Reflection on Family Interviews

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**Participants**

The way the selected was conducted for the participant in the first family was by asking the closest relative I felt more comfortable talking with. I have known this parent for my whole life because she’s a family member. The participant mother is a thirty-nine year old single mother that is the biological mother of three children whom are girls that have lived with her most of their lives in San Jose, California. The mother education level is a high school diploma; she makes about 20,000 to 30,000 a year and works about 40 to 50 hours a week. Both the parent and child ethnicity are Hispanic and the mother focused on the middle child that is sixteen years old.

The selected for this participant in the second family was conducted by being interested to hear a father perspective. I have known this father for about two years because we are co-workers. The participant is a white/Anglo father that’s twenty-seven years old who is the biological father of his two children whom are white/Anglo girls and live with him in Chico, California. The father is separated from the child biological parent for about three years and most of the children life has lived with both parents. The father education level is some college, works forty hours and makes about 30,000 to 40,000 a year. The father focused on the oldest child who is seven years old.

**Data Collection**

I believe that conducting research with parents and children is important because it helps us understand the types of factors, causes, and barriers parents face that impact their parenting style. This can lead for various interventions that can help out families with resources that they might be able to obtain such as parenting classes, childcare, and so on. It also helps us identify the type of parenting style parents they have depending on their ethnicity/culture, it helps us understand their reasoning and actions parents take on with their children.

The best method for collecting family data would be qualitative research because as researcher we want to gain rich detail and data from families to have a deeper and better understanding. Therefore, you would use methods such a interviews, observing them in their natural setting, video tape/voice recorded so you can get their face expression and everything they say in order to collect data. When collecting family data you want detail information not surveys or scale that just measure their believes and thoughts. You want their perspective; reasoning and thinking behind their answers and actions they take. The family that should participate should be one child and both parents. Now that divorce rates are really high, it will be harder to find families that will be willing to both parents to participate in a study.

A way to recruit families to participate in research studies would be to go to an elementary school and have children take a form indicating a brief summary of what you want to do and purpose of study. This way parents aren’t going to hang up on you on the phone or if you mail something they wont ignore it. Some parents might feel obligated to do it since the school approve of it. This strategies might be a little more challenging because it it’s a longer process and it takes time to get approved from the district, principal and so on. However, it is a more reliable and beneficial way to recruit families because then those parents can suggest other parents that will be willing to participate and can influence other parents to participate as well.

**Methods**

The research method used in this assignment was valid which is the accuracy of the measures assesses the construct it claims to measure (Chld 455). For instances, the constructs were being measure in the parent survey that contain different values or categories. Examples of categories or values used in the parent survey were gender, martial status, and family structure. In the parent interview it showed us that the research method was valid because it interpretive validity and when you repeat the respondent answers, it checked for accuracy. However, it didn’t contain reliability which is the measure of the consistently yields similar results in the same child over time. It isn’t reliability because the parents and the child can do change over time in the perspective of disciplines, activities, and parenting styles that they have among each other and would result in having no consistently or dependability within the respondent’s answers. Reliability focus more on yes/no questions and liker-type scale were the values are turned into scores, in this assignment did not conduct this type of surveys.

Multi-method approaches are a combination of qualitative and quantitative designs and data collection. It is a preferable approach because it has a richer quality of data and it has the capability of checking the data across methods and sources. Also, when using this approach you are able to use multiple measures or methods such as questionnaire, observation, interviews and multiple informants such as both parents and children. The methodological strength that was found in the data collection methods for this assignment was doing the parent interview. We were able to probe questions to gain greater depth in the respondent’s answers and we were able to clarify their responses as well. Another great thing was being able to see their face expression as the parents talked about their child and/or partner, it gave it more depth and meaning to their answers. A weakness that could be found in the data collection methods used in this assignment would be that language barrier. When you come across a parent that has a different ethnicity and their English isn’t great it is hard translating the questions and their response.

**Research Questions**

One possible research hypothesis could be single parents have more barriers and responsibilities for their children than married parents. Another research hypothesis would be that gender determines the type of activities that both the parent and child engage together. Both of these research hypotheses are interesting because single parents have more barriers and responsibility when it comes to their children, since they don’t have a partner to help them and support them. However, married parents would have more support and help from their spouse and would then have less barriers and responsibilities for their children. The second hypothesis is also very interesting because the type of activity a mother and a father does with either their son or daughter always correlates with their gender. For instances, mothers tend to do girly things with their daughter going to the mall, doing their nails and etc. You wouldn’t really see a mother teaching her daughter how to change a tire from her car because she would leave it to the father to do that. It fascinate me me that as much as we try not to stereotype gender roles we have a tendency to always end up back to the gender roles and that’s why I would be interested.

**Comparison of the Two Families**

The two families were different in the ages of the target children that they discussed, family one target child was sixteen years old and family two target child was seven years old. Another difference was that in family one the parent was a single mother that is thirty-nine years old while the family two was a single father that is twenty-seven years old. The families come from different culture, family one comes from a Hispanic one and family two comes from a white/Anglo one. Family one catches up with their child at night while family two catches up with their child in the morning.

Both families were very similar in different aspects. For example, they both only have daughters and they are both single parents. The parents departed from their partner after their second child. The two families that I interview have family members that support them and it is their parents. The way they both disciplines reflect their parent’s discipline when they were growing up. They both did plan the spacing of their children and work was a barrier for them to spend more time with their child. Both families child doesn’t seek them first when their child needs comfort. Family one and two aren’t able to both be involve in school as much as they would like to but they are involve with what the child can bring school to home.

These difference and similarity does affect the way they parent and the choices they made regarding their children. For instances, in the similarity both parents work full time to provide for their children which causes them to not have enough time to spend with them and not be involve in school as well. A difference that affects the way they parent is the multiple strategies that they use to disciple their child concerning her age. For example, family one talk about how she always talks things through with her child because she is sixteen and she will be able to understand more by it and making the child realize what she did wrong. On the other hand, in family two the father gives her daughter time outs and warning to try to get her daughter acknowledge that she is doing something wrong. Another similarity that affects the way parent their child is using the ideas that their parents raised them with. Family one implements the strategies her parents used on her to her child while family two started to implemented them but stop because he didn’t think they were effective towards his child.

**Application of Class Materials**

There has been a rise in couple’s cohabitating throughout years about 44% of all adults cohabitate with their partner instead of marrying because the factors of marrying have change as well. Couples used to marry because they of economic reasons now they marry because they are in love. Another rise has occurred in single parents from 1960 to 2011, mothers only families has increased from 11% to 23% and fathers only family has increased from 1% to 8% (Wildsmith, Steward-Streng, and Manlove, 2011). Families with different cultures have parenting styles different than white/Anglo family. Latino families identify with their family as in white/Anglo family identify themselves (Parke, 2004). The working hours of both mothers and father have increased (Chld 455). A child trend that is likely to occur for other family structure such as a single parent is that they have twice the level of risk and problems with their child (Moore, 2003).

The families that participated in the assignment were very similar within the statistic and trends of families in the United States. Both parents cohabitated with the biological parent of their child but they never married which fits the statistic about the rise of cohabitations in adults. Along with both parents being single parents and that also has increased over the years for both fathers and mothers. In family one the participate is from a Hispanic background and when she talked about how her parents would always tell her that family is first and the children comes first, reflects the finding that Parke found in his study about Latino families identifying themselves with their families not themselves. We can also see that both families work about 40 to 50 hours a week, which is similar to the statics that the working hours have increased for parents. In family one, the parent talks about she has stumble into some problems with her child skipping school and lying to her could be correlated to the trend about the level of risk being twice with a different family structure.

**Personal Reflection**

I felt really comfortable approaching these two families because I known them for some time and they are very open about talking about their parenting styles. However, the level of preparedness with the first family wasn’t that high. I didn’t anticipate how hard translating the questions in a different language could be. This became a challenge for me because when the parent would response to a question they would approach it in a different way it could be because I wasn’t clear enough or because I didn’t translate it right. My understanding of research procedures and concepts did change due to this project. I understood the trends more and theory concepts well. The families that I interview reflect the class materials in numerous ways and in a way it amazed me. I demonstrated the disposition of respect by listening to them when they were talking and having a warming face expression because I didn’t want them to feel like I was going to judge them or anything.

References

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