

When Parenting Exhausts Parents:

Good-parent beliefs and parental burnout across 37 countries

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When Parenting Exhausts Parents

Good-parent beliefs and parental burnout across 37 countries

1. A Brief Introduction
2. Research Design
3. Method & Result
4. Take-Home Message

INTRODUCTION

The origin of the current research



Parenting is the foundation of the survival of the human species

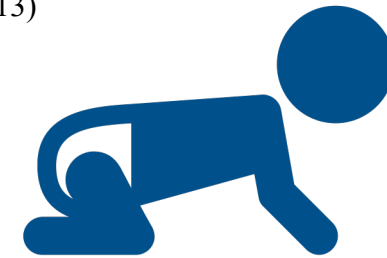
(see Bornstein, 2015)

Nevertheless...



90% of the studies devoted to parenting involve US parents.

(see Bornstein, 2013)

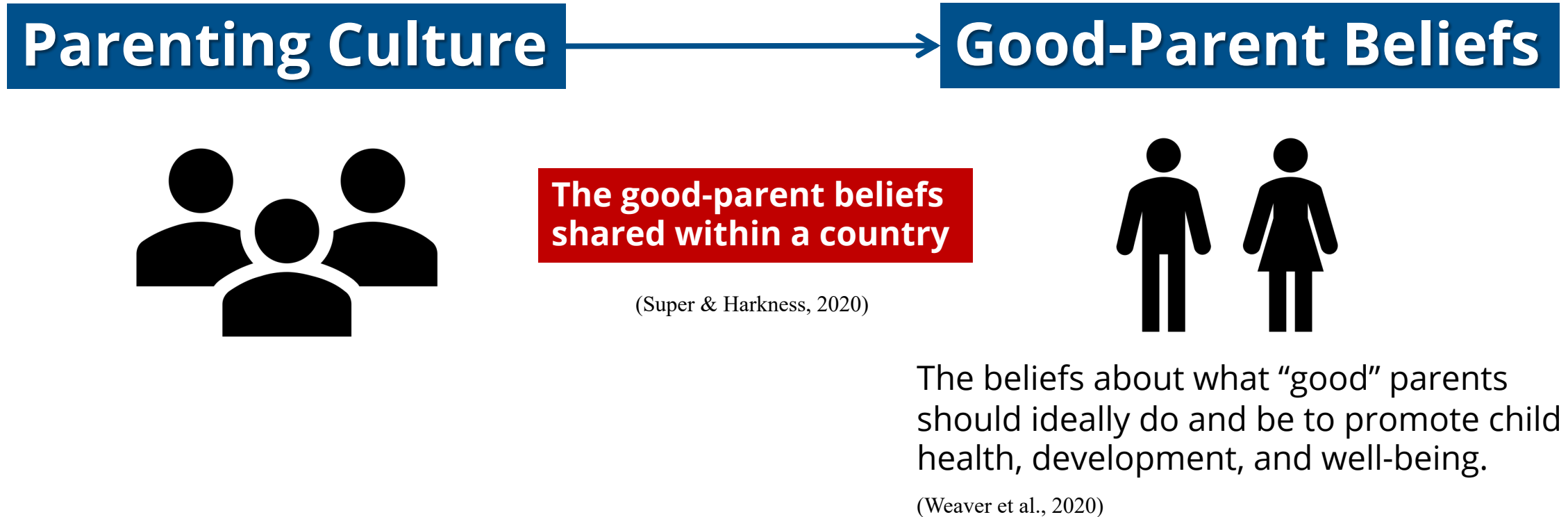


Research was mainly concerned with delineating “good” parenting as the way to promote child development.

(see Bornstein, 2012)

INTRODUCTION

Research questions: (1) What are the features of parenting cultures across 37 countries?



Cole, M. (2010). What's culture got to do with it? Educational research as a necessarily interdisciplinary enterprise. *Educational Researcher*, 39, 461–470.

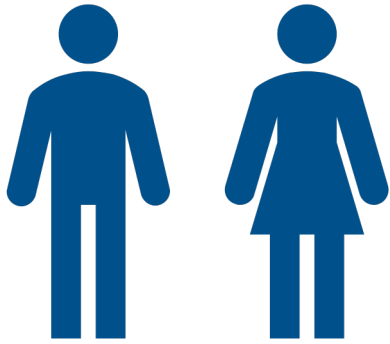
Super, C. M., & Harkness, S. (2020). Research on parental burnout across cultures: Steps toward global understanding. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 174, 185–192.

Weaver, M. S., October, T., Feudtner, C., & Hinds, P. S. (2020). "Good-Parent Beliefs": Research, Concept, and Clinical Practice. *Pediatrics*, 145(6), 1-9.

INTRODUCTION

Research questions: (2) What's the association of parenting culture with parental ~~burning~~ **burnout**?

Parenting Culture

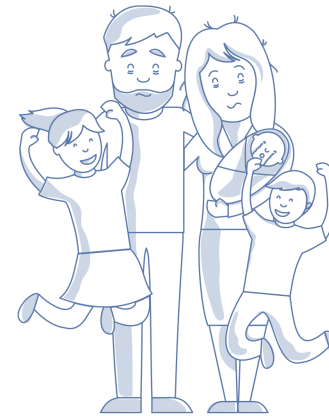


The beliefs about what “good” parents should ideally do and be to promote child health, development, and well-being.

(e.g., Weaver et al., 2020)

Parental Burnout

A psychological **syndrome** encompassing four key dimensions...



Exhaustion

Emotional distancing

Feeling of being fed up

Contrast with prior parental self

(see Mikolajczak, Gross, & Roskam, in press; Roskam et al., 2018)

INTRODUCTION

Research questions: (2) What's the association of parenting culture with parental burnout?

*Parental burnout is a psychological **syndrome** encompassing four key dimensions...*

Exhaustion in one's parental role

I feel completely run down by my role as a parent

Emotional distancing from one's child(ren)

I do what I'm supposed to do for my child(ren), but nothing more

Feelings of being fed up with one's parental role

I can't stand my role as father/mother any more

Contrast with previous parental self

I don't think I'm the good father/mother that I used to be to my child(ren)

*Have serious
impact on...*



(see Roskam & Mikolajczak, 2020;
Roskam et al., in press; Mikolajczak,
Gross, & Roskam, 2019)

RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative/quantitative mixed-method



Participants:

Parents from 37 countries assessed by International Investigation of Parental Burnout

Gender	N	M _{age} (SD _{age})	Children		
			# of bio.	M _{age} (SD _{age}) of the youngest	M _{age} (SD _{age}) of the oldest
Mothers	9,898	37.81 (8.10)	1.94 (1.01)	5.98 (5.95)	9.60 (7.91)
Fathers	4,196	42.13 (9.81)	2.00 (1.19)	7.89 (7.20)	12.18 (9.21)

(see Roskam et al., in press for more detail)

Measurements:

- **Good-Parent Beliefs:** Indicate five features (each was in one word) that an ideal mother/father should have in their opinion (e.g. caring)”
 - **Good-Mother Beliefs:** Indicate five features (each was in one word) that an ideal mother should have
 - **Good-Father Beliefs:** Indicate five features (each was in one word) that an ideal father should have
- **Parental Burnout:** Parental Burnout Assessment (Roskam et al., 2018)

METHOD AND RESULT

(1) What are the features of parenting cultures across 37 countries?

Parenting cultures at country level



Parenting cultural zone

Leximancer semantic network analysis (Smith & Humphreys, 2006)

Between-Factor			
ID	Country	Good-Mother/Father Beliefs	Parental burnout
110	Finland	ability to be present, ability to meet the needs of a child, caring	14
111	Belgium	Able to manage, Affectionate, Nice, Player, firm	17
112	Finland	flexible, able to solve problems, listening, gentleness, robust	86
113	France	Authority, Benevolence, Tenderness, Honesty, Abnegation	40
114	Thailand	Teach the children well, Always be with children, Be a good role model, Be a st	0
115	Finland	accepting, gentleness, good self-esteem, trust for oneself and others, good emot	17

To compare the similarity of Good-Parent Beliefs across countries &
To define parenting cultural zones

METHOD AND RESULT

(1) What are the features of parenting cultures across 37 countries?

Parenting Cultural Zone

East/South Asian

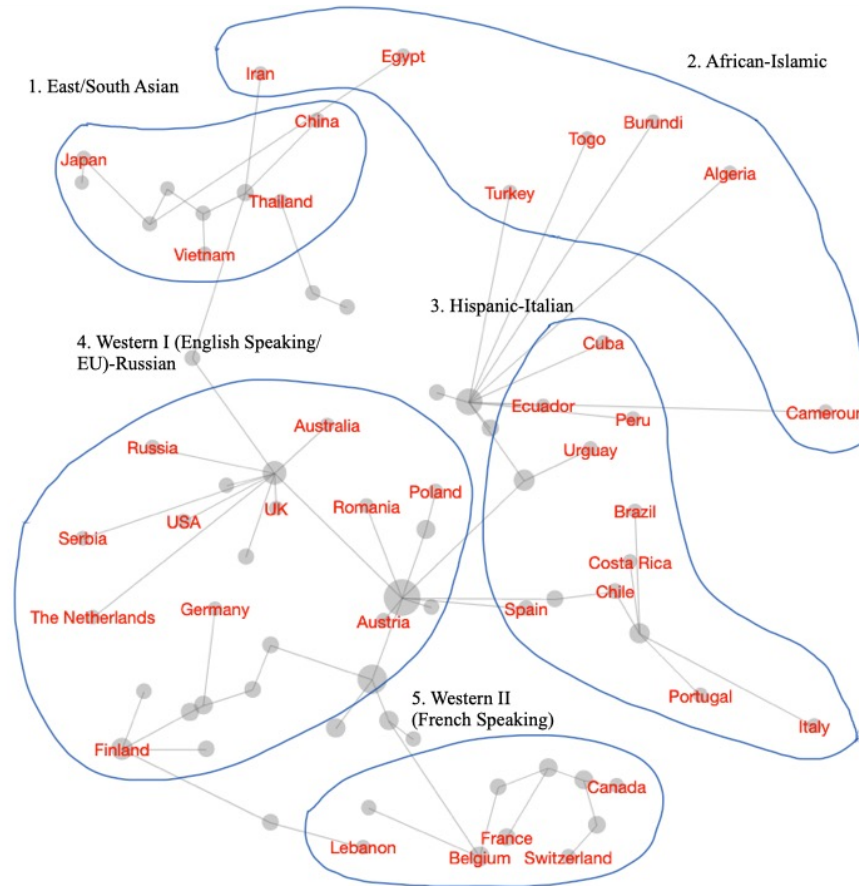
African-Islamic

Hispanic-Italian

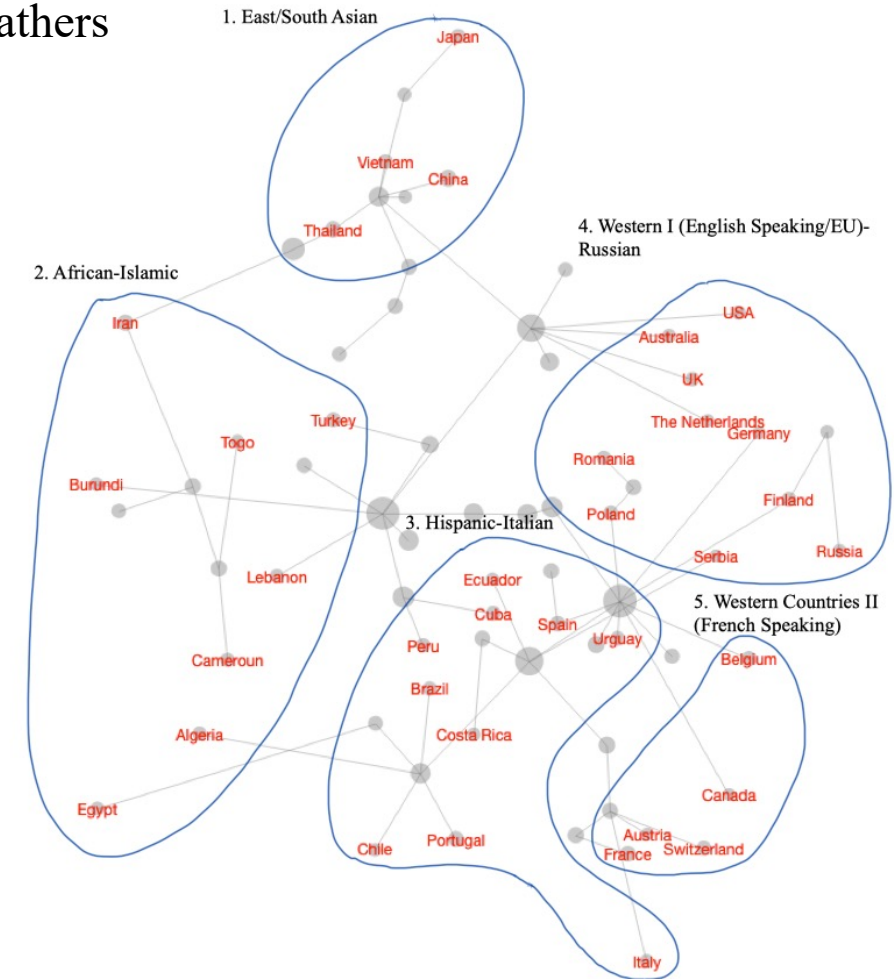
Western I (English Speaking/EU)-Russian

Western II (French Speaking)

a. Mothers



b. Fathers



METHOD AND RESULT

(1) What are the features of parenting cultures across 37 countries?

The Top Most Frequently-Occurring Concepts of Good-Parent Beliefs in Each Parenting Cultural Zone

1. East/South Asian				2. African-Islamic			
Good-Mother (N = 939)		Good-Father (N = 792)		Good-Mother (N = 1,035)		Good-Father (N = 950)	
Concepts	#	Concepts	#	Concepts	#	Concepts	#
children	449	family	279	responsible	325	responsible	312
family	398	children	266	patience	210	patience	194
model	330	care	201	family	161	family	193

1. Child-focus

2. Responsibility-focus

- There is extremely homogeneous good-mother beliefs and good-father beliefs within each parenting culture.
- Parenting cultures can be characterized by most frequent concepts.

3. Hispanic-Italian				4. Western I-Russian				5. Western II			
Good-Mother (N = 2,021)		Good-Father (N = 957)		Good-Mother (N = 3,333)		Good-Father (N = 935)		Good-Mother (N = 2,570)		Good-Father (N = 562)	
Concepts	#	Concepts	#	Concepts	#	Concepts	#	Concepts	#	Concepts	#
loving	990	loving	415	loving	1,618	loving	494	loving	1,075	loving	258
responsible	685	responsible	274	patient	1,093	caring	345	patient	744	patient	175
affectionate	624	affectionate	225	caring	871	patience	206	present	572	listen	110

3. Emotion & responsibility-focus

4. Emotion & patience-focus

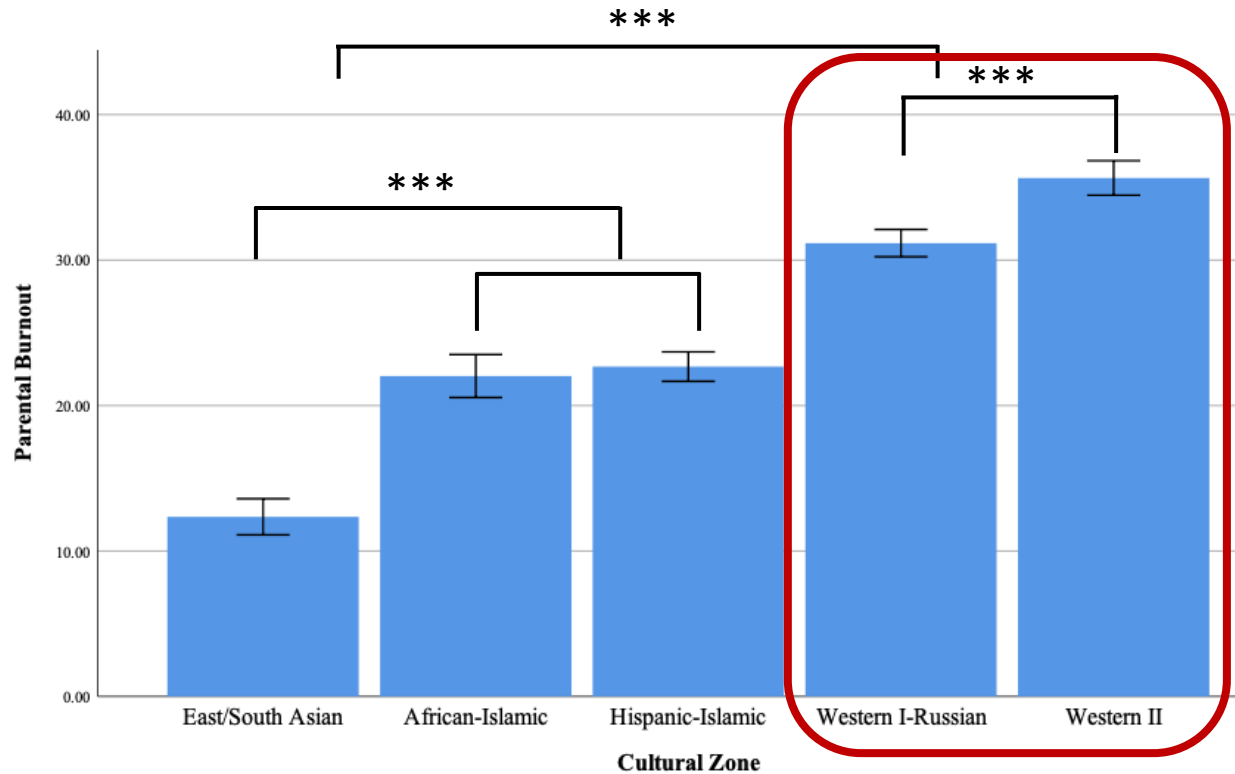
Note. # represents the frequency count (i.e. the total number of occurrences) of the concepts.

METHOD AND RESULT

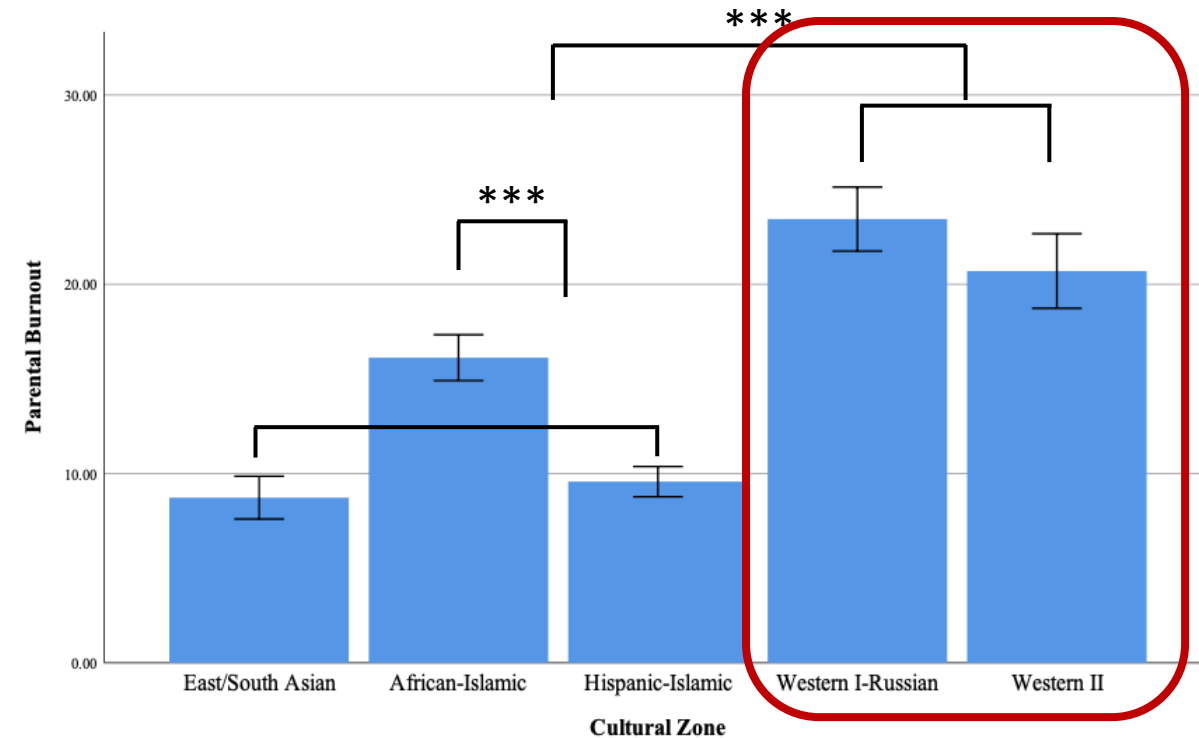
(2) What is the association between parenting culture and parental burnout?

Between-Culture Mean Difference of Parental Burnout

a. Mothers



b. Fathers



Note. Post-hoc analyses were adjusted with Bonferroni adjustment (significant level = .001)

$$F_{(4, 9893)} = 178.68, p = .000; \eta^2 = .07, 95\% \text{ CI} = [.06, .08]$$

$$F_{(4, 4191)} = 90.66, p = .000; \eta^2 = .08, 95\% \text{ CI} = [.06, .09]$$

METHOD AND RESULT

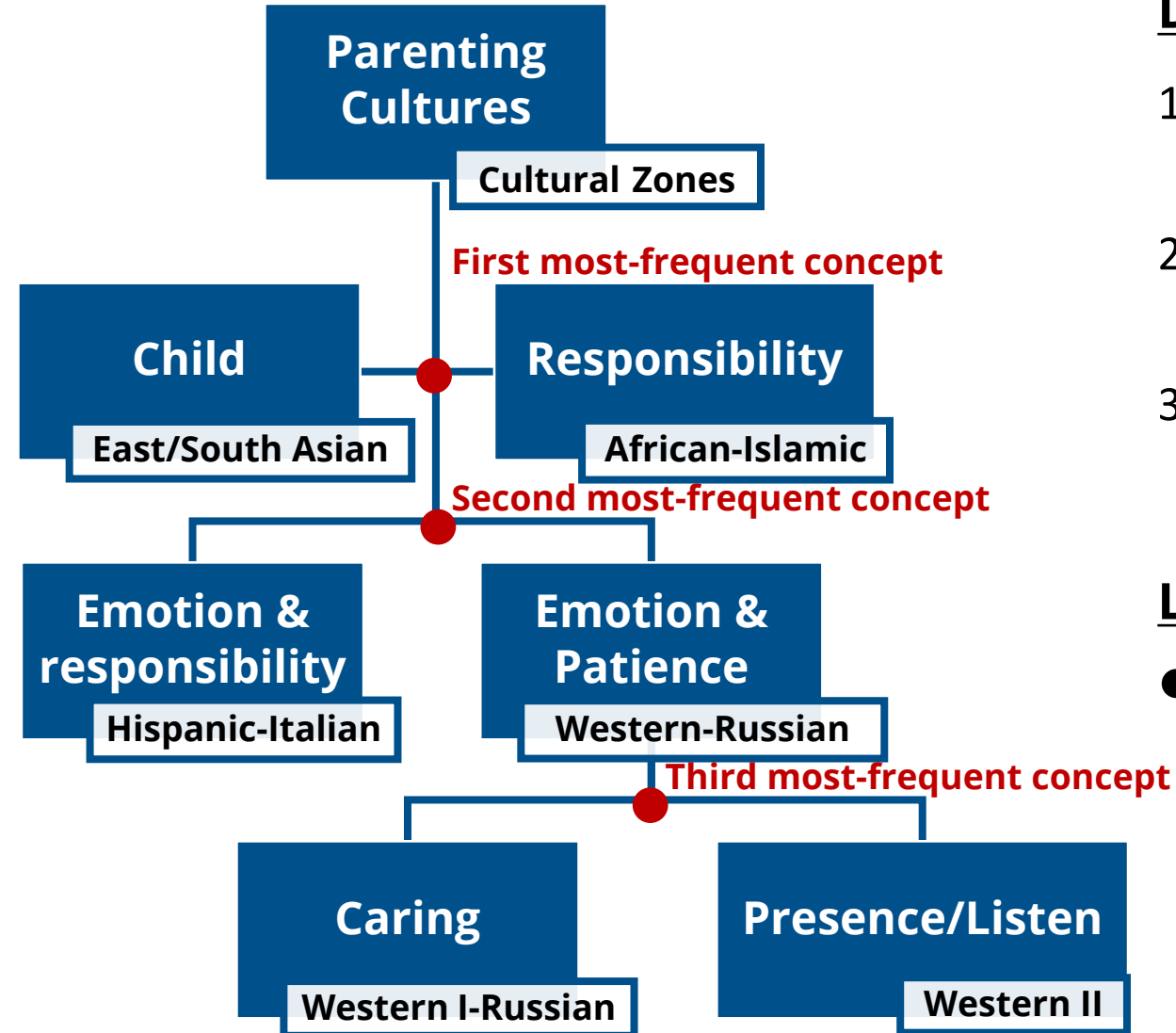
(2) What is the association between parenting culture and parental burnout?

Within-Culture Association of Good-Parent Beliefs with Parental Burnout

Parenting Cultural Zone	Low Parental Burnout		High Parental Burnout	
	Mother	Father	Mother	Father
East/South Asian	Leader, listen, Opinion	Job, Money, Respect	Love, Responsible, Respect	Breadwinner, care, housework
African-Islamic	Caressing, Honest, Compassionate	Love, Compassionate, Understanding	Moral, Courage, Kindness	Worker, Home, Wise
Hispanic-Italian	Protective, Honest, Funny	Happy, Responsible, Hardworking	Patient, Intelligent, Time	Patient, Tolerant, Empathetic
Western I-Russian	Supportive, Involved, Funny	Loving, Firm, Understanding	Calm, Patient, Family	Emotional, Reliable, Consistent
Western II	Honest, Caring, Time	Honest, Sweet, Respectful	Calm, Sweet, Reassuring	Calm, Listen, Available
Emotion & patience-focus		Show Positive Emotions	Control Negative Emotions and Be Available	

TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

A brief conclusion of the current research



Discussion

1. Across the 37 countries, we identified five parenting cultural zones and the characteristics of these cultures.
2. Parenting culture(s) may not be genderized into "mothering" or "fathering" (sub)cultures.
3. At cultural level, parents of both Western I-Russian and Western II parenting cultural zones in average have higher vulnerability to parental burnout.

Limitation

- Due to the characteristics of cross-sectional survey and without confounding variables examined, any causal interpretation should be put forward with caution.

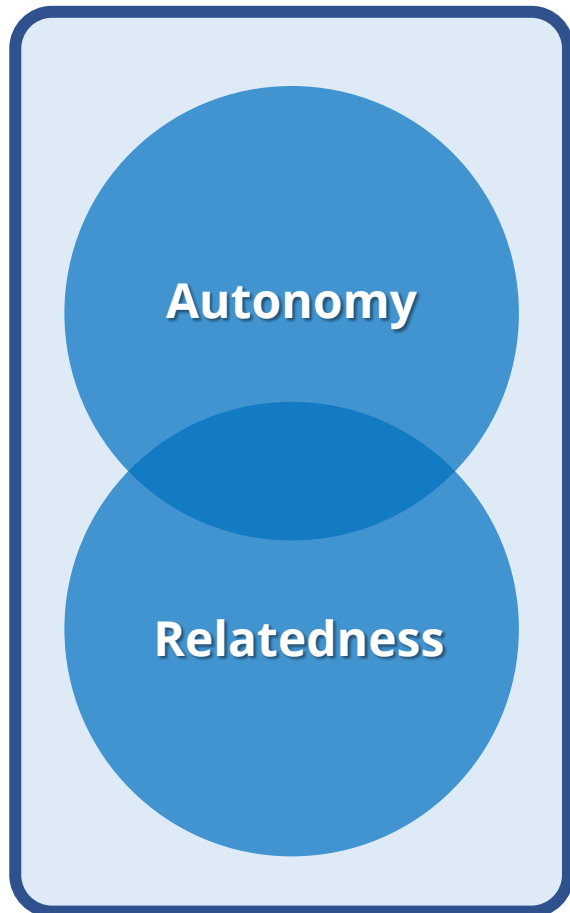
Thank You!

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Two prototypical cultural models of developmental process

(Keller, 2018; Keller et al., 2006)

Basic Human Needs



Cultural models of the self

provide frameworks for shaping socialization goals and parental ideas about what constitutes effective child rearing

A psychologically autonomous child

Western countries

1. Individuality
2. Mental Agency
3. Self-Worth
4. **Social Initiative** (Chen et al., 2006)

A hierarchically related child

Non-western countries

1. Community/Communality
2. Obligation
3. Modesty/Respect

RESEARCH QUESTION 1 (Version 1)

Does ideal parenting exist? What is its cultural specificity and commonality?

Grouped Countries

1. Independent vs. Dependent
2. Familism
3. Asian Culture (Confucianism)

Research hypotheses		High Independent Low Familism Low Confucianism	High dependent High Familism High Confucianism
		Parents-centered	Child-centered
Parenting Behavior	Affection	High	Low
	Responsibility	Low	High
	Sensitive	High	Low
Socialization Goals		1. Individuality 2. Mental Agency 3. Self-Worth	1. Communality 2. Obligation 3. Modesty/Respect

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Childrearing attitudes and beliefs across cultural contexts

(Chen, Fu, & Zhao, 2014)

Western Cultural Context

Indep. compared to Interdep.:

1. More expression of positive emotions in parent-child interactions

2. Stimulate sociability

(Keller et al., 2007; Wörmann et al., 2012)

Italian compared to North-American:

1. Richer environment for social contact

2. Sensitive and greater affection

3. Valued more socially oriented interactions

(Harkness, et al., 2007).

Latino parents (who value familism) compared to European American:

1. Emphasize child obedience and respect for adults
2. Use directive and controlling practice

(e.g., Bornstein et al., 1992; Carlson & Harwood, 2003; Chaudhuri, Easterbrooks, & Davis, 2009; Dornbusch et al., 1987; Livingston & McAdoo, 2007).

Non-Western Cultural Context

Asian compared to western countries

1. less affectionate and sensitive
2. less likely to engage in affective communication
3. low motivation to socialize children in sociability and social initiative
4. More controlling and power assertion
5. Use more “child-centered” parenting methods

(Chao, 1994, 1995; Chen, 2010; Chen, Hastings, et al., 1998; Dornbusch et al., 1987; Jose, Huntsinger, Huntsinger, & Liaw, 2000; Lin & Fu, 1990; Porter et al., 2005; Rudy & Grusec, 2006).)

Nso in Cameroon compared to German:

1. Predominantly interdependent sociocultural orientation
2. Less positive emotions and less likely to respond to and reinforce infants' smiles.

(Wörmann et al., 2012)