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The influence of *marianismo* beliefs on physical activity of young immigrant Latinas

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Objectives

- **Describe the role of marianismo beliefs on physical activity of young immigrant Latinas**

- **Discuss the Freirian model of empowerment as it is utilized in the design of a physical activity intervention for Latinas**

Purpose of the study

This study is a qualitative descriptive study, using culture circles, to co-design and inform a pilot physical activity intervention, for low-income immigrant Hispanic women.
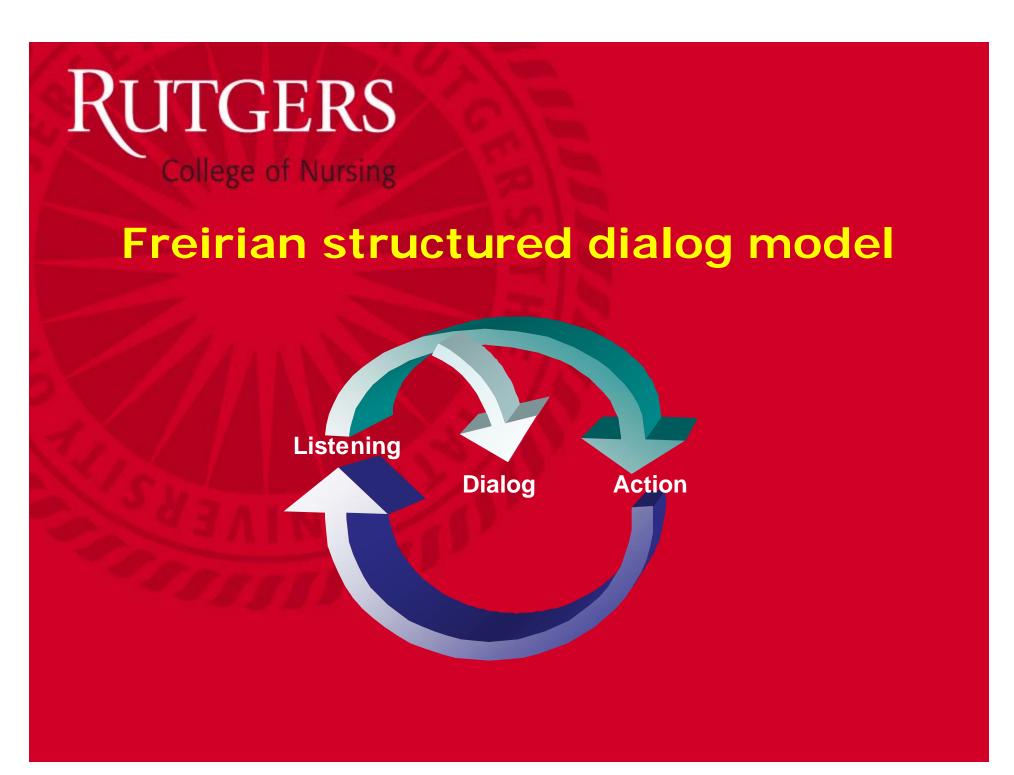
Background

- **Various hypotheses have been advanced to explain the lack of physical activity among Hispanic women**

- ***Marianismo-* construct that describes influence of cultural beliefs on gender role identity. Includes:**

  - **Prioritization of familial responsibilities over self-care**
  - **Self-sacrifice**
  - **"Elevated motherhood"**

- **Construct is articulated and understood in many different ways within different spheres of society**

Conceptual framework

- **Paulo Freire's empowerment model, based upon his work in adult literacy in Brazil**
- **Approach sometimes referred to as "popular" or "empowerment" education became the basis for community based health promotion programs for oppressed populations throughout Latin America**
- **Purpose of education is human liberation, where individuals become the subjects of their own learning-"learner as subject" approach**
- **Structured dialog, wherein everyone involved in the educational process participates as a co-learner**

Freirian structured dialog model

Listening

Dialog

Action

Methods

- Mini-ethnographic "culture circle" methodology
- CBPR study with Salvation Army
- Purposive sampling- first generation Latinas, ages 18-40yrs, n=28
- Women met in two groups for two sessions each to discuss issues and brainstorm solutions

- Participants were from 14 different LA countries
- Groups based on working status of women
- Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence (DRS) used for data collection & analysis of culture circle data.

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Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence (DRS)

- **Ethnosemantic analysis**- understand the reality of a person's experience by the way they talk about it
- Informants share details of their experiences, while researcher identifies common beliefs and values that erege from the data
- **Emic perspective** -especially important in a population that is seldom heard from
- Systematic & rigorous approach to data collection & analysis
- Because of the emphasis on semantics, need to be attentive to the translation/back translation process in non-English speaking populations

Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence (DRS)

- Locating an informant
- Interviewing an informant
- Making an ethnographic record
- Asking descriptive questions
- Analyzing ethnographic interviews
- Making a domain analysis

- Asking structural questions
- Making a taxonomic analysis
- Asking contrast questions
- Making a componential analysis
- Discovering cultural themes
- Writing the ethnography

Reliability issues

- **Good rapport with informants**
- **Purposive sampling, using key informant**
- **Repeating questions with different informants to see if answers are consistent**
- **Listen to responses & check to see if you have correct understanding**
- **"Mini-ethnography" (Leininger)**

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Spradley's DRS- Preliminary Results

Domain analysis: "The woman is the center of the family"

Included terms

- "Family is a priority"
- "Women's work & men's work"
- "Low self-esteem"

Cultural themes

- "Women change but men don't"
- 'A woman makes a man what he is"
- "Our mothers"

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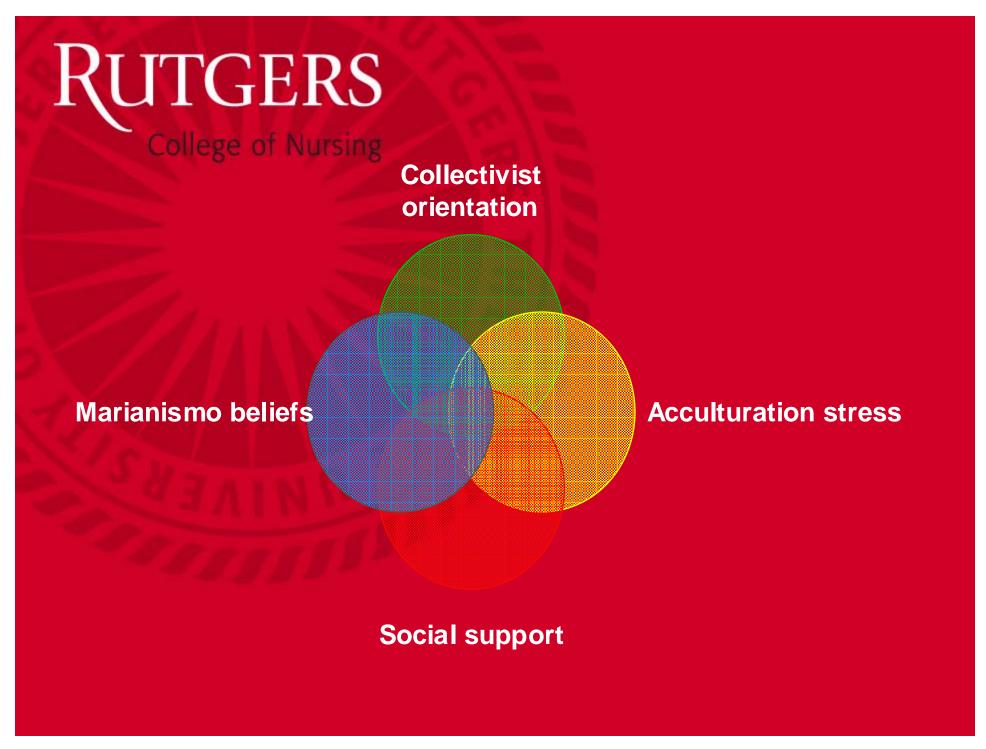## Domain analysis: "Life is too fast here"

Included terms

- "Isolation"
- "No time for me"
- "We don't think about our health"

Cultural themes

- "Living in America"
- "Making the day longer"

Conclusions

- **Women prioritize family responsibilities above their own health needs**
- **Experiencing role overload associated with stress of acculturation**
- **Grieve loss of female support networks in US**
- **Feelings of isolation**

Collectivist orientation

Marianismo beliefs

Acculturation stress

Social support

Collectivism vs Individualism

Collectivism

- Group is the fundamental unit of political, social, and economic concern.
- Subjugation of the individual to a group
- Interdependence and group success
- Adherence to norms, respect for authority/elders, group consensus
- Stable, hierarchical roles (dependent on gender, family background, age)

Individualism

- Human being should think, act and judge independently
- Autonomy
- Individual success
- Promoting self-expression, individual thinking, personal choice
- Egalitarian relationships and flexibility in roles (e.g., upward mobility)

Sources of acculturation stress

- Language barrier
- Marginal employment
- Lower SES
- Conflicting value orientations
- Anti-immigrant sentiment
- Isolation
- Acculturation & education issues in children

- Lack of health care
- Fear of deportation
- Changing roles of women & men
- Transportation issues
- Separation from family

Implications for intervention

- **How to build on woman as center of family→ authority & role model for good family health**
- **Build social support networks**
- **Address factors leading to acculturation stress among women and their families**

- **Look at sources of social support for immigrant men**
- **Keep it local**
- **Childcare**
- **Stay flexible**
- **Build trust / show respect**