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Development and Validation of a Quantitative Measure of Intensive Parenting Attitudes

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Abstract

Intensive mothering (IM) attitudes have been considered the dominant discourse of motherhood, but have only been assessed qualitatively The goal of this study was to develop a quantitative scale to assess these ideologies, their construct validity, and their relationship to relevant constructs (i.e., work status and division of household labor). An on-line questionnaire was given to 595 mothers asking 56 questions assessing different aspects of IM attitudes as well as several validation measures. An Exploratory Factor Analysis on 315 randomly selected mothers yielded a 5 factor solution. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis on the remaining 280 mothers demonstrated good fit. The five factors expressed the ideas that 1) women are inherently better at parenting than men (Essentialism), 2) parenting should be fulfilling (Fulfillment), 3) children should be cognitively stimulated by parents (Stimulation), 4) mothering is difficult (Challenging), and 5) parents should prioritize the needs of the child (Child-Centered). Scales had adequate reliability and construct validity compared to the Parental Investment in Child scale, the Parenting Sense of Competence Scale, and Beliefs about Maternal Employment. The Essentialism, Fulfillment, and Challenging scales were positively related to having more responsibility for childcare and household chores. Stay-at-home mothers had higher scores on Essentialism and lower scores on Stimulation than both part-time and full-time working mothers supporting the notion that both working and non-working mothers have intensive parenting ideologies that are manifested in different ways.

Keywords: Intensive mothering ideology, parenting, work-status, division of household labor, scale development

Introduction

Parent involvement is a good thing for children. It has been linked to mental (Cicchetti & Toth, 1998) and physical health (Repetti, Taylor & Seeman, 2002) as well as better school achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001). Children who grow up in households where they are spoken to and played with develop greater cognitive abilities (National Research Council, 2001). The attachment work by Bowlby and many other researchers has shown that consistent, involved parenting is related to children learning trust and aids in developing positive socialization skills (Bowlby, 1969; Farnfield, 2008). Intrinsic to these constructs is the idea that 'good' parenting leads to 'good' children, and thus, the more involved the parent, the better the outcome for the offspring. It is also clear from the literature that not being involved with children leads to a host of negative outcomes (Combs-Orme, Wilson, Cain, Page, & Kirby, 2003). But is there a point where parental involvement can be so extensive that it crosses the line into what Warner (2006) called "too-muchness" (p. 4), if not for the child, then for the parent who feels responsible for every aspect of that child's development?

Books about maternal anxiety have made their way into the popular press (Warner, 2006) and indicate that women in the United States feel pressured to focus on their children's needs to the near exclusion of all else (Lee, 2008). In 1996, Sharon Hays introduced the concept of *intensive mothering* (IM) as the dominant discourse of modern motherhood. The tenets of intensive mothering beliefs include the ideas that raising children is primarily a maternal responsibility and so important a task that the household should be child-centric. Hays suggested that following these tenets places women in a "cultural contradiction" as they struggle to reconcile their sense of personal identity with the belief that all selfish needs should be sacrificed for the sake of the children. The work done by Hays was based entirely on narrative discourse, and research on intensive mothering is limited by the lack of a well-validated quantitative measure of this construct.

Intensive Mothering Ideology

Hays (1996) interviewed mothers about their parenting beliefs and found that women with children felt pressure to abide by cultural standards of highly involved parenting. These demanding responsibilities fell primarily on women as it was their conviction that parenting is best done by mothers because mothers have an inherent skill in parenting. Fathers were typically perceived as well intentioned but generally incompetent and unable to provide the care that the child needs. Second, mothering was deemed to require time intensive methods with the goal being to meet the child's individual needs. These methods included reasoning with the child instead of using strict

disciplinary techniques, working to please the child, and placing the child's well-being above that of the parents. The use of time-intensive methods results in mothers' experiencing the raising of children as extremely difficult; for many of the women Hays interviewed, it was seen as more demanding than the job of a corporate executive. Furthermore, intensive methods were seen as guided by experts and involved engaging children in expensive activities designed to stimulate them. Finally, children were seen as precious, delightful, innocent, and sacred. This belief in children's inherent goodness led to childrearing being perceived as having a special, revered status.

Since Hays' (1996) seminal work, many qualitative studies have documented the struggles that women go through as they embrace the dominant cultural ideology of intensive mothering. Wall (2010) interviewed women with preschool-aged children, revealing that mothers believed that adhering to intensive parenting methods could ensure their children's success. Mothers in Wall's study described sacrificing paid work, sleep, and personal relaxation to ensure that their children had appropriate engaging and stimulating activities. A discourse analysis of women's every day interactions in another study revealed that women embraced the ideologies of IM and often contrasted the "good mother" who is protecting, caring and proud of her children with the "inadequate mother" (Guendouzi, 2005).

Intensive Mothering and Division of Household Labor

The ideology of IM, specifically the idea that mothers are the most capable caregivers, may be related to the pervasive inequality in the division of labor and childcare (Coltrane, 2010). This may even be true in families where women work full-time and believe theoretically in equality. One study of employed mothers with egalitarian beliefs found that women did 70% of the cooking, 72% of the cleaning, and 64% of the childcare (Claffey & Mickelson, 2009). Other research has found that the division of labor becomes more traditional with the birth of a child (Coltrane, 2000; Cowan & Cowan, 1988). Whether inequity in the division of labor is linked directly to endorsement of intensive mothering beliefs has not been clearly established. However, one study among young men and women in Iceland found that the belief that women were naturally adept at parenting was related to expecting a more traditional division of labor (Bjarnason & Hjalmsdottir, 2008). Another study among young men and women in the U.S. found that rejecting essentialist beliefs about women's natural ability to parent was related to expecting a life trajectory in which both husbands and wives cut back on work and shared childcare equally (Deutsch, Kotot & Binder, 2007).

Thus, adherence to components of IM ideology may predict the extent to which women take on the majority of household tasks while rejecting this ideology may predict a more egalitarian division of labor. Furthermore, endorsement of IM ideologies may be related to the extent to which unequal division of labor is deemed to be fair. Research suggests that although inequality in the division of household labor and childcare is pervasive, very few women claim that it is unfair (Claffey & Manning, 2010). Whether endorsement of IM ideologies is related to finding inequality of household labor, childcare, or both to be unfair has not been investigated.

Intensive Mothering Ideology and Work Status

For some women, embracing IM ideologies may result in a desire to stay home with their children in order to influence their development on a day-to-day basis (Rubin & Wooten, 2007). However, these beliefs are not only embraced by stay-at-home mothers. Indeed, Hays (1996) interviewed both working and nonworking mothers and found that both groups embraced IM ideologies. Stay-at-home mothers justified their choice not to work by arguing that the consistent presence of the mother was good for their children. Employed mothers also justified their choice to work by pointing out that the extra income would provide the financial resources to give children all they needed. Although working mothers would have the most to gain by redefining motherhood to rely on less intensive methods, Hays found that they did not. Instead, they believed that they should be spending a great deal of time and effort researching the best childcare placement for their children and focusing on high quality interactions with their children to make up for lost quantity of time together. According to Hays, the working mothers in her sample ended up feeling quite pressed for time and guilty that they had not done enough for their children but continued to strongly embrace the ideology of intensive mothering.

Other research examining how women with various work statuses negotiate the ideology of intensive mothering has confirmed Hays' (1996) contention that both working and nonworking parents embrace these ideologies (Johnston & Swanson, 2006), but indicate that they may do so in different ways. In their interviews with mothers who worked full-time, part-time, or stayed at home with their children, Johnston and Swanson found that all mothers, regardless of whether they worked outside the home, embraced intensive mothering expectations but altered their construction of these expectations depending on work status. For example, stay-at-home mothers emphasized accessibility as central to their conception of ideal motherhood, part-time mothers emphasized quality interactions, and full-time working mothers emphasized empowering children and providing financial resources to

support their children's activities. Thus, all women were able to justify their choices by claiming that they benefitted their children, an indication that all mothers accept the child-centric focus of IM beliefs.

While working mothers embrace intensive parenting, doing so may lead to guilt (Guendouzi, 2006; Sutherland, 2010). Guendouzi (2006) found that working mothers often felt guilty that they were not spending more time with their children. It has also been suggested that working mothers may feel even more pressured than nonworking mothers to prove their good mother status by engaging in intensive or extreme parenting behaviors to make up for time spent at work (Dillaway & Pare, 2008).

Related Parenting Constructs

Although no one has specifically operationalized the ideologies of IM, other assessments of attitudes toward parenting exist that are conceptually related to this construct, and can be used to assess convergent and discriminant validity of a quantitative measure of intensive parenting. The scale that has come closest to a measure of intensive parenting is the Parental Investment in Children Scale (PIC; Bradley Whiteside-Mansell, Brisby & Caldwell, 1997). The PIC assesses the extent to which parents accept their parenting role, delight in their child, exhibit knowledge/sensitivity of their child, and experience anxiety when they are separated from their child. The PIC measures both attitudes and behaviors and is designed such that responses indicating greater investment in the child are considered to be positive.

Soon after it was developed, Hays (1998) criticized the PIC for valorizing the ideologies of intensive parenting and for placing pressure on mothers to constantly delight in their child, never feel as though the child is demanding, accommodate the child's needs, and never want to leave the child. The lead author of the PIC, Bradley (1998), countered that the PIC does not place undue pressure on mothers because it can be completed by either mothers or fathers. Furthermore, Bradley noted that the relationships may be curvilinear such that an overly strong endorsement of PIC items may be unhealthy. Thus, while not designed to specifically measure the ideologies of intensive parenting, the PIC captures some of its themes. However, the PIC appears to focus on the benefits parental investment without considering the costs included in Hays' conceptualization of intensive mothering. Therefore, a quantitative measure of intensive parenting should be moderately related to the subscales of the PIC, demonstrating both concurrent and discriminative validity.

Endorsement of intensive parenting ideologies may also be related to a parents' sense of satisfaction and efficacy. The Parenting Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC, Johnston & Mash, 1989) was developed to determine

how satisfied and efficacious parents felt in their role and functions as a measure of parental self-esteem. In the original study, they found that child behavior problems were related to decreased satisfaction for mothers and decreased satisfaction and efficacy for fathers. Research using the PSOC has confirmed that satisfaction and efficacy are separate subscales and has found that having an "easy-going" parenting style is related to greater parenting satisfaction in both mothers and fathers and greater efficacy in mothers (Ohan, Leung, & Johnston, 2000). Certain aspects of intensive parenting ideology, such as the belief that a child is sacred and fulfilling may be related to an increased sense of parental satisfaction and efficacy. On the other hand, other aspects of intensive parenting, specifically those that may indicate a less easy-going style, such as the belief that parenting should be time and labor intensive, may be related to decreased satisfaction and efficacy.

Another construct that may be related to intensive parenting ideologies are Beliefs about the Consequences of Maternal Employment for Children (BAMEC; Greenberger, Goldberg, Crawford, & Granger, 1988). This measure was designed to assess attitudes about both the costs and benefits of maternal employment. In the original validation study, beliefs about both the costs and benefits of maternal employment were related to work status and hours worked. Subsequent research on the BAMEC has revealed that women who were attached to their careers and had liberal gender attitudes perceived fewer costs and more benefits to maternal employment (Moon, 2002). Other research determined that working mothers who perceived greater costs to maternal employment spent more time with their children on weekends (Booth, Clarke-Stewart, Vandell, McCartney, & Owen, 2002). As reviewed above, qualitative studies have indicated that working mothers endorse IM ideologies as much as nonworking mothers but in different ways. However, certain aspects of these ideologies, such as the belief that mothers are superior to fathers in providing childcare, may be moderately related to believing that material employment has higher costs and fewer benefits. Whether other aspects of intensive parenting (such as the belief that parenting should be child-centric or that children are sacred) are related to beliefs about the costs and benefits of maternal employment remains an open question.

In sum, a review of a decade of literature on mothering concluded that the cultural ideology of IM represents the dominant discourse of motherhood, but noted that research is needed to better understand the specific ways in which this belief system influences women's lives (Arendell, 2000). Intensive mothering ideologies are thought to negatively impact women, leading to increased stress, frustration, guilt, and anxiety (Tummala-Narra, 2009; Sutherland, 2010), but the ways in which the various ideologies associated with intensive mothering relate to

women's mental health are not fully understood. The biggest barrier to better understanding this construct is the lack of a quantitative measure assessing the various dimensions of intensive mothering.

The main goal of the current investigation was to develop a quantitative scale to assess intensive parenting attitudes and to assess its concurrent and discriminative validity using the PIC, PSOC and BAMEC. Furthermore, we hoped to determine whether intensive parenting ideologies were related to the division of labor in the household and perceptions of the fairness of the way in which household labor and childcare were divided. We also hoped to determine whether endorsement of various intensive parenting ideologies differed quantitatively based on work status (e.g., full-time working, part-time working, or stay-at-home). Additionally, it was our goal to develop a measure of intensive parenting that could be used reliably with both mothers as well as non-mothers, so we also examined the reliability and validity of the measure with a group of women who were not yet parents. Finally, we hoped to explore the differences in intensive mothering beliefs between mothers and non-mothers as we hypothesized that mothers would have stronger intensive parenting beliefs than non-mothers.

Method

Participants

Data were collected from 595 mothers. The age of the mothers ranged from 20 to 73 with a mean age of 34.78 years ($SD = 8.07$). Country of origin of the mothers varied with the majority residing in the US (86.7%); 7.1% resided in Canada, 2.1% in Australia, 1.1% in the United Kingdom, and the remaining 3% lived in other nations. The self-reported socioeconomic composition of the mothers was largely middle class (53.3%) and upper middle class (23.9%) with 17.7% working class, 3.5% reporting poverty, and 1.5% wealthy. The majority of the mothers (91.4%) reported their ethnicity as Caucasian with 2.4% Latina, 2.4% multiracial, 1.5% Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.5% African American, 0.2% American Indian, 0.5% other, and 1.2% chose not to disclose. Of the mothers who completed the survey, 3.0% had less than a high school diploma, 0.2% had a high school diploma or the equivalent, 13.8% had some college, 4.7% had an associate's degree, 38.3% had a college degree, 27.0% had a master's degree, and 13.0% had a doctoral or professional degree. The vast majority of the mothers (86.9%) reported being married, 4.9% reporting cohabitating but not being married, 4.0% were divorced, 2.7% were single (never been married), 1.0% were in a civil union or domestic partnership, and 0.5% were widowed. Mothers reported having their first child at the age of 28.16 years ($SD = 14.83$) and having an average of 1.91 children ($SD = 1.02$). Among the mothers, 46.7% considered themselves to be stay-at-home, 23.9% part-time working, and 29.3% full-time working.

Data were also collected from 209 women who were not mothers who ranged in age from 17 to 58 with a mean of 25.84 (*SD* = 8.00). The majority of this group was from the US (92.9%), although 1.9% lived in Canada, 1% in the United Kingdom, .5% in Australia, and the remaining 3.7% lived in other countries. The self-reported socio-economic status of the non-mother sample was mostly middle (51.2%) and upper middle (32.5%) class with 14.8% reporting that they were working class, 1.0% reporting that they lived in poverty, and 0.5% reporting being wealthy. The majority of the non-mothers were Caucasian (82.3%) with 3.8% African American, 3.3% multiracial, 2.9% Latina, 0.5% American Indian, 1.9% other, and 2.9% chose not to disclose. Of the non-mothers who completed the survey, 7.2% had less than a high school diploma, 0.5% had a high school diploma or equivalent, 27.3% had some college, 3.8% had an associate's degree, 37.3% had a college degree, 15.8% had a master's degree, and 8.1% had a doctoral or professional degree. Relationship status was requested with 51.9% of the respondents reporting being single (never married), 16.3% identifying as cohabitating but not married, 29.8% were married, 1.0% were in a civil union or domestic partnership, and 1.0% were divorced.

Procedures

An online survey was created on and distributed using Survey Gizmo. We used a snowball sampling technique to recruit participants for this study by posting the questionnaire on Facebook and parenting blogs. Links to the study were posted on Facebook with a request to re-post to broaden the potential sample. Additionally, we contacted approximately 100 parenting blogs (e.g., stay-at-home and working mom blogs) by e-mail and asked if they would post a link to our study on their site. Potential participants were informed that the survey was on attitudes toward mothering but that we were interested in the opinions of women who were both mothers and non-mothers.

Measures

Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ). The qualitative research on intensive mothering (e.g., Hays, 1996, Wall, 2010) includes extensive quotes from women who engage in these practices, and their authentic language served as the basis for our item generation. The central tenets revealed in Hays' (1996) qualitative interviews included the belief that women were naturally better caretakers than men, that child rearing should be child centric, and that children are sacred and, thus, that being with one's child should provide ultimate fulfillment. Other themes included the idea that parenting should involve intensive methods that engage and stimulate the child, that parenting should be expert guided, and that parenting is hard work and labor intensive.

Finally, the notion that parents can shape the outcome of their children through intensive methods, a theme more clearly articulated by the women interviewed in the Wall (2010) study was also included. The initial item pool consisted of 56 items rated on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). A six-point scale was used based on prior research suggesting that participants may satisfice when offered a neutral midpoint, which has been shown to reduce reliability (Alwin & Krosnick, 1991).

Parenting Investment in the Child Scale (PIC). Parental investment was measured in the mother sample using this 24-item measure (Bradley et al., 1997). Questions were answered on a 4-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*). The scale is divided into four subscales: acceptance of parenting role (e.g. "It's been hard to deal with the demands placed on the family by this child" - reversed); delight (e.g. "I'm always bragging about my child to my friends and family"); knowledge/sensitivity (e.g. "Babies have to learn they can't be picked up every time they cry" - reversed); and separation anxiety (e.g. "I worry when someone else cares for my child"). The Cronbach's alpha for the acceptance of parenting role subscale was .72 in the original study and .73 in the current study. The alpha for the delight subscale was .71 in the original study and .68 in this study. The knowledge/sensitivity subscale had an alpha of .70 in the original study and .51 in this study. The alpha for the separation anxiety subscale was .75 in the original study and .78 in the current study.

Parenting Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC). Parental feelings about their sense of efficacy as parents as well as the satisfaction they gain from parenting were assessed in the sample of mothers using a 16-item scale (Johnston & Mash, 1989). Participants answered on a 6-point scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). The questions in this survey were divided into two subscales: satisfaction (e.g. "I go to bed the same way I wake up in the morning feeling I have not accomplished a whole lot," reversed) and efficacy (e.g. "I meet my own personal expectations for expertise in caring from my child"). The Cronbach's alphas in the original study were .75 for the satisfaction subscale and .76 for the efficacy subscale. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha for the sample of mothers was .77 for the satisfaction subscale and .75 for the efficacy subscale.

Beliefs about Maternal Employment (BAMEC). This 24-item scale measured respondents' thoughts about maternal employment (Greenberger et al., 1988) and was given to both mothers and non-mothers. Answers were provided on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 6 (*very strongly agree*). The scale is composed of two subscales: benefits of maternal employment (e.g. "Children whose mothers work are more independent and able to do things for themselves") and costs of maternal employment (e.g. "Children are less likely

to form a warm and secure relationship with a mother who is working full-time"). For the benefits subscale, the

Cronbach's alpha was .91 in the original study and .94 for non-mothers and .95 for mothers in the current study. The

Cronbach's alpha for the cost subscale was .94 in the original study and .95 for both non-mothers and mothers in the

current study.

Division of Labor and Fairness. Mothers were asked about division of labor in the household. The items

were: "The majority of the childcare in my family is done by…"; "The majority of the household tasks (e.g.,

cooking, cleaning, laundry) are done by…"; and "The majority of the household maintenance tasks (e.g., home

repairs, yard work) are done by…."Items were answered on a 5-point scale where 1 meant *my partner*, 3 meant

equally shared, and 5 meant *self*. Thus, higher scores on this measure indicated that the participant did more of the

relevant chores. Participants were also asked whether the division of labor in their family was fair on a 5-point scale

ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Thus, higher scores indicated that they felt as though the

division of labor was more fair.

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Results

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The sample of 595 mothers was divided into two groups using the random sampling function in SPSS to

perform both an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) as well as a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). There were

315 women included in the EFA sub-sample and 280 women included in the CFA sub-sample. Subsequently, the

sample of mothers was combined to examine concurrent and discriminative validity, compare intensive parenting

ideologies to division of household labor and perceptions of its fairness, and determine whether there were

differences in intensive parenting ideologies depending on the work status (i.e., stay-at-home, part-time, full-time) of

the mother.

Development of IPAQ in a Maternal Sample

Exploratory factor analysis. An EFA was conducted using principal components analysis with varimax

rotation to test the factor structure of the 56 item measure. This solution produced 16 factors with eigenvalues over

one, but examination of the scree plot indicated that a five factor solution would be appropriate. We then ran EFAs

forcing a four, five, and six factor solution. The five factor solution produced the only interpretable factor structure,

but many items cross-loaded on multiple factors or had primary factor loadings below .4. Therefore, an additional

EFA was undertaken forcing a five factor solution including only the 32 items that had loadings of .4 or above on

only a single factor and no cross-loadings greater than .25; these standards are consistent with recommendations for

best practices in exploratory factor analysis (Costell & Osborne, 2005; Tabachnick &Fidell, 2007). Eight factors had eigenvalues over 1, but an examination of the scree plot indicated that the five factor solution was, indeed, appropriate. The first factor, Essentialism, accounted for 17.21% of the variance and was comprised of 8 items. The second factor, Fulfillment, had 5 items and accounted for 8.50% of the variance. Factor three, Stimulation, accounted for 6.80% of the variance and had 7 items, but one item had a factor loading below .4 and was excluded from further analysis resulting in a 6 item subscale. The fourth factor, Challenging, was comprised of 6 items and accounted for 7.60% of the variance. Finally, factor five, Child-centered, had 6 items and accounted for 5.87% of the variance. No items had a cross-loading higher than .25, so no additional items were dropped due to exceeding this criterion. Factor loadings and cross-loadings for each item are presented in Table 1.

The eight items loading on factor one that comprises the Essentialism scale had acceptable internal consistency reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of .85. The average score was 2.11 ($SD = 0.74$), and scores ranged from 1 to 4.5. Cronbach's alpha for the five items loading on factor two, the Fulfillment scale, was .76 with scores ranging from 1 to 6 ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.92$). The seven items that loaded on factor three, Stimulation, had a Cronbach's alpha of .68 with scores ranging from 1.67 to 5.67 ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.75$). For factor four, Challenging, the six items had acceptable reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of .74. The average score was 4.51 ($SD = 0.77$) with scores ranging from 2.33 to 6. Child-centered, the final factor, was comprised of six items and had a Cronbach's alpha of .68. The average score was 3.75 ($SD = 0.66$) with scores ranging from 1.83 to 5.67. All items were measured on a 6-point scale with higher scores indicating more agreement. The distribution of all scales appeared to be normal based on skewness and kurtosis values.

Confirmatory factor analysis. A CFA using M-plus (Muthén & Muthén, 2005) with maximum likelihood estimation was used to verify the fit of the five factor solution derived from the EFA on an independent sample of women. The initial CFA model was a direct replication of the factor structure derived from the EFA, and all the factors were allowed to intercorrelate. The fit of this model was adequate, $\chi^2(424) = 746.78$, $p < .001$; CFI = .84; RMSEA = .06; and SRMR = .07, but some of the items had loadings below .4. Given this, a second CFA was run, and the eight items with low factor loadings were removed. The fit of this model was good, $\chi^2(265) = 478.31$, $p < .001$; CFI = .88; RMSEA = .06; and SRMR = .07. Factor loadings for this final model are provided in Table 2. The final measure, referred to as Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ), had twenty-five items and included five separate scales measuring different dimensions of intensive parenting attitudes.

The eight items loading on factor one that comprises the Essentialism scale had acceptable internal consistency reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of .85. The average score was 2.22 ($SD = 0.78$), and scores ranged from 1 to 5. Cronbach's alpha for the four items loading on factor two, the Fulfillment scale, was .77 with scores ranging from 1.5 to 6 ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 0.99$). The four items that loaded on factor three, Stimulation, had a Cronbach's alpha of .64 with scores ranging from 1 to 6 ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.85$). For factor four, Challenging, the six items had acceptable reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of .76. The average score was 4.44 ($SD = 0.79$) with scores ranging from 2.17 to 6. Child-centered, the final factor, was comprised of three items and had a Cronbach's alpha of .70. The average score was 3.32 ($SD = 0.84$) with scores ranging from 1 to 5.67. All items were measured on a 6-point scale. The distribution of all scales appeared to be relatively normal based on skewness and kurtosis values.

        Intercorrelations among IPAQ scales. The correlations between the five factors of the IPAQ are presented in Table 3. The five factors had small to moderate positive intercorrelations (ranging from .11 to .36) confirming Hays' (1996) notion that intensive parenting attitudes represent a set of interrelated belief systems that mutually confirm one another, but consist of multiple unique dimensions. Based on the intercorrelations of the scales, it would be possible to calculate a total score on the intensive parenting measure. However, we do not recommend using the total scale score because the scales have different relationships with some of the validity constructs as described subsequently (see Table 3).

Construct Validity of IPAQ in a Maternal Sample

        Essentialism. The Essentialism scale was positively related to the delight and maternal separation anxiety scales on the PIC indicating that mothers who felt women were uniquely qualified to care for children were more delighted by their child and concerned over separation from them. On the other hand, the Essentialism scale was negatively correlated with acceptance of the parenting role on the PIC indicating that mothers who endorsed Essentialism also endorsed items reflecting a frustration with parenting and a desire for their children to be more independent. Essentialism was not significantly related to the knowledge/sensitivity scale of the PIC. It was also unrelated to parenting satisfaction or efficacy on the PSOC. The Essentialism scale was positively related to associating costs with maternal employment but unrelated to benefits associated with maternal employment on the BAMEC.

        Fulfillment. The Fulfillment scale was positively related to all four scales of the PIC indicating that women who believed that parenting should provide a strong sense of fulfillment were more likely to accept the parenting

role, experience delight in their children, have knowledge/sensitivity about their children, and have anxiety about being separated from their children. It should be noted, however, that the Fulfillment scale had small to moderate relationships with the PIC scales, the highest being the moderate relationships with the delight and maternal separation anxiety scales, indicating that it represents a distinct construct. The Fulfillment scale was also positively related to both a sense of satisfaction and efficacy on the PSOC. Finally, it was positively related to perceiving costs associated with maternal employment but was unrelated to perceiving benefits on the BAMEC.

Stimulation. Belief in the importance of engaging with and stimulating one's child was related to greater delight and maternal separation anxiety on the PIC, but was unrelated to knowledge/sensitivity and acceptance of the parenting role. It was unrelated to either satisfaction or efficacy on the PSOC. The Stimulation scale was positively related to believing in the benefits of maternal employment but was unrelated to perceiving costs associated with maternal employment on the BAMEC.

Challenging. The Challenging scale was also negatively related to acceptance of the parenting role on the PIC. However, it was positively related to maternal separation anxiety and delight on the PIC. Thus, women who see mothering as a very hard job expressed frustration with their parenting role but also reported delight in their children and anxiety when they were separated from them. The Challenging scale was not related to the knowledge/sensitivity scale of the PIC. It was also negatively related to satisfaction and efficacy on the PSOC indicating that viewing parenting as challenging is associated with feeling less satisfied with and effective in the parenting role. The belief that mothering is challenging was related to perceiving greater costs associated with maternal employment but was not related to perceiving benefits associated with maternal employment on the BAMEC.

Child-centered. The Child-centered scale was positively related to delight, knowledge/sensitivity, and maternal separation anxiety on the PIC but was unrelated to acceptance of the parenting role. Women who endorsed a child-centered approach to parenting reported that they took delight in being a parent, were sensitive to their child's needs, and experienced anxiety when separated from their child. Furthermore, it was unrelated to parenting satisfaction, but was positively related to a sense of efficacy on the PSOC. The belief that parenting should be child-centered was related to perceiving costs associated with maternal employment, but was unrelated to perceiving benefits on the BAMEC.

Relationship of IPAQ to Relevant Constructs in a Maternal Sample

Division of Household Labor. Child care responsibilities and completing household chores (e.g., cooking, cleaning, and laundry) were positively related to scores on the Essentialism, Fulfillment, and Challenging scales; endorsing these beliefs led to greater participation in chores. Fairness in perceived division of labor in the household was negatively related to scores on the Essentialism and Challenging scales; women who endorsed these scales felt that the division of labor in their homes was less fair. Division of responsibility for household maintenance tasks (e.g., home repairs and yard work) was not related to the IPAQ scales.

Work Status. A MANOVA was conducted to determine whether the five dimensions of intensive parenting attitudes differed by work status, $F(10, 1154) = 5.74$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .05$. Univariate tests conducted to follow up the significant MANOVA indicated that parenting attitudes on the Essentialism, Stimulation, and Challenging scales varied by work status. See Table 4 for means, standard deviations, and results of the univariate F tests. Post hoc Tukey tests indicated that stay-at-home mothers had higher scores on Essentialism than both part-time and full-time working mothers. Both full-time and part-time working mothers had higher scores on Stimulation than did stay-at-home mothers. Finally, stay-at-home mothers had higher scores on the Challenging scale than did part-time working mothers; full-time working mothers were not significantly different from either group.

Validation of IPAQ with a Sample of Non-Mothers

We were also interested in whether the IPAQ was a viable measure to use with women who are not mothers. Therefore, an additional CFA was run to confirm the final factor structure with this group. The fit of the model with this sample remained adequate, $\chi^2(265) = 533.97$, $p < .001$; CFI = .86; RMSEA = .07; and SRMR = .08. The factor loadings for this CFA are provided in Table 2.

The reliability of the IPAQ with non-mothers was generally adequate. The Essentialism scale had high internal consistency reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of .91. The average score was 2.00 ($SD = 0.86$), and scores ranged from 1 to 5.13. Cronbach's alpha for the Fulfillment scale was .83 with scores ranging from 1 to 6 ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 1.14$). Stimulation had a Cronbach's alpha of .57 with scores ranging from 2.75 to 5.50 ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.55$). Therefore, the Stimulation scale should be used cautiously with women who are not mothers. The Challenging scale had acceptable reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of .72. The average score was 4.30 ($SD = 0.76$) with scores ranging from 2.17 to 6. Child-centered, the final scale, had a Cronbach's alpha of .83. The average score was 3.77 ($SD = 0.70$) with scores ranging from 1.83 to 5.33. The distribution of all scales appeared to be relatively normal based on skewness and kurtosis values.

   Intercorrelations among IPAQ scales and Employment Beliefs among Non-mothers. The correlations

between the scales of the IPAQ and the BAMEC (Greenberger et al., 1988) can be found in Table 5. All five scales

of the IPAQ were positively correlated with each other among the non-mother sample, and the intercorrelations

among this group were generally stronger than those found in the sample of mothers. Thus, intensive parenting

attitudes appear to represent an inter-related set of beliefs among women who are not mothers. In addition, the five

factors of the IPAQ were all positively related to believing there are costs of maternal employment. The relationship

between Essentialism and the costs of maternal employment was particularly strong ($r = .66$) in the sample of non-

mothers. No IPAQ scales were significantly related to perceiving benefits associated with maternal employment.

Comparison of Mothers and Non-Mothers on the IPAQ

   Finally, the mothers were compared to the non-mothers on the scales of the IPAQ. The overall MANOVA

was significant, $F(5, 780) = 28.07$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .15$, indicating that intensive parenting attitudes varied by

maternal status. See Table 6 for means, standard deviations, as well as results of the univariate tests. Non-mothers

differed from mothers on the Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered scales but not the

Fulfillment scale. Mothers endorsed the ideas of essentialism and that mothering is challenging more than non-

mothers. Conversely, non-mothers endorsed the Stimulation and Child-centered scales more strongly than mothers.

<div align="center">Discussion</div>

   The primary goal of the current investigation was to operationalize the ideologies of intensive parenting as

conceptualized by Hays (1996). She identified several components of intensive parenting including that parenting is

the responsibility of the mother; childcare should be child-centric and labor intensive; and children are sacred,

innocent, and need to be protected. We developed items to capture each of these overarching constructs based on

interview quotes from mothers found in the qualitative literature. Exploratory factor analysis revealed that a five

factor structure best fit the data. Our five factors represent many of the ideas conceptualized by Hays (1996) but do

not entirely map onto her model. Our Essentialism scale mirrors Hays' first notion that parenting is best done by

mothers. This scale was a highly reliable in both mothers and non-mothers and appears to capture the construct in a

similar way to its original conceptualization. Hays' idea that mothering should involve intensive, child-centric

methods is captured by three of our scales: Child-centered, Stimulation, and Challenging. Each of these were

components of Hays' conceptualization of intensive, child-centric methods. The Stimulation factor also captures the

notion that parents need to promote children's intellectual development, an idea more fully articulated in the

interviews by Wall (2010). Finally, Hays' notion that intensive mothering involves the belief that children are sacred and innocent was somewhat captured by our Fulfillment scale, with mothers endorsing statements about the joys and rewards of holding and loving their children. However, items that specifically referred to children being sacred, innocent, and needing protection failed to fall on any specific factor and were not included in the final measure. It is not clear why these items did not cohere to make a factor more clearly measuring the sacredness of childrearing. It is possible that the notion of sacredness was too abstract and had too much of a religious tone for parents to coherently endorse. Future researchers may wish further explore this dimension through the development and testing of additional items.

The results of our study indicate that the ideologies of intensive mothering are inter-related and mutually reinforcing. For example, the belief that mothering is challenging (a belief system that represents some negative affect about motherhood) was positively correlated to the belief that children should provide fulfillment (a set of beliefs that imply a more positive affect). While it might seem counterintuitive that women who find mothering difficult also believe that children provide considerable fulfillment, it makes sense within the logic of intensive mothering. Cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) suggests that we feel discomfort if our actions and attitudes fail to align. If a woman experiences motherhood as being highly demanding, leaving her with little time or energy for anything else, there is less cognitive tension if she also sees parenting as highly rewarding. The women in Hays' (1996) study emphasized that it is the very fact that mothering is so fulfilling that makes the difficulty of it worthwhile. Furthermore, it makes sense that perceiving motherhood as hard is related to believing that motherhood should be child-centered and involve intense stimulation. Overall, the fact that the scales showed moderate positive correlations with one another indicates that the ideologies of intensive parenting represent distinct, but interrelated, belief systems and are best understood as separate dimensions that are mutually reinforcing rather than one monolith ideology.

It should also be noted that three of the scales, Stimulation, Fulfillment, and Child-Centered, do not make specific reference to mothers and, thus, can be considered scales assessing beliefs associated with intensive *parenting* ideologies rather than only focusing on intensive *mothering*. The Essentialism scale specifically reflects the belief that mothers are uniquely qualified to care for children, and, as such, is about mothers rather than parents in general. The Challenging scale, as written, does have items that specifically refer to women. These items were written in this way as the notion that *mothering* rather than simply *parenting* was challenging was so prominent in

the Hays (1996) interviews. Future research may wish to explore if answers on the IPAQ differ by the use of *mothers, parents,* or *fathers* as the referent group.

Construct Validity

The relationship between the IPAQ and the other measures provided support for its construct validity. The relationships between the IPAQ and the PIC were particularly central to determining the construct validity of our measure because the PIC has been considered a measure of intensive mothering (Hays, 1998), although its goal was to valorize high parental investment as an indication of appropriate maternal attachment. The fact that the strongest relationships between the PIC and the IPAQ were in the moderate range indicates that the constructs assessed are distinct. Furthermore, the PIC scales correlated in different directions with different aspects of intensive parenting as assessed by the IPAQ. For example, acceptance of the parenting role in the PIC was correlated positively with the IPAQ's Fulfillment scale but negatively correlated with the Essentialism and Challenging scales. This indicates that components of intensive mothering ideology (e.g., the belief that mothering is difficult and can only be done by mothers) are related to a frustration with the parenting role, while other components are related to more positive feelings about being a parent. Although the acceptance of the parenting role scale was differentially related to the various IPAQ scales, the PIC delight and separation anxiety subscales were significantly positively related to all of the components of intensive mothering. Thus, women who endorsed any of our measured components of intensive parenting reported that they experienced more delight when they were with their children and more anxiety when they were separated from them.

A central difference between the PIC and the IPAQ is that many of the PIC items are measures of specific *behaviors* while the IPAQ is purely a measure of *attitudes*. Furthermore, the PIC is largely descriptive with women endorsing how they actually feel and behave. The IPAQ, particularly the Child-centered and Fulfillment scales are more prescriptive, indicating beliefs about how women think mothers *should* think. Believing that one should be fulfilled by one's child *may* be related to actually being fulfilled, but not necessarily. In fact, mothers who strongly believe that they should be fulfilled by their children but are not, may experience particular difficulty due to the gap between their ideal of what they should be as a mother and their actual experience. This self-discrepancy between the ideal self and the actual self may be related to a sense of guilt or shame (Higgins, 1986) and, potentially, even to post-partum depression. Higgins proposed that while the presence of a negative outcome can lead to fear, the absence of an expected positive outcome (e.g., experiencing fulfillment in becoming a mother) can lead to

disappointment and sadness. The ability to determine whether discrepancies between prescriptive beliefs about motherhood and actual experiences of motherhood is a fruitful topic for future study and will be greatly enhanced by the IPAQ, which could be considered a measure of the internalized prescriptive demands of motherhood.

The separate components of the IPAQ were related differentially to the scales on the PSOC. Although the Fulfillment scale was related to *increased* satisfaction and efficacy, the Challenging scale was related to *decreased* satisfaction and efficacy. These contrasting relationships are particularly interesting as the Fulfillment and Challenging scales were positively related to each other. Additionally, being child-centered was related to a sense of parental efficacy. Given that parenting in a child-centered manner might contribute to what makes parenting seem difficult (and, indeed, Child-Centered scores were positively related to Challenging scores), the differential relationships between the IPAQ scales and the PSOC are intriguing. These relationships also point to the importance of understanding the ideologies associated with intensive parenting as separate constructs rather than one overarching belief.

In looking at the relationship between the IPAQ and perceptions of the costs and benefits associated with maternal employment, we found that intensive mothering beliefs, except for Stimulation, were related to perceiving costs associated with maternal employment (as measured by the BAMEC). This finding makes sense as many of the components of intensive mothering involve the belief that the mother should be actively engaged with the child. The relationship between essentialism and belief in the costs of maternal employment was among the strongest of the measured relationships for the mothers and was the strongest relationship for non-mothers. Thus, believing that mothers are uniquely qualified to care for children may be related to lowered career aspirations for both mothers and young women who intend to become mothers. Essentialist beliefs have been themes in interviews with women who have chosen to give up careers and stay home with their children (e.g., Stone & Lovejoy, 2004). Future research using the IPAQ can examine how the belief in women's superior capacity to parent affects women's career choices and aspirations.

Division of Household Labor and Work Status

An additional goal of this paper was to determine how intensive mothering ideologies related to division of household labor and childcare as well as perceptions of the fairness of the division of labor. Despite the fact that many mothers work full-time, women continue to do a disproportionate amount of the household labor and childcare (Coltrane, 2000; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). Although inequity in the division of labor has been linked to

more conservative gender ideology (Kroska, 2004; Stevens, Minnotte, Mannon, & Kiger, 2006), the relationship

between inequity and adherence to intensive mothering ideologies has not been established. Our data demonstrated

that intensive mothering ideologies are indeed related to inequality in the division of labor and childcare.

Specifically, having greater inequality in both the division of labor and childcare was related to beliefs in

Essentialism, Fulfillment, and the perception that mothering is hard (Challenging). Whether these ideologies about

motherhood drive the unequal division of labor (e.g., Essentialism) or are the result of the unequal division of labor

(e.g., Challenging) cannot be determined by these data. Essentialist beliefs have been found to be related to greater

anticipated inequality in the division of labor by adolescents (Bjarnason & Hjalmsdottir, 2008), and our data suggest

that it is related to actual inequality as well.

Having more essentialist beliefs and perceiving mothering as being hard were also related to the perception

that the division of labor was unfair. While it makes sense that women who perceive mothering as being hard would

find the division of labor to be unfair, it is interesting that women who believe that mothers are uniquely qualified to

parent (thereby rejecting some efforts by fathers) also report inequality to be unfair. It may be that women who find

themselves doing considerably more of the household labor and childcare are both frustrated by the inequality and

simultaneously looking for reasons to justify it. By asserting that their husbands are unable or incompetent to parent,

they may justify inequality, but continue to think it is unfair for it to be that way. Our data support the contention of

scholars who have suggested that one way to encourage greater egalitarianism in the home is to challenge the

perception that women are inherently better at parenting than men, a central component of intensive mothering

ideologies (Bjarnason & Hjalmsdottir, 2008; Crosby, Biemat & Williams, 2004; Deutsch et al., 2007).

We also investigated whether intensive mothering ideologies varied by work status. Our results support the

idea that both working and non-working mothers embrace intensive mothering ideologies but emphasize different

aspects (Johnston & Swanson, 2006). Specifically, while Essentialism was endorsed more by stay-at-home mothers,

Stimulation was endorsed more by working mothers. Working mothers, who presumably have families with more

disposable income, may be more likely to emphasize engaging their children in intellectually stimulating activities

that may cost money. Finally, stay-at-home mothers were the most likely to endorse the notion that mothering is

hard, consistent with the idea that stay-at-home mothers consider mothering to be a job and themselves to be the

CEO of their home (Dillaway & Pare, 2008). Our data also indicated that some components of intensive parenting

ideologies do not vary due to work status. Specifically, the belief that childrearing should be fulfilling and be child-centered was held uniformly across all groups.

Comparing Intensive Parenting Beliefs of Mothers and Non-Mothers

Our results indicate that the IPAQ is valid for use with both mother and non-mother populations, with the possible exception of the Stimulation scale, which had low reliability, especially with the non-mother sample. However, non-mothers differed significantly from mothers on all of the scales except for the Fulfillment scale. Not surprisingly, mothers viewed parenting as more challenging than non-mothers. Mothers also scored higher in Essentialism, supporting earlier studies that found a move toward more traditional gender roles following the birth of the first child (Coltrane, 2000; Cowan & Cowan, 1988). However, in contrast to our hypothesis that mothers would score higher than non-mothers on all aspects of intensive parenting beliefs, non-mothers actually scored higher on the Stimulation and Child-centered scales. Non-mothers may hold a more idealized view of parenting than mothers who are likely trying to juggle many responsibilities in addition to parenting. Longitudinal research is needed to see how becoming a parent changes IPAQ scores. It may be that holding very high standards for mothering before one has a child, followed with an inability to meet those standards after the birth of a child, may be related to particularly negative outcomes for new mothers.

Limitations and Conclusions

The generalizability of the current investigation is limited by the relative homogeneity of the sample. Our sample was largely white, well-educated, and middle- to upper-middle class. The extent to which intensive mothering ideologies are embraced by women outside of the hegemonic mainstream of the discourse of mothering (e.g., mothers on welfare, single mothers) is not fully understood. Working class and lower income mothers have typically been understood through "deviancy discourses" of mothering (Arendell, 2000), which focus on their shortcomings rather than on their strengths. Women out of the mainstream of mothering discourse may be able to reject some of the prescriptive intensity of the ideologies of intensive mothering. For example, qualitative analyses have indicated that working class mothers give their children more responsibility around the home but also more opportunity to structure their own playtime (Lareau, 2002). Whether these differences would translate to lower scores on scales of the IPAQ such as Child-Centered and Stimulation remains an open question. Nevertheless, the IPAQ will allow researchers to gain a better sense of whether endorsement of intensive parenting beliefs varies among women with different social statuses, as well as whether the consequences of endorsing these beliefs varies.

Other limitations of our study include our definitions of work status as full-time, part-time, and stay-at-home motherhood as many women do not clearly fall within these categories (e.g., women who work from home, women who do childcare work while taking care of their own children, and women who work at night but stay at home full-time with their children during the day; Dillaway & Pare, 2008). Future research should consider using more nuanced measures of work status. In addition, our exclusion of fathers in this study does not allow us to understand whether ideologies of intensive parenting are endorsed by fathers and how these ideologies may impact the experience of fathers. Finally, it should be noted that the reliability of the Stimulation scale is lower than the .7 accepted standard for respectable reliability (Devellis, 1991). Future researchers should use this scale with caution, especially with non-mothers, and may wish to test whether adding items would improve the reliability.

While the notion that IM is the dominant ideology of contemporary mothering is widely accepted (Arendell, 2000), research to date on the topic has been limited to qualitative studies due to the lack of a reliable and valid measure of this set of beliefs. The Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire will allow researchers to better understand how endorsing these ideologies impacts women and families. The relationship between the endorsement of intensive parenting ideologies and maternal mental health is a ripe area for research as the prescriptive nature of these beliefs may make them difficult for women to hold without experiencing stress, anxiety, and guilt about not living up to their own expectations (Tummala-Narra, 2009). Given that the IPAQ is also a reliable measure for non-mothers, the scale can be used to better understand how intensive parenting ideologies shape the expectations of young women and how they change over time and with the birth of a child.

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Table 1

IPAQ Factor Loadings from the EFA

Item	Factor 1: Essentialism	Factor 2: Fulfillment	Factor 3: Stimulation	Factor 4: Challenging	Factor 5: Child-Centered
Men are unable to care for children unless they are given specific instructions about what to do	**.80**	.07	.06	.19	.04
Although fathers may mean well, they generally are not as good at parenting as mothers	**.75**	.16	.06	-.01	.11
Men do not naturally know what to do with children	**.75**	-.04	.02	.17	.02
Both fathers and mothers are equally able to care for children*	**-.73**	-.06	.01	.02	-.07
Women are not necessarily better parents than men*	**-.69**	-.19	-.07	-.05	.07
Although fathers are important, ultimately children need mothers more	**.68**	.18	.05	.08	.07
Men do not recognize that raising children is difficult and requires skills and training	**.60**	-.07	-.08	.19	.002
Ultimately, it is the mother who is responsible for how her child turns out	**.54**	.21	.16	-.001	.06
Being a parent brings a person the greatest joy they can possibly experience	.09	**.73**	.18	.09	.01
Parenting is not the most rewarding thing a person can do*	-.05	**-.72**	.10	-.03	-.02
Holding his/her baby should provide a person with the deepest level of satisfaction	.20	**.72**	.22	.05	.15
A parent should feel complete when he/she looks in the eyes of his/her infant	.17	**.67**	.24	.08	.16
Being a parent is important to me but is not (or will not be) central to how I define myself*	-.16	**-.56**	.22	-.07	-.16
Finding the best educational opportunities for children is important as early as preschool	.006	-.11	**.70**	.08	.17
It is important for children to be involved in classes, lessons and activities that engage and stimulate them	.03	-.09	**.70**	.07	.07
Parents should begin providing intellectual stimulation for their children prenatally, such as reading to them or playing classical music	.13	.13	**.63**	-.08	.08
It is important to interact regularly with children on their level (e g , getting down on the floor and playing with them)	-.06	.07	**.55**	.01	.08
Children are likely to grow up healthy and happy without much intervention from their parents*	.07	-.16	**-.51**	-.11	.03

If parents have the adequate time, resources, and knowledge, they can ensure their child's success	.10	.14	**.47**	-.02	-.02
Parents should take expert advice with a grain of salt*	-.15	.10	**-.37**	-.11	.16
Child rearing is the most demanding job in the world	.10	.18	.06	**.79**	-.05
Mothers never get a mental break from their children, even when they are physically apart	.07	.09	-.03	**.67**	-.04
Parenting is exhausting	.03	-.25	.04	**.67**	.04
It is harder to be a good mother than to be a corporate executive	.09	.19	.02	**.69**	.003
Being a parent means never having time for oneself	.20	-.10	.06	**.56**	.08
To be an effective mother, a woman must possess wide ranging skills	.04	.12	.09	**.41**	.13
Children's needs should come before their parents	.09	.24	.04	-.05	**.65**
Children should be the center of attention	.14	.16	.16	.10	**.61**
The child's schedule should take priority over the needs of the parents	.19	.11	.07	-.01	**.56**
Parents should adjust their style to the individual needs of their children	-.07	.04	-.16	.04	**.63**
How a child is raised should be controlled by the individual child's needs and desires.	-.06	.004	.006	.16	**.59**
Parents should focus less on their children and more on their marriage*	.001	.08	-.11	.06	**-.56**

Note. * represents a reverse scored item.

Table 2

Factor Loadings for CFAs with Mothers and Non-mothers for the IPAQ

Item	CFA Mothers	CFA Non-mothers
Factor 1: Essentialism		
Men are unable to care for children unless they are given specific instructions about what to do	.78	.88
Although fathers may mean well, they generally are not as good at parenting as mothers	.76	.81
Men do not naturally know what to do with children	.75	.86
Both fathers and mothers are equally able to care for children*	.61	.72
Women are not necessarily better parents than men*	.67	.81
Although fathers are important, ultimately children need mothers more	.56	.65
Men do not recognize that raising children is difficult and requires skills and training	.47	.61
Ultimately, it is the mother who is responsible for how her child turns out	.63	.69
Factor 2: Fulfillment		
Being a parent brings a person the greatest joy they can possibly experience	.55	.78
Parenting is not the most rewarding thing a person can do*	.54	.60
Holding his/her baby should provide a person with the deepest level of satisfaction	.75	.87
A parent should feel complete when he/she looks in the eyes of his/her infant	.79	.75
Factor 3: Stimulation		
Finding the best educational opportunities for children is important as early as preschool	.55	.61
It is important for children to be involved in classes, lessons and activities that engage and stimulate them	.76	.73
Parents should begin providing intellectual stimulation for their children prenatally, such as reading to them or playing classical music	.60	.38
It is important to interact regularly with children on their level (e g , getting down on the floor and playing with them)	.45	.43
Factor 4: Challenging		
Child rearing is the most demanding job in the world	.81	.86
Mothers never get a mental break from their children, even when they are physically apart	.62	.56
Parenting is exhausting	.56	.39
It is harder to be a good mother than to be a corporate executive	.63	.60
Being a parent means never having time for oneself	.50	.33
To be an effective mother, a woman must possess wide ranging skills	.41	.48
Factor 5: Child-Centered		
Children's needs should come before their parents	.68	.61
Children should be the center of attention	.65	.77
The child's schedule should take priority over the needs of the parents	.61	.62

Note. * represents a reverse scored item.

Table 3

Correlations among IPAQ Scales and Validity Measures for Mothers

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Essentialism	-				
2. Fulfillment	.29**	-			
3. Stimulation	.11*	.26**	-		
4. Challenging	.21**	.15**	.16**	-	
5. Child-centered	.21**	.36**	.24**	.11*	-
6. PIC Acceptance	-.11*	.26**	.03	-.39**	.07
7. PIC Delight	.11*	.42**	.33**	.21**	.36**
8. PIC Knowledge/Sensitivity	-.01	.13**	.05	-.04	.18**
9. PIC Separation Anxiety	.23**	.43**	.18**	.13**	.36**
10. PSOC Satisfaction	-.09	.22**	.08	-.33**	.04
11. PSOC Efficacy	.02	.25**	.09	-.11*	.18**
12. BAMEC Benefit	-.05	-.07	.17**	.08	-.01
13. BAMEC Cost	.43**	.33**	-.03	.09*	.17**
14. Childcare	.34**	.12*	.03	.13**	.08
15. Household Chores	.18**	.11*	.04	.13**	-.04
16. Household Maintenance	-.01	-.04	.02	-.02	-.06
17. Division of Labor Fair	-.16**	.04	-.03	-.19**	-.01

Note. $N = 452$; *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; PIC = Parenting Investment in the Child; PSOC = Parenting Sense of Competency Scale; BAMEC = Beliefs about Maternal Employment.

Table 4

Marginal Means, Standard Deviations (in parentheses), and F values by Work Status on the Five Scales of the IPAQ

for Mothers

	Stay-at-Home (N = 275)	Part-time (N = 137)	Full-time (N = 171)	$F(2, 580)$
Essentialism	2.31 (0.76)[a]	2.06 (0.76)[b]	2.03 (0.74)[b]	9.67*
Fulfillment	3.85 (1.00)	3.65 (0.99)	3.67 (0.90)	2.92
Stimulation	3.98 (0.87)[a]	4.20 (0.87)[b]	4.30 (0.77)[b]	8.60*
Challenging	4.58 (0.76)[a]	4.34 (0.79)[b]	4.41 (0.80)[ab]	5.07*
Child-Centered	3.40 (0.86)	3.22 (0.74)	3.28 (0.82)	2.41

Note. *$p < .05$; means with different superscripts differ significantly at $p < .05$.

Table 5

Correlations among IPAQ Scales and Validity Measures for Non-Mothers

	1	2	3	4	5
Essentialism	-				
Fulfillment	.30**	-			
Stimulation	.30**	.27**	-		
Challenging	.31**	.25**	.24**	-	
Child-centered	.29**	.51**	.29**	.33**	-
BAMEC Benefit	.14	.06	.10	.07	.03
BAMEC Cost	.66**	.36**	.23**	.35**	.30**

Note. $N = 182$; *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; BAMAC = Beliefs about Maternal Employment; PSOC =

Parenting Sense of Competency Scale; PIC = Parenting Investment in the Child.

Table 6

Marginal Means, Standard Deviations (in parentheses), and F values by Maternal Status on the Five Scales of the

IPAQ

	Non-Mothers	Mothers	Univariate Test
Essentialism	1.99 (0.84)	2.17 (0.77)	$F(1, 784) = 9.67**$
Fulfillment	3.68 (1.13)	3.76 (0.97)	$F(1, 784) = 2.92$
Stimulation	4.81 (0.68)	4.13 (0.85)	$F(1, 784) = 8.60***$
Challenging	4.29 (0.75)	4.47 (0.78)	$F(1, 784) = 5.07**$
Child-Centered	3.47 (0.89)	3.32 (0.82)	$F(1, 784) = 2.41*$

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

Appendix

The Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire

1. Both fathers and mothers are equally able to care for children
2. Although fathers may mean well, they generally are not as good at parenting as mothers
3. Parents should begin providing intellectual stimulation for their children prenatally, such as reading to them or playing classical music
4. Although fathers are important, ultimately children need mothers more
5. Parents never get a mental break from their children, even when they are physically apart
6. Ultimately, it is the mother who is responsible for how her child turns out
7. Being a parent brings a person the greatest joy he or she can possibly experience
8. Parenting is exhausting
9. It is important for children to be involved in classes, lessons, and activities that engage and stimulate them
10. Parenting is not the most rewarding thing a person can do
11. The child's schedule should take priority over the needs of the parent's
12. Men do not recognize that raising children is difficult and requires skills and training
13. Child rearing is the most demanding job in the world
14. Holding his or her baby should provide a parent with the deepest level of satisfaction
15. Being a parent means never having time for oneself
16. Women are not necessarily better parents than men
17. Men do not naturally know what to do with children
18. A parent should feel complete when he or she looks in the eyes of his or her infant
19. Children should be the center of attention
20. Men are unable to care for children unless they are given specific instructions about what to do
21. Finding the best educational opportunities for children is important as early as preschool
22. It is harder to be a good parent than to be a corporate executive
23. To be an effective parent, a person must possess wide ranging skills
24. Children's needs should come before their parents
25. It is important to interact regularly with children on their level (e.g. getting down on the floor and playing with them)

Scale Coding
Essentialism: 1(r), 2, 4, 6, 12, 16(r), 17, 20
Fulfillment: 7, 10(r), 14, 18
Stimulation: 3, 9, 21, 25
Challenging: 5, 8, 13, 15, 22, 23
Child-Centered: 11, 19, 24