two different juvenile detention centers. The researcher also monitored the media for reports on police behavior, truancy policies, and jailing conditions in Los Angeles County. This monitoring included both English language (*Los Angeles Times*) and the Spanish language (*La Opinion*) newspapers.

The researcher wrote memos about her reflexivity throughout the data collection and analysis to help her process and explore her personal biases. These memos focused on her identity as a Latina immigrant mother with a young adult son and her role as an academic researcher. These memos facilitated her ability to describe, analyze, and critique her own beliefs and biases throughout the study so that she could more clearly understand the women in their own contexts.

In addition to the practice of writing memos, trustworthiness via confirmability was sought by using an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 319). This was imposed by systematizing the management of data. The *Atlas.ti* software assisted the researcher in managing the data set. The data management software facilitated the researcher's ability to cross-reference and attach priorities to data that otherwise might have remained undifferentiated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 310).

Drawing from Halpern's (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 310) six categories for establishing an audit trail, the following activities were undertaken. Interviews were digitally recorded and

field notes taken; coding was reduced to manageable units through Grounded Theory coding; and summaries were made of field notes as part of analysis. In addition, the researcher took methodological notes related to the evolution of her analytical strategy and the decisions she made in the analysis process.

Credibility

Methodological validity involves matching the logic of the method to the kind of research questions being posed. A thorough review of the literature was unable to turn up any previous research on this topic. Urquhart stated in these situations, “GTM [Grounded Theory Methods] has an obvious appeal in instances where no previous theory exists” (Urquhart, 2013, p. 10).

Bloomberg & Volpe (2008, p. 86) suggested that the credibility of the findings may be enhanced by reviewing and discussing them with professional colleagues. The researcher met with her professional mentors in the juvenile justice system, which included a pastor assigned to the families of the incarcerated. The researcher met with her mentors many times, and shared with them her emergent findings. They assured her that the reality of the participants was adequately reflected in the findings.

Dependability/Confirmability

Memos are available on the researcher’s computer hard drive, as part of Atlas.ti memoing feature. The researcher’s constant journaling entries have been preserved in spiral-bound notebooks, and labeled by month. In addition, the email-trail between the researcher and the committee chair provides a sense of the transparency of the method.

Transferability

Transferability refers to ability to transfer a working hypothesis developed in one context to application in a different one (Lincoln & Guba 1985, pp. 124-125). Given the unique nature of

the sample—low-income, Spanish-language dominant, immigrant Latina mothers with incarcerated sons, these findings might possibly be transferred to other contexts of involuntary mother-son separation involving the same type of immigrant Latina mother, such as in the case of one or the other party being forcibly deported, etc.

Limitations of the Study

The small sample (N = 17) drawn from in a distinct area of one large, urban, Southern California county is a limiting aspect of this study. A larger sample, representing more locations in Los Angeles County, and possibly in the state, might allow the findings to be more applicable beyond this sample. The mothers were low-income, monolingual Spanish speaking immigrants. A sample expanded to include middle income, English speaking U.S. born participants would have added variety. Each respondent was interviewed only once, in the course of which they provided a retrospective account of their coping. Future prospective research would be useful in overcoming this limitation.

Ethical Considerations

The health and wellbeing of a participant always came first. Holloway & Wheeler (1995) stated that a nurse researcher has the dual role of health professional and researcher, and hence is bound by the professional responsibilities and code of ethics founded on the principles of autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice. These responsibilities and ethics require that the nurse researcher must forego the role of researcher in the event a patient is in pain or in distress. In this research project, the researcher discovered that the participants wanted her to know their experiences. Many participants shared with the researcher that the interview had allowed them to “desahogarse” or unload.

Additionally, because the specific aims of this study and the research focus in a qualitative research approach is general, the specific path that an open-ended interview will take cannot be predicted. Participants are vulnerable in ways that they are not in quantitative research. This means that a participant may disclose information during the interview that she may later regret or find uncomfortable. In compliance with UCLA IRB protocols, during the informed consent procedure and prior to the interview, each participant was informed of the right to inspect the digital recording of her interview, as well as her right to request the deletion of any information she found worrisome. On two occasions, the researcher, sensing discomfort, asked the participants if they wanted her to stop the recording, to which they both responded it was not necessary as the researcher stated she would use pseudonyms, and hence they had nothing to hide.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS

This chapter provides the findings of a study designed to explore the perceptions and experiences of Latina women as they coped while their teenage sons who were incarcerated. Findings revealed how the coping processes evolved, and described the mothers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses during their initial awareness of their sons' incarceration to the time of the interview. It also describes their intrinsic and extrinsic resources for coping. This description is grounded in the voices and narratives of Latina mothers who underwent this experience.

In summary when their sons had been little boys, the participating Latina immigrant mothers had tried to create homes, as best as their limited incomes allowed them. They had dreams for their sons and other children: they would do well in school, go on to college, perhaps become a professional and become good parents themselves to their children. The mothers often worked, some at two jobs, in order to provide the basic elements of home life, such as food, clothing and housing. Then suddenly, one day, their sons were arrested and placed in the custody of the juvenile justice system. The world of the mothers changed dramatically.

This study explores how the participating mothers tried to cope with the impact of the incarceration of their young sons. The mothers described the initial effects on them in terms of devastating pain, so intense that some mothers wanted to die rather than endure the pain. They cried for their sons suddenly removed from them. They felt alone and isolated. They lost interest in life, in their other children, in their jobs.

At the low point of these negative feelings, some mothers expressed an awareness that they were close to allowing themselves to “dejarse caer”, i.e. to fall down, or fall to pieces or to give up. If they were to “dejarse caer,” they would give in to the loss of energy and joy in life. They would cease to take care of themselves and others in their families and would run the risk of losing their jobs. Perhaps, they described, only with death would they find release from the pain caused by the incarceration of their son.

At this point, any or all of three motivators would intervene to prompt the mothers into taking steps to not allow themselves to “dejarse caer.” The three motivators included the other children in the family who still needed to be taken care of, the suddenly incarcerated son who then presented different needs and their own self-image as capable persons. With few external resources available to them, these mothers had to provide therapy for themselves to work themselves out of their mental state that was impeding their functioning. They did so by working with their mind, working with others and by working with God. These will be described below in the section on self-care.

The participants had been mothering their sons, and described three elements of their mothering: nurturing the relationship with their sons, providing for the sons, and protecting the sons from harm. Before the incarceration, the mothers were free to decide how to do the mothering within their resource limit. They chose the housing, selected the food items and picked out the clothing. Once their sons were incarcerated, the participants sought to continue to mother the imprisoned son, but they had to modify drastically how they nurtured the relationship, provided and protected their sons. At the same time, they also had to continue to mother their unincarcerated children as they had before the incarceration. This chapter begins with a description

of the context or the impact that the incarceration of an adolescent/young adult son has on his mother, then provides detail on the core categories of self-care and mothering.

Context for the Coping Process

The mothers were devastated when their sons were taken from them and jailed. This devastation was expressed as pain, thoughts of death, thoughts of suicide, loss of energy, loss of joy in life, uncontrolled crying, loss of sleep, feeling hopeless, isolation, effects on family and multiple problems.

Pain

The pain caused by the enforced separation was described by one woman as the worst pain she had ever experienced in her life (Alma 359-361). Another mother called the pain a “Hell” for her (Fatima 289).

Thoughts of Death and Dying

The pain was so great that some mothers felt they could not tolerate it, and it would kill them. Olivia recounted how there were days in which she felt that she could not put up with the pain that she was experiencing, days when she felt that she could not tolerate it any longer (Olivia 933-937). Diana was sure she was dying. She used to say definitively that she could not tolerate the pain she was undergoing (Diana 315-317).

Thoughts of Suicide

Rather than wait for the pain to take their lives, some mothers felt that they wanted to commit suicide so that the pain would stop. As Fatima put it, if the dog were dead, the rabies would be over. She felt that if she were dead, everything would be calm for her, hence she considered suicide many times (Fatima 1404-1409). Uma stated that if she had had something, a

pistol or something with which to take her life, she may well have done so (Uma 13-17). Belena expressed that she simply did not want to live any longer (Belena 679).

Loss of Energy

The women described that they could feel their energies flow out of them, so that they spent days seemingly paralyzed, unable to even take care of themselves, not bathing, not eating, not even showing up for work (Eva 1994-1998). One mother recounted spending a week simply moving from her bed to her sofa, day after day, not bathing herself or changing her clothes, wearing the same clothes for a week (Belena 353-354). Mariana described such a loss of energy that she lost track of time, not sure what day of the week it was or if it were day or night; she did not know if she was tired or hungry; she did not realize when it was time to pay bills. Time ceased to exist for her (Mariana 1099-1107).

Loss of Joy in Life

Some recounted realizing that they had lost their ability to enjoy life in the world that they once had enjoyed (Belena 2577-2579). As one mother put it, joyful holidays such as Christmas no longer existed for her and she did not want to celebrate in any way (Belena 2685). One mother described that she felt as if her other children no longer existed for her (Eva.1945-1947). Another remembered (crying simultaneously) feeling as if life were over for her when her son was jailed (Julia 53-55).

Uncontrolled Crying

Another mother recounted being unable to control bursting into tears at any moment. For example, at work in a clothing manufacturer, where her job was to manage piece work, if anyone looked at her as she was taking orders, counting the pieces, or noting the pieces, she would be crying (Victoria 1130-1137). Diana described herself as crying nearly every day (Diana 1171).

Sleep Affected

The upset and pain affected the sleep of some mothers. Eva recounted sleeping very little, perhaps two hours, if at all. Nonetheless, she had to get up and go to work the next day (Eva 1959-1967).

Feeling Hopeless

Mariana recounted feeling as if the world were over for her. Using a figure of speech shared by a few other mothers, she described feeling as if there no way out for her, because the earth and sky closed in on her (Mariana 35-36). With her son no longer with her, Connie could not live in peace. She was grateful to God that she was alive, but she was not in peace, and thus, there was no life for her (Connie 487-493).

Isolation / Loneliness

Another feeling described was that of being alone and isolated, as if the world were shunning them. Belena described feeling alone, as if even her family had turned their backs on her (Belena 561-568). Fatima lost any desire to leave the house and socialize; instead, she preferred to remain in her house (Fatima 40-42). Eva felt that she had lost all her friends and no longer had any. She would go from work to her house, then from her house to work. She would not socialize with anyone. She did not talk to almost anyone (Eva 983-991).

Effects on Family

The pain affected the rest of the family, in addition to the mother. In describing her feelings of sadness and powerlessness, Alma described that the pain affected her entire family so that they all felt depressed (Alma 1-5). Julia expressed that the terrible stress, the bitterness and the pain affected everybody, not just the mother. All of that made everyone suffer (Julia 918-

919). The pain also affected the mother's feelings towards their families. For Belena, for all the previous effort she had put into her children, as she looked at them, it seemed as if they no longer existed for her. Even her two grandchildren failed to provide her any joy in life. While once she had had "pretty feelings" ["bonitos sentimientos" Belena 2641-2642] for them, once had loved them, once remarked upon how cute they were, now none of that had any meaning for her (Belena 2641-2642). Diana described feeling that when events became overwhelming for her, she felt that she wanted to leave her husband, leaving the children to him, as she could tolerate things no longer (Diana 1134-1140). Belena felt so badly that she looked at her family as already destroyed (Belena 679-680).

Dealing with Multiple Problems Simultaneously

The "real world" around the mothers added to the weight of problems they felt for the incarcerated son: employment pressures, insufficient income, too many bills and family complications. For example, Eva described the issues that she had to deal with aside from her son's incarceration. Her rent was \$900 per month and she only had \$700 to her name but she had not paid it yet, and the landlord was upset with her. Compounding her situation, she had not made the payment for her car and she was being threatened by possible repossession. She wondered how she could buy food to eat (Eva 856-860; 1041-1047). Belena described how her family was weighing down on her: her other son was experimenting with drugs, her husband left her, and she did not have a job. She felt the weight of the world on her shoulders (Belena 254-255). Diana described the moment when a mother with so many pressures and pains felt like exploding because the problems were so numerous and she could not see any solution, any way out. The experience was horrible and she cried every day (Diana 1165-1171). These were just some of the feelings expressed upon the incarceration of the sons.

“No Dejarse Caer:” Background to the Core Categories

A number of the mothers described their initial reaction to the sudden separation from their sons was a desire to “give up.” The phrase used to describe this feeling in Spanish was “dejarse caer.” While this literally meant to let oneself fall down, the phrase “dejarse caer” was used in the interviews to refer to an emotion that ranged from “falling to pieces” to “giving up.”

The pain of the context was so great, that at times the mothers could easily imagine how they could be crushed under the burden, possibly even killed by the pressures of the context. One mother described how, at the moment her son was sentenced, she felt that she was dying. She even told herself that she was about to die, “Yo senti me moria. Yo dije, ‘Hasta aca. No quiero sentir nada’” (“I felt I would die. I said, ‘That’s enough. I don’t want to feel anything’”) (Rita 1623-1627). To allow herself to be done in by the context was to “dejarse caer.” One mother claimed that had she allowed the context to overcome her, she would have been dead and buried by the time of the interview because she would have allowed herself to “dejarse caer” (Fatima 2489-2493). Just as they were feeling the pain was about to overcome them, any of three motivators jolted them into action to “no dejarse caer,” that is, not give up or not fall to pieces. Again, these motivators included the needs of the remaining children, the needs of the incarcerated son, and the mothers’ own self-image as capable persons.

Motivation: The Needs of the Family

The first motivator was the needs of the remaining family, especially the children. One mother described her keen awareness that she was the only one in the family who paid for the daily necessities such as rent, electricity, power, automobile, insurance, food, and even soap and shampoo (Eva 816-817). Picking up from there, Sonia explained that the needs of her children

impelled her to go to work every day, because she was aware that if she gave into the desire to “give up,” her family would be finished. The needs of her children gave her a purpose to move ahead and not “give up” (Sonia 716-723).

Motivation: The Needs of the Incarcerated Son

A second motivator was the needs of the imprisoned son. Although the son was in prison, she perceived that he still needed her to mother him, but she could not perform her mothering if she allowed herself to “dejarse caer.” Rita described how at first she felt horrible pain. Then, she thought of how her son needed her support, and if she “gave up” and was essentially defeated by the ordeal of the prison term, her son might also feel defeated. By giving in to the defeat, she would not be giving support, strength or faith to her son. To help her son, she had to fight the temptation to “dejarse caer” (Rita 1632-1638). Mariana described how the only thing that kept her moving was that she felt she had to “arrive at the end of the tunnel” and be there for her son the day he would be released from prison. And then, the needs of her younger son were also another motivator: She had to fight for housing for him, as she had just lost her house (Mariana 1069-1076).

Motivation: Mother’s Self-Image

A third motivator was the self-image of strength some mothers described. As she was battling the urge to “dejarse caer,” she went to a church and prayed. After praying, she took stock of herself, remembered that she used to be strong, and that she could take care of herself: “And I said to myself, ‘Where are you? Where are you? The one that I used to be. You were strong. You, you don’t need anyone else, you only need yourself, Belena. You have to get yourself up’.” Continuing her internal conversation, the motivators of her other children and her incarcerated son also came to her mind: “ ‘You are losing one son, you have already lost him. You are losing

the other one’.” (Belena 758-763). Julia realized that she was able to give herself the strength, because her self-esteem had always been high, she knew what she was capable of doing, and she knew that she was very brave (Julia 284-287). In spite of her situation, Karen described herself as a fighter, because her father had taught her how to fight for what she wanted (Karen 501). Fatima suffered multiple sclerosis during her son’s imprisonment and proudly reported that the medical providers taking care of her marveled that she had not “given in” to the disease, but had the strength to battle the disease.

**Difficulties in “No Dejarse Caer”
(not to fall down, fall to pieces or to give up)**

The mothers described the effort that it took to keep from “giving up.” One mother who described herself as a “Tiger mother” who would “fight for her children tooth, nail, and whatever else it might take”, nonetheless would not want to wish the feeling of “dejarse caer” on anyone, as it takes a great amount of strength to not “dejarse caer,” (Laura 1129-1134). Connie expressed the fear that if she gave into the “dejarse caer,” she might not be able to pick herself up easily (Connie 881-885).

From time to time, some of the mothers did give into the feeling. Rita felt guilty about what had happened to her son and guilty that somehow she had not done enough to help him. Most of the time, she was able to move beyond those feelings, but from time to time, she would “dejarse caer” due to the guilty feelings. But then, she continued to recount, she refused to stay down. Rather, she picked herself up, dusted herself off, and told herself that she would not give in again, whatever might come her way (Rita 1629-1630; 1640-1641).

These mothers had their good days and their bad days in terms of “dejarse caer.” When they were having bad days, they still had to deal with the needs of their other children and the

incarcerated son. Usually, this meant they had to go to work, and the working environment presented its own problem. One mother described how on some days, she felt very much depressed and did not want to talk with anyone or even hear a crowd talking. She did not want anyone even to talk to her. But, she had to go to work (Eva 1181-1188).

Core Category: Self-Care

One of the participating mothers provided the most succinct description of self-care. Speaking of how she managed to cope without the assistance of professional mental health care, she said that she did not want to let herself, “dejarse caer” (Fatima 2489). Her son’s incarceration pained her deeply and she felt as if her soul had been split in two. But then, at that point, she described that she would give herself therapy, “yo me doy terapia sola” (“I gave myself therapy”) (Fatima 612-615). She recounted that she herself would be the one to pick herself up, so that she would not “dejarse caer” (Fatima 2495).

In this section on the core category of self-care, the properties and dimensions of self-care that the participants engaged in to take care of the contextual pain that threatened to incapacitate them will be detailed. This includes working the mind, working with others, and working with God.

Working the Mind

The property of working the mind under the core category of self-care is defined as thinking about the son and the consequences of thinking about the son.

Thinking about the Son. The mothers reported turning their thoughts towards their sons, dwelling on the situation and then feeling the pain again. The thoughts may have been about any aspect of their sons’ situation. Questions that mothers asked included: Why had my son done

what he did that got him into trouble? Why was his sentence so long? If the prisons are dangerous, is my son safe? Can my son survive in prison? Why did this happen to me? (Olivia 579-583; 663-665; Rita 1021-1028; Sonia 166-167). These thoughts turned over and over in their minds.

The thoughts became repetitive, “walking through my mind” as one mother put it (Rita 1021-1028), over and over again, so that at night, they were tired from such unrestrained thinking. These types of thoughts occurred day after day, ever-present in their minds (Olivia 663-665). The thoughts brought with them the fear and pain of the sons’ situation so over and over the mothers were immersed in their pain and fear (Olivia 579-583; 663-665; Sonia 166-167). After some time with these thoughts, mothers began to wonder if they could make it through all the pain (Rita 1021-1028).

Consequence of thinking about son. As the thoughts worked through their minds, the pain and fear worked on them and they began to edge towards the “dejarse caer” condition. One mother described how the constant replay of events in her mind affected her to the point that she did not want to talk even with her friends at work; all she wanted to do was go home and go to bed. She reported feeling depressed two or three days of every week (Rita 1014-1018). But the consequences of falling into “dejarse caer” could prod some mothers into action: if they would “give up” they would be of no help to the remaining children who still needed them on a daily basis (Uma 66-67).

The effects of thinking on health. Another topic emerged in explaining the effects of negative thoughts. Many participants described a direct relation between negative thoughts and poor health and also between positive thoughts and good health. In their view, thoughts caused health. Laura gave the best description of this relation between thoughts and health: “If we think

positively, then things will go positively. If we think negatively, then that will bring negativity to our lives, and we will make ourselves ill, we will frustrate ourselves.” Positive thinking helped Laura in this way: When she was sick, she would not give in to staying in bed, but instead she would get up and say “No!” (Laura 481-487). One of Rita’s co-workers suggested that she stop crying; she told her that if she continued to cry, she, the mother, would wind up ill (Rita 1007-1009). If a mother already had an illness such as diabetes, the negative thinking, the pain of memory, was reported to make the illness worse. For example, a mother with diabetes reported that her sugar levels rose every time her son was arrested, which aggravated her pre-existing diabetes (Eva 628-635). Because of this perceived causal linkage between thoughts and health, the mothers could not allow themselves to be mastered by the negative thoughts. They had to control their thoughts or their health might be in danger.

The unrestrained, repetitive thinking was not limited to the mother. Other family members might also become caught up in the cycle of thinking and run the risk of feeling depressed or of falling ill. Belena emphasized that the constant thinking (“24 hours a day” in her words) about why the incarceration happened and the sense of powerlessness affected the entire family and led to feelings of depression (Belena 1841-1847).

The mind, with its constant thinking about the sons’ situations was moving the mothers towards the “dejarce caer” condition and the associated problems for all in the family. Thus, they reported they felt they had to combat the negative thoughts and change their mindset towards a positive frame of mind, thereby gaining peace, energy and strength. The mothers reported three major strategies (dimensions) of working with the mind to move from negative to positive thoughts.

Strategies for Working the Mind

The three strategies for working the mind described by the participating mothers were: Distracting the mind, tricking the mind, and stopping the thoughts.

Distracting the mind. When a mother's thoughts turned to the son's situation, one way to head them off was to engage in activities that distracted the mind from the thoughts (Fatima 2359-2361). The distracting can occur at a variety of levels. Some could be at a strictly individual level, involving only the mother, such as reading (Eva 934) or watching television (Fatima 2539). The mundane chores of housework could be a form of distraction such as ironing, cleaning the house (Eva 1453-1455), cleaning drawers, or taking out garbage (Fatima 1702-1703). Cooking could be a distraction (Eva 1445-1449), and cooking could be taken to a level higher than simply meal preparation by focusing on decorating a cake or making table arrangements out of fruit (Laura 464-465). Some distracting could occur with activities that might also be done as a hobby such as knitting or sewing (Fatima 1700-1702). At other times, the mind distraction took place outside the house, with other people involved. Exercising to music could be done alone in the house (Laura 458-459), but was reported to also be done with friends in a park two or three times a week (Alma 1138-1143). Participating in classes, and even participating at work, were also mentioned as forms of distracting the mind (Laura 461-462).

Tricking the mind. Another way to manage the damaging thoughts was to, in the words of one participant, "engañar mi cerebro" (trick my mind), by shunting the thoughts onto a different track (Fatima 2529-2532). The way one mother used to "trick the mind" was to imagine that her son was on "vacation." She was aware she was doing this to slow her head down from thinking so much, so that she would not worry herself into an illness (Eva 2266-2272). In a

related fashion, a mother could try to see the incarceration as a positive event. For example, a mother whose son had been involved in gangs used to think about the dangers her son had run while on the street: He could have been killed or so seriously wounded that he would have to live the rest of his life in a wheelchair. She told herself that he was safer in jail, he was alive, and she could at least visit him (Rita 465-474). Another mother, whose son had become a drug addict, focused on the positive side of her son's prison situation: She knew where he was, she would be able to see him again, he did not get a long sentence, he had not murdered anyone, he was not a criminal and he would be sent to drug rehabilitation (Fatima 650-653). The thought that her son was alive, even if in jail, was actually comforting to some (Diana 1291-1296). Comparing herself to other mothers of gang members living a dangerous life, she could stop worrying because at least he was alive and was going to be safe in prison.

Stopping the thoughts. A third strategy to working with the mind was to simply block the thoughts, stop them before they penetrated into daily life. One mother described it in stages: A thought would arrive but she would not let it pass on through inside (Connie 177). As an example, at one point, the thought came to her that some harm had come to her son in prison. On her own, she thought, "Dear God, get those thoughts out of my head" (Connie 335-338). As a preventive effort, some mothers tried to keep their minds focused only on positive thoughts. Norma described that she had to think positive thoughts, because if she allowed herself to develop negative thoughts, she would only suffer more (Norma 852-853).

In summary, the mothers in the study described that the negative thoughts would lead to "dejarce caer," and possibly even physical illness. They worked with their mind by distracting themselves with activities, by "tricking the mind" and by stopping thoughts before they could take root. Rita perhaps best exemplifies the properties of working the mind: She was so positive

in her thoughts that her sister and her mother remarked on how positive she was. In reply, Rita said that she had no choice but to have a positive attitude. If not, with what she had to deal with, she would have been three meters underground already, or suffering from diabetes (Rita 1384-1394).

Working With Others

In addition to working with the mind to cope with their sons' incarceration, the participating mothers also worked with other people who provided support. Some sources of support were informal such as family, friends and co-workers. Formal support was also sought from support groups, church groups and organized programs.

Self-Care: Working with Supporters

In their activities to provide self-care, the mothers mentioned that outside support came in three types: Informal family support, informal non-family support, and formal support.

Informal family support. Informal support was provided by the immediate members of a mother's family, and ranged from the mother's parents to their children, both the incarcerated son and unincarcerated children. As will be seen at the end of this section, not every mother had support from others. This section will present the findings about support, and not about lack of support.

Husband. For some, support was reported to come from husbands. The support could be somewhat passive, consisting mainly of someone to talk with, and someone with a shoulder to cry upon (Olivia 946). But support from a husband could also be described as being more active, as in the case of Diana. Her husband actively encouraged her in her coping related to the imprisoned son and reminded her that if the son in prison did not appreciate her efforts, their other child, who needed her attention, would appreciate them (Diana 332-336). One husband's

support was so appreciated by one mother that she characterized him as being her “fortress and faith” (Olivia 933-937).

Other children. The non-incarcerated children were able to provide support of different kinds. Sometimes they served to provide a sort of recreational break for the mother because of their own needs for recreation. One mother wound up enjoying taking her younger daughter out for a hamburger or to parties. (Rita 885-887). Younger children who were computer- and internet-literate were described as providing support by connecting the mother to sources of information (Olivia 775-776).

Son in prison. The incarcerated sons could also be a source of support for the mothers. In response to the mothers’ worries about their safety behind bars, sons were described as making efforts to assure their mothers that they were safe and well taken care of, and that things would turn out well (Rita 617-618). One mother recounted how her son comforted her by assuring her that God probably had a purpose for him and thus brought him to the prison for a reason (Julia 1412-1415). Trying to encourage his mother to be well, one incarcerated son told his mother that, “If you are well, then I will be well.” (Rita 820-821). To one mother’s delight, when her son who had been the most affectionate with her of her three children was incarcerated, he continued showing his affection for her by sending her letters, drawings and other things that he made in prison to show his love for her (Sonia 499-503).

Parents and siblings. The mothers’ parents were described as being a source of family support. One mother recounted how she talked with her own mother nearly every week (Alma 1055-1057). Another mother mentioned how her sister would comfort her when she would be crying by telling her how she admired her sense of humor, even while crying (Fatima 806-810).

Informal non-family support. Support was reported as also coming from non-family sources. Sources mentioned included friends, coworkers, and neighbors.

Friends. The network of support in coping can also include friends. Julia described a range of support, from God to her family to her friends. In particular, she perceived her friends to always be there for her, “pendientes de mi” (be there for me). As she described their behavior, she said that while they could not provide her monetary support, they could provide her with emotional support (Julia 1147-1153). While a number of the mothers mentioned friends as a source of support, one mother provided the most clearly stated reason why this was needed: Family members were under the obligation to say nice things to her, but a friend was not under that obligation. So nice things said by someone outside the family was also necessary (Eva 1294-1303).

Co-Workers. Mothers recounted spending many hours at work every day and in the recounting would describe how co-workers had been able to provide support to them. As an example, when one mother would start to cry while at work, a co-worker would come and stand by her side and implore her to remember that such crying could lead to her becoming ill, then what would her son do if she were ill? The co-worker counseled her to be strong. The mother agreed, and after a short while, the urge to cry passed (Rita 1006-1012). Bosses and supervisors could provide support in a unique way: they could allow flexibility in the work schedule at a time of great need. Julia remembered how her boss would allow her flexibility in her schedule, always ensuring that she got her full hours for a complete paycheck. Her boss realized that she needed to pay her bills (Julia 907-914).

Neighbors. Support could also come in unexpected ways from neighbors. One mother explained how, in the depths of her pain, a neighbor offered to accompany her to church where the mother encountered additional, more formally organized sources of support (Uma 35-38).

Formal support. Support was also encountered in more formal settings such as official support groups, community groups and church groups. In addition, the Spanish-language media were mentioned as a support group.

Support group. A few mothers reported having joined official organized support groups. One had joined Neurotics Anonymous and, upon reading some of the group's literature, began to learn she could control her feelings to some extent (Belena 1903-1904). Mothers also described groups that appeared to be support groups but they were not able to describe to what extent they were formally organized or run, nor what affiliation they had. One mother described a group that met after church as being "the community, discussing." Members of the group had all experienced the same sort of problem (the participant did not exactly specify what the problem was), and exchanged information about what they had done about it. For her, the value was in seeing and listening to others who had overcome the problem that she was involved in (Diana 410-422).

Church. Churches provided both informal and formal support. Informal support was reported by some mothers as being obtained simply by attending a service. One mother who attended services during Holy Week estimated that she felt "50% better" by the end of Holy Week (Belena 2504-2608). Churches also offered more formal forms of support. The Archdiocese of one woman's home city offered a retreat in Spanish, called "La Fe Mueve Montañas" (Faith Moves Mountains). One mother heard about the program and her daughter-in-law bought her the \$25 ticket to enter so she attended it (Belena 653-654, 674, 842).

Classes. Mothers described attending classes as a form of support. They did not always report under whose auspices the classes were held. Attending a class made some of the mothers feel better as they tried to cope with their problem (Eva 1369-1373). Others reported gaining knowledge and communication skills to help them better cope with their families, such as having more conversation with their children and not shouting at them (Alma 253-257). One mother felt the classes were so valuable, that she feared losing out if she were not enrolled in a class so she enrolled in a dozen classes at once (Eva 1380-1382).

Media. The Spanish language media were mentioned as being another formal source of support. A neighbor recommended a radio program broadcast by the Catholic Church, called “*Radio Guadalupe*” (Belena 633-634) to one mother who followed up with the recommendation, listened to the program, attended the retreat and found it helpful. (Belena 671-676).

Awareness of a Lack of Support

The focus in this section is on lack of external support sources as perceived by the mothers. In one example, one mother felt very deeply the lack of support from her husband. It seemed to her that her husband looked for ways to create problems for her to make her suffer. He seemed to want to use her children’s anger against her to “get even” with her. When her son was arrested, the father did nothing to help. When bail was set at \$5,000, her husband told her, “Go out and earn it,” and added that he would not contribute even a nickel (Belena 84-95). Problems between Teresa and her husband began when he was out of work, so she took a job and asked him to stay home and watch the children. When her son began problematic behavior, Teresa’s husband blamed her for not giving him enough time, even though she was the one working and he was at home (Teresa 470-476). When the son was in the courts, her husband refused to accompany her to the sessions, calling it a “waste of time,” (Teresa 597-601), and when the son

was sentenced and incarcerated, the husband did not go to visit him (Teresa 576-591). Julia had separated from her abusive husband, who had then returned to Mexico, so there was essentially no husband and no relationship for her to turn to for support (Julia 1528-1534).

In another example, another mother could not talk with members of her family about her needs because none of them, with the exception of her mother, would talk with her (Alma 1054).

Working with God. The property of working with God to help the mothers cope with the pain and loss caused by their sons' incarceration was experienced by all the participants. Many described themselves as having a very strong faith in the existence of God. Julia described herself as having a blind faith in God, "Dios es un Dios justo. Y yo como tengo una fe inmensa en el. Eso es lo que a mi, me a ayudado, la fe ciega" (Julia 1294-1297). (God is fair. And I have a huge blind faith in him. That's what helps me, blind faith). For her, God was the most important thing in the world, after which would come her children, her work, and then her friends.

Attributes of God. The women described God as possessing a number of attributes that they found helpful in their coping process. Examples included Laura who described God as being all-powerful, for whom nothing was impossible. Laura felt that God, and only God, could move mountains, open doors, and had the power to do anything (Laura 635-636). Another mother felt that, being omnipresent, God was always able to be with her (Victoria 1387). Teresa also felt this constant presence and claimed that she never had to feel alone (Teresa 563). Another mother said that she always had someone who would listen to her (Fatima 444). The women felt that God's omniscience meant that he would know the answers to many things such as why their sons had to be incarcerated. Rita felt, in the bottom of her heart, that God knew why her son was in prison and when he would be released (Rita 634-637). Laura felt that God's will

would be accomplished in the long run; she, like the others, was willing to let His will be done (Laura 29-30). Julia believed that God would place “Angels” in her path to help her deal with her son’s incarceration (Julia 92).

Some mothers shared stories that showed that God listened to them and answered their prayers. Connie had many “pruebas” (forms of evidence) that bolstered her faith in God including one that involved her incarcerated son. Her son was not able to communicate with her after his arrest. She prayed and asked God for a sign that her son was unharmed by having him call her. Even though it was at night, within five minutes her son called. This incident bolstered her faith that God had listened to her (Connie 493-505).

Dimensions of working with God. The participants described three dimensions of Working with God: strength, emotions and endurance.

Strength to keep going. The opposite of “dejarse caer” is to “seguir adelante” (keep on going). God’s help was elicited to give the mothers the strength to keep moving forward (Laura 29-30). Norma explained that God was the only thing that could give her the strength; she could find no other source for it (Norma 223-224). Trying to move ahead was so difficult, so hard, that Rita felt that God was the only source for her (Rita 240-244). Diana recounted that she had been so weak she might not have endured without God’s intervention (Diana 1187-1190). Without this strength, some mothers were afraid that they might not have physically survived the experience (Uma 357-358).

Emotional strength. Many mothers felt that God could help them find the courage they needed to confront the situation they were in. Teresa reported that she was doing well, once God had given her the courage to cope and maintain her health (Teresa 1163). Uma felt that through her reading of the Bible, God had lifted her up emotionally, almost completely (Uma 343-346).

When Eva took time to think about the evils that could befall her imprisoned son, she would start to spiral downward towards “dejarse caer,” but then she would ask God to take away such thoughts, to take away the images that crossed her mind that were pulling her down, inferring that it did help (Eva 1441-1443).

Patience/endurance. Mothers worked with God to gain the ability to endure the experience. Connie recounted how she asked God to give her the resignation to endure all that she was going through (Connie 821-823). Many mothers shared the opinion that God would help them in some form or another (Laura 331).

Core Category: Mothering

The mothers participating in the study described how they perceived their sons and the dreams that they had for the sons as they would grow from childhood to adult. They also held these dreams for their other children, but the focus of the interviews was on the incarcerated sons.

The mothers explained how they tried to raise their sons so that they would grow up to fit the dreams they had developed for their sons. The process of raising their sons is labeled here as “Mothering,” and includes the actions that they undertook to guide and mold their sons. Three properties of mothering were described in detail, including nurturing, providing, and protecting. As informed by the mothers, Nurturing was described in terms of maintaining the relationship between mother and son in such a way that the mother’s own upbringing in her country of origin guided her to help her son to construct his life to meet the mothers’ dreams. Providing consisted of ensuring that their sons had the physical and intellectual resources to grow and develop. Protecting was described as their efforts to shield or guard their sons from harmful influences.

Before incarceration, the mothers were free to define and implement the nurturing, providing and protecting as they saw fit given, of course, the limits of their resources. With the arrest and incarceration of their sons, the mothers had to radically alter how they defined and implemented the three properties of mothering. All of the mothers described how they tried to continue to mother ---none expressed even a remote desire to stop trying to mother their incarcerated son. But they could not simply carry on as before with the incarcerated son. They had to find new ways to implement nurturing, providing and protecting for their incarcerated sons. Yet, most had un-incarcerated children at home, still going to school, still needing meals and still waiting for hugs. These children required mothering in the way she had mothered her son before incarceration. In essence, the mothers had to develop two styles of mothering: one for un-incarcerated children and a second for the incarcerated son.

In this section, I present each property of mothering: nurturing, providing and protecting. Each property will be presented in terms of how it was constructed and experienced before the son's incarceration and how it was constructed and experienced after his incarceration.

Mothering: Nurturing the Relationship Before Incarceration

The mothers participating in the study had developed notions of what a family and children meant to them. Teresa described that, when she immigrated to southern California, she, like "every woman", brought with her the dreams that every mother brought with her ("las ilusiones que traemos cada mujer") (Teresa 401-407) to create a home, have a family, have children, and acquire her own house. Rita was very clear that she came to southern California, like many do, so that they could provide a "better class of life" ("darle otra clase de vida") to their children; she was emphatic that she did not come with the idea that her children would become delinquents ("cholos"), "thieves or rapists" (Rita 1159-1161).

The children were an important part of these dreams and the successes of their children were, in a way, a sort of measure as to how well the mothers were achieving their dreams. Mother after mother repeated how important it was for their children to “get ahead” in life so as to not suffer what they had endured in their countries of origin. Eva emphasized that she was trying to move her children ahead (Eva 1353). Julia pointed out that as a mother, she was not negligent: What she wanted was for her children to “get ahead” as much as possible (Julia 189-190). Teresa explained the attitudes and values that she wanted her children to have when grown up. She wanted them to be “good persons” (“buenas personas”), to have finished their studies, and to get ahead by themselves on their own, without having to depend on anyone else (“sin depender de nadie”) (Teresa 676-678).

Nurturing by Advising

Performing well in school was described by these mothers as the key to their children’s future success. Part of nurturing was to advise their children, to motivate them to share the same dreams of success by achieving well at school. Diana gave a very clear explanation of how she advised her son about the importance of doing well in school. She would repeat to him, “You have to study, finish your school. And after that, if you want, you can go to a college or university.” In fact, she would give all her children the same advice about school and success, “You have to become someone. You have to be a professional or something” (Diana 1436-1444). Eva shared with her children that she was working so hard and she was sacrificing herself so that they could go to school (Eva 183-186).

In addition to advising them about school, mothers advised their children about the decisions a child has to make in life. Uma remembered advising her children, including the son that eventually became incarcerated, that she would never tell them simply to do whatever they

wanted. Instead, when they did anything, they were to think about the consequences, and that they would have to abide by the consequences (Uma 81-84).

Nurturing by Presence

Being present with their children was described as a means of nurturing the relationship between mother and children. When he was young, Julia took her son to the park in the area where he played sports. She felt that he was practically raised in the park, as she took him to the swings and as he rode his bike in the park (Julia, 325-328). Victoria, a single mother, enrolled her son in a soccer league when he was young and took him to his football games so that he would become interested in a sport. She still kept the jerseys from his team (Victoria 608-611). Mariana described that she felt obligated as a mother to be with her son and she planned to be with him as long as God would give her the strength (Mariana 150-154).

For Belena, mealtimes were not simply a fuel-stop. For her, it was so important that the family eat meals together that she tried to limit her hours on the job. She preferred to cook and prepare a meal every day, so that the entire family would sit and eat together (Belena 2188-2191). She would even make a big meal for her entire extended family at least once a month during the summer, with music, so that everyone could be present together (Belena 2198-2201).

Nurturing by Trying to Communicate

Mothers described how they nurtured by listening and communicating with their sons, by providing an audience for them to talk. Eva recounted how, three days after her son's first brush with the police over a stolen bicycle, she told him that she needed to talk with him. She wanted to know what was happening with him; she wanted to know if he needed help. He needed to get something off his chest and she wanted him to tell her his problems, to see if there was any way she could help him (Eva 161-167). To her chagrin, he refused to let her listen to him. At the age

of 14, Victoria's son was arrested for putting firecrackers in mailboxes with some friends. He was sent to bootcamp and upon his release, Victoria listened as he told her his realization that he had thought he had been playing a game for fun, but in bootcamp he had realized that he was getting himself into serious trouble. She continued to listen as he laid out a new life for himself, including heeding the advice of a camp counselor to get rid of the tattoos he had acquired from his earlier friends (Victoria 516-530).

Nurturing Rejected

In the mothers' recounting, their sons seemed to be taking their advising and were involved in school and sports. Then, at puberty, many of the sons turned away from their mothers' nurturing, spurning the relationships between mother and son that had developed up to that point. Norma's family belonged to a "Christian" church (i.e., not Catholic) and she considered her son to have been "almost born" in the Christian church, having become a member at three years of age. She recounted that he had learned about God. But, at around fourteen years of age, he began to rebel against his mother. He did not want to attend church any longer and fled from her to be with his friends (Norma 18-27). She perceived that he was rejecting the nurturing aspect of her mothering.

For Victoria, when her son was about 12 years of age, she noticed that some "amiguitos" (literally "little friends," used in a sarcastic sense) came to the house, and her son began to hang around with them, to the point where she became afraid and wanted to separate him from the so-called friends (Victoria 617-620). This mother perceived that the time her son spent with his friends was time taken away from her nurturing relationship; worse yet, she suspected these "amiguitos" would attempt to undermine her nurturing. At about 14 years of age, Julia's son began giving her problems in that he would not want to listen to what she was saying. She would tell

him not to leave the house but he would not obey her and he would run away (Julia 2-9). The mothers perceived their sons as rejecting their relationship and seeking relationships with others who did not share the mothers' dreams for their sons in this new country.

The mothers would attempt to continue nurturing the relationship, but the sons seemed to have rejected the relationship. The difficult part of this experience for Diana was that her son no longer wanted to listen to anyone (Diana 33). She expressed that, in addition to her son's constant bickering and fighting with them ("...peleando todo ese tiempo. Peleandole. Peleandole. Peleandole."), when she tried to talk with him, he would ignore them. Whatever they said to him "entered in one ear and came out the other" (Diana 1312-1316).

A central element of the mothers' dreams, a goal for the relationships that had been nurtured, had been for their sons to get ahead by succeeding in school. So, when sons rejected schooling, this was very painful for the mothers, as it struck at the very core of the relationships they were trying to nurture. Diana described that she and her husband began to have a lot of problems with their son as he no longer seemed to understand the dream they were nurturing for him. Instead, he claimed that he did not want to go to school any longer (Diana 12-14). For Norma, there was no good alternative to going to school. Her son would cut school which was bad enough. But then, she wondered what would he be doing in the streets? She was sure he would be doing things that he should not be doing (Norma 80-83). An extreme rejection was when the sons rejected the mothers' nurturing of the relationship itself. Diana related that as her son became older, his anger and rebellion grew to the point where he ceased caring for the family members, and instead he hated them (Diana 14-16).

At this point, the mothers' efforts to nurture the relationships were seen as meddling and bothersome. Norma remembered how her son shouted at her, "You are always bothering

me,” yet she tried to continue the nurturing, advising him that she did not wish to bother him, but she wanted to remind him that neither she nor her husband had taught him to smoke. Thus, she wanted to know why he was behaving like that and why he would listen to the advice of his so-called friends, who she felt would “carry him to ruin” (Norma 106-109). Diana’s son expressed this rejection very clearly. He was angry when she caught him using drugs and placed him in a bootcamp. When he came out of the bootcamp, he was always angry with Diana and her husband. He accused her and her husband of not loving him anymore, saying that he did not know why they wanted him to be born, that he hated them all, and similar very “emotionally ugly things” (“Enojado siempre con nosotros. Y nos decia que nosotros no lo queriamos. Que para que lo tuvimos, que nos decia muchas cosas feas...Que nos odiaba.”) (Diana 93-97; Diana 16).

Nurturing While Incarcerated

Once the sons had been arrested, jailed and separated from the world, the mothers wanted to continue to nurture their relationship with their sons. Alma described that she and her family were not going to leave her incarcerated son alone. Wherever he was housed, they would go to visit him. This was “the least they could do for him”, even though, she said with a sigh, he was given a 27 year sentence (Alma 657-666). Once her son was jailed, Sonia assured him that he was, for her, the most important thing, that in spite of what had happened, she still loved him (Sonia 667-680). Eva visited her son in prison and told him that she, his mother, was the only friend that he really had, as she was the only one that would go to visit him in prison. Eva felt that she was her son’s only friend. She continued to be the only person in whom he could confide, the only one to whom he could tell what was happening to him, the only one who would help him (Eva 248-261).

However, the mothers could not nurture their sons in the same way as they had before the incarceration. Connie described how the court would not allow her even minimal communication for nurturing. Her son was being held and tried. She went to every session of the court, and she was prohibited from talking to her son, to the point she could not even say “Hello” to him, or the bailiff would remove her from the courtroom. All she could do was watch her son being tried. After one session, as her son was being led back to jail, he turned to her and shouted out, “Mom, I love you,” and was punished for having spoken to her (Connie 631-643). When Teresa went to see her son the day he was to be sentenced, she was warned by the bailiff that the judge would not tolerate anyone bursting out in tears or calling out anything. Teresa told the bailiff that she would have to express her feelings, to which the bailiff replied that it was prohibited by law. Even so, when her son was sentenced and led away, she could not help but burst out in tears, at which the judge glared at her: she was unable to communicate using the most elementary gesture (Teresa 807-827).

While an accused son may be technically a minor, and in theory still somewhat under his mother’s care, if the son is tried as an adult, he is treated as an adult, and the mothers described losing the right to function as a parent of a minor. The mother of an adult may no longer have automatic access to his records and information. Sonia described that her 15 year old son had suffered in school from a learning disability but was not provided help by the teachers and was made fun of by other students. Thus, by age 15, he had begun to cut school and hang around a group of older adult boys. As a result, he was present and arrested when an incident occurred; that “event” was elevated to a case involving an “intent to kill” and her son, as an “associate,” was going to be tried as an adult. She described that she lost her rights as a mother- and a mother of a son with a learning disability- because he was going to be tried as an adult.

The mothers wanted to continue to nurture their relationships with their sons, but the fact of physical isolation made attempting to nurture very difficult. Face-to-face communication was limited to visiting hours every once in a while. Even though their sons were far away, the mothers described making considerable efforts to be able to be with their sons, even if only for a few hours. Laura wanted to visit her son every week, but she did not know how to drive and there was no bus service to the area where her son was incarcerated. So, she could try to get a ride from someone else going to the prison to visit, try to convince her daughter to give her a ride, or take the metrolink, that would leave her with a long walk to the prison (“el metrolink...deja muy retirado de todos modos tenia que caminar mucho y seria...no puedo caminar tanto”) (Laura 610-620). While her son was in a juvenile center, Julia would take four buses from her house to a location in Southern California where another bus (possibly a chartered van, from her sketchy description) would take her to the prison. The bus would only wait for two hours before returning her to the Southern California location. Then she would take another four buses back home, arriving late at night (Julia 219-228).

Karen would pay a neighbor to leave at 5:00 in the morning and drive her three hours so that she could be in line by 8:00 am to enter the prison. In order not to lose time, rather than make rest stops on the way she would wear “Pampers” diapers up and back, to absorb her urine (“..pues oiga, necesita uno cargar su Pamper para dentro para no miarse”; Well listen, one has to put on Pampers, while you are in [the car] so as not to urinate on yourself) (Karen 1082-1084).

Even the short visit might not always be possible. Alma described a journey with her family to the facility holding her son. It was only after they had arrived that they learned that their son was being punished and could not be visited: Alma felt that someone should have called her to let them know that he could not be visited (Alma 1520-1529). For reasons Alma did not

clarify, her son was being held in isolation in an adult prison and could not receive visits or even telephone calls (Alma 1017-1018).

To supplement the in-person nurturing or to utilize alternative forms of nurturing when face-to-face visits were not possible, the mothers tried other available means, such as telephone calls and letters. Sonia would send her son letters, even greeting cards, or anything she could to continue the nurturing so that he would feel better. She was acutely aware of the fact there was little opportunity to nurture the relationship as she could visit only on weekends, but she tried everything she could (Sonia 698-701). Once the obstacles had been overcome and the mothers' presence continued in some attenuated form, they could continue the nurturing of their relationship with their now-incarcerated sons.

Nurturing by Listening

As before, the mothers could provide an audience for their sons but this time their sons wanted to talk. They reported how their sons used this shortened time to share their thoughts. Teresa recalled how her son shared his reflections on what he had done. For him, all his behavior had been like a game, like when young children run down an apartment corridor, knocking on doors and running away before they are answered. But at this point, in prison, he had begun to realize the gravity of what he had done (Teresa 942-947). Belena listened while her son shared with her his fears that his being an ex-convict would mark him for the rest of his life and that schools, employers and society in general would make feel that he was a bad person (Belena 1691-1695).

When physical presence was not possible, the mothers could "listen" via other means. Connie had not been able to visit her son, but he wrote to her and reassured her, "Mom, I'm OK, I'm all right" (Connie 783-784). Karen preferred that her son call her and asked him to call her

from wherever he was housed. Apparently, she did not have a telephone so her son would have to call her sister and her sister would give the phone to Karen when he called. But, she assured him if he could not call, then at least she wanted him to write her so that she would know that he was all right (Karen 94-100). This mother was happy to get any kind of communication from her son, spoken or written.

Nurturing by Advising

The mothers continued to advise their sons, but the advising was, at this new point in time, tempered by the fact that their sons were currently prisoners and in the future would be labeled as ex-convicts. The advising could be simply about their personal behavior. Early advice given by a number of mothers to their sons was to not get tattoos in prison, nor get their heads shaved. Connie gave this advice by writing to her incarcerated son (Connie 737-744).

The advising could also be about preparing themselves for life after prison. For example, Fatima advised her son that he would have to think a lot about his future because as an ex-convict he would not be able to find employment as easily as any other person (Fatima 2667-2669). Diana advised her incarcerated son to take advantage of the fact that in prison he could earn a high school diploma (which none of her children had accomplished at that time) so that, should he be released someday, he could get a job (Diana 1480-1485). Teresa's son was studying while in prison and she would remind him that if he were still running the streets, he would not be earning graduation credits. This was this mother's way of continuing to advise him to focus on his education and make the best of the situation. Because he was in prison, he was able to earn these credits and she thought that he would earn his diploma in the following year (Teresa 771-774).

Some advising was also about their future relationships with other family members, especially children the sons might have at that point. Eva's incarcerated son had fathered two children with a girlfriend before incarceration. In a visit with her son, Eva advised him to become a responsible person like she was and to help his children get ahead, not to pull them down (Eva 2424-2430). Other advising was also about personal moral character. When the mothers were sure that their sons had indeed committed some crime, they advised them to take their punishment. Uma told all her children that whoever committed an error would have to pay for it (Uma 777). Fatima reminded her son that everything had been up to him, he had the world in his hands, and he knew what was going to happen, inferring that he needed to behave (Fatima 625-626). Eva appealed to her son's latent sense of morality when she asked him to think about the consequences of his earlier behavior. When he had stolen money, she asked him to think that maybe the stolen money had been needed for a sick child, or for food, or to pay the rent (Eva 601-605).

Mothering: Providing for their Sons before the Incarceration

The mothers provided many things for their children, including food, clothing and shelter. Before incarceration, the mothers were free to define what they provided, the quantities they provided, and the timing of these provisions to their sons and the other children. The three major elements of providing before the incarceration that will be described below are: providing opportunities to "get ahead" (education), providing basic necessities (housing and food), providing opportunities to enhance the growth and development of their sons, and the work that providing entails.

Providing Opportunities

The immigrant mothers described their countries of origin as having very limited opportunities. One mother described a childhood growing up in a very poor environment in which they sometimes did not have enough food to eat (Diana 1527-1528.) At some point in their lives, the women decided to immigrate to the United States to seek better opportunities for themselves and to provide better opportunities for their children (Rita 1159-1161). One mother was very clear about her motives for moving to Southern California. She and her husband did not want their children to grow up as deprived as they had been. She felt that education was the key to their children's future achievement. So, she and her husband would provide the necessities for their children, so that they could concentrate on their schoolwork (Diana 15). The provision of necessities was the means of achieving their goal to provide opportunities for their children to get ahead.

Providing Basic Necessities

The mothers mentioned the importance of being able to provide the basic necessities for their children. Housing was one of these necessities. Whether renting or owning, the mothers took pride in being able to provide shelter for their children. One single mother who worked commented that her house "cost her a lot to maintain" (Julia 68-174.) A married mother described with pride the fact that she and her husband had actually bought a house and took out a loan and remodeled it with more bedrooms, so that each child could have a private bedroom, with a guestroom for the visiting grandparents (Diana 1575-1586). For Fatima, the only time she had felt tranquility and lived comfortably were the two years that she and her family were able to manage the rent for a house as opposed to an apartment. However she was no longer able to pay rent and, at the time of the interview, was living in a small apartment that was less desirable

(Fatima, 351-362). Through their work, the parents were able to provide clothing and shoes for their children (Victoria 336-344.) Food and meals were additional daily basic necessities the mothers were able to provide for their children. Laura expressed that she felt it important for her to say that she had done all that she could to provide food and clothing for her family (Laura 696-699). Some mothers were even able to provide spending money for their children (Victoria 352-356).

Providing Opportunities for the Son's Growth and Development

Beyond the basic necessities, when they were able, mothers tried to provide extra-curricular opportunities for their children to develop. One mother recounted how she provided music classes for her son who wanted to learn to play the accordion (Mariana 252-253). When a mother had to work, she had limited, small amounts of time to spend on her children.

One mother recounted how she tried to make that small amount of time a "quality time" with them in spite of her work schedule (Laura 692-694). For Laura "quality time" meant giving her children the attention she could not give them while she was at work (Laura, 692-694). Mothers were aware that the neighborhoods they lived in were not the ones that they desired for their children. Rita described passing by gang members in her neighborhood and could see younger boys being recruited but was unable to move out of the area (Rita 434-438).

Working to Provide

Upon arrival in Southern California the immigrant mothers found jobs and began to work to provide for their children. One mother was brought as a teenager to Southern California at the age of 15. She had found a job within two weeks of arrival, and had worked ever since, sometimes working at two jobs so that her children "would never want for anything" (Eva 188-192; 88.) The work was often described as requiring very long hours. One mother mentioned

that she worked 10 to 11 hours per day, but she seemed to not mind, as long as her children were involved in studying (Rita 1163). Uma summarized the relationship between working and providing. After describing herself as earning her daily bread (“pan de cada dia”), she did the best that she could to have a home and provide everything in the home that was needed (Uma 708-709). In other words, if she didn’t work she could not provide.

The mothers were proud of their achievements in immigrating and then working hard to provide the necessities for their children so that they would have more opportunities for education and advancement than they had had in their countries of origin. One mother spoke very clearly and said that because of her work, they would have food and shelter, and could dedicate themselves to their schoolwork (Eva 183-186).

Mothering: Providing for their Sons While Son is Incarcerated

Once the sons had been incarcerated, the mothers described their ability to provide for them as greatly constrained. On a daily basis, the incarcerated sons were provided with some basic necessities by the prison such as shelter, food and clothing. Yet the mothers still tried to provide basic necessities for their sons, as they felt their sons were not being sufficiently provided for. One son tried to allay his mother’s concerns about his meals by reassuring her that he was fed a number of times per day (Norma 254-258). But the mothers were not convinced that the necessities supplied “free of cost” by the prison were sufficient (Julia 110).

Basic necessities. The meals provided in prison were of concern for some mothers. One mother was worried that the prison housing her son did not provide sufficient food to satiate the inmates (Norma 257-261). Other mothers were concerned about the quality of the food. One mother went so far as to express concern about the “shitty” food being provided to her son (Karen 372-374). As described below, the mothers could order some additional basic necessities

for their sons using a sort of “commissary” system---they could order, and pay for, a short list of products to augment their sons’ diets. But the items on the list were of dubious nutritional value. One mother was concerned that the “augmentation items” were no better than the ordinary prison food. In her view, the prison food already was of poor nutritional value, but the additional foods she was allowed to provide were essentially fast foods of the “cup of soup” and potato chips variety, which were not much of an improvement. Nonetheless, she bought these few extra items for her son every three months, to be able to provide at least something more than the prison minimum (Julia 1097-1098; 1076-1077; 1121). However, she would have preferred more nutritious items such as apples and oatmeal which were, in her view, far more nutritious than chocolate bars or potato chips (Julia 1111-1121).

Clothing was also supplemented by the mothers. One mother described needing to provide a good portion of the clothes her son needed. She was not sure the prison would even supply socks, so she sent her son items on an ongoing basis (Julia 1132-1136).

Constrained Providing

Mothers explained that they could not simply buy items of their choosing in a store of their choosing and ship them to their sons. They had to go through an intermediary, a sort of prison commissary. The mothers ordered and paid for items on a list that the commissary then provided to their sons. But the lists themselves were offered extremely limited options: The prison commissary had a short list of “approved” items that were the only items parents could choose from (Karen 344-346).

In other words, the mothers were limited to paying someone else (the prison) to deliver an extremely limited selection of items to their sons. In order to supplement the prison-issued food and clothing, parents could spend hundreds of dollars a month (Julia 1123-1128). At every

visit, many mothers would bring money for their sons to order from the limited selection available to them (Connie 688-689). This additional expense could be needed for the length of the prison sentence, which for some young offenders, meant the rest of their lives (Alma 654). While they could not provide for their incarcerated sons the way they had before incarceration, they could provide something.

However, the mothers described some problems in the ordering system. The full dollar value the mothers sent would not always be made available to the son: the prisons had systems for reducing the amount for various reasons. One mother complained that if she sent \$80 to the prison for food items, first the prison would withhold half that amount, then spend the remainder on “cup o’ soup” and potato chips (Julia 1076-1077.) At one adult prison, the system sent half the amount remitted by the mothers back to the courts to pay for the costs of the trial that had sent their sons to prison (Connie 871-876). The mothers found ways to get around this withholding. One mother would send money to another young prisoner who did not owe the courts, so that her son would get the full amount (Connie 878-879)¹

Working to Provide

By the time the sons were incarcerated, some mothers had experienced major changes in life that had affected their economic standing: Husbands might have left, jobs may have been lost and great expenses may have accrued for attorneys, bail and other costs. Some reported not being in the same financial situation they had been in years earlier. But, because they wanted to provide for their sons, they engaged in other forms of earning. The simplest way to generate money for the needs of the incarcerated son was to do with less themselves, such as buying less

¹ While the mother was unclear in describing the reasons for which the monetary assistance she gave to her son was taken or reduced, during her son’s incarceration, personal correspondence from prison chaplain Javier Stauring, suggested that this may be part of a victim restitution program. February 20, 2013, Office of Restorative Justice, Archdiocese of Los Angeles, California.

food for themselves so that some money would be left over for the sons (Julia 1094). One mother went to the extreme of “selling tamales,” (“vender tamales” in Mexican Spanish implies making money however one can) first to pay off the attorney’s fees, then later perhaps to send to her son (Laura 807-812.) Another mother said she engaged in the fraudulent activity of selling her food stamps to raise money to send to her son. She said, “Why should I tell you lies...to sell food stamps to send something to my son is fraudulent, but I do it...I don’t do it as a bad thing, I do it to help my son” (“Para que le voy a echar mentiras...cambiar las estampillas para mandarle a mi hijo es fraude, pero yo lo hago...no lo hago por mal, lo hago para ayudar a mi hijo”) (Karen 1068-1070).

Some mothers could not help commenting on the changed circumstances of their sons in prison. Whereas before incarceration, the sons might have spurned their mothers’ providing for them, some mothers reported that once their sons were incarcerated, they finally appreciated what they had lost. One son told his mother that he used to complain about the food she had provided for him at home, but now that he had prison food he realized that she never had given him bad food, but rather she had given him the best she had (Karen 361-363). One mother reported gently chiding her son about what he had lost; she said she asked “Why did he have to come to prison to get food, clothing, bed and shelter? What had he lacked for at home?” (Norma 263-265; 260-261).

Mothering: Protecting Her Son Before His Incarceration

As described earlier, the process of mothering was constructed by the participants (mothers) in order to guide their sons, so that they would grow up to fit the goals the mothers had developed for them. The nurturing and providing properties of the mothering have been described above, both before and after incarceration. At times, the mothers perceived that

harmful influences on their son could interfere with their sons' abilities to achieve the goals the mothers had for them. So, the final process to be presented is that of protecting. In the mothers' perceptions, at times their sons needed to be protected from institutions (school, police and courts), from destructive friends, from threatening neighborhoods, and from their own behavior (school behavior, drug use, clothing, behavior).

Protecting from Institutions

The mothers reported instances of protecting their sons from three different types of institutions: the schools, the police and the courts.

Schools. Schools were the place where their children were supposed to be provided knowledge and skills so that they could "become someone." For some mothers, the schools were reported as the problem rather than the solution and were seen as obstructing their children's progress. In such cases, the mothers had to protect their children from the schools. The case of Uma (124-133) is illustrative. She received repeated calls from a school official who identified her son as disruptive. She met with the official and complained that while she would not tolerate disruptive behavior in her son, neither would she tolerate the official bothering her son. The discussion escalated and the official threatened to have her thrown out of his office. She replied that if he had done so she would complain to the school district. She added that her son was not alone in the school: He had his mother and father to back him up. They finally agreed to transfer her son to another school. Another mother had a son who, because of a learning disability, was to be placed in a special education program designated by the Individual Education Plan (IEP). However, the mother perceived that the teachers did not participate as they should have and his learning goals were not being met. When she confronted the teachers, they told her that they

could not give extra attention to one single student as there were a lot of students that needed their attention (Sonia 101-1-4; 121-122).

Police. Another institution the mothers had to protect their sons from was the police. After Victoria's son was released from bootcamp with glowing recommendations (Victoria 114-116), he was assigned a probation officer (PO) who constantly threatened him, telling him that he (the PO) did not want to see him walking free on the streets, that he wanted to see him in jail (Victoria 121-122). The PO then threatened the mother that if she did not sign some papers he had, he was going to lock her up as well. She stood up to the PO and replied that he had better lock her up because she was not going to sign the papers (Victoria 156-159). Another mother explained that verbally attacking the police was the only thing that she, as a mother, could do for her son; however, she recalled being immediately told to control herself by her daughter while at the police station (Belena 2117-2135).

Courts. During the court process, the mothers described trying to protect their sons from being railroaded by the courts. Connie told how her son was being pressured to accept a plea bargain and was unsure if he should accept or not. The court allowed Connie to talk with her son for five minutes with the instruction that she should convince her son to accept and sign the offer. She was told could not hug him or touch him; she could only talk to him face-to-face. As they stood facing each other, she told him that she would not counsel him to sign the offer: she would leave that decision up to him, and she would support whatever he decided. She added that, if he was not guilty, if he really felt he was not guilty, there was no reason for him to accept the offer (Connie 649-664). When the District Attorney accused Belena's son of being a gang member, she fought back ("peleamos") and hired a private investigator out of her own funds to do a background check on her son at the schools he had attended (Belena 1522-1524).

Protecting from Destructive Friends

Mothers were aware that their sons' friends were playing an increasingly influential role in their sons' daily lives. One mother told her son that she wanted him to be with friends who were positive and constructive, that she would accept that type of friend. But she refused to allow him to bring destructive friends into their house who were themselves "destroyed and only wanted to destroy others" (Teresa 1072-1085). As a response to this type of protection, some sons would not bring their friends home, but instead would leave the house to meet with them. This absence from the house was worrisome for the mothers who saw that their sons were escaping ("se me escapaba con los amigos") from their protection (Norma 27-30). A number of mothers recounted coming home from work, discovering their sons were gone from the house, and then searching the streets late at night for their missing sons, to protect them from the potentially destructive influence of the sons' "friends". One mother, who did not know how to drive at the time, literally walked the streets at one o'clock in the morning to find her son and protect him by removing him from the influence of the friends (Rita 45-46; 51-56). Another mother searched for her son in parts of the city that were so dangerous that her son asked if she were not afraid; she replied that she was not at all afraid (Teresa 1108-1128).

Protecting from Neighborhood

One way of protecting their sons from the dangers in a particular neighborhood was to move him to another neighborhood, hopefully a better one. Uma was aware of the difference in neighborhoods and the effects of this difference on children's development. She described her desire to be in a better neighborhood so that her children could grow up in a better environment, not the one she was currently living in. She called her area "lo ultimo", i.e. the worst. She contrasted it by describing a very swanky, up-scale town, "Hill Crest," as calmer and cleaner.

That type of environment, she believed, would be motivating for a child, would help a child mentally, and would influence the child greatly (Uma 712-721). Beyond yearning for a better environment, some mothers went to the extent of changing residences to another city so that they could use distance to protect their sons from the undesired influences. One mother moved her son far away from the threatening environment to a place where he did not know anyone. When he wanted to see his old friends, he would have to ask her to take him back to the old neighborhood and, of course, she would know with whom he was associating (Victoria 632-634).

Protecting Sons From Their Own Behavior

When the sons were younger, most mothers reported how they had tried to protect their sons from external threats such as non-supportive schools. However, at the time of puberty, “Beginning around 10, 11, 12, 13 years” (Victoria, 617), the sons began to act in ways that the mothers perceived as threats to the dream that they had created for their son’s ability to get ahead (“salirse adelante”). The mothers described how they had to begin to protect the sons from their own behavior.

Police. The mothers had been promoting school participation as the main path to advancing in life (Diana 1066). If the sons lost interest in schoolwork, the mothers saw that they had to protect the sons from this harmful behavior. One mother reminded her son that being in school meant more than simply filling a seat---he needed to become motivated to get involved in learning (Diana 1060). However, once their son began to cut school, the mothers stated that their concern was elevated to a higher level. Not only were they not moving ahead in school work, there was now the worry about what their sons were doing outside of school, what he was doing on the streets. At this point, the mother needed to learn what to do to intervene to protect the son from his own behavior (Norma 80-85).

Drug use behavior. In the course of providing for their sons, while washing clothes or cleaning a bedroom, the mothers might find evidence of the sons' use of drugs. An initial way of protecting was to attempt to reason with the drug-using son. When Eva discovered that her son was smoking drugs, she warned him that he could lose his mind by smoking what she called, "that junk" ("esa cochinada") (Eva 278-279). Another mother's first reaction to this discovery was to break up and throw away the son's bong and lighters (Diana 945; 957; 959). Some mothers sought to confirm their sons' drug use through drug testing (Diana 643-647). Others even sought professional rehabilitation help for their sons (Sonia 1092-1094).

Clothing behavior and appearance. Mothers also tried to protect their sons from adopting clothing behavior that they associated with gangs (Teresa 979-993). Making fun of the loose-baggy clothing was described as one type of attempt to protect the sons from this clothing behavior. One mother told her son that if she were put on her son's baggy pants, all of her could fit in one baggy pant leg (Diana 843-844). Some mothers lamented that their sons had gotten tattoos (Eva 281, Fatima 1833, Norma 211, Victoria 476). For other mothers, it was important to acknowledge and share with the researcher that their sons had not gotten tattoos (Belena 1538-1541, Connie 47, Olivia 1299).

Mothering: Protecting While Incarcerated

Once their sons were in the custody of the criminal justice system, the mothers' ability to protect their sons was suddenly and fundamentally changed. They could not intervene to protect their son from the institution now in charge of their sons' lives. They could not protect their sons from their own behavior and they could not even protect their son from other inmates.

Nonetheless, they did continue to want to protect their sons. When one mother went to visit her son, she noticed his mouth and teeth had been beaten in, and he told her he had been assaulted by

a larger inmate. Her desire was to be there to help protect him but as he was behind bars, she could do nothing (Sonia 404-416). Mothers reported seeking help from others to help their sons such as one mother who complained to the correctional facility staff that her son had gotten beaten while in custody (Sonia, 94). Others sought the help of public defenders or lawyers in private practice (Alma, 14, Sonia 375, Mariana 824, Julia 755-756, Karen 419-420, Laura 412). One mother tried to do the paper work to appeal her son's charges but found that it was too late; he had accepted a plea bargain without her knowledge (Connie 34).

Protecting Sons from Negative Thoughts

As already noted, the mothers often described the notion that negative thoughts and emotions could affect one's physical health. Their belief of the effect of negative emotions on health meant that the one thing that a mother could protect her incarcerated son from was negative thoughts that the mother's own behavior and actions might generate in her son. The mothers did not want to negatively impact their sons' health.

The mothers were hurting and suffering inside but they did not want their sons to know because then the sons might begin to hurt and suffer for their mothers. This would only add to the pain of being incarcerated. Victoria illustrated this when she recounted that she felt she had to be strong when she visited her son. She knew her son would be observing her and that if she let him see her cry, that image would remain in his mind, and he would later worry about her suffering. So, even though she wanted to cry, she had to be strong and assure her son that she was fine. She did not want to add to his already heavy emotional burden of being imprisoned (Victoria 584-589). Another mother described that she would never cry in front of her son. Because he needed to be strong in prison, she would only cry when he could not see her,

apparently so that he would not be weakened by the memory of his mother's suffering (Laura 814-815).

In a similar fashion, some mothers expressed that they would try to not appear glum or sad when visiting their sons because these negative emotions might affect their sons. Alma described how she had to be strong and not let her son see her feeling depressed (Alma 1120-1129). The effort of appearing strong was noticed by the daughter of one of the mothers who complimented her mother for being strong enough to choke back her tears, even though she was ill (Belena 256-257).

If negative thoughts created negative health, the opposite was also part of beliefs described by the mothers of this sample: positive emotions will create positive health. One way to communicate strength to the sons was to appear to them as well groomed rather than disheveled. For Fatima, being poorly groomed might make her appear emaciated to her son. When her son had a court appearance, she dressed nicely, arranged her hair *y todo* [and everything, probably referring to makeup] so that he would see her in apparent good condition (Fatima 114-119). Another mother likened her preparations to be present in court for her son almost as a disguise: she took a bath, changed her clothing, then put on make-up that she called "a mask," (Belena 145-150).

Beyond protecting their sons from negative emotions that might affect their health negatively, i.e. worrying about how their incarceration was affecting the mothers, there was little else the mothers could do to protect their sons while they were in prison. They had almost no other options to protect their sons.

Integrating the Core Categories

Based on the narratives from low-income Spanish-language dominant Latina immigrant mothers who were experiencing the incarceration of their adolescent and young adult sons, this chapter has presented theoretical analysis of two core categories that have been developed into concepts: self-care and mothering. . These concepts are placed into an integrated model to show the mothers' coping processes (see Figures 1 and 2). Findings in this study are the product of a constructivist grounded theory approach to data collection and analysis. These two concepts of self care and mothering are connected to each other in a circular fashion. Each concept implies a process and each process helped to keep the mother from “dejarse caer,” that is, from falling down, or from falling to pieces, and from giving up.

Figure 1 shows the impact of the sons' incarceration on their mothers. The emotional pain, the impact on the family, and the relentless external pressures (jobs, bills, other children, etc.) weighed on the mothers, and they described spiraling downward into a condition they called “dejarse caer”. At the end of that spiral would be dysfunction and suicidal thoughts. However, at this point, the motivators came into action. Motivated by the needs of their other children, by the needs of their incarcerated sons, and by their own self-image as functional, able mothers, they were motivated to pull themselves out of the “dejarse caer” spiral, into a “no dejarse caer” (do not fall down, do not fall to pieces, do not give up) spiral. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

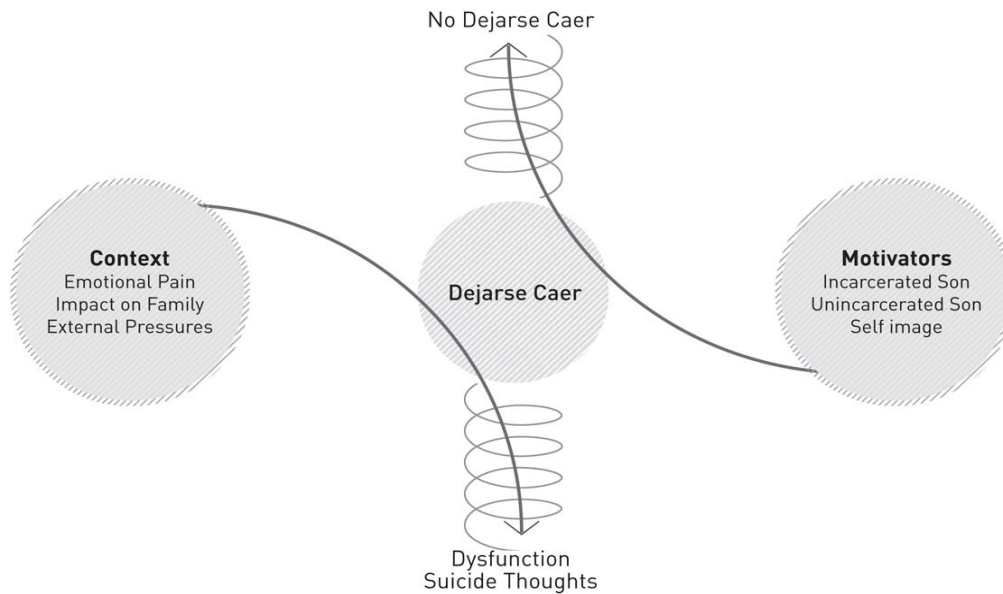


Figure 1. Spiral experienced by mothers due to son’s incarceration.

Figure 2 below shows how the mothers took action to achieve and maintain themselves in the “no dejarse caer” mode. On the left are the behaviors of self care. Unable to access much formal, professional care), three properties of self-care emerged from the mothers’ actions to keep from falling down or giving up: working with the mind, working with others and working with God. The self-care process assisted them in continuing their mothering, with its properties of nurturing, providing and protecting. As stated above, the two core categories, self-care and mothering, fed into one another in a circular fashion. Because they engaged in self-care, they could continue to mother which provided them a compelling purpose to continue the self-care. In short, they coped in order to mother, and they mothered in order to cope.

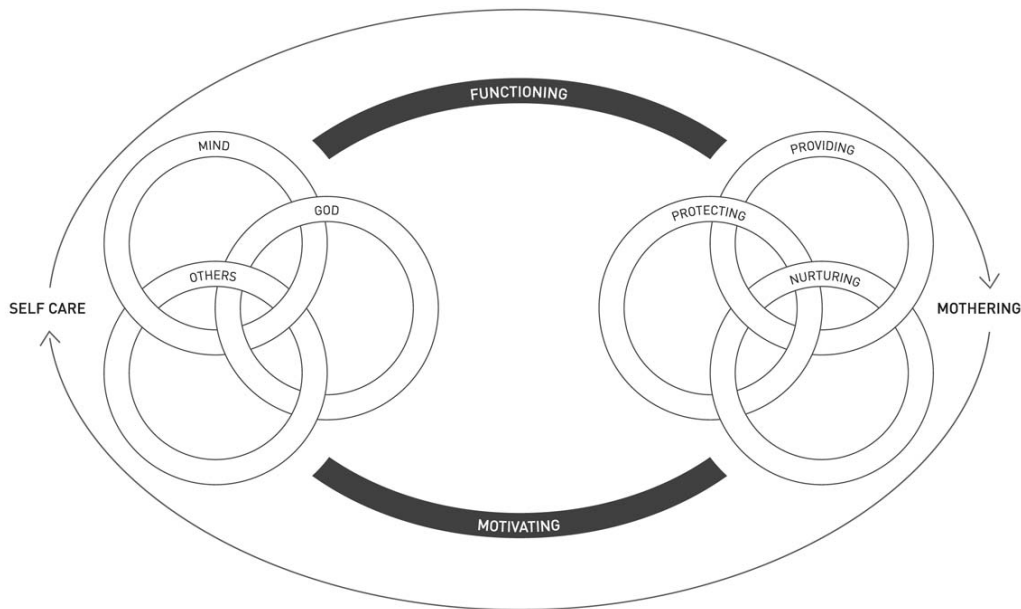


Figure 2. The interrelationship between self-care and mothering.

Summary

At the time of the interviews, the mothers described still feeling the pain of their sons' incarceration: a number of them wept during the interviews. No one mentioned receiving professional one-on-one services, therapy, counseling, or mental health care to help them in their situations. Instead, they described being left to cope on their own, sometimes with support from family, friends and co-workers. As described, a few were able to find some support from volunteer and community programs. Working on their own, they had developed ways to calm their emotions, and use the motivation of their children's needs to continue the daily struggle to put food on the table and a roof over their heads. They also continued the mothering of their incarcerated sons, but had to develop new ways to do this, given the highly structured constraints

of their sons' lives in prisons. And, they had to continue mothering the children who were not in jail. The implications of these situations for nursing will be discussed in the final chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses a model of the coping processes that integrates the concepts of self-care and mothering. This model was constructed using constructivist grounded theory methodology from a small non-population-based sample of low income, Spanish language-dominant, immigrant Latina mothers who were coping with an incarcerated son. This discussion is guided by the theoretical framework of Symbolic Interaction (SI), the philosophical tenets of pragmatism, as well as a limited sample of research articles considered relevant from the extant literature. In addition, the relevancy of the findings to the practice of nursing is touched upon from the point of view of facilitating the application of nursing frameworks when working with Latina immigrant populations managing stressful situations and identifying broader roles for public health nurse involvement. A brief discussion of the limitations of this study is included.

The findings revealed the mothers appeared to be in acute emotional stress, so intense, raw, profound, and traumatic that they felt debilitated and paralyzed. Crisis intervention would have been appropriate, but for various reasons, which could include lack of health insurance, these mothers did not receive professional help for their situation. The literature reviewed did not turn up any studies on Latina mother's reactions to the incarceration of their sons. However, King's (2004) research was found on the impact of incarceration of family members on women who were not Latina women, such as chronic grieving, and this may shed some light on the issues that remain to be explored amongst Latinas. King pointed out that grieving an incarceration of a loved one is different from grieving a death in that the continued but distant

presence of the incarcerated did not allow for reactions to go on to closure, as in the case of death and burial (King, 2004).

Incarceration affected the entire family, and many other family members could also feel the pain. This phenomenon has come to the notice of the Spanish-language media. A recent article in *La Opinion*, titled “Padres pobres sufren con hijos tras las rejas,” (Poor parents suffer with sons behind bars) carried a number of case histories that were very similar to the histories related by the participants in this dissertation. In one example, one mother who had to travel great distances to visit her incarcerated son reported had to budget \$1,200 per month just to cover gas, hotel and transportation (Martinez Ortega, 2012). Attention will now be turned to the coping process of the mothers as they grappled with all these pressures and problems.

Dejarse Caer

“Dejarse caer” is an example of an “in vivo” code that captured the experience directly from the transcriptions of the interviewees (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 55-57). Between the pain caused by their sons’ incarceration and the weight of multiple economic and family problems, some mothers felt they were dragged down into dysfunction. To have succumbed to this pressure was called “dejarse caer.” Three motivators moved them to take steps to “No dejarse caer”.

One motivator for the mothers was the needs of her family, especially of the non-incarcerated children. Another was the needs of the now-incarcerated son. A third was the mother’s own self-image of being a capable person and mother. This vision of motivators moving them to action contrasts greatly with the research concept of fatalism which has been referred to as “the general belief that all events...are determined by fate” (de los Monteros & Gallo, 2011, p. 311). Further research may clarify whether or not fatalism is specific to certain situations or is a global attitude.

Blumer detailed the Symbolic Interactional approach to what he termed the “individual act.” He described the self-reflective element as the key to the individual act, but did not elaborate much on the motivators for an individual acting alone (Morrione, 2004, pp. 69-94). Mead certainly drew upon his pragmatist tradition to provide a framework for understanding why an individual would want to take action, and his framework helps us to better understand what occurred with these mothers as they made the transition from “dejar se caer” to “no dejar se caer.” In the Mead version of pragmatism, the meanings of experiences generally remain unquestioned as long as the conduct toward an object proceeds without problem. But, when the conduct toward an object generates conflicting reactions, the individual needs to re-examine the object, its meaning, and the conduct toward that object, and perhaps generate new meanings that can help to clarify the conflicting reactions (Cook, 1993, p. 51). For the mothers of this study, mothering was generally non problematic prior to their sons’ incarceration. However, the current incarceration of their sons suddenly presented a major problem or obstacle to their previous lines of action. They were, at that point, motivated by this problem to find new ways to mother.

Self-Care

These mothers described situations of, at best, sporadic access to medical care. None described having an established, on-going usual source of care. As noted in the literature review, numerous studies have continued to document the fact that Latinos enjoy the least access to health services compared to non-Hispanic whites due to lack of insurance (34.1% without for Latinos compared to 10.5% for NHW, CHIS 2005) and scarcity of providers (Hayes-Bautista et al., 2000). This lack of access is accentuated among Latinos who immigrated with lack of insurance running as high as 63.6%, compared to 22.2% for U.S.-born Latinos (CHIS 2005).

None of the participating mothers described having received a clinical diagnosis of depression, much less having been in a course of professional mental health treatment. Yet, a number of the mothers self-diagnosed their experience—pain, loss of energy, loss of joy, etc.—as depression. The Spanish-language media may have played a role in this self-diagnosis, as depressed heroines are commonly featured in the nightly telenovelas; also, television and newspaper medical personalities frequently write about the symptoms of depression. The lay-concept of depression is very present in Spanish-language popular media. A search for articles containing the term “depression” in the Spanish language newspapers comprising the ImpreMedia group (Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Tampa/Orlando, New York and Houston) for the period of May 11, 1985 to September 26, 2012 yielded a total of 2,946 articles containing the term. These articles ranged from physician’s columns to stories about stage and screen actors to articles about deported undocumented immigrants (ImpreMedia, 2012).

In the present study, the mothers diagnosed themselves, and then, given the lack of access to care, they perceived no option but to develop some form of self-care for themselves. To repeat what Fatima (615) said, “Yo me doy terapia solo” (I give myself therapy). Viewed from an SI philosophical perspective, these mothers were active agents in their own lives, making decisions via self-reflexivity, as they constructed new lines of action to cope with the pain of the incarceration of their sons. They stopped obsessive rumination by “tricking,” distracting and blocking any negative or worrisome thoughts of their sons, because they believed that negative thoughts would lead to bad health and to “dejarse caer.” In contrast, other research efforts on other topics, undergirded by different assumptions about human action and interaction, have presented Latinas as submissive, passive, self-abnegating and fatalistic (Castillo, et al, 2010;

Davis, Resnicow & Couper, 2011; Moreno, 2007). This may be an example of how divergent philosophical underpinnings and theoretical models may guide a researcher's gaze differently.

The mothers turned to other sources, both formal and informal, to seek support for their coping. Nonetheless, Latinos have been found to use formal mental health services less than other groups and tend to use informal support more than formal (Cabassa, Zayas & Hansen, 2006). Further research will be needed to determine if Latinos prefer to use informal support or if they use informal support because they have difficulty accessing formal support services.

For all the mothers, caring for self (self-care) involved working with God. God kept them from "dejarse caer." God was always there to provide them with patience, strength and endurance. The way the mothers worked with God was adumbrated in the pragmatist perspective of James, who, in developing his "Theory of Truth," held that when religion functions satisfactorily in the conduct of the believer, then for the believer it is true (Suckiel, 2009, p. 37). Studies have indicated that church attendance and prayer may be associated with alleviating pain and discomfort (Koenig, Larson & Larson, 2001; Gordon, Feldman, Crose, Schoen, Griffing & Shankar, 2002; Mitchell & Weatherly, 2000) but disagreement about methods and measurements cloud the field. For the participants of the current study, the mothers' actions to work with God appear to resonate with Dunn and O'Brian's quantitative study of stress, support and coping in 179 Central Americans living in the Washington DC area, "collaborating with God" (2009, p. 216).

Mothering

Another key tenet of SI came from its pragmatist origins: In this theory, the self is formed via interaction with other humans (Blumer 1969, pp. 61-62). The initial group that starts the process of integrating the individual into the larger social fabric is the primary group. As

described by Cooley (1998), the primary group is characterized by intimate, face-to-face daily association. This level of association could include the family, neighbors, and playmates. It is within the primary group that the individual learns to become resonant with the desires and needs of others, and gains the ability to view oneself in the position of others. The goal of the members of a primary group is “some desired place in the thought of the others,” (Cosser, 1971, pp. 307-309).

Applying this idea of the “primary group” to the women of this study, the mothers actively tried to provide the socialization for their sons so they would influence their son’s sense of self. The mothers had definite notions of the “self” into which they desired their sons to develop: educated, independent, and responsible. Mothering referred to the ways in which the mothers sought to influence the emerging “self” of their sons, and did so by constructing joint lines of action with their sons that they, the mothers, expected would result in the emergence of the sons’ selves they desired.

The participants described their mothering activities as: nurturing the relationship with their sons; providing; and protecting. Before incarceration, the mothers could construct these activities as they wished. After incarceration, the mothers wanted to continue to nurture, provide and protect, but lost the freedom to decide for themselves how to conduct those activities. Instead, they were limited to working within the severe restrictions imposed by the incarceration.

Blumer described a joint action as having a history: a beginning, middle and end. He provided more detail on joint lines of action, including instances when joint lines do not finish the way an individual initially thought they would. He noted that joint lines of action could be “interrupted, abandoned or transformed,” (Blumer, 1969, p. 71). The case of mothering is an illustration of the joint lines of actions the mothers had initiated with their sons which was then

severely interrupted by the incarceration. The mothers needed to transform their actions considerably so that they could continue to conduct their mothering in the new situation.

The literature on the effects of incarceration on mothers focused on two types of situations. In the first type, the mothers were impacted by the incarceration of a family member (usually the husband, in the literature see Daniel & Barrett, 1981; Lowenstein, 1984; Miller, Browning, & Spruance, 2001; Moerings, 1992). In the second type, the mothers themselves were incarcerated. Sometimes they were incarcerated because they had turned to petty crime in order to provide for their children (Ferraro & Moe, 2003). While the two types of situations are quite different (mothers outside the prison versus mothers inside), one consistent trend was seen across the two situations: In both types, the mothers' desires and activities may survive the fact of incarceration, but have to undergo a great deal of change and modification in order to continue.

Moerings' study (1992) in Holland divided mothering outside the prison into roles, such as homemaker or employee, then noted not only how the roles changed upon the incarceration of the husband, but also how some roles disappeared and new ones appeared. This current study did not focus on roles per se, but rather on the construction of lines of action to cope. Nonetheless, every line of action studied (e.g., nurturing, providing and protecting) underwent significant change as a result of the sons' incarceration.

In a similar fashion, incarcerated mothers had to change how they fulfilled their roles, to engage in what Loper and Tuerk (2006) called "parenting behind bars." In this current study, the mothers were outside the bars, trying to mother from the outside in. But whether inside or outside the bars, the mothering actions (or roles, as conceptualized in other study design frameworks; see Berry & Eigenberg, 2003; Celinska & Siegel, 2010) were changed significantly by the incarceration of, in the case of this study, a son.

Implications for Nursing Practice

This conceptual model of the coping processes to “No dejarse caer,” provides a deeper understanding of how this sample of mothers created lines of action to cope with stressful situations while their sons were incarcerated. It has the potential of sensitizing health care providers to the unique and resourceful manner that mothers may use to approach stressful situations and thereby could facilitate the use of helping or caring frameworks like the Comprehensive Health Seeking and Coping Paradigm (CHSCP) (Nyamathi, 1989), when working with Latino immigrant populations.

From a public health nursing perspective, the larger question is one of prevention: What can public health nursing do to prevent (or greatly reduce) the effects of incarceration of young sons on their mothers. The role that public health nurses can choose to play can be narrowly focused or broadly focused.

The narrowly focused role would be to work with the families themselves. Public health nurses can first do more to prevent delinquent behaviors by helping mothers to involve their sons with healthy youth organizations and advocacy groups programs, designed to promote healthy non-violent, drug free lifestyles. Public health nurse also need to make clear to immigrant mothers the type of activities that are considered delinquent and to increase the juvenile justice literacy level of immigrant.

Public health nurses can help immigrant mothers and families increase their understanding of how the juvenile justice in the United States, particularly in California, functions. The juvenile justice system is complex and usually not on the radar of most parents until a problem arises. Public health nursing efforts might involve encouraging immigrant

families to become familiar with the laws and policies that govern youth delinquent activities. They can do this by working with the appropriate branches of the police department to do community education and outreach to immigrant communities. Public health nurses, in conjunction with the police department and youth advocacy groups, could develop literature in Spanish that would increase the transparency of the court system.

There are several websites that can be accessed, such as <http://www.dhs.stte.n.us/main/groups/children/documents...> “Understanding the juvenile justice system,” that provides articles simplifying the various stages of the juvenile justice system into six stages (arrest, intake, detention hearing, adjudication, disposition and placement) providing definitions of legal terms such as adjudication and disposition), explanations of different types of placements and facilities, such as (aftercare and residential facility) as well as identifying key points for family involvement, such as demand to be present in any interrogation of your child.

A broader focus would be to look at the community and community-level analyses and policy work. Public health nurses can choose to include broader demographic variables, such as arrest and incarceration rates as part of their community assessments. Public health nurses can choose to discuss the dynamic interrelationship that exists between risks in the environment and the growth and development of children, more specifically boys growing up with limited supervision in risky neighborhoods. Public health nurses can also choose to become more vocal and involved in deciding how schools should handle issues, such as truancy. For example, under a “zero tolerance” policy adopted nearly a decade ago, a student who is one minute late to school, or who is found away from the school grounds, is given a “ticket” with a fine that has to be paid. The fine can start at \$250, and if not promptly paid, can escalate to \$860. If a ticket is unpaid, the student can be arrested, led away in handcuffs and be brought to court, sentenced and

be placed in juvenile detention (Alvarado, 2012; Jennings, 2012). And finally, public health nurses can choose to become more involved in helping to evaluate criminal justice issues from a mental and physical health perspective.

Limitations of this Study

The limitations of this study are those associated with any qualitative study: its purpose is not theory verification but the construction of conceptual models through induction and “creative inferencing.” Its subjective approach is dependent on the researcher’s training and ability to establish rapport with research participants. The data that are generated are in the form of verbal reports, which are vulnerable to the level of cognitive processing and communication skills possessed by the research participant. Lastly, given the small size of a non-population-based sample, the findings are not easily generalizable (Rennie, Phillips, & Quartaro, 1988).

Furthermore, the sample consisted of low-income, Spanish-language-dominant, Latina immigrant mothers. A similar study of English-language-dominant US born Latina mothers might enhance the development of the concepts of self-care and mothering. A cross-sectional survey informed by the findings of this study might provide quantifiable generalizability and would be a highly suggested next step.

Concluding Remarks

In this study, informed by SI and Constructivist Grounded theory (CGT), the researcher—an immigrant bilingual nurse—interacted with 17 immigrant, low income, Spanish-language dominant mothers to construct a portion of their world around the incarceration of their young sons. After the interviews, the researcher interacted with the data to develop core conceptual categories and analyze the relations among them. The implications of these categories for PHN practice have been introduced, but by no means exhausted.

The researcher would like to invite the readers to interact with the findings presented here, aware that each reader's individual biography may lead to different conclusions from those presented here. The fact that the individual interpretations may differ is not seen as a problem, but is instead viewed as an opportunity for readers—researchers, policy makers, and the non-professional community - - to begin to interact with each other with the hope that new joint lines of action might emerge from this effort. If this happens, even just once, this researcher will be satisfied her efforts have not been in vain.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Script for Invitation to Participate

ENGLISH

Hello. My name is Teodocia "Maria" Hayes-Bautista. I am a Nurse and a doctoral candidate in the UCLA School of Nursing. As part of my work there, I am doing Nursing Research so that I can understand how Latina mothers cope while their young adult sons are incarcerated. But, I want to clarify that I am not a lawyer.

I chose this topic to study because while working as a nurse, mothers often would say, "How can I focus on my health when I am so worried about my son who is in jail?" This makes sense to me and so now I want to spend time understanding what it is like for Latina mothers to cope when their sons are incarcerated in jail or juvenile hall.

For this reason, I am here to invite Latina mothers who have a young adult son who is incarcerated to take part in my study by being interviewed about how you cope with your life at this time. I am specifically focusing on mothers who are of low income. This project involves only one interview that is completely confidential, and will last from 1 to 2.5 hours. I will tape record the interview so I can transcribe it and study it to be sure I understand what you have said about the way that you think and feel and how you are coping while you son is incarcerated. But, I will ask you to use code names instead of real names. Anything that you think might identify you will be deleted. In fact, you can listen the tape and have any part deleted.

In order for you to be a part of my study, you must have legal custody of your son if he is under 18 years of age. It is important that you know that I am obligated by law to report to the authorities if I think that harm is being done to you or others. This is explained in detail in the consent form that I need each volunteer to read and sign before the interview. I will give you a copy of the consent form for you to keep. We will have the interview in a private office or in your home, as long as you feel that it is safe and private.

Each woman who is interviewed for my study will receive a gift certificate for \$25 to a supermarket as a thank you for her time. If you or someone you know is interested please let me know or call me at the number on the flyer I will be passing out.
Thank you!

Appendix B

Recruitment Flyer

UCLA ***University of California, Los Angeles*** ***Study of Latina Mothers' Coping Processes While*** ***Their Young Adult Sons Are Incarcerated***

What: Maria Hayes-Bautista (nurse researcher) seeks to interview Latina mothers who have a son (age 16-24) in custody. Mothers must have legal custody of the incarcerated son. Each research volunteer will be interviewed once. The length of time of each interview is estimated to be between: 1 hour to 2 ½ hours.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to understand how Latina mothers cope when their young son is taken into custody.

How: The interview consists of asking volunteer research participants to describe how they felt (emotion), what they thought and think (cognitive coping) and what they did and do (behavioral coping) to cope. Each interview is confidential and will be recorded, transcribed and then studied to develop nursing models of the coping processes.

Where: The interview will take place in a private office or in the home of the participant.

Compensation: Volunteers will receive a \$25 gift certificate to a supermarket as compensation for their time.

For more information please contact:

Maria Hayes-Bautista (xxx) xxx-xxxx or
(xxx) xxx-xxxx

Appendix C

Screening Script

Study of Latina Mothers' Coping Processes While Their Young Adult Sons Are Incarcerated/UCLA

Thank you for calling regarding the research study of Latina mothers coping while son is incarcerated.

I would like to ask you a few questions in order to determine whether you may be eligible to participate in this study.

Before I begin the screening I would like to tell you a little bit about the research. The purpose of this study is to describe the experiences and perspectives of Latina mothers of young sons who are incarcerated. This study will increase our understanding of the stress and coping processes of these mothers. Your participation in this research will involve you being interviewed by me only once for approximately 1 to 2 1/2 hours. I will ask you questions related to how you are coping with the incarceration of your young adult son. The interview will be recorded on a digital recorder. To ensure confidentiality, your interview will be assigned a number and the recording will be deleted after it has been transcribed and verified by me.

Would you like to continue with the screening? Yes/ NO?

(If respondent answers "No." The screening will stop and the participant will be thanked for inquiring about the study. If respondent answers "YES" The screening will continue).

Please do not answer the following 4 questions individually. When I am done asking them, you may say "no" if one or more of the questions does not apply to you.

An answer of "no" to the inclusionary questions may disqualify you. Your participation in the screening is voluntary. Your answers will be confidential.

1. Are you of Latino ethnicity?
2. Do you have a young son (ages 16-24) in custody, i.e. in the juvenile justice system?
3. Do you have legal custody of this son?
4. Are you low-income as based on the 2009 US Census above 200% poverty threshold by the number of 18 years of age children in your household and your approximate annual income?

For example: An annual income of less than \$22,128 for a household of four. (Respondent may have been screened by another agency and therefore knows she is low income. Please ask the respondent to may provide you with the number of children/people in the household. I will take the number and look up the number on the threshold table and ask the respondent if the annual household income is below the amount of the 200% poverty level threshold. I will use threshold table (Exhibit H: Threshold Poverty Table and Exhibit I: Reference for Threshold Poverty Level of IRB application).

Thank you for answering the screening questions. [I will indicate whether the person is eligible, or is not eligible and explain why.]

Do you have any questions about the screening or the research? I am going to give you a couple of telephone numbers to call if you have any questions later. Do you have a pen? If you have questions about the research screening, you may call my faculty sponsor Dr. MarySue Heilemann at (xxx) xxx-xxxx, she will answer your questions.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or if you wish to voice any problems or concerns you may have about the study to someone other than the researchers, please call the UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

Thank you again for your willingness to answer our questions.

Appendix D
Consent to Participate (Form)

University of California, Los Angeles

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Study of Latina Mothers' Coping Processes
While Their Young Adult Sons are Incarcerated

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Teodocia Maria Hayes-Bautista, Principal Investigator and Prof. MarySue Heilemann, Faculty Sponsor from the UCLA School of Nursing, at the University of California, Los Angeles. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a Latina mother who has legal custody over your adolescent or young adult son who is incarcerated. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

The purpose of this study is to increase health care provider's understanding of the stresses and concerns that Latina mothers have as a result of an adolescent or young adult sons, aged (16 to 24) being incarcerated.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the nurse researcher will schedule a one time interview that may last up to 2 1/2 hours to be held at a time convenient to you in a private office or at your home. Before the interview the nurse researcher will ask you to complete a brief demographic profile questionnaire, which consists of ten questions. This information will help to describe in general demographic terms the group of volunteers who participated in the study. You have the right to refuse to answer any of these 10 questions. For the interview portion of the study, the researcher will ask you the following types of questions:

- What worries do you have while your son is in custody?
- What has helped you cope with your concerns?
- What has helped you cope with stress while your son is in custody?
- What has gotten in the way of coping for you?

The interviews will be recorded on a digital recorder. Your interview will be assigned a number. Your name or any other personal identifiers WILL NOT be used. You will have the right to review, edit, or erase, in whole or in part, the recordings made for the purpose of this study. The digital recording will be deleted (destroyed) after it has been transcribed and verified by the nurse researcher.

Protocol ID:IRB#11-002990 UCLA IRB Approved Approval Date: 9/12/2012 Through: 9/11/2013
Committee: South General IRB

How long will I be in the research study?

After you complete a brief 10 item demographic questionnaire, which takes 2-3 minutes to complete. The open-ended interview will begin. You will be interviewed only once for approximately 1 hour to 2 1/2 hours. However, if you need more time, the interview will be continued at another agreed upon time and place.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that I can expect from this study?

Risks are minimal. There is the possibility that engaging in an interview may cause discomfort or stress of varying degrees such as feeling nervousness, anxiety or irritability. You may terminate the interview at any time without repercussions. The nurse researcher will provide you with a list of resources that can be helpful to you.

Are there any potential benefits if I participate?

There are no direct benefits to you however the results of this study may help health providers develop a deeper understanding of how Latinas cope when their adolescent or young son is behind bars and may provide a knowledge base for the development of policy and programs to support mothers in similar situations.

Alternatives to participation

The alternative is not to participate in the study.

Will I receive any payment if I participate in this study?

You will receive a gift certificate in the amount of \$25 to a supermarket as compensation for your time.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

The content of your interview will be kept confidential however; we will not be able to keep confidential any disclosure or endorsement of thoughts to harm yourself. If at any time during the interview you disclose that you have intentions of hurting yourself or any others, the nurse researcher is required to stop the interview and report this to the appropriate authorities for the protection of the participant or others.

Also, under California law, the privilege of confidentiality does not extend to information about sexual or physical abuse of a child or elder. If the nurse researcher is given such information she is required to report it to the authorities. The obligation to report includes alleged or reasonably suspected abuse as well as known abuse.

Withdrawal of participation by the investigator

The investigator may withdraw you from participating in this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so to protect your health and safety.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty or loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.

You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may leave the study at any time without consequences of any kind. You are not waiving any of your legal rights if you choose to be in this research study. You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

Who can answer questions I might have about this study?

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to the one of the researchers. Please contact: Teodocia Maria Hayes-Bautista, at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or (xxx) xxx-xxxx or Dr. MarySue Heilemann at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

If you wish to ask questions about your rights as a research participant or if you wish to voice any problems or concerns you may have about the study to someone other than the researchers, please call the Office of the Human Research Protection Program at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or write to Office of the Human Research Protection Program, UCLA, 11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 102, Box 951694, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694.

SIGNATURE OF STUDY PARTICIPANT

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF PERSON OBTAINING CONSENT

In my judgment the participant is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent and possesses the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study.

Name of Person Obtaining Consent

Contact Number

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date

Appendix E

Demographic Profile Capture Form

ENGLISH

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this study. Before we start with the interview, I would like your help with the following demographic information. This information will help me describe the participants in the study.

How old will you be on your birthday in 2011? _____

In what country were you born?

Mexico _____
El Salvador _____
Guatemala _____
United States _____
Other country _____

What is your marital status?

I am currently married _____
I live with a domestic partner _____
I am single _____
I am separated or divorced _____
I am a widow _____

Are you currently employed? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what is your occupation? _____

How many years of schooling have you completed? _____

Now I would like to ask you five questions regarding your son. These questions will also help me do a demographic summary of participants in this study.

What type of school was the last school your son attended?

Public _____
Catholic _____
Alternative school _____
School for individuals with behavioral or emotional problems _____
Community college _____

At this time, how many years of school has your son completed? _____

Does your son have or has your son ever had a learning difficulty? Yes _____ No _____

Do you perceive or think that your son suffers from some form of mental health problem like anxiety, stress, depression, or fear? Yes _____ No _____ [If yes] please describe here your impression of the problem.

What is the date of your son's current incarceration? Please indicate month and year.
Month _____ Year _____

Thank you for your help. I will now be able to do a demographic summary of the mothers who have participated in this study.

SPANISH

Gracias por su participación en este estudio. Antes de comenzar nuestra entrevista, necesito su ayuda con la siguiente información demográfica. Esta información me ayudará a describir las participantes de este estudio.

¿Cuántos años cumple usted en este año, 2011? _____

¿En qué país nació usted?

México _____
El Salvador _____
Guatemala _____
Estados Unidos _____
Otro país _____

¿Que es su estado matrimonial?

Estoy casada _____
Vivo en unión libre. _____
Soy soltera _____
Estoy separada o divorciada _____
Soy viuda _____

¿Tiene Ud empleo actualmente? Sí _____ No _____

Si contesto "sí", ¿en qué trabaja? _____

¿Cuántos años de escuela ha terminado usted? _____

Ahora me gustaría hacerle cinco preguntas acerca de su hijo. Estas preguntas también me ayudarán a crear un resumen demográfico de las participantes del estudio.

¿Qué tipo de escuela fue la última escuela que su hijo asistió?

Pública _____
Católica _____
Escuela alternativa _____
Escuela para individuos con problemas emocionales o de comportamiento _____
Colegio comunitario _____

Hasta la fecha, ¿cuántos años de escuela ha terminado su hijo? _____

¿Actualmente padece su hijo de o alguna vez ha tenido su hijo dificultades de aprendizaje?

Sí ___ No ___

¿Percibe usted o piensa que su hijo sufre de alguna molestia o problema de salud mental como ansiedad, estrés, depresión, angustia, o terror? Sí ___ No ___ [si contesta que sí] por favor describa aquí lo que usted piensa.

¿Cuál es la fecha del encarcelamiento actual de su hijo? Por favor indique el mes y el año:
Mes ____ Año ____

Gracias por su ayuda. Ahora podré hacer un resumen del perfil demográfico de las madres que han participado en este estudio.

Appendix F

Interview Guide

Interview Questions from the Consent Form:

What worries do you have while your son is in custody?

What has helped you cope with your concerns?

What has helped you cope with stress while your son is in custody?

What has gotten in the way of coping for you?

Interview Guide for Interviews with Participants:

Please tell me about the initial incarceration, describe the experience.

How did your thoughts and feelings change over time?

How did you cope with these thoughts and feelings then?

How do you cope with these thoughts and feelings now?

What did you do to cope?

What do you do to cope?

What or who helped you to cope then?

What or who helps you to cope now?

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