Explorations of Modern Parenting

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the mothers who strive daily to be the best they can be – you are superheroes.

In loving memory of Ronald Overdorff, the first to tell me I was a “good mum,” and Dr. Wendy McClean Cooke, who taught me much about life.

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Whit, you were my first and best teacher. Thank you for making me a mother.

Eilidh, you've been my cheerleader the entire way. Thank you for your support and your wise counsel.

Kara, thanks for coming along for the ride. Remember I will still be Mommy, even if I'm a doctor.

ABSTRACT

Parenting is typically described in terms of behavioral dimensions (e.g., support, control) and typological classifications of parenting styles (i.e., authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, neglectful). In recent decades, several modern parenting styles have also emerged. These styles (e.g., free-range, helicopter, intensive, mindful) are evident in popular culture including books, magazines, and social media, and may best be understood by a combination of behavioral components and the parental cognitions underlying those behaviors. Parenting is often considered integral to the experience of childhood, but modern parents navigate continual advice and pressures about parenting that may lead to poor mental health outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and parental burnout. Some modern parenting styles, such as intensive mothering, have been associated with higher levels of depression and stress, but most remain understudied. This three-part dissertation begins with a literature review that situated modern parenting within foundational parenting frameworks. Next, a two-part latent profile analysis was used to a) identify traditional parenting styles using only traditional behavioral measures and b) identify modern parenting styles using a combination of traditional measures and parenting cognitions. This work's final section regressed maternal mental health outcomes of depression, anxiety, stress, and parental burnout on the identified modern parenting profiles. Modern parenting styles are similar to, but not the same as, traditional styles. Many modern parenting styles are identified mainly through parental cognitions, as confirmed by the latent profile analysis. The first model, based on traditional measures, revealed four profiles, three of which resembled traditional parenting styles. The second model, which included parental cognitions, further delineated parenting styles into five profiles, authoritative, authoritarian, good enough, free-range, and

intensive. Regression results indicated intensive mothers had higher levels of anxiety and stress, while authoritarian mothers had higher stress and burnout compared to other styles. Taken together, it is evident that parental cognition plays an important role in identifying modern parenting approaches and that some modern parenting styles (e.g., intensive mothering) have potential implications for maternal mental health. Modern parenting styles require further research and should be considered in future parenting research. Maternal mental health deserves attention throughout the lifespan.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last century, a greater emphasis on child-well being pushed parenting into the public sphere (Thelen & Haukanes, 2010) and added pressure to create an ideal environment for children (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). As laws related to child rights and social responsibility for child welfare increased (Hoghughi, 2004), research on parenting flourished. Social science researchers have explored parent-child relationships (Power, 2013), specific parenting practices (Barber, 1996), and parenting styles (e.g., Baumrind, 1971a; Schaefer, 1959). As parenting research progressed, researchers frequently sought to identify direct effects between parenting practices and child outcomes (Collins et al., 2000; O'Connor, 2002) and which parenting practices were best for children (Thelen & Haukanes, 2010). To do this, they often made use of traditional frameworks of parenting, such as parenting behaviors (e.g., parental support, behavioral control), and the classifications of parenting made popular by the work of Baumrind (1971a, 1991).

Identifying connections between parenting and child outcomes remains a popular topic in parenting research to this day. In general, the authoritative style of parenting, characterized by high levels of support (i.e., responsiveness) and high levels of behavioral control (i.e., demandingness; Baumrind, 1991), has been associated with the most ideal child outcomes (Taraban & Shaw, 2018). Conversely, authoritarian parenting (i.e., low support with high control), permissive parenting (high support with low control), and neglectful parenting (low support and low control) are considered to be less than ideal for most children (Baumrind, 2012). At the same time, parenting research sometimes fails to consider the importance of the cognitive process of parenting (Holden & Smith, 2019). Parental cognitions encompass the variety of

attitudes and beliefs individuals hold about parenting as well as the goals they have for their own behaviors and their child's outcomes. Although considered important, researchers have struggled to identify clear connections between cognitions and behavior (Bornstein, 2015; Rubin & Mills, 1992).

Another area of parenting research that is ripe for investigation is that of modern parenting styles. Parents in the last two decades have seen rapid advancement in technology and social media, which has shaped the way individuals enact parenting and how they engage with parenting information (Janning, 2019). Many parents today report intentionally enacting a parenting style that is aligned with their personal beliefs and attitudes (see Burke et al., 2020). Modern parenting practices include free-range parenting (e.g., Skanazy, 2009), mindful parenting (Duncan et al., 2009), intensive mothering (e.g., Hays, 1996), and unconditional parenting (e.g., Kohn, 2005), among others. Modern parenting styles seem to be largely shaped by parental cognition, meaning they cannot be described by a simple behavioral model or framework of parenting. Furthermore, the experiences of modern parents are, perhaps, more complex than in previous generations (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020).

In general, parenting is thought to be important for child outcomes (Bornstein & Manian, 2013) and family dynamics (Kerig & Bornstein, 2019). As Nomaguchi and Milkie discuss in their 2020 review, researchers are now beginning to pay attention to how the experience of parenting is important for parents. Although this line of research is relatively new, the consensus is that social awareness about parenting makes the experience seem more demanding (Novoa et al., 2022), and has the potential to negatively impact parental wellbeing and mental health (e.g., stress, depression, anxiety). Parents' mental health has long been considered important for

children's outcomes (e.g., Belsky, 1984), but less commonly is it the sole focus of research. Several recent studies have begun to address this gap, reporting that parents face elevated expectations and anxiety about parenting (Dupont et al., 2022) as well as parental burnout (Mikolajczak et al., 2018). Associations between mental health and modern parenting approaches, such as mindfulness (Ahemaitijiang, et al., 2021) and intensive mothering (Cappellini et al., 2019) have also been reported, although other modern parenting styles remain understudied. In summary, modern parents seem to be at risk for depression, anxiety, stress, and parental burnout (Mikolajczak et al., 2021), all factors that have potential negative consequences for families, parents, and children.

Parenting research has a rich history, tying back to both theory and practice. At the same time, the field has been slow to take note of modern parenting approaches and the importance of parenting experiences for parents. Thus, the current study aims to review traditional parenting frameworks as well as modern parenting approaches, providing a conceptual analysis of how the two are related. In addition, this study aims to identify modern parenting approaches by using traditional measures and parental cognitions in a latent profile analysis and then test for associations between modern parenting styles and parents' mental health.

CHAPTER I MAPPING MODERN PARENTING STYLES ONTO RESEARCH-BASED FRAMEWORKS: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Abstract

Parents and parenting are often seen as integral to the experience of childhood. During the last century, researchers have described parenting in terms of behavioral dimensions and typological classifications of parenting styles. In addition, they have aimed to understand the antecedents of parenting behavior in terms of parental cognitions (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, goals) and contextual determinants of parenting (e.g., parent characteristics, child influences, and social contexts). This foundational research has informed policy, education, and intervention efforts for several decades. Over the last twenty years several modern parenting approaches, or styles, have also emerged. These styles (e.g., conscious, free-range, helicopter, intensive, mindful) are increasingly evident in popular culture, including books, magazines, and social media, but it remains unclear how they fit within existing parenting frameworks. This review summarizes modern parenting styles as well as foundational parenting frameworks and situates modern parenting styles within parenting frameworks. Conceptually, most of the modern parenting approaches in this review reflect some aspects of authoritative parenting in terms of parental support and behavioral control, yet do not fully align with that parenting style. Further, each modern parenting style carries important cognitions that drive parental behaviors and make each style unique. Examining both parental cognitions and parenting behaviors may provide meaningful insight into understanding the complexity of modern parenting.

Mapping Modern Parenting Styles onto Research-Based Parenting Frameworks: A Conceptual Analysis and Review

Over the course of the 20th century there emerged an emphasis on child well-being, children's rights, and the importance of childhood experiences (Thelen & Haukanes, 2010). As Baldwin (1955) wrote, the study of childhood is important because "…children are important, and because childhood experiences influence later personality" (p. v). While a social understanding of the importance of children and parenting is not new (French, 1995), the renewed focus on child development brought the practice of parenting into the public sphere. The idea that parents are important for children's cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and personality development (Holden & Edwards, 1989) increased the pressure on parents to provide ideal environments for their children (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020) and may have contributed to a rise in intensive parenting practices (Long et al., 2021). At the same time, there has been a push toward a de-privatization of parenting (Thelen & Haukanes, 2010) corresponding with a greater legal and social responsibility for the welfare of children (Hoghughi, 2004).

As the appreciation of childhood grew, research on parenting flourished. Parenting, broadly defined as the practices of parents, or what parents do with regard to their children (Haukanes & Thelen, 2010), includes raising, supporting, and socializing children (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). Social science researchers in the 1930s and 1940s began investigating how the parent-child relationship and specific parenting practices (Power, 2013) influence child development. Research also addressed how parenting attitudes (e.g., cognitions) serve as an antecedent for parenting behavior (Holden & Edwards, 1989). These early studies regularly reported direct effects between parenting and a variety of child outcomes (O'Connor, 2002),

although some of these results may have been overstated (Collins et al, 2000). Parenting research has also been criticized for researcher bias (O'Connor, 2002; Patterson & Fisher, 1990) and a lack of consideration for family, racial, or cultural diversity (Frosch et al., 2021). These concerns limit the ability to generalize earlier findings to broad populations of parents and children. Despite criticism, there is a wealth of evidence that parenting is important for children's outcomes (Bornstein & Manian, 2013; Härkönen et al., 2017) and the experience of parenting is important for parental well-being (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020) and family dynamics (Kerig & Bornstein, 2019). Further, research on parenting continues to influence public policy, parent education, intervention efforts, books, and websites aimed at parents (Morris et al., 2021).

Modern parents are frequently exposed to information and advice regarding best and worst practices in parenting (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020; Thelen & Haukanes, 2010). While cautioned not to engage in over-parenting practices such as helicopter parenting or intensive mothering, parents are also immersed in the sensationalized media reports highlighting school shootings, abductions, and the dangers of screen and internet use (Nelson, 2019). Parents are told to be firm, but not too firm, be supportive, but not too supportive, and to set safe boundaries but also allow for natural exploration and freedom. It is not surprising that this overload of information can make parents feel both judged and confused (Janning, 2019), especially given that there is not a social consensus on the 'proper' way to parent. Parents eager to learn more about appropriate parenting practices might turn to the myriad of books available on the subject. Some of the approaches outlined in parenting books over the last twenty years have spurred cult-like affiliations including attachment parenting (e.g., Sears & Sears, 2001), conscious parenting (e.g., Tsabary, 2010), unconditional parenting (e.g., Kohn, 2006), and free-range parenting (e.g.,

Skenazy, 2009). Each of these parenting styles claims to be new and different (Rettew, 2021), yet it remains unclear exactly what sets each approach apart and how they might differ from academically accepted parenting frameworks. Thus, this review aims to summarize modern parenting approaches and situate them within the existing landscape of parenting research. Specifically, there will be a focus on how the core dimensions of parenting (i.e., support and control) are displayed, how each style fits within Baumrind's (1971a) parenting typology, and how cognitions differentiate modern parenting styles and drive specific parenting behaviors.

Modern Parenting Approaches

Over the last several decades there has been a shift in parenting; parents are more likely to have egalitarian relationships with children and exert less control and power over children than in previous decades. This trend is more evident in highly educated parents and developed countries (see Doepke and Zilibotti, 2014; Ulfrets, 2020). Parents are also represented in new ways in the media. A quick Google™ search of "parenting styles" results in at least 10 seemingly unique and distinctive types of parents. These include four academically based parenting styles (i.e., authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, neglectful) as well as other styles including conscious, helicopter, intensive, free-range, mindful, and a variety of attachment-based perspectives (e.g., natural, slow, instinctive). Research conducted in the last two decades has begun to pay attention to some of these modern parenting trends, especially those that may contribute to negative outcomes such as helicopter parenting (Vigdal & Brønnick, 2022) and intensive parenting/mothering (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). The following section reviews three main approaches to modern parenting that seem to arise most frequently in the media: mindfulness, overparenting (e.g., helicopter and intensive), and free-range parenting.

Mindfulness Approaches

There are three modern parenting styles that have underpinnings in the mindfulness movement (e.g., Kabat-Zinn, 1994) including conscious parenting, unconditional parenting, and mindful parenting. Mindfulness is an approach in which an individual is purposefully aware of the self, the situation, and interactions with others, with a goal of being present in the moment. When applied to parenting, parents choose to be fully present in interactions while also having an awareness of how the specific situation is impacting the self and the child (Bögels & Restifo, 2014; Turpyn & Chaplin, 2016). These approaches emphasize the need for parental self-care and management of parenting stress (Bögels & Restifo, 2014). They also highlight the need for flexibility, tolerance (Kohn, 2005), and emotional connection (Peterson, 2015) to promote healthy parent child interactions.

Conscious Parenting

The earliest identifiable reference to conscious parenting is the book by Thomas and Eilieen Paris (1994), "*I'll never do to my kids what my parents did to me": A guide to conscious parenting*. Since the late 1990s several other books and resources on conscious parenting have been published. Shefali Tsabary is a leading spokesperson for conscious parenting, and best-selling author of *The conscious parent*: *Transforming ourselves, empowering our children*. Tsabary (2010) challenges parents to continually reflect on how they are feeling in the moment, asking themselves questions like "why am I feeling triggered?" and "is my child behaving this way because I'm unable to be firm and consistent?" (p. 239). She encourages parents to give up control and accept what they cannot change about the child or themselves, instead embracing and living in each moment and specific interaction.

The conscious parenting approach is evident to some extent in academic literature and to a greater extent in the popular press. For example, Akinyela (2006) describes the conscious parenting approach as having roots in African-centered therapy. Applied within a parent educational program, conscious parenting encourages participants to reflect on the current issues in their home and family, questioning whether specific family and child-related situations constitute a "problem" and whether they have a solution. Similarly, Rahmqvist et al. (2014), in a qualitative analysis of parental participation in the Triple P parenting program in Sweden, described a group of conscious parents as those who were reflective regarding their own parenting practices and sought to understand the child's development and abilities. Salmon and Erez (2021) suggested parent-child relationships and the child's sense of self are optimized if parents "shift toward 'conscious parenting' in terms of actions and reactions towards the children" (p. 16). In other words, the authors recommend parents be aware of their actions and decision making, choosing actions, and modulating reactions in order to promote the best development of the child; a practice that the authors note may be at odds with parental instincts and learned intergenerational patterns of parenting.

A Google™ search of "conscious parenting" returns about 979,000 results including mainstream websites such as parents.com and WebMD. In an article in a popular parenting magazine, Schott (2021) suggested a defining element of conscious parenting is a day by day, moment by moment choice to practice parenting in a specific way. In other words, parents actively work to unlearn responses built from lived experiences of being parented, reframe the perception of their child's behavior, and actively determine how to best respond to each and every situation. In general, this mindfulness-based approach is accompanied by elements of

gentle parenting such as emotional awareness and non-punitive discipline. The conscious parenting approach is careful to not provide specific guidance for discipline and instead focuses mainly on perceptions and practices of the parent.

Unconditional Parenting

Closely aligned with conscious parenting, unconditional parenting is largely absent from academic and lay literature, although it does have a presence on Instagram and Facebook as a gentle parenting approach. The understanding of unconditional parenting is dominated by Alfie Kohn's (2005) book *Unconditional parenting*. This book outlines 13 principles of unconditional parenting, all of which focus on the behaviors of the parent within or outside of parent-child interactions. A child-centered approach, unconditional parenting emphasizes what is best for the child, from considering their age when making requests to limiting control and allowing space for exploration, dangerous or otherwise. Kohn acknowledges the complexities and conflicts of parenting and asks readers "to reconsider your basic assumptions" (p. 9) placing a clear emphasis on how respect, acceptance, and authenticity, rather than power, control, and punitive discipline, build strong connections that lay a foundation for parent-child relationships.

Mindful Parenting

Mindful parenting, which is similar to conscious and unconditional parenting, has received more attention in the academic realm. Sayer Cohen and Semple issued a call for research on mindfulness-based parenting in 2010, and a systematic review published a decade later reported on a variety of parenting program evaluations, mindful parenting measures, theoretical perspectives, and studies regarding child outcomes (Ahemaitijiang et al., 2021). Results of these studies are mixed, and measurement of mindful parenting is inconsistent.

However, associations have been reported between mindful parenting practices and positive outcomes for children and parents. Specifically, mindfulness approaches contribute positively to parent-child interpersonal relationships (Coatsworth et al., 2015), child psychosocial outcomes (Kil & Antonacci, 2020), child and adolescent externalizing problems (Parent et al., 2011), adolescent risk-taking behaviors (Turpyn & Chaplin, 2016), parenting self-efficacy, and parental stress (Burke et al., 2020). As with conscious parenting, mindfulness in parenting does not provide meaningful directives of specific parenting behavior. Instead, this approach is a parent-centered reflective practice.

Mindfulness in parenting has even been explored in relation to existing parenting dimensions and styles. Gouveia and colleagues (2016) tested mindfulness parenting in a sample of Portuguese parents and compared responses to parents' placement within Baumrind's (1971a) authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive styles using the Portuguese version of the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ; Carapito et al. 2008). The authors reported that mindful parenting was positively correlated with authoritative parenting and negatively correlated with permissive and authoritarian parenting tendencies (Gouevia et al., 2016). Similarly, Williams and Wahler (2010) reported that mothers who practiced mindfulness in their parenting were more likely to endorse an authoritative parenting style over an authoritarian style.

Over-parenting Approaches

According to Bornstein and Manian (2013), parents vary in their level of responsiveness to their children. Some parents may fail to respond to their infant's cues for attention while others go beyond optimal responsiveness, leading to over contingent parenting, more commonly referred to as over-parenting. Over-parenting is a term that is being used to include a variety of

concerning and potentially developmentally inappropriate practices (Segrin et al., 2015). Parents who enact these approaches may do so unconsciously (Forbes et al., 2020) or deliberately (Turner et al., 2022).

Although the moral panic regarding overparenting seems to have exponentially increased since 2006 (Nelson, 2019), the concept of overparenting itself is not new. In 1955, Alfred Baldwin described possessive parents (i.e., mothers) as those that were especially sensitive to cultural expectations of parenting and child behavior. Possessive households were characterized by extremely high levels of warmth, indulgence, child-centeredness, protectiveness, and control (i.e., restrictive regulations and readiness to suggest or criticize behavior). Prior to this, Levy (1931, 1943) suggested that maternal overprotection was a commonly held belief and might be an outcome of the parent's own emotional needs being unmet.

The behaviors identified by Levy (1943) align closely with those described by Locke et al. (2012), who sought expert opinion to depict over-parenting practices. Several of these descriptions were based around the dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness (e.g., Baumrind, 1971a; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Behaviors identified by Locke and colleagues included (a) low demandingness (i.e., permissiveness, babying, or limiting maturity development), (b) high responsiveness (i.e., befriending the child or constantly engaging), (c) a combination of low demandingness and high responsiveness (e.g., high attunement with the child's needs, checking in at school, requesting special accommodations for the child), (d) high demandingness (e.g., pushing for academic success), (e) a combination of high/low demandingness (i.e., limited accountability when the child didn't meet demands), and (f) anxious

parents (i.e., those who were overly concerned or anxious about safety, academic performance, or development).

Attempts to classify over-parenting reveal substantial variation in how overparenting is conceptualized and enacted (Turner et al., 2022). In the following sections I will focus on two commonly referenced modern over-parenting styles – helicopter parents and intensive mothers/parents – and outline ways in which these parenting styles are conceptualized, measured, and discussed more broadly.

Helicopter Parents

Helicopter parenting is a parenting style that has received considerable attention in both scholarly and public domains. Some (e.g., Roth, 2015) claim helicopter parenting was derived from Dr. Annette Lareau's (2003) definition of "concerted cultivation" in the book *Unequal Childhoods*. While concerted cultivators do share some parent characteristics (e.g., active or over-involvement) and child outcomes (e.g., entitlement) with helicopter parents, there is evidence that the term was coined much earlier. For example, Dr. Haim Ginott's 1969 book *Between parent & teenager* described parents who "hovered" over their children (see Bayless, 2022, Dupont et al., 2022). In 1991 "helicopter parent" was included as a buzz word in Newsweek and defined as "a nosy grown-up who's always hovering around" and "quick to offer a teacher unwanted help" (Zeaman, p. 9). One of the earliest academic references to helicopter parenting comes from a summary of the National Survey of Student Engagement (Lipka, 2007); helicopter parents are mentioned as being potentially advantageous for college student success. This term has become increasingly popular in the United Sates since 1990 (Dupont et al., 2022). After the year 2000, helicopter parenting was mentioned more frequently in news outlets,

magazines, online forums, and blogs (Nelson, 2019). A search of journal databases including Scopus and APA PsychInfo using the search term “helicopter parent*” reveal the publication of at least nine empirical articles per year since 2014, with a peak in 2020.

Helicopter parents are often generalized to exhibit high levels of involvement, support, or control, that hinder rather than foster development (Segrin et al., 2015). Despite a general understanding of helicopter parenting, and the growing field of literature on helicopter parenting, the term has not been well conceptualized (Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012). Further, the behaviors associated with helicopter parents are not clearly defined (Turner et al., 2022). In an effort to better conceptualize helicopter parenting, Padilla-Walker and Nelson (2012) created a five-item child-report measure. Each item describes a way that parents might unnecessarily intervene in situations that could be resolved independently by the child. Given that measures of behavioral control (e.g., Baumrind, 1971a) and psychological control (e.g., Barber et al., 2005) do not seem to adequately capture helicopter parenting, the authors further discuss the need to identify how parental control exhibited by helicopter parents is different from previously defined types of parental control. Padilla-Walker and Nelson’s (2012) measure of helicopter parenting has been used frequently in the last decade (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020) and provides an important understanding of the practices of helicopter parenting from the child’s perspective. Still, a consistent measure for identifying the attitudes, beliefs, and specific behavioral practices of parents associated with helicopter parenting is lacking (Dupont et al., 2022).

Despite the lack of reliable measurement, studies examining child outcomes of helicopter parenting generally report negative outcomes for children such as increased narcissism, entitlement, anxiety, depression, and other psychological difficulties as well as limited autonomy

development (see Dupont et al., 2022 for a review; c.f. Fingerman et al., 2012). Warnings against behaving like a helicopter parent are evident in broader culture. For example, a blog post warns that the over-protective nature of helicopter parenting may set young adults up for failure (Sirota, 2018). Popular media typically claims a host of undesirable outcomes for the children of helicopter parents including poor work ethic, lack of basic skills, the inability to resolve conflict, unrealistic expectations of success, and an attitude of entitlement.

Intensive Parenting

Although intensive parenting can refer to mothers or fathers, it is most often discussed in reference to mothers and called intensive mothering (Long et al., 2021). Thus, in this section I will use the term "intensive mothering" which was coined by Hays (1996) to describe a mothering ideology based on attachment theory and attachment parenting (e.g., Sears & Sears, 2001). The establishment of a secure attachment is considered so important that numerous successful parenting education programs have been based on attachment theory (Wright & Edington, 2016). The attachment parenting style promoted in a popular book by Sears and Sears (2001) advocates for high levels of responsiveness through the "Baby B's" including birth bonding, breastfeeding, baby wearing, and bedsharing. However, this pattern of hypervigilant response sets a foundation for potential over-analysis of a child's needs (Beebe et al., 2008) in the early years and over-involvement in the later years (see Nomaguchi and Milkie, 2020).

Intensive mothering ideology includes reasoning with the child rather than using strict discipline, prioritizing engaging and cognitively stimulating activities for the child (Ulferts, 2020), and placing the needs of the child above the well-being of the parent (Hays, 1996; Wall, 2013). Mothers are often the primary executor of these time- and labor-intensive behaviors and

permissive parenting practices (Büskens, 2001). Although there are behavioral expectations aligned with intensive mothering, this term also represents a constellation of parenting attitudes. The expectations of intensive mothering stem from a variety of sources, including access to expert opinion on child rearing (Adrian, 2019; Wall, 2013) and social reinforcement of 'good' parenting behaviors (Cowdery et al., 2009; Green, 2015; Ishizuka, 2019).

In 2013, Liss and colleagues generated the Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ) which includes five different specific attitudes associated with the intensive mothering (or parenting) ideology. Specifically, the measure identifies essentialism (mothers are the ideal caregivers and essential for children's optimal development), fulfillment (mothers should have high role salience, satisfaction, and efficacy), stimulation (it is important to engage and stimulate cognitive development), challenging (parenting is, and should be, difficult), and child-centered (the child's needs should be prioritized). However, more work is needed to determine if items in the measures are invariant (i.e., are interpreted similarly and represent the same latent constructs) across gender and racialized identities (Long et al., 2021).

Despite a lack of established reliability and validity, intensive mothering, measured with the IPAQ (Liss et al., 2013), has been associated with outcomes for parents and, to a lesser extent, children. Although challenged by some scholars (e.g., Elliot et al., 2015), the belief of the mother as an essentialist caregiver has been linked to higher levels of parental stress and lower levels of life satisfaction for mothers (Rizzo et al., 2013). The demands of intensive mothering may begin prenatally as women strive to the create ideal prenatal environment and birth experience (Novoa et al., 2022). The inability for mothers to meet their own expectations has been associated with feelings of guilt (Green, 2015; O'Brein Hallstein, 2006) or failure

(Büskens, 2001), and negative outcomes for mothers may persist through mid-life (Gunderson & Barrett, 2017). Literature on child outcomes associated with intensive mothering is nascent. Tentatively, it might be assumed intensive parenting ideals would prompt parenting practices that promote development (e.g., responsiveness, cognitive stimulation, emotional reflection) and yet the few studies on the topic (e.g., McGregor, 2022; Schiffrin et al., 2015) have yet to reveal significant correlations between child outcomes and intensive parenting attitudes.

The intensive mothering ideology is thought to have been shaped mainly by White, middle-class mothers (Long et al., 2021) and some researchers have claimed that intensive mothering is not an ideal that is held by people of color (How, 2016). In contrast, Ishizuka (2019) suggested that intensive parenting practices are held to some extent by *all* parents regardless of racialized identity and gender. Similarly, Lankes (2022) reported varying levels of intensive parenting practices and beliefs across groups. If intensive mothering has become a dominant discourse of mothering (Hays, 1996) it does a disservice to parents who lack the resources to attain these ideals (Cooper & Pugh, 2020; Johnston & Swanson, 2006) if they are in fact attainable (O'Brein Hallstein, 2006).

Free-Range Parenting

Lenore Skenazy (2009) is generally credited for coining the term free-range parenting. In 2009, Skenazy published a book on free-range parenting in opposition to the culture of fear, worry, and over-scheduling that seems to contribute to helicopter parenting. Despite a safer environment than ever before in which to raise children, childhood safety (including the risk of abduction) has been sensationalized, leading to higher levels of protective parenting and supervision (Pimental, 2012). Skenazy's book consists of "baby steps" and "brave steps" that

encourage parents to break out of the mold of hyper-vigilance to allow their children some of the freedoms experienced by earlier generations (e.g., 1980's and earlier; Jones, 2013). Free-range parenting has been the subject of some controversy over the constitutional rights of parents (Pimental, 2012), which has resulted in specific laws being passed for the protection of parental rights with regard to leaving children unsupervised (Lindke & Oppenheimer; 2022; Vota, 2017).

The field has been slow to consider the free-range parenting trend. A search of databases including APA PsychInfo and Web of Science revealed only three scholarly journal entries that mention free-range parenting. Cairns (2007) interviewed parents and placed them along dimensions of traditional to progressive and laid-back to uneasy (i.e., anxious). Although different classifications of parents were noted, the author reported that all parents seemed to wish their children had a more free-range childhood with freedom, autonomy, and less fear. Steiner and Bronstein (2017) begin to bring free-range parenting into the empirical literature. Motivated by the Meitiv family's encounters with police officers after allowing their children to walk unaccompanied to the park near their home (Pimentel, 2012; Vota, 2017), the authors analyzed comments related to free-range parenting posts published to a *New York Times* parenting blog. The authors reported that commenters frequently mentioned real and perceived risk as well as the role of the government and law enforcement in determining the rights and practices of parents. In the most recent study, Lindke and Oppenheimer (2022) conceptualized free-range parenting as the polar opposite of helicopter parenting in terms of what they discuss as an authoritarian practice of agency restriction (i.e., psychological control). However, their discussion of study results was overwhelmingly focused on helicopter, rather than free-range parenting. Free-range children and parenting have also been mentioned in books about children's play (e.g., Alexander

et al., 2018) and the prevention of childhood obesity (e.g., Whitzman et al., 2010). Given the lack of empirical writing on free-range parenting, there are no connections to child or parent outcomes to report.

Academic-Based Parenting Research and Frameworks

In addition to being commonly discussed in the public sphere, parenting has received considerable attention in the academic realm for more than a century. Social scientists continually seek to conceptualize and measure parenting (Hembacher & Frank, 2020; Smetana, 2017), identify ways in which parents differ from one another (Maccoby & Martin, 1983), discover antecedents of parenting behavior (Rubin & Mills, 1992), and explore the contextual influences on parenting behavior (e.g., Belsky, 1984; Taraban & Shaw, 2018). Hembacher and Frank (2020) discuss this work as uncovering intuitive theories about parenting and acknowledge that despite this effort there remains variation in parents' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. To provide a foundation for understanding the nuances of modern parenting, I will review the theoretical underpinnings of parenting research as well as the history of parenting research with regard to parenting cognitions, dimensions, styles, and contextual determinants.

Theoretical Connections

Early parenting research was based in psychoanalytic theory (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Although not extensive, Freud (1920) briefly mentions parental attitudes as a determinant of child behavior. Parenting behavior is also implicated in the resolution of the first few stages of Erikson's (1963) developmental progression (i.e., trust, autonomy, initiative, industry). Parents are evident in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory as part of children's microsystems and, through interactions with other proximal systems, integral to the development of the mesosystem

(Stolz, 2009). Although beyond the scope of this review, it warrants mention that many theoretical perspectives and conceptual frameworks have been meaningful for the study of children and parenting including attachment theory (e.g., Ainsworth et al., 1991), attribution theory (e.g., Kelman, 1958; see Maccoby & Martin, 1983), evolutionary theory (e.g., Emlen, 1995), family development theory (see Rodgers, 1964), family systems theory (e.g., Kerr & Bowen, 1988), feminist theory (see Cudd & Andreasen, 2005), the transactional model of development (e.g., Sameroff, 2009), social learning theory (e.g., Bandura 1977), and symbolic interactionism (e.g., Meade 1934; Stryker, 1968). Many of the earlier theoretical approaches discussed mechanisms through which parenting behaviors serve to meet the needs of the child (e.g., attachment theory) or how parenting changes in response to shifting family needs (e.g., family development theory; family systems theory). On the contrary, modern parenting styles are strongly tied to the parental role and identity and might better be understood through theories such as symbolic interactionism (e.g., Stryker, 1968).

Parental Cognitions (Attitudes, Beliefs, Goals)

For the purposes of this review, I will adopt the term *parental cognitions* to broadly represent parental attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, expectations (Holden & Edwards, 1989; Holden & Smith, 2019; Okagaki & Bingham, 2005), and goals (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Holden & Edwards, 1989). The elements of parental cognition can be difficult to separate conceptually and methodologically (Holden & Edwards, 1989; Holden & Smith, 2019). Although considered a key determinant in parenting behavior (Abidin, 1992; Holden & Smith, 2019), researchers have been largely unsuccessful confirming the anticipated relationship between cognitions and behavior (Bornstein, 2015; Holden & Edwards, 1989; Rubin & Mills, 1992). Still, parental

cognitions provide an important insight into parenting behaviors, especially for nuanced modern parenting approaches. In the following section I review the interconnected elements of parental cognitions which form the foundation for understanding parenting behaviors (Holden & Smith, 2019).

Parenting Attitudes

The earliest studies on parenting attitudes appeared in the 1920s (Holden & Smith, 2019) and were a popular area of research from the 1930s to the 1950s (Clarke-Stewart & Apfel, 1978). Early research on parenting attitudes likely served as a foundation for later research on parenting dimensions (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). For example, the concepts of acceptance and rejection first mentioned by Stodgill (1936) were later conceptualized as parenting dimensions (e.g., Baldwin, 1955; Becker, 1964; Schaefer, 1959). Scholars have continually emphasized the importance of parental attitudes as a foundation for parental socialization behaviors (Rollins & Thomas, 1979). Frequently studied are attitudes toward specific elements of parenting such as parental authority, discipline (e.g., corporal punishment; Holden & Smith, 2019), and parent-child role expectations (Myers & Battistoni, 2003). More recently, Hembacher and Frank (2020) measured attitudes toward parenting and aligned them with parenting dimensions of parental support, behavioral control, and early learning.

Quite often the term parental attitude has been used to represent views regarding the role of the parent (Okagaki & Bingham, 2005). These role-related attitudes have been measured as role investment or salience (Abidin, 1992), role satisfaction, and efficacy (Gibaud-Wallston & Wandersman, 1978). Baldwin (1955) discussed how individuals who find the parental role gratifying would naturally exhibit more warmth and responsiveness to the child than those who

find the parental role at odds with their expectations or other responsibilities (e.g., career). Scholars have recently suggested that society is changing with regard to expectations of parenting (Nelson, 2019; Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020; Rettew, 2022), making it seem more demanding (Novoa et al., 2022). The view of parenting as an essential activity, a central role (i.e., high investment), and inherently challenging is characteristic of some modern parenting approaches, such as intensive parenting (Forbes et al., 2020; Liss et al., 2013; Long et al., 2021).

Beliefs and Expectations

Parental beliefs refer to "cognitions that parents accept as true or real" (Holden & Smith, 2019, p. 689). Parental beliefs often grow from knowledge about child development and parenting practice gained through experience or formal education. A main difference between parental beliefs and expectations is that beliefs are present-oriented and ongoing while expectations are future-oriented. Expectations are considerations of what will, or should, happen with children and the experience of child-rearing (Holden & Smith, 2019). Thus, expectations drive proactive parenting practices (Rubin & Mills, 1992) and might be seen as influential in the use of routines, rules, and preemptive limit setting. Along these lines, Baumrind (2013) states that the perception of the child can change the way parents use behavioral control. A view that parent and child rights and responsibilities are reciprocal typically results in a balance of autonomy and compliance. In contrast, when the parent considers the child's autonomy as secondary to parental wishes they may exhibit unyielding control over the child.

Parental beliefs can also play a fundamental role in an overall approach to parenting and may be an important consideration when examining modern child-centered parenting approaches. Child-centeredness is reflective of the philosophy of Rousseau, who advocated for

free development of the child's natural impulses (Adams & Steinmetz, 2009) and elevated the concept of childhood as a time of purity and innocence (Zhao, 2011). A frequent practice in early childhood education (Floom & Janzen, 2020), child-centered beliefs are largely based on the perception of the child as an autonomous being with their own thoughts, feelings, and desires (Zhao, 2011). From an educational perspective, the child's interests and preferences are fundamental, and teachers are to place the child at the center of all decision making (Floom & Janzen, 2020). Similarly, it can be expected that parents who hold child-centered beliefs might seek to understand the child's point of view (i.e., perspective taking; Joussemet & Grolnick, 2022) or even place the child's needs as paramount to other members of the family (Wall, 2013). The limited research on child centered parenting has reported a positive association with socioemotional functioning and attachment (Joussemet & Grolnick, 2022). At the same time, this approach is criticized for the potential to produce egocentric young adults whose self-focus is detrimental to family and social relationships (Floom & Janzen, 2020).

Parenting Goals

Darling and Steinberg (1993) proposed that to understand the complexities of parenting behavior it was important to understand the goals of parenting in addition to beliefs and attitudes (Okagaki & Bingham, 2005). LeVine (1988) explained parenting as an adaptive process in which parental behaviors may change to meet specific goals. Parenting goals typically focus either on expectations of one's own parenting (Abidin, 1992; Hays, 1996) or goals for specific child outcomes. Personal expectations of parenting are formed through one's own experience and education (Holden & Smith, 2019) but are also influenced by social networks (Novoa et al.,

2022). Whether or not a parent feels they are meeting their own expectations for parenting is foundational to the concept of parenting self-efficacy (Abidin, 1992).

Many child-directed goals seem to be universal (Bornstein, 2015). Five common goals include (1) protection, or the survival and health of offspring; (2) reciprocity, a mutually beneficial exchange between parents and children; (3) guided learning, where parents scaffold skills and values; (4) group participation or socialization to activities and cultural expectations; and (5) control, where parents promote and guide children to behave in appropriate ways (Grusec & Davidov, 2019; LeVine, 1988; Smetana, 2017). The consideration of goals may provide insight into why parents engage in different behaviors with their children. At the same time, the way goals shape behavior may differ based on the context of racial or cultural norms and the resources available to parents (Chen et al., 2019). For example, in the United States, parents often encourage individualization such as autonomy, independence, and individual achievement (Okagaki & Bingham, 2005), and yet the extent to which a parent encourages autonomy or individual achievement may vary based on the centrality of that goal to the individual or family.

Parenting Dimensions

Much of what is known about parenting is distilled into two or three core parenting dimensions (Bornstein, 2015). To understand how each of these may be reflected in modern parenting, the history and current conceptualization of parenting dimensions is reviewed in detail. Researchers most often use self-reports or observations (Power et al., 2103; Smith, 2011) to group similar parenting behaviors together. Some of the earliest work on parenting dimensions was conducted by Schaefer (1959) using maternal behaviors such as emotional involvement, punishment, autonomy, affection, and ignoring. Schaefer proposed two bi-polar dimensions:

autonomy vs. control and *love vs. hostility*. These early dimensions have also been conceptualized as *warmth vs. hostility* and *restrictive vs. permissive* (Becker, 1964), *democracy vs. autocracy* and *emotional involvement vs. detachment* (Baldwin, 1955), or *autonomy granting vs. psychological control*, and *lax vs. firm control* (Schaefer, 1965).

Building on early dimensional work, researchers have consistently supported the dimensions of *parental support, behavioral control,* and *psychological control* (Power et al., 2013; Skinner et al., 2005; Smetana, 2017). Parental support and behavioral control are considered to be positive (i.e., higher levels continually resulting in better outcomes for the child) while psychological control is considered negative (i.e., higher levels are more likely to result in problematic child functioning; Barber & Xia, 2013; Taraban & Shaw, 2018). When considered discrete and unidimensional, it is possible for parents to exhibit a combination of high, moderate, or low levels of each individual dimension.

Parental Support

The dimension of *parental support* is often measured by the presence or absence of affectionate, nurturant, or companionate behavior (Barber et al., 2005) that creates an accepting and loving environment (Barnes & Farrell, 1992). Support may also be characterized by emotional availability, involvement, and responsiveness (Baumrind, 1971a). High levels of *parental support* are predictive of children's socio-emotional development (Okorn et al., 2021) and cognitive development (Morris et al., 2021), and may serve as a buffer against depression and anti-social behavior (Barber et al., 2005). In most research, *parental support* is continually and positively associated with positive child outcomes. However, limited research (e.g., Hess,

2018) alludes to the potential for parents to exhibit intrusive levels of support, especially with adolescents, young adults, and grown children.

Behavioral Control

Behavioral control encompasses a variety of parental activities (Barber & Xia, 2013). In general, *behavioral control* is meant to guide or direct a child's behavior to be acceptable to parents and aligned with societal expectations and norms (Barber, 1996). This dimension is often measured by examining parental use of rules, routines, limit setting, supervision, and monitoring, as well parental knowledge of children's behaviors (Baumrind, 2012/2013; Steinberg, 1990). Some researchers note the presence or absence of behavioral control (e.g., firm vs. lax control; Schaefer, 1965), while others consider this a continuum from low to high (e.g., Baumrind, 2012). Research has shown that when parents provide structure and expectations children often have higher psychosocial functioning (Barber et al., 2005), while the lack of guidance and supervision is regularly associated with delinquency problems (Barnes & Farrell, 1992; Pettit et al., 2003), impulsivity, aggression, and substance abuse (Barber, 1996).

Behavioral control may depend on both child and parent factors. For example, monitoring is sometimes measured as knowledge of a child's activities, which might arise from parental inquiry (i.e., asking what the child is doing and with whom they are doing it) as well as the child's tendency to disclose this information (Kerr & Statin, 2000). Transactional models of parenting (e.g., Sameroff, 2009) further propose that children elicit particular responses, such as increased monitoring, from parents in a reciprocal process (Conley et al., 2004; Darling & Steinberg, 1993). In addition, some researchers have suggested that more behavioral control is not always better (Barber et al., 2005; Barber & Xia, 2013). Excessive control often crosses a

line between healthy limit setting behavior (i.e., behavioral control) and intrusive behavior (i.e., psychological control). High levels of control that do not adjust as the child grows older and gains independence may be especially problematic (Dupont et al., 2022; Segrin et al., 2015).

Psychological Control

Psychological control refers to love withdrawal, shame, guilt, and manipulation (Smetana, 2017; Barber 1996) and is evident when the parent intrudes upon the psychological development of the child. This dimension has also been conceptualized in terms of parental disrespect, including violations of privacy, ignoring, ridiculing, and embarrassing the child in front of others (Barber et al., 2012). High levels of psychological control are frequently associated with greater anxiety, depression, and delinquent behavior (Barber, 2002; Pettit et al., 2001; Pinquart, 2017).

Additional Parenting Behaviors

Despite wide acceptance and application of parental support, behavioral control, and psychological control as key dimensions of parenting, there has been a suggestion that other parenting behaviors are also important for children's development (Power, 2013). These behaviors that fall outside of the dimensions of support and control seem especially motivated by parental cognitions and are evident in modern parenting approaches. Although cognitions are often hypothesized to prompt behaviors, this connection has been somewhat cloudy in parenting research (Bornstein, 2015; Okagaki & Bingham, 2005). Below I summarize autonomy support, cognitive stimulation, emotional awareness, and tolerance as parenting behaviors with cognitive antecedents.

Autonomy support. Support for the development of autonomy was originally conceptualized by Schaefer (1965) as part of a bi-polar dimension *psychological control* vs. *autonomy granting*. More recent opinion is that while parents who engage in psychological control would naturally inhibit autonomy development (Baumrind et al., 2010), the reverse may not necessarily be true. Autonomy supporting behaviors may stem from parental beliefs about sharing power or the goal of promoting individual decision making (Kohn, 2005). Behaviors associated with this dimension would be largely age-dependent and may include offering choices to a toddler, respecting reasonable clothing choices for a school-aged child, or reducing supervision for adolescent children.

Cognitive stimulation. In the mid-1960s researchers were considering the role of the home environment and parents in shaping cognitive outcomes for children. Hess and Shipman (1965) discuss how maternal use of complex language and authoritative communication style with children sets a foundation for development. Research over the next several decades provided additional evidence of how parental behavior – especially responsiveness, stimulation, and use of language – act as a predictor of children's cognitive development (Langman, 1986). Parenting goals often include an element of language, learning, or stimulation (Smith, 2011) and parents have been shown to endorse the importance of cognitive stimulation and learning as part of the parental role (Hembacher & Frank, 2020).

Emotional reflexivity. Emotional elements are present in the *parental support* dimension and yet socialization of emotion (i.e., attempts to directly teach emotional regulation and expression; Morris et al., 2013) has also been a subject of study as an independent parenting dimension. In fact, Baldwin (1955) and Becker (1964) both proposed a dimension of *detachment*

vs. *emotional involvement* in their original dimensional structures (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Although Darling and Steinberg (1993) discuss emotional support as part of an authoritative parenting approach, the authors clearly emphasize the importance of a positive emotional relationship between parent and child. Eisenberg and colleagues (1998) reviewed the literature on emotional socialization, emotional competence, and social competence in childhood. The authors reported that, overall, parental encouragement of emotional expression was associated with positive socioemotional development in childhood. In more recent work, Joussemet and Grolnick (2022) include emotional empathy as a key parenting construct, which may have antecedents in the mindful parenting approach (Duncan et al., 2009).

Tolerance. The concept of tolerance has received limited attention in academic literature. Greenspan (2006) boldly endorses this concept as integral to what he terms "harmonious parenting" (p. 9; see also Baumrind, 1971b) and defines tolerance as the acceptance of children's emotions and tolerance of children's undesirable behaviors. Brestan and colleagues (2003) provide an intriguing definition of tolerance as "the extent to which a parent tends to be annoyed by child misbehavior" (p. 2). The authors go on to hypothesize that parental tolerance may explain some of the variance by which similar behavior in children is subject to differential discipline by parents. In line with this hypothesis, a tolerance for frustration while parenting has been associated with less incidence of child-abusing behaviors (Thompson, 1977 as cited in Davis, 1990). Tolerance provides a good example of how the relationship between cognitions and behavior becomes clouded. Ignoring misbehavior, which is a key characteristic of permissive parenting (Olivari et al., 2013), seems to clearly fall in the realm of parenting behaviors. However, the reason for ignoring might stem from neglectful parenting, permissive parenting, or

an intentional approach to parenting. Research on ignoring or tolerance as a unique dimension is lacking, and yet this could be a principal element that differentiates under- and over-controlling parents.

Parenting Types or Styles

Researchers endorsing a typological approach suggest that parenting might best be understood by examining the patterns of parental attributes with regard to multiple dimensions, rather than considering each dimension independently (Baumrind, 2013). A comprehensive review is included to better situate modern parenting styles in relation to this broadly accepted parenting framework. Typologies are developed by considering a parent's placement within a combination of dimensions (Power et al., 2013). Baldwin (1955) and Becker (1964) both described a typological classification of parenting including four parenting types based on whether parents were high or low in their respective dimensions (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Perhaps one of the most influential and broadly applied parenting typologies is the tripartite classification proposed by Baumrind (1971a; 2012; 2013) which includes authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive; based on an individual's placement within the dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness. A review of published articles from 2008-2017 identified 530 documents that included the key word "parenting style," more than 90% of which were published in peer-reviewed journals (Farzand et al, 2017). Given the emphasis and use of Baumrind's typologies in academic and mainstream circles, a comprehensive discussion of the typology is included. Baumrind's work is built on Baldwin's (1955) typology (Baumrind et al., 2010) and the work of Becker (1964). Baumrind's classification is based on dimensions similar

to those first identified by Shaefer (1965): *acceptance vs. rejection, autonomy vs. psychological control, firm vs. lax control* (Baumrind, 1971a).

Baumrind's (1971a) typology of three parenting styles was later revised (see Smetana, 2017) to acknowledge the differences between psychological control and behavioral control as identified by Barber (2002) and to include a fourth type, neglectful or uninvolved parenting (Baumrind, 2012; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Each parenting style is defined based on a specific pattern of scores within behavioral clusters (Baumrind, 1971a), described as responsiveness (i.e., parental support, autonomy support) and demandingness (i.e., behavioral control and monitoring; Baumrind, 2012/2013). Each style can be considered a prototype (i.e., a characterization of the behaviors that represent the group). Although Baumrind based her parenting styles on groupings of behaviors, the description of each parenting style also alludes to the goals, beliefs, and attitudes of the parent. For example, authoritarian parents and authoritative parents seem to differ meaningfully in their beliefs about parent-child reciprocity and power structure.

Authoritarian Parenting Style

According to Baumrind (1971a), the authoritarian parent aims to control or shape a child's behavior to be aligned with a specific standard of conduct. This parent may employ forceful or punitive discipline, values obedience and yielding to authority, and does not engage in democratic behaviors such as verbal give and take. Authoritarian parents demonstrate little or no responsiveness (e.g., parental support/warmth; Baumrind et al., 2010). In later writings, Baumrind (2012; 2013) considers elements of psychological control (see Barber, 2005) as markers of the authoritarian style.

Authoritative parenting style

The authoritative parent is similar to the authoritarian parent in that they value compliance and desire to direct or control the child's behavior (Baumrind, 1971a). In contrast to authoritarian parents, the authoritative parent values autonomy and engages in verbal give and take and reasoning with the child (Baumrind, 2012). These parents are considered responsive, providing moderate to high levels of parental support (Baumrind et al., 2010). Baumrind (2013) warns that the authoritative style is often misinterpreted to be more lax or permissive than originally intended. She reiterated that the "authoritative upbringing is highly demanding as well as highly responsive" and that many experts "incorrectly interpret the responsive component of the authoritative construct to imply unconditional acceptance" (p. 28).

Permissive parenting style

Permissive parents are considered accepting of children's behavior, and thus lower in behavioral control compared to authoritative and authoritarian parents (Baumrind, 1971a). These parents make few demands on children, allowing for autonomy and self-regulation of behavior. Permissive parents provide moderate to high levels of parental support (Baumrind et al., 2010) and might be considered egalitarian or child centered (Baumrind, 2012).

Parenting and Social Context

From an ecological standpoint there are many potential influences on parenting cognitions (Okagaki & Bingham, 2005) and behaviors (Myers & Battistoni, 2003; Rubin & Mills, 1992). The transactional model of development suggests a complex and reciprocal relationship among a variety of influences including the individual child and their experiences and environment (Sameroff, 2009). From the earliest days social science researchers identified

differences in parenting behaviors based on socioeconomic status and education (Becker, 1964; Khon, 1963; Langman, 1986; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Rubin & Mills, 1992). The explanations for why social contexts result in differential outcomes have varied, although more recent opinion is that differences in parenting stem from racial or cultural norms (e.g., reinforced beliefs and expectations) and the ability or inability to engage in desired parenting behaviors based on social constraints (Lansford, 2022).

In the mid-20th century, Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggested parents who attain higher levels of education are influenced by exposure to expert opinion on parenting. Kohn (1963) suggested that parental values and goals play a role; middle-class parents seemed more likely to promote autonomy while working-class parents often endorsed a need for children to conform to rules and social expectations. Differences stemming from social class are foundational in the work of Annette Lareau (2003), who discussed ways in which social stratification and engrained social norms mold different approaches to parenting. Specifically, she outlined two styles of parenting: *concerted cultivation* and *natural growth*. Concerted cultivation is a hallmark of middle- and upper-class families in which parents actively manage the daily life of the child, use reasoning and negotiation in interactions, foster the child's talents and preferences, and often intervene on behalf of the child. Natural growth, which Lareau claimed is more evident in working class families, is characterized by a dependence on institutions, room for the child to grow and explore naturally, and the use of directives from parent to child with little room for the child to challenge adult authority.

Important to the conversation about the social contexts of parenting is the role of racialized identity in parenting. Lareau's (2011) work identifies class differences but fails to

address the role of racialized identity when describing different parenting approaches (Manning, 2019). Parents of color, especially Black parents, often engage in intentional parenting styles and practices aimed at developing a positive racialized identity and preparing their children to survive and thrive in a racially complex world. The failure to fully appreciate racially based differences in parenting has been an ongoing point of challenge in parenting research for decades. Parenting research that includes parents of color yet relies on between-group comparisons might inadvertently perpetuate inaccurate myths about parenting along racialized lines (see Suzuki et al., 2021). Furthermore, researchers might exclude minority groups from the interpretation of results (Rious et al, 2019) or misinterpret results when failing to consider the research team's implicit biases and positionality (Garcia et al., 2019).

Additional determinants of parenting have also been explored in research and theory. In 1984, Jay Belsky outlined a process of parenting model in which parenting behavior is broadly determined and influenced by a complex, multideterminant process including parental characteristics (e.g., personality, mental health, developmental history), child characteristics (e.g., temperament), and social context (Taraban & Shaw, 2018). Belsky (1984) considers parent characteristics to be the most influential factor in this model (Taraban & Shaw, 2018). Some researchers have specifically examined the influence of the *Big Five* model of personality as proximal determinants of parenting (Vondra et al., 2005). This line of research shows connections between personality traits such as neuroticism (i.e., emotional instability, psychological distress, and maladaptive coping responses) and conscientiousness (i.e., having high standards and striving to achieve goals) with parenting style. Further, a parent's mental and

physical health, sense of competence, parenting stress, spousal relationship, and access to social support all play a role in functional/dysfunctional parenting (Patterson, 1990).

Situating Modern Styles in the Academic Parenting Landscape

The parenting literature has covered a wide range of parenting cognition, determinants, dimensions, and typologies over the last century. All of these approaches attempt to understand parenting and to distill the complexity of parenting into useful measures and categorizations (Becker, 1964). Still, as Collins et al. (2000) state, "neither the assumptions nor the research that dominated the field as recently as [the 1990s], however, represent research on parenting today" (p. 218). Dimensions of parenting – especially control and support – and parenting styles (e.g., Baumrind, 1971a; 2012) are frequently used in research, education, intervention, and are evident in publicly available materials. Similarly, parenting cognitions have long been thought to shape interactions between parents and children. Still, research demonstrating how these two important elements work in an orchestrated fashion remains elusive (Bornstein, 2015).

Modern parenting (i.e., parenting in the 21st century) is seemingly different than parenting in previous decades (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). While we know quite a lot about parenting, it remains unclear how existing dimensions and typologies relate to modern parenting approaches. To remain relevant in understanding the ever-changing social milieu of parenting, it is important to have a comprehensive understanding of how modern parents approach parenting. This includes determining how modern parenting fits within the historical and academic perceptions of parents and parenting (Gouveia et al., 2016). Furthermore, it is important to explore cognitive and contextual influences on parenting (Bornstein, 2015). An understanding of the nuances of modern parenting may serve to clarify inconsistent findings from previous

research. Mapping modern styles onto existing frameworks can help to link modern parenting approaches with what has been shown to be beneficial for children. A comprehensive understanding of modern parenting, including a consideration of parenting cognitions as a key predictor of parenting behavior, may also benefit educational and intervention efforts aimed at promoting changes in parenting behavior and improving parental outcomes.

Three sources were identified that have attempted to explore how modern parenting aligns with traditional parenting research. Williams and Wahler (2010) and Gouveia et al. (2016) identified ways that mindful parents were similar to authoritative parents with regard to elements of warmth and limit setting. In the book *Parenting made complicated*, Rettew (2021) discusses similarities between modern parenting styles and Baumrind's (1971a) typology and provides a visual representation of where attachment, free-range, old-school, and tiger parenting may fall within the dimensions of warmth and control (p. 47). Each of these attempts focuses on understanding how modern parenting styles display parenting behaviors (e.g., dimensions of support and control). The current review builds on this preliminary work by considering how both parenting cognitions and behavioral dimensions serve to distinguish modern parenting styles. The next section explores how each modern parenting approach might be understood within the context of academically based parenting frameworks. A visual representation can be found in Figure 1 and a summary can be found in Table 1 (All tables and figures are shown in an appendix).

Mindfulness Approaches

The three reviewed modern mindfulness-based parenting styles have much in common with regard to their positions in the landscape of existing parenting research and theory. Thus, in

the discussion of how these approaches map onto existing parenting frameworks, I will discuss conscious, unconditional, and mindful parenting jointly. First, based on the available literature, it might be anticipated that individuals taking a mindfulness-based parenting approach would be more aware of their child's needs and feelings (Peterson, 2015). Thus, they might exhibit very low levels of psychological control and have highly responsive, warm, and affectionate interactions with their children. This provides an opportunity for mindfulness-based parents to be labelled either authoritative or permissive. The distinguishing factor between authoritative and permissive parenting is in how the parent exhibits (or does not exhibit) behavioral or confrontive control (Baumrind, 2013). In other words, how does the parent apply limit setting, behavioral regulation, monitoring, and discipline?

Some websites (e.g., WebMD, 2021) suggest conscious or mindful parents should set limits, establish rules, and be consistent with discipline. Similarly, Duncan et al. (2009) suggested that mindful parenting contributes to an overall positive parenting attitude which brings about higher levels of consistency and monitoring (i.e., behavioral control), but this approach is largely absent from parenting books on mindfulness approaches. For example, Tsabary (2010) mentions the importance of being consistent with boundaries for toddlers, but then encourages conscious parents to let go of control and accept the decisions and behaviors of their older children. Kohn (2005) asks parents to consider if they are setting too many limits. The former suggests an authoritative approach while the latter is more permissive.

In contrast to some conscious and unconditional recommendations, prior research findings support the idea that parents practicing mindfulness are more likely to be authoritative (Gouveia et al., 2016; Williams & Wahler, 2010). Still, mindfulness-based approaches do not

seem to emphasize the firm control described by Baumrind as characteristic of authoritative parents (1971a; 2012; 2013). This suggests that mindful parents do not align with either authoritative or permissive styles. Instead, these parents seem to reflect a style Baumrind (1971b) called "harmonious." Unlike permissive parents, who fail to exert control, these parents simply did not seem to need to exercise control in the authoritative sense. Instead, harmonious parents "focused upon achieving a quality of harmony in the home… and lost interest in actually resolving a difference once agreement upon principles of resolution had been reached" (p. 99).

It is also important to consider parenting cognitions and related behaviors that set this approach apart from others. Given that mindful parents strive to accept and provide space for their child's emotions and react in non-judgmental ways (Gouveia et al., 2016), it might be anticipated mindfulness-based parents would show high levels of emotional reflexivity, autonomy support, and tolerance. When frustrated with a child's behavior, the parent would reflect on their own response to behavior, rather than exerting power in an attempt to regulate the child. Furthermore, the mindfulness approach emphasizes high expectations for how parents will interact and react to children's behaviors. These expectations seem to be paramount, with any child-based goals being secondary. Given this emphasis on parent-based goals, it might also be anticipated that those taking a mindfulness-based approach have high parental role salience. Parents taking this approach are also likely to demonstrate child-centeredness in that they attempt to take the child's perspective and may defer to the child's wishes and feelings.

In summary, while mindfulness-based parents may land in the authoritative range (see Figure 1; appendix p. 169), they have characteristics of both authoritative and permissive parenting in that they likely demonstrate low psychological control and high responsiveness. A

difference may be in the way behavioral control is displayed. Given their egalitarian and child-centered views, it might be anticipated that mindful parents demonstrate moderate levels of behavioral control. These parents may not be overly demanding (i.e., permissive) but are likely to engage in the give-and-take characteristic of authoritative parents. As indicated in Table 1 (see appendix p. 170), mindful parents can be further identified by their emotional reflexivity and tolerance as well as the emphasis on parent-based goals and expectations. It is the striving to be the best possible parent (Walters, 2018), combined with parental self-reflection, which guides their parenting behavior.

Helicopter Parents

Padilla-Walker and Nelson (2012) propose that helicopter parents reflect a unique patterning of the basic dimensions of parenting (e.g., support and control). It is well established that helicopter parents are high in behavioral control (e.g., monitoring) and show high levels of support (Fingerman et al., 2012). Based on this information, helicopter parents seem to fall into the realm of authoritative parenting. However, outcomes for children of helicopter parents do not align with the considerable literature that claims authoritative parenting is the best possible parenting style for most children. Thus, it is important here to consider how support and control are measured. Padilla-Walker and Nelson hypothesize that helicopter parents enforce limits and monitoring behaviors to the extent that they limit the development of independence and autonomy, characteristic of psychological control. Similarly, the high levels of support that are shown by helicopter parents seem to be largely in the realm of "helping," rather than in warmth and responsiveness. If we consider these distinctions, helicopter parents are now characterized by low or moderate levels of warmth, high levels of behavioral control, and moderate to high levels

of psychological control, landing them in the zone of authoritarian parents. Given these inconsistencies, it is hypothesized that helicopter parents may occupy some middle-space between authoritative and authoritarian parenting (see Figure 1; appendix p. 169).

Moving beyond support and control, intrusive parenting practices and the 'hovering' for which helicopter parents are known suggest limited support for autonomy (see Table 1; appendix p. 170), but also a low tolerance for misbehavior or failure. Parents may be motivated by a child-based goal of protection (Dupont et al., 2022) or promoting optimal development, well-being, and happiness (Locke et al., 2012). There is also a suggestion that individuals labeled helicopter parents feel that children are not capable of handling independent tasks (Lindke & Oppenheimer, 2021). This belief may stem from a lack of knowledge about the ability of children at different ages or may be prompted by a fear of the child's failure. Helicopter parents also seem to have a need to exert control over the child, in contrast to child-centered beliefs.

It can be assumed that most, if not all, helicopter parents are characterized mainly by their tendency to over-control (behaviorally or psychologically) although this may manifest in a variety of ways and be prompted by different parental cognitions. Regardless of the motivation for their behavior, helicopter parents seem to take valued parenting practices to extremes (Turner et al., 2022). Research on helicopter parenting is still developing, but available literature seems to support Levy's (1943) original description of possessive parents as potentially demonstrating excessive presence, infantilization, prevention of autonomy development, or excessive control.

Intensive Mothering

Intensive mothering may be best understood when considering the classification of parental cognitions that may manifest in varied parenting behaviors based on the individual goals

and resources of each parent. Importantly, mothers endorsing this approach see the maternal role as highly salient and the mother as essential for optimal child-rearing (Hays, 1996). They also consider the child's needs to be paramount and the experience of parenting to be necessarily difficult (Liss et al., 2013). These beliefs lead to mothers to engage in the majority of care for and interaction with the child. Mothers who adhere to this ideology are also likely child-centered; Hays (1996) reported that intensive mothers held a belief that they should seek to understand their child, continually enjoy the presence of their child, and limit time away from the child. Intensive mothers seem to be goal-oriented, having high standards for their own parenting (e.g., parent-based goals) as well as high expectations for their child's development (e.g., child-based goals). See Table 1 (appendix p. 170) for a comprehensive coverage of expectations.

When comparing intensive mothers to traditional typologies, they seem to demonstrate elements of both authoritative and permissive parenting. Intensive mothers typically demonstrate attachment behaviors including high levels of warmth and responsiveness. At the same time, they may have high levels of tolerance, given their child-centered nature, which could present as low behavioral control. Taken together, these attributes would suggest that intensive mothers align with permissive parenting, and yet child outcomes associated with permissive parenting (e.g., limited self-regulation, anti-social behaviors, worse academic performance) are in direct contrast to the ideological goals of the intensive mother. It is also important to consider how these individuals approach parental control. Although intensive mothers may defer to their child and thus de-emphasize parental power, they often set firm regulations around children's diet, interactions with others (e.g., gatekeeping; Forbes et al., 2020), and behaviors (e.g., play, screen use; Novoa et al., 2022). The behavioral control employed by intensive mothers is complex and

may be context specific. Thus, it is difficult to render a hypothesis about the average level these mothers might demonstrate. However, given the likely presence of behavioral control and anticipated high levels of parental support, this parenting style may be most closely aligned with authoritative parenting (see Figure 1; appendix p. 169).

Free-Range Parenting

Free-range parenting is another style that does not clearly resemble traditional academic parenting styles. Free-range parents have been considered permissive or even neglectful given the deliberate lack of parental monitoring (Morin, 2021). Still, these parents likely demonstrate some level of behavioral control in the form of rules, restrictions, and behavioral expectations (see Figure 1; Table 1; appendix pp. 169-170). As Skenanzy (2009) points out, free-range parenting is less about simply leaving children unattended and more about encouraging unscheduled play, limiting time with technology, and orchestrating opportunities to develop and exert independence.

Given the limited empirical research on free-range parenting, it is difficult to determine how contextual factors might influence this parenting style. It could be argued that free-range parenting is similar to Laureau's (2003) description of natural growth. In fact, free-range parenting ideals seem to match closely with Laureau's fictional description of fourth graders who have limited structured activities, limited adult supervision, and are free to go see friends and relatives that live nearby. A key difference between Laureau's (2003) description and free-range parenting may come from the exertion of parental power. Laureau describes natural growth parents as establishing firm boundaries and providing children with directives rather than reasoning (an authoritarian tendency; e.g., Baumrind, 1971a, 2012).

As with mindfulness and intensive mothering, free-range parenting is driven by parental cognitions. Specifically, the free-range approach suggests pushing back against the tendency for over controlling or protecting each moment of the child's life. It is anticipated that these parents would be child-centered, allowing the child to choose for themselves and make their own decisions rather than exerting parental power. It could be hypothesized that free-range parents would take a more egalitarian approach to parent-child interactions including the verbal give-and take more characteristic of an authoritative approach. More research is needed on this parenting style to determine more detailed characteristics, such as parental warmth and maternal essentialism (see Table 1; appendix p. 170).

Conclusions and Future Research

In developed countries across the world there has been a shift toward authoritative parenting (Doepke & Zilibotti, 2019) and also a rise in intensive parenting practices (Morris et al., 2021; Nelson, 2019). Many of the modern parenting styles discussed in this review seem to be practiced in the United States by middle- and upper-class parents and yet expectations for authoritative and intensive parenting practices may be evident in a variety of socioeconomic groups (Ishizuka, 2019). Despite ample evidence that parenting differs based on social contexts, research often focuses on more privileged populations (Lansford, 2021), and more work is needed to link culture and parenting (Bornstein, 2009). It is also vital to continue to explore ways in which to best measure the complexities of parenting behavior, attitudes, and goals especially as they relate to diverse parenting within the United States and globally.

This review aimed to situate modern approaches to parenting within existing research on cognition, dimensions, typologies, and contextual influences, generating specific hypotheses and

areas of investigation for empirical work. Parenting is complex (Darling & Steinberg, 1993), and the ability to classify and measure parenting often lags behind the conceptual understanding of parents and parenting (Smith, 2011). The complexity increases when considering modern parenting styles (i.e., free-range, helicopter, intensive, mindfulness). Cognition plays an important role in determining parenting behavior, and modern parenting approaches are often notable for their different attitudes, beliefs, and goals. Specifically, mindfulness, free-range, and intensive mothering have strong connections to parental cognitions. To further research and theory on parenting, it is important for researchers and parenting educators to consider how parental cognitions are influential in determining specific parenting behaviors and overall parenting styles, including modern parenting approaches.

With regard to dimensions, it is anticipated that some modern parenting approaches might show moderate levels of parental support, behavioral control, or psychological control, rather than simply being high or low on each dimension. Future research should strive to identify parents who occupy this middle ground and identify connections between moderate parenting and outcomes for children. It is also imperative that researchers find ways to differentiate between seemingly similar concepts. While it is possible for parents to demonstrate very high levels of warmth and support without negative consequences (Adrian, 2019), high levels of behavioral control may cross the line into psychological control (Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012). Similarly, high levels of parental support may push a child's tolerance for affection (Hess et al., 2018), or cross the line into hyper-vigilance and be associated with negative outcomes for children (Bornstein & Manian, 2013) and parents (Büskens, 2001). Perhaps there is an opportunity to determine where this line falls and identify the mechanism through which over-

parenting occurs. To accomplish this, it is important to investigate how support and control are measured in existing studies and to consider measuring elements of each dimension individually in future research (González-Cámara et al., 2019).

When considering academic parenting styles, modern parenting approaches did not align completely with authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, or neglectful parenting. Helicopter parenting seems authoritative on the surface level, but more authoritarian when considering nuances in the measurement of parental support and parental control. Intensive parenting and mindfulness approaches seem to be authoritative with permissive tendencies, showing high levels of parental support (i.e., responsiveness, warmth), moderate levels of behavioral control, and low levels of psychological control. Free-range parenting seems to be a permissive style of parenting (i.e., low control) but given the intentionality of this approach it is likely that these parents have some authoritative tendencies. Empirical testing could serve to confirm or reject the hypotheses laid out in the current review and provide further evidence of how modern parenting approaches relate to parenting cognitions, dimensions, and well-accepted parenting styles.

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CHAPTER II BRIDGING THE GAP TO MODERN PARENTING STYLES: A TWO-PART LATENT PROFILE ANALYSIS

Abstract

Parenting literature commonly refers to authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and neglectful styles of parenting, classified by their display of parental support and control. Modern parenting approaches have a variety of labels including intensive, helicopter, free-range, and mindful, which may not align with traditional parenting styles. Modern styles are often differentiated by parental cognitions (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, and goals); however, few researchers have considered cognitions in addition to behavioral measures when classifying parents into groups. Using a latent profile analysis, this study explored how classifications of parenting (i.e., profiles) change when considering parental cognitions in addition to parental behaviors, and whether the inclusion of cognitions allows the identification of more nuanced modern parenting styles. Using traditional measures, parenting profiles emerged that resembled traditional parenting styles (i.e., authoritative, authoritarian, permissive). The inclusion of parental cognitions was instrumental in identifying modern approaches to parenting, such as intensive mothering and free-range parents, and provides insight into how beliefs and attitudes about parenting serve to influence a parent's overall approach or style of parenting.

Bridging the Gap to Modern Parenting Styles:

A Two-Part Latent Profile Analysis

Social scientists and parenting researchers have consistently demonstrated that parents play a central role in influencing child outcomes (Bornstein & Manian, 2013; O'Connor, 2002). The importance of parents for children's development has led to a heightened focus on parenting behaviors over the last century (Thelen & Haukanes, 2010) and especially in the last several decades (Nelson, 2012; Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). In general, positive parenting behaviors include being warm and loving, responsive to the child, and setting firm boundaries and limits for children (Taraban & Shaw, 2018). These behaviors are often measured as dimensions of support and behavioral control. Negative parenting includes neglect, abusive behaviors, and forms of psychological control such as parental disrespect and violations of privacy (Barber et al., 2012; Barber & Xia, 2013). Negative parenting behaviors have been negatively associated with children's mental health and achievement, and positively associated with their externalizing behaviors (Barber et al., 2012; Härkönen et al., 2017; Petit et al., 2001).

Some researchers suggest that the combination of parenting behaviors (i.e., support and control) can be used to describe a parent's overall approach to parenting (e.g., parenting style; Baumrind, 1971). However, these parenting styles may not be sufficient to capture the nuances of modern parenting (Rettew, 2021; Renegar & Stolz, 2022), which is seemingly different than parenting in previous generations (Collins et al., 2011). Parents today face significant scrutiny. Additionally, they have endless avenues (such as social media) through which to engage with information about parenting, compare themselves to others, and promote their own parenting beliefs and attitudes (Janning, 2019). A key element in advancing parenting theory and understanding the complexity of the parenting experience is the consideration of both cognitions

and practices (Bornstein, 2015). Although research on parental cognitions has been growing since the 1960's (Holden & Smith, 2019), parental cognitions and behaviors are not often used together (Lankes, 2022) to describe parenting. The current study aims to fill a gap in the existing literature by considering how variability in traditional parenting dimensions alone, and in concert with parenting cognitions, can serve to identify traditional and modern parenting types.

Theoretical Framework

The current study is guided by the theory of planned behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991; 2002) which includes three main elements: *attitudes*, *norms*, and *control*. For the current study, a*ttitudes* describe an individual's feelings toward parenting (i.e., parenting attitudes) while *norms* represent general social expectations (i.e., how society expects parents to behave). *Control* broadly represents parenting self-efficacy, or how the individual feels about their ability to meet parenting expectations. The TPB posits that these elements work together to predict behavioral *intentions* (Azjen, 2002). To fully understand a parent's overall parenting style, we must consider their parenting attitudes, including their expectations for themselves and the norms they internalize, in addition to their behaviors. With heightened expectations and widespread communication of social norms around parenting, this theory provides an excellent platform for an investigation of modern parenting.

Review of Literature

Research on parenting informs parenting books and websites, education and intervention, and social policy (Morris et al., 2021). Over the last century, researchers have aimed to conceptualize and measure parenting by identifying parenting cognitions, dimensions, and contexts. In addition, parental behaviors have been classified into parenting types or styles (e.g., Shaefer 1959/1965; Baumrind, 1971). More recently, researchers have begun to focus on modern

trends in parenting such as mindfulness practices (Ahemaitijiang et al., 2021) as well as over-parenting practices (Segrin et al., 2015) such as intensive mothering (Novoa et al., 2022) and helicopter parenting (Vidgal & Brønnick. 2022). The review below will first describe the state of research related to parental cognitions, parenting dimensions, and traditional parenting types before describing several modern parenting styles and situating them within the existing research landscape.

Parental Cognitions

Parental cognitions can be thought of as a combination of attitudes, beliefs, and goals that function together (Darling & Steinberg, 1993) to influence overall parenting style and determine parental behavior in specific situations (Holden & Smith, 2019). Although traditional parenting literature focuses mainly on behaviors rather than cognitions (Wamser-Nanney & Campbell, 2020), cognitions have long been considered an antecedent of parental behavior (Rollins & Thomas, 1979; Rubin & Mills, 1992; Stodgill, 1936) and are an integral part of some behavioral theories (e.g., TPB; Ajzen, 1991). In recent decades, parenting has received increased scrutiny (Thelen & Haukanes, 2010), and parents now expend more energy learning and thinking about how to enact parenting than in previous generations (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). Parental cognitions provide an opportunity to understand a parent's overall approach to parenting and serve as an intervention point for changing parenting behavior, especially in populations at risk for maltreatment or other adverse outcomes (Wamser-Nanney & Campbell, 2020).

Parenting attitudes include thoughts toward specific parenting practices (e.g., corporal punishment; Holden & Smith, 2019), expectations about parent-child interactions (Myers & Battistoni, 2003), or perceptions of the parenting role overall (e.g., role salience, role satisfaction; Okagaki & Bingham, 2005). Parenting beliefs can be thought of as things "parents

accept as true" (Holden & Smith, 2019, p. 689) and may be oriented toward the parental role (e.g., essentialism; Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013), views of the child (e.g., child-centeredness; Liss et al., 2013), or parent-child interactions (e.g., egalitarianism; Baumrind, 2012; 2013). Parental goals include a variety of desires the parent has for the child including safety, socialization, learning or education, and compliance or control (Grusec & Davidov, 2019; Smetana, 1997). In addition, parents may have goals for their own parenting behavior based on internalized expectations (i.e., behavioral intentions; Ajzen, 2002). Given their overlapping nature, it can be difficult to separate the various elements of parental cognitions (Holden & Edwards, 1989), and parents are not always able to enact behaviors that align with their own attitudes, beliefs, and goals (Holden & Smith, 2019). Still, the hyper-focus on parenting in recent decades has led to a heightened awareness of one's own parenting behavior. In other words, modern parents are more likely to think about the best ways to parent and self-reflect on their own behaviors than previous generations of parents (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). Furthermore, many modern parenting styles seem to be distinguished mainly through parental cognitions (Renegar & Stolz, 2022).

Parenting Dimensions and Traditional Parenting Styles

Consistently, three core parenting dimensions have been identified and used to describe parenting and predict child outcomes: parental support, behavioral control, and psychological control. Parental support, defined as warmth, affection, and nurturing behaviors (Barber et al., 2005), is generally viewed as positive, with high levels of support contributing to parent-child attachment (Barber & Thomas, 1986; Barber & Xia, 2013) and pro-social development (Okorn et al., 2021). Behavioral control is also considered a positive dimension (Taraban & Shaw, 2018). The use of routines, supervision, and rules (Baumrind, 2012) typically results in higher

psychosocial functioning for children (Barber et al., 2005). In contrast, psychological control is viewed as a negative dimension (Taraban & Shaw, 2018) and is characterized by parental use of shame, guilt, or manipulation (Smetana, 2017; Barber, 1996). High levels of psychological control are associated with concerning issues including children's externalizing behaviors (Pinquart, 2017). However, parenting is considerably more complex than these three dimensions might suggest (Bornstein, 2015; Holden & Edwards, 1989). Parenting behaviors that warrant additional attention include autonomy support (e.g., Kohn, 2005), cognitive stimulation (e.g., Cumming et al., 2022; Hembacher & Frank, 2020), emotional reflexivity (e.g., Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Joussemet & Grolnick, 2022), and tolerance (e.g., Greenspan, 2006). Several of these were evident in early parenting research (e.g., Baldwin, 1955; Becker, 1964; Schaefer, 1959).

Parenting dimensions are also foundational for the traditional understanding of parenting styles. Applications of Baumrind's (1971) parenting typology are frequently used to describe parenting and predict child outcomes (Farzand et al., 2017; Olivari et al., 2013). Authoritative parenting, characterized by high levels of support, high levels of behavioral control, and low levels of psychological control (Baumrind, 1971; 2012), is often associated with positive outcomes for children (Baumrind, 2013). Authoritarian parents exhibit high behavioral and psychological control and low warmth, while permissive parents show high support, low psychological control, and low behavioral control. Neglectful parents are considered low in all dimensions (Baumrind, 1971; 2012). However, Baumrind was only successful in identifying a parenting style for three-fourths of her original sample, suggesting that some parents do not fit the mold of traditional parenting styles. More recent attempts to characterize parents according to this typology have used a measure of authoritative, authoritarian, or permissive tendencies (e.g.,

Robsinon et al., 2001). Despite being frequently used to measure parenting style, this measure is applied inconsistently, shows poor reliability in measuring permissive tendencies, and often identifies sub-groups of parents that don't align with traditional styles (Olivari et al., 2013).

The four well-accepted parenting styles (i.e., authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, neglectful) continue to be identified in normative parenting populations (e.g., Kuppens & Ceulmans, 2019; Mikkonen et al., 2022) and maladaptive parenting populations (e.g., Louis, 2022). However, Kuppens and Ceulmans as well as Mikkonen and colleagues both used dimensional measures (i.e., parental support, behavioral control, psychological control) rather than authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive tendencies, to identify parenting groups. Kuppens and Ceulmans identified four unique parenting styles while Mikkonen and colleagues reported six styles, yet both identified groups similar to Baumrind's (1971) typology. However, cluster analyses are largely self-determining (Power, 2013). In other words, when researchers use the same measures of parenting to classify parents into types (e.g., high in one dimension and low in another), it is logical that they would continue to identify the same or similar groups.

Distilling parenting into groups or types is common and can be advantageous as a simplified way to predict child outcomes. Existing approaches have been inconsistent and, at times, unreliable. However, there is an opportunity to improve upon the way parenting types are described and identified. The consideration of multiple dimensional measures (Skinner et al., 2005), and the inclusion of parental cognitions (Renegar & Stolz, 2022), may more clearly delineate the complexities of parenting styles. This may be especially true for identifying modern parenting styles, which are more likely to be defined by parenting cognitions (i.e., a purposeful or planned approach to parenting). Having a better conceptual understanding of the diversity of

parenting approaches, including the role of parental cognitions, provides a foundation to potentially uncover nuances in outcomes for children and parents.

Gender Differences

There is an ongoing debate in the field of parenting research about whether "mothering" and "fathering" are distinct concepts (e.g., Gerhardt et al., 2020) or two sides of the same coin called "parenting" (e.g., Schoppe-Sullivan & Fagan, 2020). Mothers often bear the brunt of the burdens of parenting and childcare (Bornstein, 2015). Also, mothers are apt to engage with online parenting information, compare themselves to others (Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2017), and endorse modern parenting styles, such as intensive mothering (Ishizuka, 2019). Considering that research has overwhelmingly focused on mothers (Stolz et al., 2005), it is unclear if current dimensional approaches and measures, or parenting typologies can be applied equally well to mothers and fathers. Results from recent cluster analyses suggest parenting styles may differ for mothers and fathers (see Turner et al., 2022) but it remains unclear whether parenting measures capture the essence of parenting the same way for mothers and fathers (Crapo et al., 2021). Expectations for fathers are changing, but mothers are more frequently held to extremely high, if not unrealistic, standards of parenting (O'Brein Hallstein, 2016) which are reinforced through a variety of personal, social, and digital outlets (Janning, 2019).

Modern Parenting Styles

Recent research has identified modern trends in parenting including over-parenting (i.e., helicopter and intensive) and mindfulness-based parenting. The popular media refers to these parenting styles, and other modern parenting styles (e.g., attachment, conscious, unconditional, and free-range parenting; Renegar & Stolz, 2022) as alternative parenting styles. Despite an increased presence of modern parenting styles in parenting literature, it is still unclear how these

styles relate to the traditional styles that dominate academic research (Rettew, 2021). Recently, Renegar and Stolz (2022) discussed how four modern parenting approaches (free-range parents, helicopter parents, intensive mothers, and mindful parents) relate to parenting dimensions, cognitions, and traditional parenting styles. An illustration of how each might be situated within Baumrind's (1971) typology is included in Figure 1 (appendix p. 169).

Free-range parents

Free-range parenting is becoming a popular term in popular parenting media. It was first used in Lenore Skenazy's (2009) book *Free Range Kids*, a parenting book written in direct contrast to the culture of fear and over-protection (e.g., intensive or helicopter parenting) that modern-day parents often exhibit. Free-range parents are expected to be warm and loving, but limited in their provision of helping support, instead allowing space for children to learn to be self-sufficient (Renegar & Stolz, 2022). With regard to control, free-range parents most closely resemble permissive parents, low in behavioral control and psychological control. Still, these parents are expected to endorse some rules, limits, and expectations, whereas permissive parents tend to be characterized by "lax behavioral control" (i.e., few or no demands about the child's behavior; Baumrind, 2013, p. 27). With regard to parental cognitions, free-range parents would be expected to be low in over-controlling or helicopter tendences and high in autonomy support, given that these parents are most notable for engaging in behaviors that intentionally push back against over-protection and endorsement of children's autonomy (Skenzazy, 2009).

Helicopter parents

Helicopter parenting is a term that has become increasingly common since the late 1990's (Dupont et al., 2022) and is relatively well-studied in academic literature (Vidgal & Brønnick, 2022). Named for their tendency to "hover" over children (Dupont et al., 2022), helicopter

parents typically exhibit high levels of parental support and behavioral control (i.e., authoritative tendencies; Turner et al., 2022). However, helicopter parents might be considered authoritative or authoritarian, depending on how support and control are conceptualized (Renegar & Stolz, 2022). Going beyond typical or healthy levels of support and control, these parents tend to over-parent in ways that become intrusive to the child's development and might be categorized as psychological control, an authoritarian characteristic (Padilla-Walker, 2012). Helicopter parenting behavior seems driven by multiple child-focused goals (e.g., protection, child development/success, socialization) and characterized by a need to have control or power in the parent-child relationship (Renegar & Stolz, 2022).

Mindful parents

Over the last two decades a mindfulness approach to parenting has become increasingly popular (Schott, 2021). Those taking a mindful approach seek to be present and understanding of each parent-child interaction (Burke et al., 2020). Although this approach is sometimes called 'conscious' or 'unconditional' in the popular media, it is most commonly studied as mindful parenting in the academic realm. Mindful parents are most closely aligned with authoritative parenting but also show some elements of permissiveness (Renegar & Stolz, 2022). Similar to both authoritative and permissive styles, mindful parents are likely high in parental support (i.e., are warm and responsive). However, the mindful parenting approach does not seem to demonstrate the high levels of confrontive behavioral control described by Baumrind (2013) as an essential element of authoritative practice. Books on mindful parenting practices typically downplay the need for behavioral control (Renegar & Stolz, 2022). Similar to other modern approaches, mindful parenting is characterized by a specific attitude (i.e., cognition) that parents should be reflective, present, and attentive in their interactions with their child. The main goal of

mindful parenting is to build a healthy emotional relationship between the parent and child (Duncan et al., 2009).

Intensive mothers

First coined by Hays (1996), intensive mothering is an ideology that grew from the principles of attachment parenting (e.g., Sears & Sears, 2001). This approach seems driven by ingrained personal attitudes and beliefs about parenting and the need to meet external social norms and expectations. Characterized by high levels of involvement with children, intensive mothering is often demonstrated by mothers engaging in time- and labor-intensive parenting behaviors with young children (Wall, 2013). Intensive mothers demonstrate a range of behaviors that might be classified as either authoritative or permissive (Renegar & Stolz, 2022). Owing to an attachment-based foundation, intensive mothers are highly warm and supportive (Novoa et al., 2022). Intensive mothers are also marked by their beliefs about parenting and the maternal role. Specifically, they feel that 'good' mothering is essential to promote optimal child development (i.e., essentialism; Liss et al., 2013) and that that the child's needs take precedence over the parent (i.e., child-centered; Hays, 1996). These two perspectives might prompt mothers to be over-involved or over-controlling in some areas such as cognitive stimulation, play, and feeding, while also exhibiting permissive tendencies such as lax behavioral control (Renegar & Stolz, 2022). Given that behavioral elements of intensive mothering might vary based on context, the endorsement of essentialist and child-centered beliefs are most likely to set this style apart from others.

Contextual Factors

How an individual approaches parenting may also be determined by contextual factors such as socioeconomic status, educational attainment, and cultural norms. Observations of

differential parenting practices along social class lines have been evident throughout the history of parenting research (see Becker, 1964; Kohn, 1963; Langman, 1986; Rubin & Mills, 1992). Most often, middle- and upper-class parents have been shown to engage in more hands-on parenting (i.e., concerted cultivation; Laurea, 2003), while working class parents are more likely to allow children to engage in natural growth. Recently, researchers have suggested that differences in parenting behaviors might be spurred by different cultural norms, social constraints (Lansford, 2021), or the role of racialized identity (Manning, 2019).

The Current Study

Parents are considered to be an integral part of a child's development (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). Modern parents, especially mothers (Hays, 1996), are held to exacting standards of parenting (Nelson, 2019), continually exposed to information about parenting, and often subject to social or self-judgement (Janning, 2019). Parenting is often studied in terms of dimensions (e.g., support and control) and the parenting styles that can be gleaned from those dimensions, although there is recent evidence that parents and parenting are more complex than these styles reflect. It is also important to consider that an individual's approach to parenting is determined by a combination of factors including their beliefs about appropriate parental behaviors, goals for their child, and social contexts (Bornstein, 2015). Through the lens of TPB, individual attitudes toward parenting combine with social expectations or norms to become internalized which then predict future behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 2002). This is especially true in the current era where parents often intentionally enact specific modern parenting approaches (e.g., intensive mothering) in an effort to meet the increasingly high standards of parenting. Few researchers have considered both behaviors and cognitions when identifying parenting styles

(Lankes, 2022), although the use of multiple indicators may more precisely define the variety of existing parenting styles (Skinner et al., 2005; Renegar & Stolz, 2022).

The goal of this study is to identify discrete parenting profiles in a sample of mothers based on (a) behavioral parenting dimensions alone as well as (b) parenting dimensions and parental cognitions (i.e., attitudes, beliefs, goals). This study will aim to answer the following research questions.

RQ1: When identifying parenting profiles using only traditional dimensions (i.e., support, behavioral control, psychological control), (a) how many profiles emerge, and (b) do the profiles represent the four well-researched parenting types and/or modern parenting styles?

RQ2: When identifying parenting profiles using traditional parenting dimensions (i.e., support, behavioral control, and psychological control) as well as parenting cognitions (i.e., autonomy support, child-centeredness, essentialism, overparenting tendencies, mindfulness, goals), (a) how many profiles emerge and (b) do these profiles represent the four well-researched types of parenting and/or modern parenting styles?

RQ3: Does self-identified parenting style or other contextual elements (e.g., education, income, family structure) predict profile membership from the model including both traditional behaviors and parental cognitions (RQ2)?

Drawing from current research (Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2019; Kuppens et al., 2009; Mikkonen et al., 2022) and a recent conceptual analysis of modern parenting styles (see Renegar & Stolz, 2022), I propose the following hypotheses for research questions one and two, but do not advance a specific hypothesis regarding the third research question.

H1: The use of traditional parenting dimensions (i.e., parental support, behavioral control, psychological control) will reveal three or four parenting styles that will be similar to the four well-researched parenting styles (e.g., Baumrind, 1971).

H2: The inclusion of parental cognitions will further delineate parenting styles, with more than four total profiles emerging. Hypothesized expectations regarding the distribution of parenting dimensions and cognitions associated with each modern parenting style can be found in Table 1 (appendix p. 170).

Method

Sample and Recruitment

Convenience sampling was used in this study. Participants were recruited through personal email invitations, public social media posts (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), physical advertisements (e.g., flyers), and paid advertisements on Facebook to complete a Qualtrics survey. The survey link was also shared within private Facebook and email groups aimed at parents. Participants had the opportunity to forward the survey link to others (i.e., snowball sampling). A total of 525 individuals provided online consent and began the survey. Participants (n = 56) were excluded if they were missing more than 50% of data for key indicators. Of the 469 remaining participants, individuals were excluded if they were missing a response for gender (n = 41) or identified with a gender other than female (n = 18). The sample was further restricted to individuals who reported having at least one child between the ages of two and eighteen living in the home. The final sample for analysis consisted of 338 participants, which is considered acceptable for a latent profile analysis (LPA) analysis (Peugh & Fan, 2013). Mothers in the sample were between 23 and 69 years old (M = 40.2, SD = 6.5). The overwhelming majority of the sample was White 87.9%, had obtained a four-year college degree or a graduate degree

(85.8%), and indicated an annual income above 100,000 USD (M = 138,153). Additional participant characteristics can be found in Table 2 (appendix p. 171).

Instrument and Measures

Data were collected using an anonymous online survey developed with Qualtrics software. Participants were asked to provide informed consent at the beginning of the survey. Each participant had the opportunity to be entered to win one of ten $20 Amazon gift cards for their participation in the study. Following survey completion, participants who chose to enter the drawing were asked to enter their name and email address in a new survey, separate from their responses. The gift card entry list was exported into a password protected computer file. Participants were assigned a number, and winning numbers were selected via a random number generator. Digital gift cards were delivered to the email addresses provided.

Parenting Behaviors

Following the example of Kuppens et al. (2009), parenting behaviors were measured using the Ghent Parental Behavioral Scale (Van Leeuwen & Vermulst, 2004) and modified items from the updated youth report version of the Psychological Control-Parental Disrespect Scale (PCDS; Barber et al., 2012). Strong theoretical and empirical evidence of three parenting dimensions and psychometric testing supports the combination of these measures to represent the three factors of parental support, behavioral control, and psychological control (Kuppens et al., 2009). Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (α; Cronbach, 1951) and McDonald's omega (ω; McDonald, 1999); while these statistics are often similar, ω typically presents a better estimate and smaller bias than α (Trizano-Hermosilla & Alvarado, 2016).

Parental support. Eight items from the Ghent Parental Behavioral Scale were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never true*) to 5 (*always true*). Items included "I make

time to listen to my child when they want to tell me something" and "I give my child a compliment, hug, or a tap on the shoulder as a reward for good behavior." This scale showed adequate reliability (α = .72; ω = .78).

Behavioral control. Six items representing the rules and monitoring subscale of the Ghent Parental Behavioral Scale were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never true*) to 5 (*always true*). Items included "I teach my child to obey rules" and "I teach my child that it is important to behave properly." This scale showed adequate reliability (α = .64; ω = .77).

Psychological control. Eight items derived from the revised youth report version of the Psychological Control–Disrespect Scale (Barber, et al., 2012) were used to measure psychological control. Following the example of Kuppens et al. (2009), items were rewritten to represent the parents' perspective and will be measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*rarely*) to 5 (*always*). Sample items include "When my child does something I don't like I make them feel guilty" and "I ignore my child (e.g., walk away, don't pay attention)." Negatively worded items were reverse coded. The scale showed adequate reliability (α = .66; ω = .77).

Parent Cognition Measures

Parental cognitions are known to be challenging to measure accurately (Holden & Smith, 2019); thus, there are few well-known reliable measures from which to choose. Furthermore, the current study aimed to measure a variety of parental cognitions that could potentially reveal differences in modern parenting approaches, including essentialism, child-centeredness, overparenting tendencies, autonomy support, and parental mindfulness. To this extent, four existing subscales were chosen, and a fifth measure was created. Prior to inclusion in the analysis, a principal components analysis (PCA) was conducted to evaluate the measures as outlined by Groth et al. (2013). The data were deemed suitable for PCA based on results from

Barlett's test of sphericity ($p < .05$) and Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test (KMO = .70). Results from the Shapiro-Wilkes test indicated non-normal data ($p < .05$). The mardia command in R was used to test for multivariate normality. Results from this test ($p < .05$) indicated the data was not multivariate normal. Oblique rotation was chosen to accommodate non-normality and the anticipated correlation among items. Parallel analysis, VSS, and a visual inspection of the scree plot were used to determine the number of factors to extract; results indicated extracting between four and six components. The five- and six-component models had similar fit (RMSR = .07, fit based upon off diagonal factors = 0.78). The five-component solution was chosen for parsimony and similarity to the intended measures, with factor loadings all above |.5| and no cross-loadings above |.3|. The five-component PCA model was compared to a factor analysis model using the factor.congruence command. Congruence coefficients between .95 and .99 suggest that the factors identified through PCA were nearly identical to those identified through factor analysis.

Essentialism. Essentialism was measured using four of the eight items of the essentialism subscale from the Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ; Liss et al., 2013). Upon reviewing the eight items on this subscale, five items were found to be similar. To reduce survey fatigue, one of the three items that depicted mothers over fathers as ideal care providers was chosen (i.e., "Although fathers mean well, they generally are not as good at parenting as mothers"). Also, one of the two items that suggested men were incapable of caring for children without instruction was chosen (i.e., "Men are unable to care for children unless they are given specific instructions about what to do"). Other items were retained as written. Response options ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These measures loaded together in the PCA and showed adequate reliability when scaled ($\alpha = .75$; $\omega = .79$).

Child-centeredness. Child-centeredness was measured using the three items that comprise the child-centered subscale of the IPAQ (Liss et al., 2013; α = .70). Items in this subscale include statements such as "The child's schedule should take priority over the needs of the parent." In an attempt to improve reliability, a fourth item "My child(ren) are the most important thing in my life" was added. Response options ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These items loaded together in the PCA and showed adequate reliability when scaled (α = .69; ω = .71).

Mindfulness. Mindfulness in parenting was measured using five items from the 28-item Mindfulness in parenting questionnaire (Duncan et al., 2009). To protect against survey fatigue, one item from each of the five domains of mindful parenting (i.e., full attention, non-judgmental acceptance, emotional awareness, self-regulation, compassion) was chosen and the wording adapted to align with other measures. Sample items included "It is important to carefully listen and tune in to your child when the two of you are talking," and "It is important to consider your own emotions when disciplining your child." Response options ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). In the PCA, the mindfulness component consisted of all five mindfulness items and one item from the autonomy group, "Listening to what a child has to say can help parents reach better decisions." Reliability for mindfulness was low, but acceptable (α = .64; ω = .70).

Autonomy. Perceptions of child autonomy were measured using the autonomy sub-scale of the Parent Attitude Scale (PAS; Grolnick et al., 1997). This is the only known parent report measure of autonomy support and has been used in previous research (see McCurdy et al., 2020 for a review). The original sub-scale consisted of four items. One item was dropped because it referenced spanking, which is more likely reflective of parental attitude toward corporal

punishment than parental attitudes toward autonomy. Three items were retained: “I encourage my child to make their own decisions,” “I encourage my child to give their opinion even if we might disagree,” and “Listening to what a child has to say can help parents reach better decisions.” One additional item was created to tap into behavioral autonomy “I encourage my child to do things on their own.” Response options range from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). In the PCA, the autonomy component was represented by three of the four autonomy items and one item from the overcontrolling measure, “It is important for children to learn to solve their own problems and resolve their own conflicts” (α = .57; ω = .61).

Over-controlling tendencies. No existing parent-report measure of over-controlling (i.e., helicopter) tendencies was located. Two earlier studies on helicopter parenting (i.e., Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; Schiffrin et al., 2015) have used adolescent reports to measure over-controlling tendencies. Each study used a nine-item measure. After reviewing the items used in each study, five items that were similarly worded were chosen and re-written to reflect the parent perspective. Sample items included “It’s important to be involved in or help with a child’s big decisions in life, regardless of how old they are” and “Parents of children over 16 should always know exactly where their child is and who they are with.” Response options range from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). In the PCA, three items from this group loaded onto the-overcontrolling tendencies component. One item loaded with autonomy support and the other item “It is important for a parent to step in and help fix things when a child is having difficulties” did not load on any component in the PCA. Reliability for the final three-item scale was low but deemed acceptable considering the limited number of items and novel nature of the measure (α = .55; ω = .52).

Parenting Goals

Participants were asked how important each of the five domains of parenting goals (e.g., Grusec & Davidov, 2019) are to their family. Goals are protection/safety, reciprocity, guided learning/development, socialization, and control/power. Each item was defined for the participant. For example, the goal of reciprocity was defined as "Building a healthy, respectful, and meaningful relationship between the parent and child." Response options for each item ranged from 1 (*not at all important*) to 5 (*very important*).

Demographic Variables

Demographic variables were measured for each participant as follows:

Family income. Participants were asked to enter their estimated annual household income in dollars from all sources (e.g., jobs for pay, dividends and interest, disability, child support, etc.).

Parent's age. Participants were asked to select their age in years.

Gender. Participants were asked to select their gender from the following categories: woman, man, transgender woman, transgender man, and non-binary. An option for participants to identify a gender not included in this list was provided.

Educational attainment. Participants were asked to identify their current level of educational attainment from the following categories: (a) some high school, (b) high school diploma/GED, (c) some college, (d) associates (2 year) degree, (e) bachelors (4 year) degree or graduate degree.

Racial identification. Participants were asked to identify with which racial categories they most closely identify. Options included: (a) American Indian or Alaska Native, (b) Asian, (c) Black or African American, (d) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, (e) White, or (f)

other racial identification. Participants had the option to select more than racial group, but all participants in the current study identified only one racial identity.

Number and age of child(ren). Participants were asked to report (a) the age of the oldest child in their household, b) if their children were biological, step, or adopted children, and c) if they had at least a child under age 19 living in their household at least half-time.

Relationship to child. Participants were asked if the children in their household are (a) all biological children, (b) all adopted children, (c) all stepchildren, or (d) a combination of those categories.

Family structure. Participants were asked to select which family structure best described their current family. Response options include (a) single (never married), (b) single (divorced or separated), (c) married, or (d) cohabiting.

Parenting Style

Participants were shown the prompt "Sometimes, parents identify strongly with a particular style of parenting that they have heard or read about. Which (if any) of the following styles do you most strongly identify with?" Participants were able to select only one answer from a list of twelve parenting styles including "free-range parent," "authoritative parent," and "mindful parent." Participants also had the opportunity to choose "none of these" or "other" and specify an alternative parenting style.

Plan of Analysis

This study employed a latent profile analysis (LPA). LPA is a person-centered approach that assumes individuals can be placed into profiles (i.e., classes, groups, or clusters) that have unique combinations of personal or environmental characteristics (Spurk et al., 2020; Williams & Kibowski, 2016). Profile membership is considered a latent or unobserved categorical variable.

The analysis identifies subgroups in the data and obtains the probability that individuals belong to different groups (Ferguson et al., 2020) based on their specific pattern of responses (Williams & Kibowski, 2016). In the present study, each profile (e.g., parenting style) can be explained by an underlying classification of parents with similar behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, and goals. Differences between profiles are interpreted by comparing the sample mean for each indicator with the profile's mean (Spurk et al., 2020).

Although falling under the umbrella of mixture modeling (Williams & Kibowski, 2016), LPA is different from similar approaches including latent class analysis (LCA). First, the observed variables (i.e., indicators) in LCA are discrete or categorical while the observed variables in LPA may be continuous, categorical, count, or a combination of these (Spurk et al., 2020). In addition, although LCA models assume local independence (i.e., indicator variables do not covary within classes), LPA can allow for this covariance (Williams & Kibowski, 2016). This element is especially important for the current study given the anticipated correlation among indicator variables. LPA also provides the opportunity to examine if covariates added to the model predict group membership (Ferguson et al., 2020) and can provide the probability of an individual having a particular response on an observed variable based on their group membership (Finch & French, 2015).

Model Specification, Fit, and Retention

To answer the first two research questions, separate latent profile analyses (LPA) were conducted in M*plus*, using 100 random starts and 50 iterations. The steps to LPA are similar to structural equation modeling (SEM) analyses, fitting a series of models with a goal of a final model that fits the data well and includes the smallest number of groups (k) of individuals (i) who share a meaningful pattern of responses to the measures (j; Ferguson et al., 2020; Williams

& Kibowski, 2016). Given the theoretical evidence of a four-profile parenting solution, each analysis compared increasingly complex models beginning with a three-profile model. The first model was specified using only behavioral dimensions (i.e., parental support, behavioral control, and psychological control) as indicators, while the second added parental cognitions and goals. The addition of variables to an LPA model has the potential to change the profile assignment substantially (Finch & French, 2015). While this is often cited as a disadvantage of LPA (Vermunt, 2010), the current study employed this step intentionally to highlight potential differences in profile identification when using only behavioral indicators compared to a combination of behaviors and cognitions.

Models were compared and model retention determined by examining the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), sample-adjusted BIC (SABIC), Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC), and CAIC (Williams & Kibowski, 2016). Lower values, as relative to the previous model, for the BIC, SABIC, and AIC indicate better model fit. Nested models can also be tested using a likelihood ratio test to determine if one model provides statistically significant better fit. *Mplus* Tech 14 output provides a bootstrap likelihood ratio test (BLRT); this test is no longer significant ($p > .05$) when additional profiles or groups do not improve the fit of the model (Finch & French, 2015; Williams & Kibowski, 2016). An elbow plot is another tool to determine the final class solution (Bauer, 2022; Maysn, 2013). Through visual inspection, the elbow plot can show the point of diminishing returns on improvements in model fit variables.

It is also important to consider the proportion of the sample placed into each profile and the distinction between profiles. For example, a profile with less than 5% of the sample may need to be excluded (Bauer, 2022; Vermunt, 2010), and two groups may be so similar they could be brought together into one group (i.e., reduction of a spurious group). Profile distinction is

especially important when profiles will be used for later testing of distal covariates as greater profile distinction results in more reliable estimates (Nylund-Gibson et al., 2019). Entropy values provide one indication of successful classification into profiles; each class solution will provide an entropy value between 0 and 1 (Ferguson et al., 2020). Values closer to 1 indicate better classification, meaning individuals are likely to be placed in the appropriate groups (and groups are more distinct) while lower values indicate more uncertainty. A value of .60 or higher is acceptable, with values at or above .80 desirable (Masyn, 2013).

Profile Description

Once a final solution is chosen based on model fit and considerations of parsimony and parenting theory, the individual profiles were described and named, answering part (b) of research questions one and two: Do the profiles represent the four well-researched parenting types and/or modern parenting styles? Latent profiles were interpreted based on the patterns of the profiles (Ferguson et al., 2020), observation of group means for indicators in comparison to the sample mean (Spurk et al., 2020), and inspection of posterior probabilities (Bauer, 2022). Many researchers rely on a qualitative comparison to determine whether each profile's mean is higher, lower, or similar to the group mean. Alternatively, profiles can be described through posterior probabilities, which represent the probability of a participant belonging to a specific class endorsing a specific response for each indicator and range from 0 to 1 or 0% to 100% (Williams & Kibowski, 2016). Given the number of indicators included in the present study, posterior probabilities may be challenging to interpret. In the current study, a series of single sample t-tests were conducted to formally test if the means on indicators for each profile were significantly different from the overall sample mean. When the t-test was not significant ($p <$ .05), the group mean was considered to be average, and labelled "ave." If the t-test was

significant, this led to the profile mean being interpreted and labelled as “high” or “low” compared to the overall sample mean. In addition, Cohen’s d was calculated to evaluate the relative size of the difference from the mean, with small effect size represented as $d > 0.2$, medium effect size as $d > 0.5$, and large effect size as $d > 0.8$.

Following determination of the final model and profiles, research question three was addressed. Research question three asks “does self-identified parenting style or other contextual elements predict profile membership?” The selected covariates are of conceptual, theoretical, or empirical interest. In this logistic regression framework, LPA membership is the dependent variable, and the covariate is the independent variable (Finch & French, 2015); this process is described in detail below.

Assumptions Testing

LPA assumes population heterogeneity, or that the sample is drawn from a heterogenous population which would produce a mixture of specific profiles (Spurk et al., 2020) as well as local independence among indicators (i.e., indicators are only related to each other due to an underlying latent factor). The local independence assumption is tested by comparing a variety of model specifications. Specifically, Maysn (2013) suggests the final solution should be tested as four other models including equal variances and covariances fixed to 0 (Model 1), varying variances and covariances fixed to 0 (Model 2), equal variances and equal covariances (Model 3), and varying variances and varying covariances (Model 6). As with previous retention testing, the best fitting model is determined by examining AIC and BIC fit indices.

Covariate Analyses

To answer research question three, relationships with contextual factors and self-identification of parenting styles were examined. From a model building standpoint, the LPA was

specified to have the final number of classes using all indicators (i.e., behavioral and cognitive) with the addition of the covariate of interest; covariates may be included individually or together. When a covariate (X_i) is added to the model, output was created in terms of a multinomial logistic regression model (Nylund-Gibson et al., 2019) in which the dependent variable (Y) is the latent class membership (unordered categorical variable) with class 1 serving as the reference category (Finch & French, 2015). Through this process, class membership is considered an observed variable, without error. However, there is considerable evidence that this process leads to biased results and questionable interpretation and underestimates the relationship between covariate and group membership (Bakk & Kuha, 2020). To resolve this, steps to correct the bias were employed. The BCH is generally considered to be reliable for continuous and categorical covariates (Bakk & Kuha, 2020). In the output from this model a coefficient for each covariate and an associated *p* value was reported ($p < .05$ was considered significant). Significant coefficients are interpreted as a one unit increase in X_i the odds of belonging in this group (compared the reference group) increases by *B.* For example, a helicopter parenting profile might be predicted by the age of the child, given that helicopter parenting is often an issue with older adolescents and young adult children. In other words, for each year older the child is, the likelihood of belonging to the helicopter profile, compared to the reference profile, increases by *B*.

Results

This study used latent profile analysis to identify discrete parenting profiles in a group of mothers with at least one child under the age of 18 living in the home. Data analysis was conducted using M*plus* version 8 (Muthén, L. K., & Muthén, 1998-2017) and SPSS version 29 (IBM, 2022). Missing data analysis indicated that less than 2% of data was missing. It was

assumed that data was missing at random due to a lack of patterns identified in the missing data. Descriptive statistics for study variables included means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis (see Table 3; appendix p. 172). First presented are the parenting styles reflecting traditional measures of parenting (e.g., parental support, behavioral control, and psychological control), followed by the

identified parenting styles based on the inclusion of modern parenting cognitions and traditional parenting styles. Finally, parenting styles identified in the second research question are compared to parent-reported demographic variables.

Profiles with Traditional Parenting Dimensions

Research question one asked how many profiles would emerge when using traditional measures of parenting. Four profiles were hypothesized, and a comparison of increasing complex models beginning with three profiles were specified using traditional parenting behavioral dimensions (i.e., parental support, behavioral control, and psychological control) as indicators. Models were evaluated based on a combination of AIC, BIC, entropy, BLRT, and class sizes. The optimal model was the 4-profile solution (see Table 4; appendix p. 173). A comparison of model specifications suggested Model 1 (i.e., equal variances and covariances fixed to 0) was the best fitting model. The entropy value for the final model was .65; this level is acceptable but indicates a potential for profile assignment error (Masyn, 2013).

Next, the profiles were examined based on the pattern of response on each indicator compared to the sample mean (Spurk et al., 2020; Figure 2; appendix p. 173) using a single-sample t-test and Cohen's d for effect size; significant t-tests with medium and large effect sizes are reported. Compared to the sample mean, parents in profile one had lower than average levels of support and higher than average levels of psychological control. This profile was the smallest

(*n* = 34, 10.0%) and was labelled *authoritarian.* Mothers in the second profile (*n* = 104, 30.1% of participants) showed higher than average levels of parental support and behavioral control, and lower than average levels of psychological control. Given the high levels of parental support and behavioral control, this profile was labelled *authoritative*. Parents in profile three had average levels of support, lower than average behavioral control, and lower than average psychological control. These parents are labelled *permissive* and represent 18.9% of the sample (n = 64). Profile four was the largest, representing 40.2% of participants (*n* =136). This profile, labelled *good enough*, was characterized by average levels of parental support, behavioral control, psychological control.

Profiles with Traditional Parenting Dimensions and Modern Parenting Cognitions

Research question two asked how many profiles would emerge when using traditional measures of parenting as well as modern parenting cognitions. A comparison of models with one to six profiles was conducted using traditional behavioral measures of parenting (i.e., parental support, behavioral control, psychological control) in addition to parental cognitions (as determined by the PCA) and five parental goals. Fit measures including AIC, BIC, SABIC, BLRT, entropy, and profile size were evaluated, and it was determined that the five-profile solution was the best choice. A comparison of model specifications suggested Model 1 (i.e., equal variances and covariances fixed to 0) was the best fitting model. Entropy for the five-class model was .80, suggesting good separation of classes. The minimum probability was 0.82 and maximum probability was 1.00, indicating a good likelihood that parents were placed in the correct profiles.

Next, the profiles were examined based on the pattern of response on each indicator compared to the sample mean (Spurk et al., 2020; see Table 5 and Figure 3; appendix pp. 174-

175) using a single sample t-test and Cohen's d for effect size; significant t-tests with medium or large effect sizes are reported. Three profiles emerged that had similar response patterns to profiles identified in the traditional model and were labelled *modern authoritative* (31.4%)*, modern good enough* (12.1%), and *modern authoritarian* (28.9%). *Modern authoritative* parents showed higher than average parental support, behavioral control, mindfulness, and overparenting tendencies. They also had lower than average psychological control and highly endorsed all five parental goals. Compared to the overall sample mean, *modern authoritarian* parents reported lower than average parental support, autonomy support, child-centeredness, and mindfulness. These parents highly endorsed the parental goals of development, control, socialization, and reciprocity and had higher than average psychological control. G*ood enough* parents followed a similar pattern to authoritarian parents but had averages closer to the sample mean for most indicators. *Good enough* parents had lower than average endorsement of the goals of control, reciprocity, and socialization compared to the sample mean.

The two other profiles that emerged were labelled *free-range* (26.0%) and *intensive* (9.2%). *Free-range* parents reported higher than average autonomy support and mindfulness along with lower than average behavioral control, psychological control, overparenting tendencies, and essentialism. These parents reported high endorsement of reciprocity while reporting the lowest agreement with the parental goals of control and protection. *Intensive* parents exhibited the highest group means for parental support, essentialism, and child-centeredness. In addition, they showed higher than average overparenting tendencies and mindfulness, as well as lower than average psychological control. Furthermore, these participants endorsed all five of the parenting goals as important to their family.

The third research question aimed to determine if any contextual elements (e.g., education, income, family structure) or the parent's self-identification with a specific parenting style predicted group membership. Tested in a logistic regression framework using BCH correction, several contextual elements predicted membership in the *intensive* profile, but no other modern profiles. Specifically, mothers were more likely to be labelled *intensive* when they were younger, had fewer children, had only biological children, and had lower levels of education. To test associations among profile memberships and self-identified parenting style, parents were assigned to their most likely profile and a chi-square comparison test was conducted on the parents who identified with a specific parenting style (n = 238). Participants' self-identified parenting style was not correlated to their LPA profile assignment.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to add to the parenting literature by identifying discrete parenting styles based on traditional measures of parenting behavior (i.e., parental support, behavioral control, psychological control) and a combination of traditional measures and parental cognitions (e.g., essentialism, mindfulness, parental goals). Furthermore, this study aimed to determine if the parenting styles revealed were associated with contextual elements (e.g., education, income, family structure) or parents' self-identification of parenting style. Using traditional measures, four parenting styles emerged. Three profiles loosely represented *authoritarian*, *authoritative*, and *permissive* styles. A fourth profile which demonstrated average scores across most variables and was termed *good enough* reflecting Baumrind's (1991) classification of "good enough" parents who showed a level of commitment high enough to "suffice to prevent problem behavior and to assure adequate competence" (p. 8). Within the modern parenting model, five profiles were identified: *modern authoritarian, modern*

authoritative, modern good enough, intensive, and *free-range.* The TPB (Ajzen, 1991) states that *attitudes* and *beliefs* are principal elements in determining *behaviors*. In the current study, parental cognitions, which represent *attitudes* and *beliefs*, provide an opportunity to refine the identification of parenting styles to include the reasons for parenting behaviors as well as the behavior itself. Each profile is discussed in more detail below.

As hypothesized, parents in the authoritarian profile in both the traditional and modern models had lower than average levels of parental support compared to the overall sample mean and average or above average behavioral control. Both groups also demonstrated the highest levels of psychological control. Authoritarian parents are generally described as exhibiting high levels of control and low levels of parental warmth (i.e., support; Baumrind, 2010) and are known for their use of power in the parent-child relationship (Bornstein & Zlotnik, 2008). These parents are thought to exhibit power and control in an effort to extract specific child outcomes (Baumrind, 1971). High demands, controlling actions, and the use of parental power may also cross into coercive control (Segrin & Flora, 2019), sometimes called disrespect (i.e., psychological control; Barber et al., 2005).

The centrality of power and control to the authoritarian parent becomes more evident when considering parenting cognitions and goals. Modern authoritarian parents exhibited lower mindfulness, autonomy support, and child-centeredness, along with a high endorsement of the parental goal of control. A specific response pattern emerged in this parenting style, higher levels of psychological control with lower levels of autonomy support. While not hypothesized, this combination is not surprising. In one of the earliest classifications of parenting styles and dimensions, Schaefer (1959) conceptualized a bipolar dimension called psychological autonomy vs. psychological control, the same pattern reflected in the current study. Autonomy support is

not a frequently measured parenting dimension (Renegar & Stolz, 2022), although this finding demonstrates the potential importance of measuring autonomy support when examining parenting styles.

Interestingly, modern authoritarian parents endorsed the goal of reciprocity (i.e., the importance of building a healthy and respectful relationship between parent and child). On one hand, it could be that parents in this group interpreted the word "respectful" to mean that the child respects the parent and follows instructions, rather than as a reciprocally respectful or egalitarian relationship. On the other hand, perhaps this group of parents is similar to the *directive parenting* style described by Baumrind (2010). This high control parenting style is commonplace in Chinese American, Latin American, conservative European American, and some African American communities (Segrin & Flora, 2019). Reflective of authoritarian parenting in terms of demands and rigidity, controlling behaviors, when occurring within the directive parenting style, are intentionally focused on the positive development of the child. This once again emphasizes the importance of understanding the cognition and intentionality behind parenting behaviors.

In contrast to the authoritarian style of parenting, permissive parents are known for high parental support and low behavioral control (Baumrind, 2010; Bornstein & Z, 2008). Prior research has reported that children of permissive parents have worse behavior, self-control, and self-esteem than children of authoritative parents (Segrin & Flora, 2019). This negative association is usually correlated with permissive parents' tendency to have limited behavioral control. At the same time high levels of parental support and warmth provide benefits for children (Barber & Xia, 2013), and are common characteristics of permissive parents. An integral missing piece in this puzzle may be the underlying reasons resulting in limited or lax

control of children. In the traditional model, a small group of mothers were labelled *permissive*, aligned with traditional definitions and the hypotheses of low behavioral control and low psychological control. It was further hypothesized that this group would exhibit high parental support, which was not supported. However, the overall sample mean for parental support was relatively high (4.39 on a scale of 0–5). Thus, it might be interpreted that parental support in this group was high, but that scores were not significantly different from the sample on average.

Post hoc testing further revealed that 40% of the mothers in the traditional *permissive* profile were also in the modern profile that was labelled *free-range* ($p < .01$). This is understandable given that the profiles demonstrated similar levels of support, behavioral control, and psychological control. Furthermore, free-range parents had a response pattern in which they showed higher than average mindfulness and autonomy support. They did not endorse the goals of control or protection but did endorse both socialization and development. In support of the limited literature on free-range parenting (see Renegar & Stolz, 2022), this response pattern suggests that free-range parents are intentionally limiting behavioral control to allow for autonomy development outside of the bounds of parental directives. Thus, it may be possible that there are distinct types of parents who might be considered permissive; those that intentionally limit the use of control and power in their parenting practices, and those that are unable, unwilling, or uninterested in setting healthy limits on children's behaviors. In fact, Baumrind (1991) described such a distinction in permissive parents in particular, terming permissive parents either "democratic" (i.e., conscientious, engaged, and intentional) or "nondirective" (p. 63). A continued exploration of intentionally permissive parenting regarding children's outcomes is warranted.

Similar to the (traditional model) *permissive* and (modern model) *free-range* profile differences, a distinction is made between (traditional model) *authoritative* and (modern model) *intensive* profiles. Often touted as the gold standard of parenting (e.g., Baumrind, 2010; 2012), authoritative parents are highly responsive (i.e., parental support) and highly demanding (i.e., behavioral control), as was demonstrated in the current study in both the traditional and modern models. Children of authoritative parents typically have more positive outcomes (e.g., behavioral regulation, self-esteem) than children whose parents are not authoritative (Segrin & Flora, 2019). Still, recent research suggests that there is an upper bound to appropriate levels of parental support and behavioral control (Segrin et al., 2015) that should be provided for children. When parents are overly supportive or overly controlling of children's behavior, parents can easily slip into the realm of overparenting (i.e., intensive mothering or helicopter parenting; Renegar & Stolz, 2022), and negate the otherwise positive effects of this parenting approach. In the modern parenting LPA, both authoritative and intensive mothers were identified. In this model, intensive parents had higher means for parental support, but lower means for behavioral control compared to authoritative parents. These differences, which are shown visually in Figure 3 (appendix p. 175), were confirmed with post-hoc independent samples *t*-tests ($p < .001$, $p < .01$). The way intensive parents exhibit control is somewhat different than traditional measures of behavioral control. Intensive mothers may engage both in permissiveness and maternal gatekeeping, controlling the child's environment, but not necessarily setting firm limits on behaviors (Renegar & Stolz, 2022).

Intensive mothers were further set apart by their levels of essentialism (i.e., endorsement of the belief that mothers are the best and preferred care providers for children) and child-centeredness. These parents also highly endorsed all five parental goals as important. The

identification of highly child-centered protective parents is not new, being first mentioned by Levy (1943) as anxious mothers and later described in more detail by Locke et al. (2012) as possessive mothers. Mothers in the current study closely resemble both of these descriptions (see Renegar & Stolz, 2022). The intensive group was also the only group membership that could be predicted by contextual factors. Mothers were more likely to be labelled intensive when they were younger and had fewer children. They were also less likely to report adopted children or stepchildren. It might be expected that intensive mothering, which develops from attachment parenting practices, and is associated with maternal essentialism and child-centeredness, would be more common in the early years of parenting when mothers are bearing the brunt of labor-intensive childcare. Something that might be considered in future research is whether intensive mothering attitudes change over time, especially as children grow older or more children join the family.

The TPB (Ajzen, 1991) may also provide some insight into intensive mothers. Intensive mothers are considered to be highly invested in the parental role (Liss et al., 2013; Ulfrets, 2020), and spend considerable time and energy parenting and learning about parenting (Hays, 1996). Intensive mothers hold specific attitudes toward parenting and the parental role (e.g., essentialist views and child-centered attitudes) and have high expectations for themselves and their child's outcomes (i.e., goals). Through the lens of TPB, this combination should result in specific intentional behaviors, such as high levels of parental support to help children reach goals. This was evident in the current sample and supports prior research showing high levels of support among intensive mothers (see Novoa et al., 2022 for a review). Although it has been reported that intensive parenting attitudes are becoming more common (e.g., Elliot et al., 2015), it has also been suggested that the phenomenon of intensive mothering is more relevant for mothers

who are White, middle-class, and highly educated (How, 2016). In the current study education did predict membership in the intensive group, but not in the anticipated direction. Mothers were less likely to be placed in the intensive group when they had higher levels of education. One possible explanation is discussed in detail by Nomaguchi and Brown (2011). Essentially, mothers with higher education may have more career demands (i.e., less time to practice intensive mothering) while mothers with lower education are more likely to report that children provide them with "joy and new life meaning" (Nomaguchi & Brown, p. 10), two concepts that align with the ideals of intensive mothering. It was not possible to explore differences in intensive parenting by racial identification, but the small number of mothers placed in the intensive mothering group does not support the idea that intensive mothering practices are widespread.

The final group of mothers, represented in both traditional and modern models, were labelled *good enough* parents and had scores that fell around average for most indicators. In her early work in parenting typologies, Baumrind (1971) reported an inability to classify all parents into groups and later labelled some parents good enough if they showed moderate scores on both demandingness and responsiveness (Baumrind, 1991). First coined by Winnicot in 1965, good enough parenting is characterized by adequate (but not necessarily high) levels of love (i.e., support), limit setting (i.e., behavioral control) and facilitation of development (Houghughi & Speight, 1998), meeting the child's needs and preventing negative outcomes such as developmental delay, delinquency, and poor mental health.

Good enough parenting has been mentioned in other areas of parenting research as well. Pederson (2016) explored mother's perceptions of good and bad mothering in an online forum and found that the preference for being just good enough was common among her middle-class posters. Perhaps good enough parents in the current study do represent a middle ground, parents

who have been difficult to place in traditional parenting clusters. At the same time, more than 70% of the current sample identified with a specific parenting style, suggesting a high attunement with and investment in the parental role. It is possible that the parents in this sample are consciously striving to be 'good enough' and potentially rejecting the pressures placed on parents to employ the 'best' parenting practices. Promoting the concept of good enough parenting may be an interesting way to decrease the pressures felt by parents, and understanding what levels of parental support, behavioral control, and psychological control are 'too much' or 'not enough' would help to delineate the lines between adequate and inadequate parenting. Similar to permissive vs. free-range parenting, being a good enough parent might be intentional or situational. In other words, some parents may consciously choose to disengage from the pressures of parenting (see Pederson, 2016), while others find their ability to invest heavily in parenting is limited by competing roles and responsibilities. Future research might consider whether an intentionally – or situationally – good enough parenting style is protective against the higher anxiety, stress, and depression now being reported by many parents (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020).

Limitations and Future Research

The study results should be considered in light of several limitations including the sample population, study measures, and fluid nature of parenting. First, the profile membership was not equally distributed. The unequal profile membership likely limited the ability to detect small effect size differences between groups. At the same time, it could be that there were few differences in demographic variables, given the homogeneity of the sample. Repeating this study with a more diverse sample with an intentional inclusion of understudied populations would provide further verification of the modern parenting styles identified and allow consideration of

the role of contextual factors in parenting styles. When conducting this research with marginalized groups, specifically parents of color, researchers should center the concepts of researcher positionality and racial or cultural influences on parenting.

Second, to guard against survey fatigue, many measures were truncated which may have led to lower reliability of certain scales. Primarily, this limited reliability makes the LPA results less reliable and identifying differences between groups more difficult. For example, although mindful and helicopter parents were hypothesized, neither was identified. One reason for this could be that both the over-parenting and mindful measures showed low levels of reliability and did not factor as anticipated in the PCA. Recent reviews of the psychometric properties of parenting measures (e.g., Hurley et al., 2014) highlight that many measures of parenting are, at best, inconsistent and moderately unreliable. Many measures are outdated and have yet to be examined for invariance across racial and or ethnic groups, parental gender, and children's developmental stages. As the field moves toward more robust measures, it is integral for researchers to provide reports of validity and reliability as well as a clear representation of how the measures are being implemented as predictors.

As the field continues to rely on the use of parenting styles to predict outcomes for parents and children, researchers should move toward normed measures that include both parental behaviors and cognitions and thus have the ability to capture more nuanced differences in parenting. In addition, researchers should carefully consider the constructs used and the way each is measured (i.e., frequency, severity, observation, self-report) that might more accurately identify different parenting approaches. This careful consideration is relevant given that parenting is generally contextual. While individual parents may endorse specific approaches to parenting, they also react to different situations and thus may not always adhere to their

parenting philosophy. In place of self-reported behavior, a time-diary approach might serve to elucidate the frequency with which parents engage in specific behaviors and provide a more reliable picture of their day-to-day parenting.

It is also important to keep in mind that cluster analyses, including LPA, are self-determining based on the sample and indicators that are used (Power, 2013). The current study identified traditional parenting styles of authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive, although most parents had seemingly high levels of parental support and behavioral control. Thus, any of the parents in this study might be described differently when compared to parents who were more or less supportive or controlling. The *intensive* group in particular had higher than average scores on most variables, which may have artificially inflated the sample mean. These high means did present challenges interpreting profiles in the current study.

Conclusion

This paper is a meaningful application of latent profile analysis contributing to our understanding of how parental cognitions are related to parenting behavior and styles. The inclusion of parental cognitions provides an opportunity to discern more nuanced parenting approaches and to examine intentionality behind parenting behaviors. The current study confirmed traditional parenting profiles (i.e., authoritarian, authoritative, permissive) and also revealed nontraditional styles such as *intensive*, *free-range*, and *good enough* parents. Non-traditional parenting styles aligned with previous conceptualizations of parenting (e.g., Baumrind, 1991; Levy, 1943; Schaefer, 1964) that have been mostly overlooked in mainstream parenting research. Most importantly, this study shows that parenting is more complex than current interpretations of Baumrind's (1971, 1991, 2012) classifications. Nuanced descriptions of parenting, such as the profiles evident in the current study, could be applied in other areas of

parenting research. For example, they could be used to explore differences in child outcomes (e.g., achievement, externalizing behaviors, internalizing behaviors), the parent-child relationship, and parental outcomes (e.g., stress, depression, burnout).

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CHAPTER III ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN PARENTING STYLE AND MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH

Abstract

An increased understanding of the importance of child development over the last century has led to a heightened focus on research and intervention related to parenting practices. Modern parents navigate advice and concerns from family, friends, medical practitioners, and influential media sources about ‘good’ and ‘bad’ parenting. This essentialist view has created pressure to provide ideal and enriching environments for children and has contributed to the rise of intensive mothering and helicopter parenting practices. In opposition to intensive or helicopter parenting, some parents have adopted a conscious or free-range style of parenting. Intensive parenting has been associated with higher levels of stress and depression for mothers, but less is known about how other parenting styles predict maternal mental health. Building upon a previous latent profile analysis, this study examines traditional and modern parenting styles regarding mothers’ stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout. Results show significantly higher levels of stress for authoritarian and intensive mothers, higher anxiety for intensive mothers, and higher burnout for authoritarian mothers. Some parenting practices such as high levels of control and maternal essentialism may result in worse mental health outcomes for mothers. Given the high prevalence of depression for women, researchers and practitioners should consider the importance of maternal mental health for mothers throughout the lifespan.

Associations Between Parenting Style and Maternal Mental Health

Over the last century there has been an increased focus on the experience of childhood and importance of child development (Thelen & Haukanes, 2010). By extension, parenting practices are often scrutinized (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020) as researchers, policy makers, and society more broadly, work to create ideal environments for children. The focus on parenting at a social level has served to sensationalize parenting practices. Newspapers, blog posts, and parenting books each tout specific parenting approaches or styles as the 'best' or 'worst.' Amazon.com, a popular online retailer that sells books, along with many other goods, has over 60,000 results when searching "parenting books", and Facebook™ has a plethora of parenting groups, many with over 100,000 members. *The New York Times* felt that the demand for parenting information was so prevalent that they created an entire website called NYT Parenting (Grose, 2019). Although many parents turn to books, websites, and social media groups for support (Plantin & Daneback, 2009), access to extensive information can be overwhelming, information can be contradictory, and social media comparisons can be detrimental to self-concept (Vogel et al., 2014).

Parenting is personal and a central adult role (Hays, 1996). Each individual approaches parenting in a unique way based on their attitudes and beliefs toward parenting and the goals they have for their child (Renegar & Stolz, 2022). Both men and women have expectations regarding the role of parents (including proper parenting behaviors) and seem to freely judge who is 'good' and 'bad' at it (Cowdery et al., 2009). However, compared to fathers, mothers are often held to a higher standard of parenting (Borstein, 2015), are more likely to engage with parenting information (Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2017), may be more likely to internalize

parenting expectations (Rizzo et al., 2013). For mothers, unmet parenting expectations often result in feelings of anxiety, guilt (Green, 2015; O'Brein Hallstein, 2006), or even failure (Büskens, 2001). Furthermore, high investment in the maternal role, combined with limited resources or other stressors can result in parental burnout (Aunola et al., 2021).

Recent research has reported a negative association with mental health (e.g., anxiety, depression, stress, burnout) for authoritarian parents (Mikkonen et al., 2022) and individuals practicing intensive mothering (Rizzo et al., 2013; Gunderson & Barrett, 2017). Positive mental health outcomes have been identified for those practicing mindful parenting (Parent et al., 2010). However, less is known about how other modern parenting styles (e.g., free-range, helicopter) might be associated with maternal mental health, and outcomes for authoritative and permissive parenting are limited and conflicting. The current study seeks to explore the relationships between parenting style and maternal mental health within a latent profile (LPA) mixture modeling framework.

Theoretical Framework

Two theories provide insight into connections between parenting behavior and maternal mental health outcomes: role theory (Stryker, 1972) and social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954). Role theory suggests that an individual enacts a variety of role-related behaviors (e.g., parenting) aligned with their own or socially reinforced expectations (Stryker). Distress may occur if the individual feels that they are not meeting their own or society's expectations (i.e., self-appraisal), especially for obligatory roles (e.g., the parental role; Gallaher, 2017) or roles in which the individual is highly invested (Stryker, 1972). Modern parents are known for high investment in parenting (e.g., intensive parenting; Nelson, 2019) and a tendency to engage in

self-evaluation or self-appraisal (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). Standards for today's parents are high, especially for modern parenting styles such as intensive mothering. It is anticipated that when parents self-appraise, they might find themselves falling short of personal or perceived social expectations, or feel that others are evaluating them negatively, resulting in psychological distress (Gallaher, 2017).

Social comparison is a phenomenon in which individuals compare themselves to similar peers (Festinger, 1954). Social comparison begins early in life, but the reference group to which an individual compares themselves changes as they shift roles (Gore & Cross, 2014). Social comparison can be beneficial when it encourages individuals to reflect on their own behaviors and make improvements. For example, mothers who engage in social comparison may be more likely to seek out parenting information and education (Chae, 2015). At the same time, negative appraisals or comparisons have the potential to negatively impact self-efficacy and mental health (Coyne et al., 2016). Today's parents have a broader comparison group than ever before when considering the level of exposure to parenting ideas and practices through television, movies, books, and social media (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). Furthermore, many social and other media representations do not accurately portray real-life parenting (Vogel et al., 2014). As with self-appraisals, mothers may negatively compare themselves to others they know personally, or to representations of ideal parenting, resulting in higher levels of depression and feelings of stress and anxiety about their ability to parent.

Review of Literature

In the academic literature, parents are generally classified into one of four types or styles (e.g., authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, or neglectful) based on their placement within

parenting dimensions (e.g., parental support, behavioral control, psychological control; Smetana, 2017). However, results from more recent research suggest that more than four parenting styles exist (Mikkonen et al., 2022; Renegar & Stolz, 2023;). In addition, many modern approaches to parenting are emphasized through a variety of avenues including popular books, blogs, newspapers, and social media. Some modern parenting styles that have recently gained attention include intensive mothering, helicopter parenting, free-range parenting, and mindful parenting. Traditional and modern parenting styles can be described by a combination of parenting behaviors (e.g., parental support, behavioral control, psychological control) as well as attitudes, beliefs, or goals about parenting (i.e., parental cognition; Renegar & Stolz, 2023). Table 5 (appendix p. 174) conveys the results of the LPA comparison of traditional and parenting styles with regard to behavioral dimensions and cognitions.

Mental Health Outcomes Associated with Parenting

Theoretical models (e.g., Belsky, 1984) posit that parental well-being influences parenting behaviors. Most research on parental well-being has explored the topic in this direction, emphasizing a path from mental health to parenting behavior and subsequent child outcomes (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). However, parenting research has recently begun to focus on the experience of parenting for *parents*, and now considers the possibility that particular approaches to parenting might lead to differential mental health outcomes for parents (Simon, 2019). Of concern are the potential negative outcomes for parents resulting from unmet expectations and high levels of pressure and investment in the parental role (Dupont et al., 2022). Whether influenced by social expectations, social comparisons, internalized ideologies, current social contexts, or a combination of these factors, modern parents may face a heavier burden

than those who parented in previous generations (Nomaguchi & Milkie). Research has shown that parents today are at risk for depression, anxiety, stress, and parental burnout (Mikolajczak et al., 2021).

Depression

Depression afflicts approximately one in four women at some point in their lifetime, with around 10% of women experiencing major depressive symptoms at any point in time (Batt et al., 2020). Depression in mothers is concerning from an individual standpoint, being associated with social functioning, physical functioning, and suicide (Smith & Mazure, 2021), but is most frequently studied with regard to children's outcomes. A meta-analytic review reported associations between maternal depression and negative child outcomes such as internalizing behaviors, externalizing behaviors, and negative affect (Goodman et al., 2011). Despite the evidence of "deleterious effects of maternal depression, specifically on children" (Burke, 2003, p. 251), the actual mechanism whereby maternal depression may influence child outcomes remains unclear (Ahun & Côté, 2019; Batt et al., 2020; Burke, 2003; Goldstein et al., 2022). One proposed pathway is through parenting behaviors. For example, depression is regularly associated with less maternal warmth (Parent et al., 2010) and responsiveness (for a review see Ahun & Côté, 2019).

Associations between depression and parenting styles have also been explored, although literature in this area is limited and somewhat inconsistent. Furthermore, results from these cross-sectional studies are discussed in opposing directions. For example, mothers reporting depressive symptoms have been subsequently labeled authoritarian for their rejecting-neglecting patterns (Peleaz et al., 2008) or permissive for their tendency to ignore misbehavior (Goldstein et

al., 2022). There are also reports of modern parenting approaches influencing levels of depression. Specifically, intensive mothers have shown a greater likelihood of depressive symptoms (Liss et al., 2013), while parents employing mindfulness have shown fewer depressive symptoms (Parent et al., 2010). While connections between parenting style and depression seem evident, each of the reviewed studies utilized only one measure of parenting (e.g., essentialism, mindfulness, permissiveness), rather than a comprehensive parenting style based on multiple indicators. Furthermore, the study samples were quite different. Goldstein and colleagues (2022) and Peleaz and colleagues (2008) had small samples of lower-income parents of color compared to the larger, predominately White, middle- to upper-class samples used by Liss et al., (2013) and Parent et al. (2010). Overall, there is considerable evidence that depression is negatively associated with maternal warmth and responsiveness and some basis to anticipate an association between depression and parenting styles such as intensive mothering, and authoritarian parenting.

Anxiety

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH, 2022) considers occasional anxiety to be a normal part of life. Clinical anxiety disorder is generally defined as feelings of worry, apprehension, or dread to the point that it interferes with daily life. Anxiety often co-occurs with depression (Smith & Mazure, 2021) and may manifest through physical symptoms (e.g., fatigue, tension, sleep disturbance) or psychosocially (e.g., difficulty concentrating, irritability; NIMH, 2022). Parenting behaviors and anxiety have been linked in previous research. Seymour and colleagues (2014) reported that mothers expressing less parental warmth and higher parenting hostility in the first year of their child's life were also more likely to report high levels of

anxiety. Similarly, mothers of adolescents who exhibit inconsistent or harsh discipline reported higher levels of anxiety (McCurdy et al., 2022).

In previous research, over-controlling parents (often called helicopter parents) have been described as highly anxious (see Levy, 1943; Lock et al., 2012). However, the association between parental anxiety and helicopter tendencies is understudied (Segrin, 2015), so it is unclear if a naturally anxious personality contributes to helicopter tendencies, or if certain parenting behaviors heighten feelings of anxiety. Mindful parenting and intensive mothering have also been examined in relationship to parental anxiety. Individuals practicing mindfulness in parenting often report lower levels of anxiety (for a review see Ahemaitijiang, et al., 2021). In contrast, those practicing intensive mothering often report feelings of anxiety about their role (Cappellini et al., 2019), although these negative perceptions are often mixed with positive feelings such as pride and self-worth, especially when measured retrospectively (Gunderson & Barrett, 2017). Although there have not been direct comparisons between multiple parenting styles and anxiety, there is a clear link between parenting behaviors and anxiety. Specifically, lower levels of anxiety are associated with greater warmth and mindfulness while higher anxiety is associated with over-parenting and parental hostility.

Stress

Many parents experience stress in their lives, which may stem from broad ecologies (e.g., poverty), specific life experiences (Louie et al., 2017), or the parental role itself (Abidin, 1995). Stress may also be associated with child temperament or a host of parental characteristics such as education and coping, but reports are mixed (Fang et al., 2022). A parent's stress is concerning because it is correlated with depression and anxiety (Smith & Mazure, 2021). Associations with

adverse outcomes for the parent-child relationship and children's behavior have also been reported (Fang et al., 2022). Although some researchers (e.g., Clauser et al., 2020) have suggested there is not an association between traditional parenting style and parents' stress, others have reported significant associations. Specifically, authoritarian and permissive parents were more likely to report high levels of stress (Ueda et al., 2020), while authoritative parents were more likely to report lower levels of stress (Fonseca et al., 2020). These associations have also been explored with regard to mindful parenting, a modern parenting approach. When parents engage in mindfulness related to parenting, they often demonstrate lower levels of stress (Burke et al., 2020), more authoritative tendencies, and fewer authoritarian and permissive tendencies (Duncan et al., 2009; Gouveia, et al., 2016).

Parental Burnout

Parenting is often exciting and enjoyable; however, it can also bring frustrations and challenges. When the demands on parents exceed their individual resources, they can develop burnout (Aunola et al., 2021). Parental burnout affects both men and women and is most often characterized by feelings of exhaustion and being run-down by the parenting role (Mikolajczak, Gross, & Roskam, 2021), affecting as many as 20% of parents (Mikolajczak & Roskam, 2018). Those experiencing burnout may feel that they are on autopilot or that they cannot make meaningful investments of time and energy in the parental role (Aunola et al., 2021).

The idea of parental burnout is relatively new, but there is some evidence of potential negative outcomes for children (e.g., neglect, violence) and for parents (e.g., suicidal thought, family escape ideation, hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal [HPA] dysregulation). Unlike other elements of maternal mental health (e.g., depression, stress, and anxiety), parental burnout is

rarely predicted by sociodemographic factors (Mikolajczak & Roskam, 2018). Instead, burnout is most often predicted by an individual's child-rearing experiences (Mikolajczak et al., 2018), coparenting relationship (Lindström et al., 2011), and psychological characteristics (e.g., being a perfectionist; Sorkkila & Aunaola, 2020). The level of burnout parents experience varies across the globe and is much more common in Western countries (Mikolajczak et al., 2021). Hubert and Aujoulat (2018) conducted qualitative interviews with five mothers and reported that burnout for these mothers was connected to self-imposed pressure, guilt, and fear of failure. Additionally, all of the participants discussed real or perceived isolation and lack of support. Mikolajczak and colleagues (2021) suggest a potential association between parental burnout and the lack or presence of social support, including state or governmental support; this association has yet to be tested.

A few studies have tested the association between parenting style and burnout. Mikkonen and colleagues (2022) identified six unique clusters of parenting styles among Finnish parents and reported that individuals who had an authoritarian, controlling, or uninvolved style of parenting were more likely to be at risk for burnout than permissive or authoritative parents. Intensive mothers may also be at risk for burnout. Another recent study reported an association between self-imposed pressure to be the perfect mother and parental burnout. This association was further mediated by maternal gatekeeping behaviors (i.e., taking over childcare tasks from others; Sorkkila & Aunola, 2020). This finding suggests that elements of control, which are evident in authoritarian, controlling (i.e., helicopter), and intensive parenting styles, may be a key factor in burnout, but this association has yet to be confirmed.

The Current Study

The experience of parenting can be central to adult life and rewarding; however, it also comes with challenges and stressors that may negatively impact parents' mental health. In the extant literature, maternal mental health is often of interest for its ability to predict children's outcomes. Less often does empirical research treat parents' mental health outcomes as dependent variables worthy of consideration in their own right or focus on factors that may predict mental health outcomes for mothers. Given the high expectations of parenting and tendency for negative self-appraisal and social comparison, modern parents may be at greater risk for negative mental health outcomes than parents from earlier eras.

Recent work (e.g., Renegar & Stolz, 2023) considered traditional parenting dimensions (i.e., parental support, behavioral control, psychological control) as well as key parenting cognitions (e.g., autonomy support, child-centeredness, essentialism) and identified discreet parenting profiles including *authoritarian*, *authoritative*, *intensive*, *free-range*, and *good-enough*. This study aims to extend a previous latent profile model to investigate whether parenting styles (based on LPA membership) are associated with differential levels of anxiety, stress, depression, or burnout. Based on prior research, it is anticipated that parents who are labelled *authoritarian* will exhibit higher levels of anxiety, stress, and burnout compared to other parenting styles and that parents labelled *intensive* will demonstrate higher anxiety, depression, and burnout. No specific hypotheses are put forward regarding authoritative, good enough, or free-range styles.

Method

Sample and Recruitment

Convenience sampling was used in this study. Participants were recruited through personal email invitations, public social media posts, physical advertisements (e.g., flyers), and paid advertisements on Facebook. The survey link was shared within private Facebook groups aimed at mothers and participants had the opportunity to forward the survey link to others (i.e., snowball sampling). The sample (N = 338) for analysis was restricted to participants identifying as female who reported having at least one residential biological, adopted, or stepchild between the ages of 2 and 18 years old. Mothers were, on average, 40 years old at the time of the survey (*SD* = 6.5, range 23–69). The majority were White (87.9%), married (84.9%), and had completed a four year or higher college degree (85.8%). Additional sample characteristics can be found in Table 2 (appendix p. 171).

Instrument and Measures

Data for this study was collected using an anonymous online survey developed with Qualtrics software. Participants were asked to provide informed consent at the beginning of the survey. Each participant had the opportunity to be entered to win one of ten $20 Amazon gift cards for their participation in the study. Following the completion of the survey, participants who chose to enter the drawing were asked to enter their name and email address in a new survey which was separate from their responses. The gift card entry list was exported into a password protected computer file. Participants were assigned a number, and winning numbers were selected via a random number generator. Digital gift cards were delivered to the email address provided.

Parenting Behaviors

Parenting behaviors were measured using the Ghent Parental Behavioral Scale (Van Leeuwen & Vermulst, 2004) and modified items from the updated youth report version of the Psychological Control-Parental Disrespect Scale (PCDS; Barber et al., 2012). Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (α; Cronbach, 1951) and McDonald's omega (ω; McDonald, 1999).

Parental support. Eight items from the Ghent Parental Behavioral Scale (Van Leeuwen & Vermulst, 2004) that capture warm and supportive behavior were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never true*) to 5 (*always true*). Sample items included "I make time to listen to my child when they want to tell me something" and "I give my child a compliment, hug, or tap on the shoulder as a reward for good behavior" (α = .72; ω = .78).

Behavioral control. Six items from the Ghent Parental Behavioral Scale that capture the rules and monitoring subscales were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never true*) to 5 (*always true*). Items included "I teach my child to obey rules" and "I teach my child that it is important to behave properly" (α = .64; ω = .77).

Psychological control. Eight items derived from the revised youth report version of the Psychological Control–Disrespect Scale (Barber, et al., 2012) were used to measure psychological control. This scale measures the frequency that parents engage in disrespectful or psychologically controlling behaviors. Following the example of Kuppens and colleagues (2009), items were re-worded to represent the parents' perspective and measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*rarely*) to 5 (*always*). Sample items included "When my child does

something I don't like I make them feel guilty" and "I ignore my child (e.g., walk away, don't pay attention)." Negatively worded items were reverse coded (α = .66; ω = .77).

Parent Cognition Measures

The nature of parental cognitions makes them difficult to measure (Holden & Smith, 2019). The measures used to represent parental cognitions were chosen from a variety of sources and evaluated using principal components analysis (PCA) prior to inclusion in the LPA.

Essentialism. Essentialism was measured using four of the eight items of the essentialism subscale from the Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ; Liss et al., 2013). Items included "Although fathers mean well, they generally are not as good at parenting as mothers." and "Men are unable to care for children unless they are given specific instructions about what to do." Response options ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These measures loaded together in the PCA and showed adequate reliability (α = .75; ω = .79).

Child-centeredness. Child-centeredness was measured using the three-items that make up the child-centered subscale of the IPAQ (Liss et al., 2013). Items in this subscale included "The child's schedule should take priority over the needs of the parent" and "Children should be the center of attention." In an attempt to improve reliability, a fourth item "My child(ren) are the most important thing in my life" was added. Response options ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These items loaded together in the PCA and showed adequate reliability (α = .69; ω = .71).

Mindfulness. Mindfulness in parenting was measured using five items from the 28-item Mindfulness in parenting questionnaire (Duncan et al., 2009). To reduce survey fatigue, one item was chosen to represent each domain of mindfulness. Sample items included "It is important to

carefully listen and tune in to your child when the two of you are talking" and "It is important to consider your own emotions when disciplining your child." Response options ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The final mindfulness measure consisted of all five mindfulness items and one item from the autonomy group, "Listening to what a child has to say can help parents reach better decisions." Reliability for mindfulness was low, but acceptable (α = .64; ω = .70).

Autonomy. Perceptions of child autonomy were measured using the autonomy sub-scale of the Parent Attitude Scale (PAS; Grolnick et al., 1997). One item was dropped for its reference to spanking which is more likely reflective of parental attitude toward corporal punishment than parental attitudes toward autonomy. Three items were retained: "I encourage my child to make their own decisions," "I encourage my child to give their opinion even if we might disagree," and "I find that listening to what my child has to say helps me reach a better decision." One additional item was created to tap into behavioral autonomy "I encourage my child to do things on their own." Response options ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Based on the results of the PCA, the autonomy component was represented by three of the four autonomy items and one item from the overcontrolling measure, "It is important for children to learn to solve their own problems and resolve their own conflicts" (α = .57; ω = .61).

Over-controlling tendencies. No existing parent-report measure of over-controlling (i.e., helicopter) tendencies was located. Two previous studies on helicopter parenting (i.e., Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; Schiffrin et al., 2015) used different nine-item adolescent reports to measure over-controlling tendencies. After reviewing the items used in each study, five items that were consistent across the two measures were chosen and re-written to reflect the parent

perspective. Sample items included “I find I want to step in and fix things when my child is having difficulties” and “Parents of children over 16 should always know exactly where their child is and who they are with.” Response options ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Three items from this group loaded onto the-overcontrolling tendencies component ($\alpha = .55$; $\omega = .52$). One item loaded with autonomy support and the other item “It is important for a parent to step in and help fix things when a child is having difficulties” did not load on any component in the PCA.

Parenting Goals

Participants were asked how important each of the five domains of parenting are to their family. Goal statements were based on the work of Grusec and Davidov (2019) and represented protection/safety, reciprocity, guided learning/development, socialization, and control/power. Each item was defined for the participant. For example, the goal of reciprocity was defined as “Building a healthy, respectful, and meaningful relationship between the parent and child.” Response options for each item ranged from 1 (*not at all important*) to 5 (*very important*).

Depression, Anxiety, and Stress

The Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) measures emotional stress over the previous week in three dimensions: depression, anxiety, and stress. All items are rated on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 0 = (*did not apply to me at all*) to 3 = (*applied to me very much, or most of the time*). A shortened version of this measure, the DASS-9 (Yusoff, 2013) has shown a similar factor structure (Kyriazos et al., 2018) to the modified 21-item measure (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). The DASS-9 consists of three items

for each subscale and showed adequate reliability; depression (α = .80; ω = .81), anxiety (α = .72; ω = .72), and stress (α = .77; ω = .78).

Parental Burnout

Parental burnout was measured using the Brief Parental Burnout scale (BPBs; Aunola et al., 2021). This measure is derived from Roskam et al.'s (2017) Parental Burnout Inventory. The BPBs is a five-item measure with responses on a four-point Likert scale. For survey consistency, the scale was adjusted from a 1 to 4 scale to match other measures: 0 = (*never*), 1 = (*occasionally – once or twice*), 2 = (*several times*), and 3 = (*daily*). Participants were asked to reflect on the previous week and respond to questions such as "I have the sense that I'm really worn out as a parent" and "I'm so tired by my role as a parent that sleeping doesn't seem like enough." Previous psychometric testing revealed that this measure is somewhat sensitive to identify those at risk for burnout compared to parents who are not at risk of burnout and very sensitive to identify parents who are experiencing burnout. Following the suggestion of Aunola et al. (2021), the measure used a cutoff value of 1 to identify parents who are at risk for burn-out and a value of 2 to identify parents experiencing burnout. Reliability for this measure was good (α = .82, ω = .86).

Analysis

This study extended a previous Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) by testing associations between distal outcome variables and identified latent profiles. LPA is a person-centered approach that assumes individuals can be placed into profiles (i.e., classes, groups, or clusters) that have unique combinations of personal or environmental characteristics (Spurk et al., 2020; Williams & Kibowski, 2016). A more recent trend, and an active area of methodological

research, is the inclusion of covariates (e.g., distal outcomes) within the LPA approach (Janssen et al., 2018; Nyuland-Gibson et al., 2016). Inclusion of covariates is not straightforward, and many of the methods identified to date, such as the *classify-analyze* or one-step distal-as-indicator approaches, are no longer recommended (Nyuland-Gibson et al., 2016). Current recommendations vary depending on model size and classification precision as well as characteristics of the covariates (see Bakk & Kuha, 2020), although a three-step approach is typically recommended.

Step 1: Latent Profile Model

The first step is the estimation of the unconditional LPA model. In a previous study, a series of LPA models were specified comparing a two- to six-profile solution, with the five-class solution being the best option (Renegar & Stolz, 2023). Model comparison examined Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), sample-adjusted BIC (SABIC), Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC), and entropy following the recommendations of Williams and Kibowski (2016). Lower values, as relative to the previous model, for the BIC, SABIC, and AIC indicate better model fit while higher entropy shows more reliable classification. In addition to these model fit indices, bootstrap likelihood ratio test (BLRT) was used to determine when additional profiles or groups were not improving the fit of the model (Finch & French, 2015; Williams & Kibowski, 2016). When this test is no longer significant ($p > .05$), it is an indication that the previous (i.e., more parsimonious) model with fewer groups should be retained (Williams & Kibowski, 2016). An elbow plot can provide another tool with which to determine the final class solution (Bauer, 2022). Through visual inspection, the elbow plot can show the point of diminishing returns on improvements in model fit variables.

Step 2: Class Membership

The second step of the three-step approach is to assign class or profile membership to each participant. This is generally done with modal assignment (Vermunt, 2010) in which profile membership is treated as an observed variable with no variation. However, this approach introduces bias to the model (Dziak et al., 2016; Nylund-Gibson et al., 2016), given that each participant typically has a probability of membership in more than one group. This bias causes estimates to be attenuated toward zero (Vermunt, 2010), and significant associations with covariates may be underestimated or overlooked as non-significant. The BCH adjustment, proposed by Block and colleagues (2004), provides an opportunity to correct the bias by accounting for classification error within the model, and is the most appropriate adjustment for continuous distal outcomes (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2021). Within the BCH approach, the *most likely* profile membership is chosen, and the model accounts for the variance (i.e., classification error) in this likelihood (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014) and avoids shifts in class membership that may occur with the inclusion of covariates (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2021).

Step 3: Inclusion of Covariates

In the third step, the most likely profile membership is regressed on each predictor variable of maternal anxiety, depression, stress, and burnout, accounting for the classification error from step 2 (i.e., BCH adjustment; Aspaouhov & Muthén, 2014; Bakk et al., 2013). Specifically, the BCH method uses weighted estimates which reflect the measurement error of the latent profile model; this approach is most reliable when entropy is large (Aspaouhov & Muthén, 2021). The automatic version of the BCH in Mplus (similar to the DU3STEP) is straightforward to implement and includes specification of the latent profile model and the

auxiliary variables or distal outcomes (e.g., parental burnout). Each outcome variable was tested individually. Output for this method provides an overall comparison of differences between groups for the outcome variable. In other words, a *p*-value is obtained and $p < .05$ is interpreted as a significant difference in the means for the outcome variable between classes.

Results

The current study used latent variable mixture modelling (e.g., latent profile analysis; LPA) to test for significant differences in distal outcome variables. Results are presented below beginning with preliminary testing, a brief summary of the LPA, and concluding with distal outcomes.

Preliminary Analysis

Descriptive statistics for study variables can be found in Table 3 (appendix p. 172), and correlations can be found in Table 6 (appendix p. 176). Mental health variables (i.e., burnout, stress, anxiety, depression) were all significantly and positively correlated with each other. Mental health variables were negatively correlated with parental support and positively correlated with psychological control. Also of note are the positive correlations between mental health variables and the modern parenting measure of essentialism and the parental goal of protection. Approximately two-thirds of the sample reported few or no symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress, or burnout. Mild to moderate symptoms of depression were most frequently reported (39.1%), followed by anxiety (20.5%), and stress (17.8%). A small percentage of the sample reported severe symptoms for depression (9.9%), anxiety (6.8%), or stress (7.5%). Twenty-eight percent of participants were considered at risk of burnout and 5.4% of the sample met the cut-off criteria for experiencing burnout.

Latent Profile Analysis

In a previous study, traditional parenting measures of parental support, behavioral control, and psychological control were combined with modern parenting cognitions and parental goals to predict discrete parenting profiles (see Renegar & Stolz, 2023) in Mplus. The largest group (n = 104) was labelled *authoritative* for their high behavioral control and parental support and low psychological control. These mothers also had higher than average overparenting tendencies, mindfulness, and child-centeredness. *Authoritarian* mothers (*n* = 74) had lower than average parental support and higher than average psychological control and behavioral control. These mothers reported lower than average mindfulness and autonomy support while endorsing the goal of parental control. *Free-range* mothers (n = 88) had lower than average behavioral control and psychological control and higher than average mindfulness and autonomy support. In addition, these mothers had lower endorsement of the goals of control, protection, and socialization. *Intensive mothers* (*n* = 31) had higher than average levels of most indicators including parental support, behavioral control, essentialism, and child-centeredness. This group also highly endorsed all five parental goals as important. The final group, *good-enough* (*n* = 41), had scores around average for most indicators and showed lower endorsement of the goals of control and reciprocity.

Distal Outcomes

After confirming the latent profiles, the BCH correction for distal outcomes was used to correct for bias in class membership assignment (see Asparouhov & Muthén, 2021). The five latent profiles were regressed on anxiety, depression, stress, and burnout in separate models to determine if there were significant differences between groups on each outcome variable.

Significant between group differences were identified for the variables of stress, anxiety, and burnout. Specifically, mothers placed in the *intensive mothers* and *authoritarian* profiles had significantly higher levels of stress compared to all other profiles ($p < .05$). Participants in the *intensive* profile had significantly higher anxiety compared to those in the *free-range* profile ($p < .05$), and mothers placed in the *authoritarian* profile had significantly higher levels of burnout compared to those in the *authoritative* profile ($p < .05$).

Discussion

This study aimed to explore associations between parenting styles and maternal mental health. Specifically, depression, anxiety, stress, and parental burnout were examined in a latent mixture modelling framework. Five parenting styles were identified in a latent profile analysis (LPA). These styles represented authoritative, authoritarian, free-range, intensive, and good-enough. It was hypothesized that *intensive* mothers would report high levels of depression, anxiety, and burnout, while *authoritarian* mothers would show high levels of anxiety, stress, and burnout. This hypothesis was partially supported. As expected, intensive mothers showed high anxiety and authoritarian mothers high stress and burnout. However, intensive mothers did not show higher levels of depression or burnout and authoritarian mothers did not show higher levels of anxiety.

Intensive mothering was coined in 1996 (Hays) to describe a mothering ideology that grew out of attachment principles and is characterized by highly child-centered labor- and time-intensive practices (Wall, 2013) and beliefs about the essential role of the mother as the optimal caregiver (Liss et al., 2013). Thirty-one participants in the current study followed this pattern. As expected, these mothers reported higher levels of stress than authoritative, free-range, or ‘good

enough' mothers and higher anxiety than those labelled free-range, although there were no significant differences with regard to depression. These results confirm the limited research examining intensive mothering and mental health (e.g., Rizzo et al., 2013) that reported higher stress but not depression related to feelings of essentialism. Intensive mothers are often highly invested in parenting with high expectations for themselves and their children (Renegar & Stolz, 2022). High investment, combined with essentialist beliefs causes many mothers to attempt to shoulder the burden of childcare alone (Wall, 2013), which could lead to higher levels of parenting-related stress.

The association between intensive mothering and anxiety might be explained bi-directionally. First, it could be that specific personality traits, which are the result of both genetic and environmental influences (Holden & Edwards, 1989), predispose mothers to a particular parenting style. In early parenting research, Levy (1943) and Baldwin (1955) discussed mothers, whom they called anxious or possessive, who fit the pattern of intensive mothers showing high levels of warmth (i.e., support) as well as high child-centeredness, protectiveness, and control. At the same time, it could be that the practice of intensive mothering builds feelings of anxiety, perhaps even through a reciprocal process. Previous research has shown that unmet expectations of mothering can result in feelings of guilt and anxiety (Green, 2015). This result is supported by role theory (Stryker, 1972) in which self-appraisals, especially for highly salient roles, may result in negative feelings toward the self. Another consideration for intensive mothers is their tendency to be concerned with concepts of 'good mothering' (Green, 2015; Liss et al., 2013). Social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) further explains that if an individual engages in negative social comparison (i.e., the think they are not as good at mothering as others around

them) it may result in feelings of anxiety about the associated role. It is unclear if intensive mothers are more likely to engage in social comparison (through peer interactions or social media platforms), although this association could be explored in future research.

Authoritarian parents are typically described as having high levels of behavioral control and low levels of parental support. As Segrin and colleagues (2015) discuss, some authoritarian parents may be likely to engage in psychological control (i.e., parental disrespect; Barber et al., 2012) in an attempt to exert power over their child. Mothers in the current study who showed low parental support, high behavioral control, and high psychological control were labelled "authoritarian". In support of previous research (see Ueda et al., 2020), mothers in this group reported significantly higher levels of stress compared to authoritative, free-range, and good-enough groups. Authoritarian mothers in the current study also showed the lowest levels of parental mindfulness. Thus, results partially support the emerging work demonstrating lower stress for parents who engage in mindfulness practices (e.g., Burke et al., 2020). Authoritarian mothers also showed the highest levels of parental burnout, although group differences were only significant between authoritarian and authoritative groups. This finding supports prior research (e.g., Mikkonen et al., 2022) that shows higher levels of parental burnout for authoritarian compared to authoritative mothers.

Similar to intensive mothers and anxiety, the associations between authoritarian parenting, stress, and burnout may be bi-directional. Researchers of parental burnout often state that individual parenting practices (Mikolajczak et al., 2018) and personality (Sorkkila & Aunaola, 2020) are important factors leading to burnout (Aunola et al., 2021). It could be that parents using an authoritarian style put forth greater effort to exert control, resulting in increased

stress and potentially leading to burnout. At the same time, previous research has made a connection from higher parental stress to more negative parenting (e.g., Mak et al., 2020). In other words, when parents experience higher stress, they are less likely to show parental warmth or support and more likely to engage in negative parenting, such as psychological control, leading them to behave in a more authoritarian manner. Perhaps a similar effect could occur with burnout, especially given the potential connections between low levels of support, high levels of stress, and burnout (Mikolajczak et al., 2021). Parental burnout causes parents to feel run-down, leading to a limited investment of time and energy in the parental role (Roskam et al., 2017). This limited investment could explain lower levels of parental support and mindfulness in parent-child interactions, although it may not account for higher levels of control shown by these parents.

A wealth of research draws connections between maternal depression and child outcomes (Burke, 2003; Goldstein et al., 2022; Goodman et al., 2011). At the same time, the mechanism whereby depression affects children is not well understood. Many researchers claim that parenting is a key pathway (Goldstein et al., 2022) while others suggest a complex interplay of personal and environmental factors (Ahun & Côté, 2019). Maternal depression is regularly associated with less maternal warmth (Parent et al., 2010) and responsiveness (Ahun & Côté, 2019). It has also been tied to more harsh parenting (Goodman et al., 2011). Extant literature almost exclusively focuses on depression as an antecedent, rather than an outcome, of parenting behavior, despite these studies being cross-sectional. In opposition, this study is interested in exploring whether that the enactment of a particular parenting style may result in more or less depression. In support of prior findings, the current study revealed a significant positive

correlation between depression and psychological control and a significant negative correlation between depression and parental support. Due to the cross-sectional nature of the study, it cannot be determined if depression resulted in these behaviors, or if depressive symptoms are an outcome. The literature connecting overall parenting styles to maternal depression is limited and inconsistent. Authoritarian, permissive, and intensive styles have all been associated with depression in prior studies, but this connection was not evident in the current study. Each of these previous studies used single indicators of parenting (e.g., essentialism, neglecting, ignoring), rather than a comprehensive parenting style, which may explain the difference in findings.

Another consideration in the lack of findings for depression is the distribution of the variable. Consistent with prior research (Batt et al., 2020) nearly 10% of the sample reported major depressive symptoms. At the same time, nearly half of the sample reported at least mild depressive symptoms, which led to a non-normal distribution. Thus, the power to reveal differences between parenting profiles may have been limited. Maternal depression is frequently studied with regard to post-partum depression (i.e., depression in the first year following childbirth) or with maternal-child attachment as a key outcome of interest (Burke, 2003). It has been suggested that post-partum depression is distinctly different from depression experienced at other points in life (Batt et al., 2020) and it is unlikely that mothers in the current sample were suffering from post-partum depression given sample restrictions. The number of participants reporting depressive symptoms supports the conclusion that maternal depression remains a concern throughout the lifespan and that future research should examine depression beyond the post-partum period.

Limitations and Future Research

The results of this study should be considered in light of several limitations. First, the sample used in this study was relatively homogenous. Although similar to samples in other parenting research (i.e., White, married, highly educated, female), it is not representative of parents more broadly. As the nature of LPA is to compare groups to the sample average, the inclusion of a more representative sample might elucidate different groupings of parents and greater differentiation of mental health. Second, each mental health variable was examined independently from the others, and independent of known covariates of mental health (e.g., social support, resources, coparenting and romantic relationships). There is not currently a straightforward way to account for LPA classification error in such a complex model; however, future research might choose to examine specific parental cognitions or behaviors, such as essentialism, while controlling for known covariates. Third, several of the modern parenting measures showed low reliability, which limits the ability to precisely define classes and reveal differences that might exist among parenting styles. Unequal profile size may have further limited the power to detect differences between the parenting styles. Finally, the cross-sectional nature of this study makes interpretations about the directionality of effect unclear. The enactment of a specific parenting style may influence mental health, or mental health could influence specific parenting behaviors. A longitudinal study design may serve to provide evidence for the direction of this effect. Specifically, researchers might consider following parents who are identified as intensive mothers over time or evaluate how a parenting intervention promoting authoritative over authoritarian practices reveals changes in mental health. Furthermore, it could be helpful to explore how individual experiences over the course of

parenting might impact maternal mental health. Topics might include specific parenting attitudes, feelings of judgement, engagement with social media, coparenting relationships, and parenting-specific social support.

Conclusion

The current study evaluated differences in maternal mental health among parenting styles. Prior research has explored some associations with intensive mothering, mindfulness, and traditional parenting styles (i.e., authoritative, authoritarian, permissive), and results from the current study support many prior findings. However, this is the first known study to combine traditional and modern parenting styles within the same model and to include a measure of parental burnout in addition to other mental health variables. Overall, participants in the authoritarian and intensive mothering groups showed worse mental health compared to free-range, authoritative, or good-enough mothers. It is important to continue to consider how specific parental cognitions (e.g., the desire for control in the parent-child relationship, feelings of maternal essentialism) may be related to maternal mental health in meaningful ways. Furthermore, maternal mental health is an important topic that warrants future consideration outside of the immediate post-partum period or potential for impact on child outcomes.

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CONCLUSION

This dissertation research aimed to define and describe modern parenting styles, identify modern parenting styles quantitatively, and explore parental outcomes for different modern parenting styles. By design, each study within the dissertation builds upon the previous results. Overall, this dissertation research adds to the parenting literature by a) describing a variety of modern parenting styles in detail and situating them within the broader parenting literature, b) emphasizing the importance of parental cognitions in describing and identifying modern parenting styles, and c) identifying potentially detrimental outcomes associated with some modern parenting styles that might be of importance to researchers and family life professionals.

To begin, modern parenting styles (e.g., free-range, intensive, mindful) were reviewed and situated within traditional parenting frameworks and the broader landscape of parenting research (Chapter One). The complexity of parenting is evident in early research as Baldwin (1955), Schaefer (1959), and Becker (1964) each discussed multiple bipolar dimensions of parenting behaviors. Although many different dimensions have been proposed during the last century, parenting researchers consistently focus on parental support (i.e., warmth, responsiveness) and behavioral control (i.e., rules, demandingness). It is possible to build from these dimensions a 4-part typological categorization of parenting, typically labelled authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and neglectful. Baumrind (1971, 1991, 2012) originally conceptualized these parenting styles as something greater than the dimensions from which they are drawn. In other words, while each parenting style is made up of measurable behaviors, these coalesce into an overall approach to parenting.

Despite this conceptualization, many researchers only measure one or two relevant behavioral characteristics (i.e., dimensions) of a traditional parenting style to use as a predictor. Less frequently do researchers empirically identify parenting styles which are then used as predictors, and seldom do they consider the motivations or thoughts underlying traditional parenting behaviors (i.e., parental cognitions; Holden & Smith, 2019). Nonetheless, parental cognitions are key in defining modern parenting styles. For example, the growing research on intensive mothering repeatedly confirms the importance of two parenting cognitions for this parenting style: maternal essentialism and child-centeredness (Long et al., 2021). Similarly, free-range parents are described with the combination of autonomy support and intentionally low levels of control (Skenazy, 2009), although these assumptions have not been explored in prior research. The current review and conceptual analysis led to a hypothesis that the inclusion of parenting cognitions in addition to traditional measures of parenting behavior would provide the opportunity to identify modern parenting styles.

The latent profile analysis (LPA; Chapter two) used traditional measures (parental support, behavioral control, psychological control) along with modern measures (autonomy, child-centeredness, essentialism, mindfulness, over-parenting) to identify discrete parenting profiles. Five parenting styles were identified: authoritarian, authoritative, good enough, free-range, and intensive. Each style had a unique combination of responses for traditional and modern measures. Free-range and intensive mothers closely aligned with the hypothesized combination of traditional and modern measures set forth in Chapter one. Furthermore, the inclusion of modern measures potentially enriches the description of traditional styles of authoritarian and authoritative parenting.

The third aim of this research was to explore parental outcomes for different modern parenting styles (Chapter three). Modern parents often report high levels of stress (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020) and parental burnout (Roskam et al., 2018). In addition, prior research has reported that specific parenting styles (such as intensive mothering) are associated with higher depression and anxiety (Rizzo et al., 2013). Thus, mental health outcomes (i.e., depression, anxiety, stress, burnout) were regressed on LPA assignments, correcting for classification bias. The results indicated differences in these variables for two parenting styles. Specifically, intensive mothers reported higher stress and anxiety while authoritarian mothers reported higher stress and burnout, partially supporting prior research.

Taken together, this dissertation's results provide strong evidence of the existence of modern parenting styles as well as the ability to discern differences in distal outcomes between groups. Integral to the detection of modern parenting styles was the inclusion of parental cognitions, which paint a more robust picture of parenting than when using behavioral measures alone. As discussed previously, the idea that parenting is complex, difficult to describe, and challenging to measure is not new. However, until recently researchers did not have the ability to model such complexity quantitatively and so the more parsimonious four-style parenting typology has been heavily relied upon. Interestingly, the non-traditional parenting styles identified in the current study resembled those described qualitatively in early parenting research (see Baumrind, 1991; Levy, 1943; Winnicott, 1965).

This was the first known study to attempt to identify a range of modern parenting styles in a latent profile framework, and also the first known study to compare distal outcomes across a mixture of traditional and modern parenting styles. Despite limitations of the current study (e.g.,

measurement reliability and sample diversity), there are a variety of ways to build upon this research. First and foremost, researchers should consider the inclusion of relevant parental cognitions when classifying parents into styles or attempting to detect differences in outcomes for parents or children. Along these lines, it is important not to overlook modern parenting styles (e.g., free-range, intensive) and good enough parents, those that have average, or adequate (but not high or low) levels of the key characteristics being studied.

Although some hypothesized modern parenting styles (i.e., mindful, helicopter) were not found in the current study, it is possible that these approaches could also be identified with improved measures. Thus, it is important that the field continues to push forward to improve the reliability and accuracy of parenting measures, especially parenting cognitions. For example, the measure of autonomy used in the current study (Grolnick et al., 1997) was the only parent-report measure located and demonstrated low reliability. At the same time, autonomy was a key identifier of the free-range parenting group. Parent reported autonomy support, along with parent-reported overparenting (i.e., helicopter) tendencies are both measures that could be further developed. Perhaps there is also an opportunity to determine at what point specific behaviors or cognitions cross a line from being neutral to either beneficial or detrimental to child and parent outcomes.

Improved measurement of the indicators associated with intensive mothering (e.g., essentialism, child-centeredness) and authoritarian mothers (e.g., psychological control) is especially important give the associations of these parenting styles with maternal mental health. Specifically, researchers might address the overall reliability of a parent-report psychological control measure as well as the specificity of measures (i.e., frequency, intensity). With regard to

mental health, practitioners and family life professionals should work to educate parents on the detrimental effects of specific parenting styles. Furthermore, future research should aim to examine maternal mental health across the lifespan, working to disentangle the directionality of effect among mental health, parenting, and child outcomes.

APPENDIX

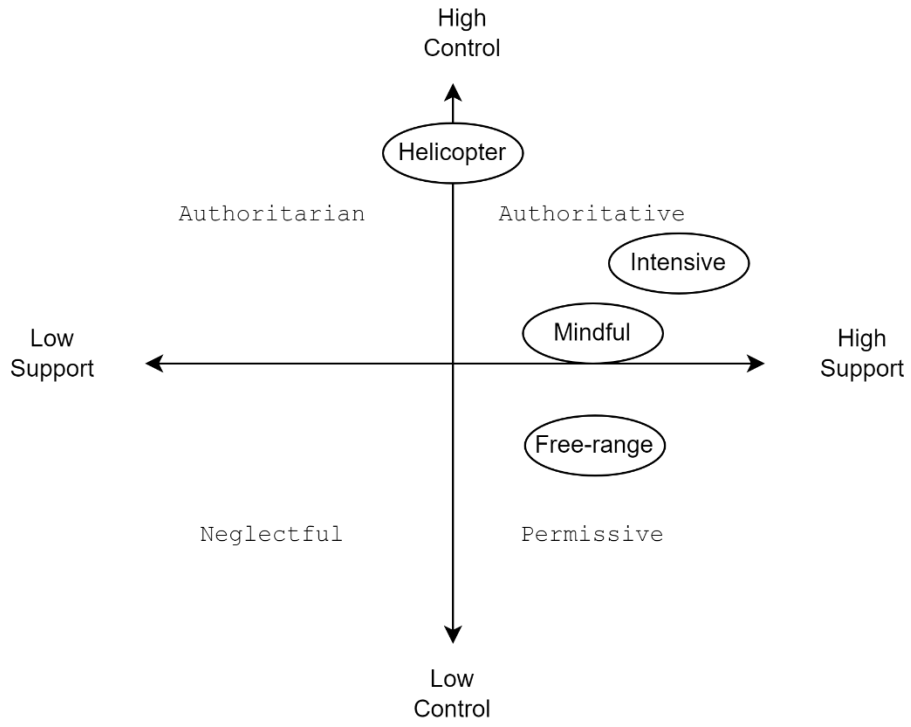


Figure 1. Conceptual Overlay of Modern Parenting on Baumrind's (1971a) Typology

Table 1. Hypothesized Characteristics of Parenting Styles

		Behavioral control	Parental support	Psych. control	Autonomy support	Child-centered	Over-parenting	Essential	Mindful	Parent Goals
Academic Parenting Styles[a]	Authoritarian	high	low	high	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Authoritative	high	high	low	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Permissive	low	high	low	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Neglectful	low	low	low	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Modern Parenting Styles	Free Range	low	–––	low	high	high	low	–––	–––	autonomy (low control)
	Intensive mothers	–––	high	low	–––	high	high	high	high	achievement reciprocity
	Mindful	–––	ave.	low	ave.	ave.	–––	–––	high	reciprocity
	Helicopter	high	high	ave.	low	high	high	–––	low	achievement protection control

Note. Academic Parenting Styles based on the work of Baumrind (1971a). Blank cells (–––) are not hypothesized.

Note. A label of high or low would indicate a level significantly higher or lower than average. A label of ave. would indicate this style has an average level compared to a general sample of parents.

Table 2. Participant Characteristics: Descriptive Statistics ($N = 338$)

Variables		*M*	*SD*	Range
Mother's age (years)		40.2	6.5	23 – 69
Age of Oldest Child at home		11.1	5.7	2 – 18
Number of Children		2.4	1.3	1 – 10
Household Income		$136,712	$84,185	$0 – 600,000
Variables			***n***	***%***
Family Structure	Married		287	84.9
	Cohabiting		16	4.7
	Divorced/Separated		25	7.4
	Single/Never Married		7	2.1
Employment status	Not working		44	13.0
	working < 20 hours		28	8.3
	Working 20-36 hours		37	10.9
	Working >37 hours		225	66.8
Education	HS diploma/GED		7	2.1
	Some college		20	5.9
	2-year degree		18	5.3
	4 year or beyond		290	85.8
Racial Identity	White		297	87.9
	Black		13	3.8
	Hispanic		10	3.0
	Asian		6	1.8
	Other Racial Identity		2	0.6
	American Indian/Alaskan Native		1	0.3
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		1	0.3

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables.

	No. of items	Range	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Reliability	
							α	ω
Anxiety	3	0 – 3	0.33	0.49	1.70	2.85	.72	.72
Depression	3	0 – 3	0.65	0.62	1.20	1.44	.80	.81
Stress	3	0 – 3	0.92	0.58	0.92	1.30	.77	.78
Burnout	5	0 – 3	0.77	0.60	1.03	1.07	.82	.86
Parental Support	8	3 – 5	4.39	0.34	-0.42	-0.46	.72	.78
Behavioral Control	6	2 – 5	4.08	0.43	-0.32	-0.16	.64	.77
Psychological Control	8	1 – 3	1.83	0.37	0.32	2.92	.66	.77
Essentialism	4	1 – 5	1.81	0.72	1.15	4.33	.75	.79
Child-Centered	4	1 – 5	3.00	0.76	0.01	2.73	.69	.71
Over-parenting	3	2 – 5	4.00	0.68	-0.33	2.56	.55	.52
Autonomy support	4	2 – 5	4.38	0.43	-0.55	3.14	.57	.61
Mindfulness	6	2 – 5	4.59	0.39	-1.70	8.50	.64	.70
Goal- development	1	1 – 5	4.65	0.55	-1.30	0.73		
Goal – control	1	1 – 5	2.56	0.98	0.135	-0.35		
Goal – protection	1	1 – 5	4.11	0.86	-0.43	-0.99		
Goal – reciprocity	1	1 – 5	4.87	0.35	-2.65	6.35		
Goal – Socialization	1	1 – 5	3.67	0.97	-0.08	-0.67		

Table 4. Fit Indices for Traditional and Modern Profile Models

	n min	n max	AIC	BIC	SABIC	Entropy	Prob. min	Prob. max	BLRT	*p*
Traditional Profiles										
3	0.22	0.48	867.4	920.9	876.5	.59	.76	.83	434.4	.00
4	0.10	0.39	849.0	917.8	860.7	.65	.73	.87	419.7	.00
5	0.04	0.38	839.3	923.5	853.7	.68	.69	.82	406.5	.00
6	0.04	0.30	818.6	918.0	835.5	.73	.78	.85	397.7	.00
Modern Profiles										
3	0.12	0.46	6364.8	6571.3	6400.0	0.81	0.88	0.99	218.2	.00
4	0.12	0.33	6280.6	6540.6	6324.9	0.78	0.83	0.99	112.2	.00
5	0.12	0.29	6239.7	6553.2	6298.1	0.80	0.82	1.00	68.9	.00
6	0.02	0.35	5805.3	6172.4	5867.8	0.89	0.86	1.00	136.9	.00

Note. The Modern 6-profile modern solution did not replicate.

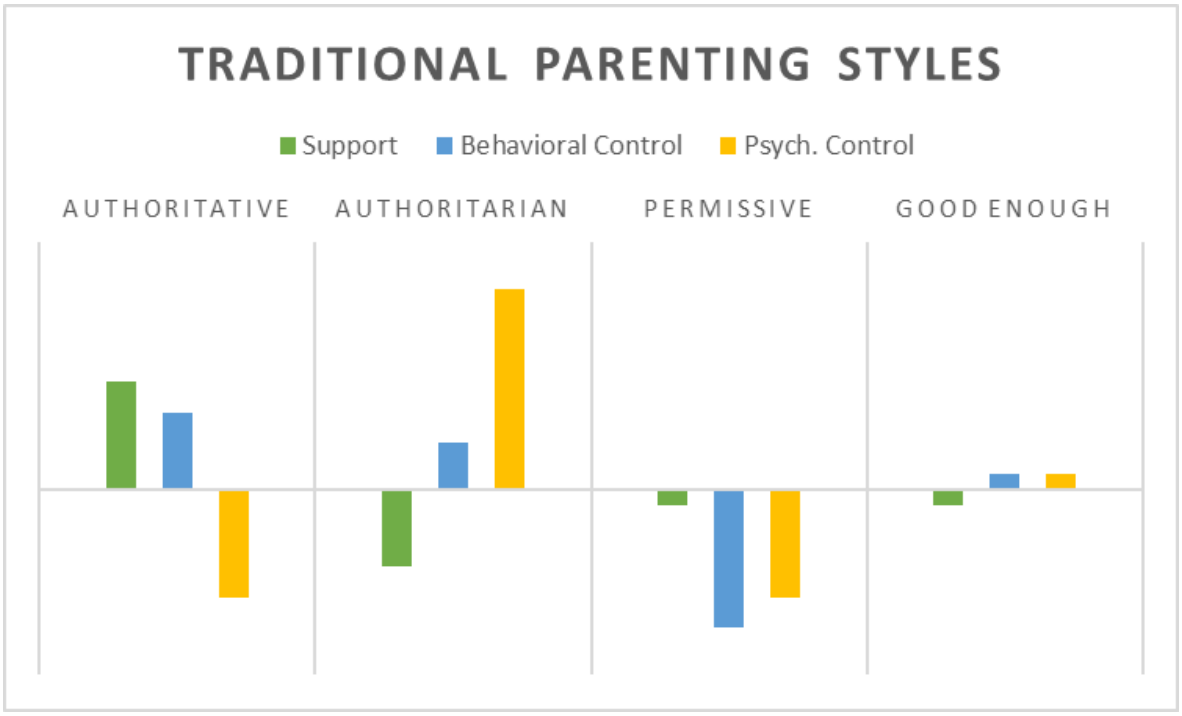


Figure 2. Traditional Parenting Styles

Table 5. Characteristics of Modern Parenting Styles.

	Behavioral control	Parental support	Psych. control	Autonomy support	Child-centered	Over-parenting	Essential	Mindful	Parent Goals
Authoritarian n = 74	ave	low	high	low^	low^	ave.^	ave.^	low^	high control^ high reciprocity^
Intensive n = 31	ave^	high	low	ave.^	high	high	high	high	high control^ high reciprocity high protection^ high socialization^ high development
Free-range n = 88	low	high^	low	high	ave*	low	low^	high^	high Reciprocity^ low protection^ low socialization^ low development^
Good Enough^ n = 41	ave.^	ave^	ave^	ave.^	ave^	low^	ave.^	low^	low control^ low reciprocity^ low socialization^
Authoritative n = 104	high	high	ave*	ave^	high^	high^	ave^	ave^	high control high reciprocity high protection high socialization high development

Note. "High" or "low" indicates mean for the group differs from the overall sample mean in a single-sample t-test ($p < .05$). A label of "ave" indicates the mean for the profile does not differ from the overall sample mean in a single-sample t-test.
Note. ^ indicates group or result was not hypothesized. *Indicates outcome differs from hypothesis.

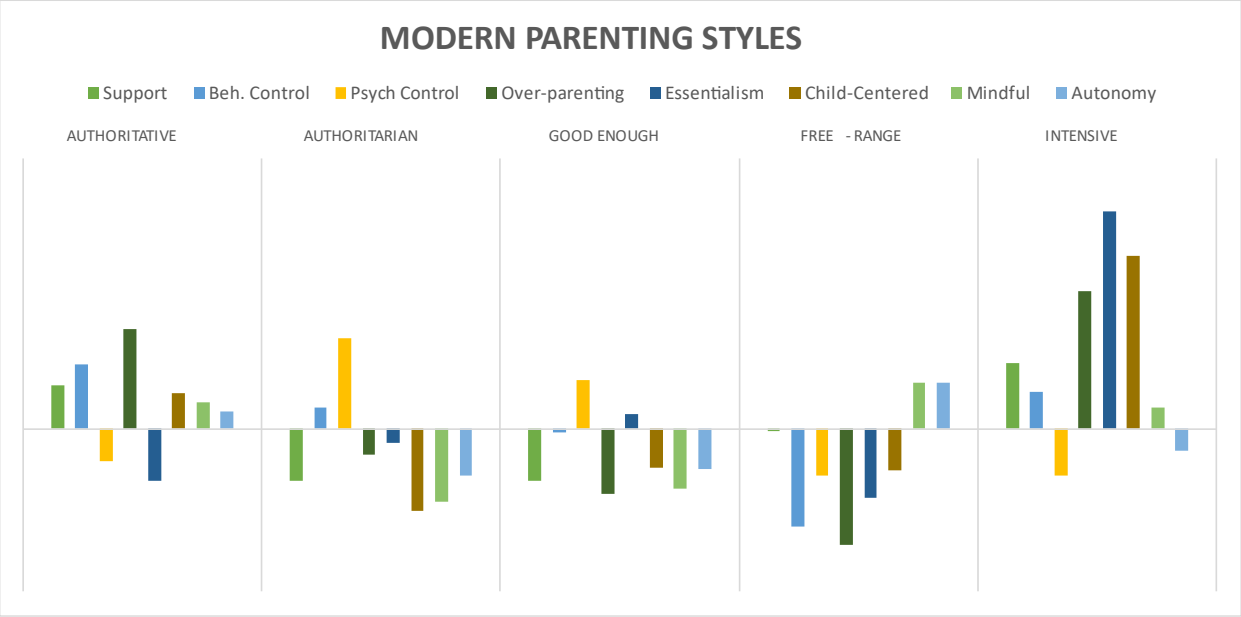


Figure 3. Modern Parenting Styles

Table 6. Correlations among Mental Health Outcomes and Parenting Style Indicators

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Burnout	_															
2. Stress	.64**	_														
3. Anxiety	.52**	.50**	_													
4. Depression	.77**	.58**	.50**	_												
5. Support	-.15**	-.26**	-.01	-.16**	_											
6. Beh.Control	-.01	.00	.08	.05	.26**	_										
7. Psych.Control	.18**	.34**	.10	.13*	-.39**	.12*	_									
8. Overparenting	-.08	.05	.08	-.07	.21**	.42**	-.02	_								
9. Essential	.12*	.34**	.15**	.08	.06	.06	.02	.20**	_							
10. Child-centered	.01	.00	.03	.01	.18**	.06	-.21**	.23**	.31**	_						
11. Mindful	.01	-.03	.06	.02	.21**	-.14**	-.25**	.03	-.07	.09	_					
12. Autonomy	.06	-.01	.04	.01	.08	-.16**	-.17**	-.10	-.09	-.08	.25**	_				
13. Achievement	-.02	-.03	.04	-.06	.22**	.18**	-.09	.18**	.01	.060	.11*	.15**	_			
14. Control	-.02	.09	.09	-.06	.01	.44**	.20**	.35**	.13*	.12*	-.22**	-.18**	.03	_		
15. Protection	.04	.11*	.17**	.04	.16**	.14*	-.10	.23**	.17**	.18**	.09	-.03	.21**	.15**	_	
16. Reciprocity	.01	.02	.68	.89	.23**	.01	-.17**	.14**	-.03	.06	.20**	.13*	.30**	.19**	.01	_
17. Socialization	.02	.03	.06	-.01	.11*	.36**	.10	.10	.15**	.08	-.16**	-.07	.13*	.31**	.19**	.01

** $p < .01$, *$p < .05$

VITA

Rebecca Renegar earned a B.S. and M.S. from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. After graduating Rebecca worked in the private sector (2008-2011) and as a public school teacher in Tennessee (2011-2013) and Virginia (2007; 2014-2018). She completed her M.S. in Child and Family Studies from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2020 prior to pursuing her Ph.D. under the direction of Dr. Heidi Stolz. During her time at the University of Tennessee, Rebecca became a certified family life educator (CFLE), served on the College of Education, Health, and Human Services graduate advisory board, was a member of the National Council of Family Relations Families, and volunteered extensively in her local community. She is currently working as a research statistician and data analyst for the Tennessee Department of Education and resides in Oak Ridge, TN, with her family.