The Talk of Unwed Adolescent Fathers of Mexican Origin: A Discourse Analysis

Jose Arturo Jaime

University of Texas at El Paso, ajaime41@gmail.com

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THE TALK OF UNWED ADOLESCENT FATHERS OF MEXICAN ORIGIN:
A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

JOSE ARTURO JAIME, BSW, MPA
Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Program, CHS/SON

APPROVED:

Elias Provencio-Vasquez, Ph.D., Co-Chair

Leslie Robbins, Ph.D., Co-Chair

Bess Sirmon-Taylor, Ph.D.

Julia Lechuga, Ph.D.

Charles H. Ambler, Ph.D.
Dean of the Graduate School
THE TALK OF UNWED ADOLESCENT FATHERS OF MEXICAN ORIGIN:
A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

by

JOSE ARTURO JAIME, BSW, MPA

DISSEPTION

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at El Paso
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Program, CHS/SON
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
December 2014
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Julia Lechuga and Dr. Bess Sirmon-Taylor for their support in serving on my committee, Dr. Leslie Robbins for her unending commitment, encouragement and guidance and Dr. Elias Provencio-Vasquez for his assistance and insightful feedback. I feel truly blessed to have benefited from such dedicated mentors who helped to keep me on track.

I would also like to thank Dr. Margarete Sandelowski for the outstanding Summer Programs in Qualitative Research that I was fortunate to attend for three years at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. I’m gratefully indebted to Dr. James Paul Gee who graciously took time to answer my questions regarding the application of his theory and method for Discourse Analysis.

I am grateful, humbled and amazed by the courageous young men who agreed to participate in this study and gave us a glimpse into their love and commitment to their children through their discourse on fatherhood.

Finally, I’d like to give thanks to God, to my family and to my friends. I couldn’t have done this without them. Specifically, Lori Delos Santos who deserves as much recognition for this work as myself because of her endless support; to Julian, Carlos, Mary, Andy and Eliana Jaime for their constant encouragement and understanding; and to the elders in my family: my aunt Ascension Macias, my uncle Emilio Macias, my godfather Pedro Miranda and my mother, Maria Alicia Jaime who passed away during the time I was completing this degree. My aunt Socorro Macias and my father Arturo Jaime still root for me. These individuals imparted the faith in God, the hope, tenacity and spirit of adventure, which inspires me to this day.
ABSTRACT

Since the 1970s, changing family and marriage trends in the United States have led to a dramatic 41% increase in the rate of unwed parents also known as fragile families, i.e., those at high risk of living in poverty and/or disintegrating (McLanahan, Garfinkel, Mincy, & Donahue, 2013, p.3). By 2011, more than 20 million children (28%) lived in biological father-absent homes and one-fourth, or five million, of these children were Hispanic of any race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Recent studies suggest a clear disparity in cognitive, behavioral and health outcomes for children who live with single or cohabiting parents when compared to their counterparts. The dominant discourse of fatherhood—which is used to shape public policy, interventions and social services—rarely includes those most directly affected: the fathers. The aim of this study was to apply Gee’s theory and method (2011) for discourse analysis to arrive at a theory of how unwed, adolescent fathers of Mexican origin (UAFMO) discursively talk about fatherhood and how this talk aims to attain self-defined social goods (e.g., power, status, recognition).

Face to face, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven participants who were unwed biological fathers of one or more children, 18 or 19 years old, reported a Mexican origin and spoke either English or Spanish. The interview data was analyzed using Gee’s 42 questions for discourse analysis and revealed similar discourses and cultural models used by participants seeking to be recognized as legitimate, involved and responsible fathers. These findings provide insight for policy makers and service providers by contributing to the literature on biological father absence, fragile families and child wellbeing, and teenage pregnancy from the adolescent father’s perspective.
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**Grant Application**

**Do not exceed character length restrictions indicated.**

**Title of Project (Do not exceed 81 characters, including spaces and punctuation.)**

**The Talk of Unwed Adolescent Fathers of Mexican Origin: A Discourse Analysis**

**Response to Specific Request for Applications or Program Announcement or Solicitation (If “Yes,” state number and title)**

**Number:**

**Title:**

**Program Director/Principal Investigator**

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<th>3a. NAME (Last, first, middle)</th>
<th>Jaime, Jose, Arturo</th>
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<td>3c. POSITION TITLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>3d. MAILING ADDRESS (Street, city, state, zip code)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jajaimex@miners.ute.edu">jajaimex@miners.ute.edu</a></td>
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**Human Subjects Research**

| 4a. Research Exempt | If “Yes,” Exemption No. |
| No Yes             |                          |

| 4b. Federal-Wide Assurance No. | No Yes |
| 4c. Clinical Trial | No Yes |

**Vertebrate Animals**

| 5a. Animal Welfare Assurance No. | No Yes |

**Dates of Proposed Period of Support (Month, Day, Year—MM/DD/YY)**

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**Costs Requested for Initial Budget Period**

| 7a. Direct Costs ($) | 7b. Total Costs ($) |

| 8a. Direct Costs ($) | 8b. Total Costs ($) |

**Type of Organization**


**Entity Identification Number**

| 11. DUNS NO. | Cong. Dist. |

**Administrative Official to Be Notified If Award Is Made**

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**Official Signing for Applicant Organization**

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**Application Organization Certification and Acceptance:**

I certify that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and accept the obligation to comply with Public Health Services terms and conditions if a grant is awarded as a result of this application. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties.

**Signature of Official Named in 13.**

**DATE**

---

**Form Approved Through 03/15**

**OMB No. 0925-0001**

**PHS 398 (Rev. 08/12)**

**Face Page**
Since the 1970s, changing family and marriage trends in the United States have led to a dramatic 41% increase in the rates of unwed parents. These are known as fragile families at high risk of living in poverty and/or disintegrating. By 2011, more than 20 million children (28%) lived in biological father-absent homes. Unwed adolescent minority fathers—particularly Hispanic fathers—are at a higher risk of creating fragile families and becoming absent fathers. Recent studies suggest a clear disparity in cognitive, behavioral and health outcomes for children who live with single or cohabiting parents when compared to their counterparts (Harper & McLanahan, 2004). The dominant discourse of fatherhood—which is used to shape public policy, interventions and social services—rarely includes those most directly affected: the fathers. The aim of this study was to apply Gee’s theory and method for discourse analysis to arrive at a theory of how unwed, adolescent fathers of Mexican origin (UAFMO) discursively talk about fatherhood and how this talk aims to attain self-defined social goods (e.g., power, status, recognition). Face to face, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with up to ten participants who are unwed biological fathers of one or more children, are 18 or 19 years old, report a Mexican origin and speak either English or Spanish. Gee’s (2011) theory and method for discourse analysis will be used in this study and interview data will be analyzed using the 42 questions provided in this method.

The findings will contribute to the literature on biological father absence, fragile families and child wellbeing, and teenage pregnancy from the adolescent father’s perspective. This study will have implications for shaping public policy, educating practitioners and designing social programs that address adolescent fathers.

Organizational Name: University of Texas at El Paso

DUNS:
Street 1: Street 2:
City: 500 W. University Avenue County: El Paso State: TX
Province: United States of America Zip/Postal Code: 79902

Additional Project/Performance Site Location:
Organizational Name:
DUNS:
Street 1: Street 2:
City: County: State:
Province: Country: Zip/Postal Code:
Program Director/Principal Investigator (Last, First, Middle): Jaime, Jose, Arturo

SENIOR/KEY PERSONNEL. See instructions. Use continuation pages as needed to provide the required information in the format shown below. Start with Program Director(s)/Principal Investigator(s). List all other senior/key personnel in alphabetical order, last name first.

<table>
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<td>Lechuga, Julia</td>
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<td>Sirmon-Taylor, Bess</td>
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OTHER SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTORS

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<th>Organization</th>
<th>Role on Project</th>
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Human Embryonic Stem Cells  □ No  □ Yes

If the proposed project involves human embryonic stem cells, list below the registration number of the specific cell line(s) from the following list: http://stemcells.nih.gov/research/registry/eligibilityCriteria.asp. Use continuation pages as needed.

If a specific line cannot be referenced at this time, include a statement that one from the Registry will be used.

Cell Line
# RESEARCH GRANT

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### Appendix *(Five identical CDs.)*

* Follow the page limits for these sections indicated in the application instructions, unless the Funding Opportunity Announcement specifies otherwise.

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Page 4

OMB No. 0925-0001

Form Page 3
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**SUBTOTALS**

CONSULTANT COSTS

EQUIPMENT (Itemize)

SUPPLIES (Itemize by category)

TRAVEL

INPATIENT CARE COSTS

OUTPATIENT CARE COSTS

ALTERATIONS AND RENOVATIONS (Itemize by category)

OTHER EXPENSES (Itemize by category)

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PHS 398 (Rev. 08/12 Approved Through 8/31/2015)


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**SUBTOTAL DIRECT COSTS**  
(Sum = Item 9a, Face Page)  
F&A CONSORTIUM/ CONTRACTUAL COSTS

**TOTAL DIRECT COSTS**

**TOTAL DIRECT COSTS FOR ENTIRE PROPOSED PROJECT PERIOD** **$**

**JUSTIFICATION.** Follow the budget justification instructions exactly. Use continuation pages as needed.
RESOURCES

Follow the 398 application instructions in Part I, 4.7 Resources.
Program Director/Principal Investigator (Last, First, Middle): Jaime, Jose, Arturo

CHECKLIST

TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check all that apply.)

☒ NEW application. (This application is being submitted to the PHS for the first time.)
☐ RESUBMISSION of application number:
  (This application replaces a prior unfunded version of a new, renewal, or revision application.)
☐ RENEWAL of grant number:
  (This application is to extend a funded grant beyond its current project period.)
☐ REVISION to grant number:
  (This application is for additional funds to supplement a currently funded grant.)
☐ CHANGE of program director/principal investigator.
  Name of former program director/principal investigator:
☐ CHANGE of Grantee institution. Name of former institution:
☐ FOREIGN application ☐ Domestic Grant with foreign involvement ☐ List Country(ies) Involved:

INVENTIONS AND PATENTS (Renewal appl. only) ☐ No ☐ Yes
If "Yes," ☐ Previously reported ☐ Not previously reported

1. PROGRAM INCOME (See instructions.)
All applications must indicate whether program income is anticipated during the period(s) for which grant support is requested. If program income is anticipated, use the format below to reflect the amount and source(s).

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2. ASSURANCES/CERTIFICATIONS (See instructions.)
In signing the application Face Page, the authorized organizational representative agrees to comply with the policies, assurances and/or certifications listed in the application instructions. Descriptions of individual assurances/certifications are provided in Part III and listed in Part I, 4.1 under Item 14. If unable to certify compliance, where applicable, provide an explanation and place it after this page.

3. FACILITIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS (F&A) INDIRECT COSTS. See specific instructions.
☐ DHHS Agreement dated: ☐ No Facilities And Administrative Costs Requested.
☐ DHHS Agreement being negotiated with Regional Office.
☐ No DHHS Agreement, but rate established with Date

CALCULATION* (The entire grant application, including the Checklist, will be reproduced and provided to peer reviewers as confidential information.)

a. Initial budget period: Amount of base $ x Rate applied % = F&A costs $
b. 02 year Amount of base $ x Rate applied % = F&A costs $
c. 03 year Amount of base $ x Rate applied % = F&A costs $
d. 04 year Amount of base $ x Rate applied % = F&A costs $
e. 05 year Amount of base $ x Rate applied % = F&A costs $

TOTAL F&A Costs $

*Check appropriate box(es):
☐ Salary and wages base ☐ Modified total direct cost base ☐ Other base (Explain)
☐ Off-site, other special rate, or more than one rate involved (Explain)
Explanation (Attach separate sheet, if necessary):

4. DISCLOSURE PERMISSION STATEMENT: If this application does not result in an award, is the Government permitted to disclose the title of your proposed project, and the name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of the official signing for the applicant organization, to organizations that may be interested in contacting you for further information (e.g., possible collaborations, investments)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

PHS 398 (Rev. 08/12 Approved Through 8/31/2015) OMB No. 0925-0001
Page 8 Checklist Form Page
**Planned Enrollment Report**

*This report format should NOT be used for collecting data from study participants.*

**Study Title:** The Talk of Unwed Adolescent Fathers of Mexican Origin: A Discourse Analysis  

**Domestic/Foreign:** Domestic  

**Comments:**

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# Cumulative Inclusion Enrollment Report

This report format should NOT be used for collecting data from study participants.

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**Comments:**

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AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to arrive at a theory of how unwed adolescent fathers of Mexican origin (UAFMOs) discursively talk about fatherhood and how this talk aims to attain self-defined social goods (e.g., power, status, recognition). The research questions to be answered are: What and how are meanings, interpretations and cultural models utilized by UAFMOs to discursively construct fatherhood, father-identity and father-involvement? What purposes, goals and social goods are UAFMOs trying to attain with their talk about fatherhood? This study will contribute to: the emerging body of knowledge on biological father-absence, fragile families and child wellbeing, and to the limited research on teenage pregnancy from the adolescent father’s perspective.

Since the 1990s the fatherhood responsibility movement has gained bipartisan support resulting in funding for prevention and research programs to understand fatherlessness (Gavanas, 2004). The dominant discourse on paternity and fatherhood underlies contemporary welfare reform politics in the United States (Haney & March, 2003). Political definitions of fatherhood have prioritized the form (biological, institutional, or financial connections) over content when discussing men’s relationships to their children (Haney & March, 2003, p. 461) and have developed programs based on those politically created definition.

This movement is not without its critics. Gavanas (2004), for one, claims that “gender, race and sexuality, as social and historical constructions, are strategically challenged and reproduced by those who have a stake in American family politics” in order to promote a certain agenda (p. 7). Proponents for client-driven welfare reform and social services advocate that the voice of fathers, particularly adolescent fathers, have been blatantly left out of this discourse which affects and marginalizes them (Barret & Robinson, 1982; Coakley, 2013; Danziger, Wiederspan, & Douglas-Siegel, 2013; Maxwell, Scourfield, Holland, Featherstone, & Lee, 2012). Efforts to reverse the growing trend of biological father-absent families must begin with an understanding of how those most at risk, the fathers
themselves, discursively construct fatherhood, its meanings, and interpretations, and the cultural models they use in their communication.

This study will utilize Gee’s (2011) theory and method for discourse analysis which sees communication as more than language but also including saying, being and doing. According to Gee, language-in-use is a social practice used to achieve perceived and desired social goals (e.g., being recognized as a good father). This analysis will explore how UAFMOs discursively construct fatherhood, father-identity, and father-involvement and what they perceive to be the desired social goods in the social practice of talking about fatherhood. These findings will be useful in contributing to, and possibly intervening in, the dominant political discourse and definitions of fatherhood, which are used to shape public policy, interventions and social services without including those most directly affected.
BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

A dramatic increase in the rates of unwed parents, 41% since the 1970’s, led to the coining of the term *fragile families* to describe unwed families which are “at greater risk of breaking up and living in poverty than more traditional families” (McLanahan, Garfinkel, Mincy, & Donahue, 2013, p.3). Changes in family structure and in marriage and parenting trends have been a point of controversy among proponents and opponents of a strictly traditional family structure. Family scholars have embarked on a research journey to try to understand the dynamics of the emerging fragile family phenomenon (McHale, Waller, & Pearson, 2012).

Until recently, most of the research on child wellbeing and single parent families focused on divorced parents. The sharp rise over the past decades in births to unwed mothers, however, has shifted the focus to unmarried single and cohabiting parents (Waldfogel, Craigie, & Brooks-Gunn, 2010). As the trends become more mainstream, research initiatives have gained support from prominent foundations that are funding the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study (FFCWS), a multi-year study that is creating a database of publicly accessible data (McLanahan, et al., 2010).

Recent findings from the FFCWS are building evidence about the cognitive, behavioral and health outcomes of children who grow up with single or cohabiting parents. Waldfogel, et al. (2010) found negative impacts which affect educational outcomes, risk of teen birth, and attachment to school and the labor market (p. 87). Saleh (2013) found that married couples, even adolescent couples, report better outcomes than nonmarried and cohabiting couples. Research on family structure and child wellbeing has evolved from a focus on divorced parents, to unwed parents and more recently to biological father-absence. The focus of these studies is now on those children most at risk, those living in homes headed by unwed adolescent mothers with an absent biological father.

More than 20 million children (28%) lived in biological father-absent homes in 2011 and one-fourth, or 5 million of these children were Hispanic of any race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). The
National Fatherhood Initiative interprets these statistics as evidence of a *father factor*, which affects most social issues in this country (Father Facts, n.d.). Harper & McLanahan (2004) found that children from father-absent families have higher incarceration risks and are “significantly more likely to contend with…low parent education, teen motherhood, minority race/ethnicity, residence in urban areas, regional resident and residence in counties with a high percentage of female-headed households, high unemployment rates, and low median family income” (p. 380). Nock & Einolf (2008, p.3) estimate the annual federal expenditures to support father-absent homes at about $99.8 billion, a figure which is considered conservative by many standards.

Systemic exclusion of fathers in society may explain some of the reasons for father-absence. The child welfare system may exclude fathers for several reasons including assumptions made by practitioners about traditional gender roles which focus interventions on the mothers, or by the mothers themselves not wanting to include fathers (Maxwell, Scourfield, Featherstone, Holland, & Tolman, 2012, p. 167). In an attempt to empower single mothers and build their parenting skills, the field of social work runs the risk of reinforcing the father’s absence and downplaying his importance when working with only the mother and child (Sieber, 2008, p. 333).

These systemic practices of focusing on the mother can make a father feel disconnected from his role and can be greater for adolescent males desiring assistance with transitioning to fatherhood but finding few, if any services, or finding services that are irrelevant to their needs, are underfunded, or understaffed or are generally female oriented (Kiselica, 2008, p. 81). In addition, internal barriers to access services include: fear of prosecution for statutory rape, no desire to meet their paternal responsibilities, a feeling that asking for help is a sign of weakness or just being overwhelmed with their situation (Kiselica, 2008, p. 55-85).

Kiselica (2008) argues that, while adolescent fathers are stereotyped as being uncaring and irresponsible, a great deal of these young men sincerely desire to be good, responsible fathers, but the
multiple challenges they suddenly confront ultimately overwhelm them. The younger the father at the
time of a child’s birth, the less likely he is to become and remain involved with the child (Robbers,
2011, p. 122). For many teen dads, being a good father means being a good provider of both cash and
caring. Adolescent fathers may face internal conflict when they are unable to fulfill this role
(Deslauriers, Devault, Groulx, & Sévigny, 2012).

The data reveals that an unwed, adolescent, Hispanic father is at high risk of creating a fragile
family, becoming an absent father, and having children who suffer the associated negative health and
life outcomes. Ventura (2009) reported that the highest nonmarital birth rates in 2009 were for Hispanic
women and for teenagers; these unmarried teenagers comprised 86% of the total teen birth. Ventura also
found that younger fathers generally reported less involvement than older fathers, and cohabiting fathers
are consistently more involved than fathers who lived separately from their children (p.52). Much work
is needed to support teen fathers and their fragile families and it must begin with the inclusion of their
voice in the national discourse on fatherhood.

Gee’s theory and method for discourse analysis was selected for this study because it draws from
three different traditions which, together, provide a powerful tool for analyzing the aspects of discourse
which were important to this study (Rogers, 2004, p. 4). First, Gee incorporates aspects of American
anthropological linguistics and social linguistics, which study language use in the contexts of specific
sites such as communities and social settings. This tradition provides a lens for analyzing the discourse
of UAFMOs in the context of their particular settings – What does fatherhood mean to me? What does
fatherhood mean in society? Second, Gee’s method draws from situated and embodied cognition
traditions that incorporates the use of a social constructivist lens, providing insight to how individuals
make meaning through interactions with other people. This tradition used in this study will provide
insight into how participants make meaning of being fathers. Gee’s theory and method for discourse
analysis is also influenced by Michel Foucault’s ontologies of discourse, power and the self which
provide a basis for examining participants’ discourse, the identities they present in their discourse and the social goods (or power) they aim to achieve in the process.
PRELIMINARY STUDIES

The three types of literature reviews identified by Cooper (as cited by Creswell, 2008, p.28) were used to inform the design of this study. An integrative literature review helped to summarize the themes in the literature and to identify areas that needed further exploration. Next, a methodological review was conducted to assist with the selection of a qualitative approach to inquiry best suited to address the specific aims of the study. This review also informed the philosophical underpinnings required for such approach. In addition, a separate methodological review of interview methods was conducted and helped to identify best practices for conducting qualitative interviews with adolescent males. Last, a theoretical review will help build validity for the study by providing information to compare and contrast with the findings of the in the discussion section of the final report.

The investigator also prepared for the interviews in various ways: through attaining a certificate of completion in qualitative methods from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; through communication with the author of the theory and method for Discourse Analysis used in the study; through mock interviews, and observational field work; and through self-reflection exercises to identify and acknowledge personal biases in an effort to minimize researcher influence during the interview and the data analysis.

The study was designed in compliance with regulatory requirements for the protection of human subjects, standard ethical guidelines and will be reviewed by be submitted for review and approval by an institutional review board (IRB). The investigator also consulted with IRB personnel and followed their guidelines in order to improve the research protocol.

The researcher is a professional with over 25 years experience working in agencies, communities and with individuals such as those in the study. He was born and raised in the city where the study will be conducted, is bicultural and bilingual in English and Spanish. His large network and connections with youth serving organizations will serve as an asset in the recruitment process and will provide a venue for dissemination of the information gleaned from the study in hopes of improving resources available to adolescent fathers.
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Research Design

The aim of this study is to arrive at a theory of how unwed adolescent fathers of Mexican origin (UAFMOs) discursively talk about fatherhood and how this talk aims to attain self-defined social goods (e.g., power, status, recognition). The research questions to be answered are: What and how are meanings, interpretations and cultural models utilized by UAFMOs to discursively construct fatherhood, father-identity and father-involvement? What purposes, goals and social goods are UAFMOs trying to attain with their talk about fatherhood?

Gee’s (2011) theory and method for Discourse Analysis will be used for this study. According to Gee, all research must begin by developing a theory of how the domain under investigation operates. This theory then guides the selection of appropriate tools of inquiry and methods by which to conduct the research. In this method for discourse analysis, the domain is language-in-use and Gee’s theory states that “language-in-use is about saying-doing-being and gains it’s meaning from the game or practice it is part of and enacts” (p. 11). Gee defines understanding as a combination of knowing what is being said, who is saying it and what are they trying to be or do (p. 2). According to Gee, a Discourse, big ‘D’, “is a sort of identity kit which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognize” and discourse with a little 'd', is used “for connected stretches of language that make sense, like conversations, stories, reports, arguments, essays; discourse is part of Discourse — Discourse is always more than just language” (Gee, 1990, p.142). Appendix A provides a visual of Gee’s theory model for Discourse Analysis, as it will be applied to this study.

Gee’s method states that we use speech and writing to create seven areas of reality or building tasks: significance, practices, identities, relationships, politics, connections and sign systems and knowledge. These are explained further in Appendix B. This method also provides six tools of inquiry
or questions for thinking about how to analyze any discourse: situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations (p. 12). The tools of inquiry that operationalize the theory are designed to describe and explain what the researcher takes to exist and be important in a domain and are detailed in Appendix C. The method therefore, provides 42 questions (seven building tasks multiplied by six tools of inquiry) that can be asked of any text and the full use of these would constitute a “full” or “ideal” discourse analysis (Gee, 2011). For example, for “Significance” the first of the seven building tasks, the discourse analyst would ask six questions: How are… situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, Conversations… being used to build relevance or significance for things and people? Appendix D and Appendix E provides further details about the building tasks and the forty-two questions used in this method.

In Gee’s method, “ideal” discourse analysis would be achieved by answering each of the 42 questions for every section of data analyzed. While this is rarely achieved due to the amount of labor intensive work required, Gee identifies four ways by which to increase the study’s validity: 1. Level of Convergence of the answers to the 42 questions, which support the analysis; 2. Level of Agreement between participants’ social language and with analysis by other discourse analysts accepting this theory and method; 3. Level of Coverage indicates that it is more valid if it can be applied to related sorts of data, what came before, and predicting what may come after; 4. Level of Linguistic Details where the findings are more valid if they are tightly tied to details of linguistic structure of the data (Gee, 2011, p. 123-124).

Reliability is concerned with consistency in the approach being used. An audit trail will be kept to document the process and to ensure it is faithful to protocols being used, transcripts will be checked for errors, coding will be checked to prevent a shift in meaning, and an assistant will help to cross-check these processes (Creswell, 2009).
Gee’s method for discourse analysis is both descriptive and critical in that it not only focuses on the grammar (“d’iscourse) to understand how language is being used, but also to identify “D’iscourses being constructed which provide important insight into the meanings, interpretations and cultural models utilized by UAFMOs to discursively construct fatherhood, father-identity and father-involvement and to elucidate what social goods are desired in their talk. This method is also a social constructivist approach with the goal of relying on the participants’ point of view (Creswell, 2007, p8) and as a way of explaining social interactions.

Setting, Population and Sample

The setting for this study will be a city along the U. S. Mexican border. The proposed study population will include minority adolescent fathers appropriate to the purpose of the dissertation research and will meet the following criteria:

Unwed – Participants must have never been married but they may live with their partners in an unmarried relationship.

Adolescent – Participants must be 18 or 19 years of age at the time of the interview.

Fathers – Participants must self-report that they have fathered one or more children. Varying ages of the fathers at the time of the pregnancy and birth of their child will provide important information that can be used to contrast with other participants.

Mexican Origin – Participants must report that they are of Mexican origin. They can be United States citizens or undocumented immigrants, having recently arrived in the Southwest or long time residents. These variables will also provide important contrasts between participants in the analysis. Interviews will be conducted in English or Spanish, according to the participant’s preference.

Mental Health – Participants must self-report that they are not suffering from emotional and mental health issues such as depression or anxiety disorders, which may be aggravated by the interview
A criterion purposeful sample will be used in this study. This is a technique used in qualitative studies and sets up a sample based on specific purposes associated with answering the research study’s questions. Discourse analysis is a qualitative method which has comparative components but not in the quantitative sense. “Discourse analysts often look at two contrasting groups, not to set up a binary contrast, but in order to get ideas about what the poles of a continuum may look like. We can get ideas that can then inform the collection of new data out of which emerges a much more nuanced and complex picture” (Gee, 2011, p. 150). This study will attempt to incorporate diversity through inclusion of participants with varying economic backgrounds, geographic residence, immigration status, and English or Spanish language speakers. These variables are important considerations in a qualitative method, which focuses on social politics and the distribution of social goods.

Up to ten individuals who respond to recruitment efforts, meet the inclusion criteria, represent the identified variables for comparison and voluntarily consent to participate in the study will be selected. The targeted sample size is based on general guidelines for qualitative studies identified by Morse (2010, 2011); on Mason’s (2010) recommendations for saturation in his analysis of 560 PhD studies using qualitative studies; and on the researcher’s personal communication with Dr. James Paul Gee, the author of the theory and method being used in this study.

**Sampling Procedures**

Participants will be recruited into this study utilizing the snowball effect, which is commonly used to access hidden and hard to reach populations through the use of social networks (Noy, 2008). Key contacts with access to adolescents will be informed of the study and provided with information detailing the aims of the study and recruitment information. Flyers will be posted in locations frequented by the target population. Data analysis will occur after each interview. If it becomes evident that more
data is necessary to make a compelling case for findings, or to provide sufficient evidence to support the theory, a second round of recruitment will identify additional participants.

Women and children under 17 years of age will not be included in the study due to the aims and research questions of this study. Adolescences and fatherhood are both life phases, which are characterized by transition and identity formation. For the adolescent father, it is a time of transitioning both from childhood to adulthood and into parenthood while adjusting their identity to fit their new roles in life. Marcia (1980) believes that “what is important about identity in adolescence, particularly late adolescence, is that this is the first time that physical development, cognitive skills, and social expectations coincide to enable young persons to sort through and synthesize their childhood identifications in order to construct a viable pathway toward their adulthood” (p.160).

**Instrumentation**

The researcher has conducted observations of the settings and populations and field notes will be kept to document the research process. There are two parts to the interview process: a demographic questionnaire and a face-to-face individual interview both will be conducted in either English or Spanish. The demographic questionnaire was created and translated by the researcher and appears in **Appendix F**. It consists of 20 items including: age, educational levels, income, living arrangements, information about their children, etc. The Interview Guide found in **Appendix G** was also created by the researcher as a tool as a reference for the researcher during the interviews and to ensure that no important aspects are neglected. This tool incorporates Gee’s interview methods, which includes two grand tour sections: the Life part of the interview will ask participants to talk about fatherhood in the context of their life, home and community and the Society part will ask them to talk about fatherhood in the context of societal interactions (Gee, 2011, p.149). Sub questions will be used as needed to explore the meanings, interpretations, and cultural models participants use to talk about fatherhood, father-
identity and father-involvement. These interviews will be digitally audio recorded and will take approximately two hours.

Gee’s methods for increasing the validity by ensuring that the findings are tightly tied to details of the linguistic structure of the data: 1) Level of Convergence, (2) Level of Agreement, (3) Level of Coverage, and (4) Level of Linguistic Details (Gee, 2011, p. 123-124). Reliability is concerned with consistency in the approach being used and an audit trail will be used, transcripts and coding will be checked for errors, and an assistant will help to cross-check these processes (Creswell, 2008, p. 190-193).

**Procedure for Data Collection**

Upon receiving IRB approval to proceed with the study, key informants—such as community leaders, school staff and social service professionals with access to adolescents—will be informed of the study through phone calls, emails and in-person visits. Recruitment materials were designed by the researcher and include: a flyer for informing Key informants, a flyer in English and Spanish targeting potential participants, and advertisements for social media and print. These are located in Appendixes H-J.

When a potential participant responds via a phone call, the researcher will conduct a screening interview, in either English or Spanish, to assess whether that participant meets the inclusion criteria. The screening script appears in Appendix K. Those who are ineligible will be thanked and informed of their ineligibility. Those who are eligible will be scheduled for an interview which will be scheduled to accommodate the participant’s choice of time and location for the interview.

At the time of the interview, the Informed Consent Form will be provided in English or Spanish to accommodate participants’ language of choice. Both versions of the Consent Form can be found in Appendix L. The researcher will explain the consent form and will ask to clarify any questions the
participant may have. Emphasis will be placed on the voluntary nature of this study. Once the
participant agrees to participate, a signature will be obtained and the interview will begin. If the
participant decides they need more time to review the consent form or to think about their decision, another appointment will be made for follow up. If the participant decides not to consent, the interview
session will end.

Paper forms will be used to collect subject information including demographic and personal
information. Forms will be kept in a storage cabinet secured with lock and key and at a location that is
locked when researcher and advisor are not present. Only the researcher and the advisor will have keys
and access to these records. Each subject will be assigned a code to de-identify personal information
and this will be the only link between identifying information collected on paper forms and subject
responses to interview questions.

Backups will be kept as part of the protocol and will occur on a weekly basis. Digital audio
recordings and backups of electronic files of subject interviews will be kept in a separate locked cabinet
drawer. Electronic files will be password protected and only authorized, trained members of the
research team will have access to this de-identified data. Passwords will be changed after any change in
staff. Data entry of study information will occur at a separate location and electronic files of this data
will be password protected.

The Data Management System will be submitted for IRB approval. The researcher will review
any breaches or potential breaches of confidentiality on a case-by-case basis and will make
modifications as needed. These will be reported to IRB and subjects affected.

Procedures for Data Analysis, Data Analysis and Interpretation

Gee provides a procedure or steps that will be followed to conduct this discourse analysis. These
include: 1. picking a piece of data, in this case, the study interviews; 2. transcribing the data while
looking for sections that address the research questions; 3. analyzing data after each interview and collecting more data until sufficient evidence supporting your theory has been collected; 4. picking some key words and phrases in the data and using the six tools of inquiry questions about the seven building blocks listed in Appendix B to analyze the data; 5. taking notes and reflecting and looking for themes that may emerge; 6. paying attention to where there may be convergence of themes; 7. some of the 42 questions may not relevant and that is fine; 8. organizing your analysis so that it provides evidence for the themes you will highlight; and, 9. achieving a degree of validity by addressing a variety of linguistic details, convergence, coverage, and agreement (Gee, 2011, p 126).

A professional transcriptionist will be hired to transcript the interview recordings by utilize a method for transcription provided by Gee (2011). This method, which uses devices such as a double slash (//) to indicate a “finished” piece of information, organizes the text into stanzas and underlines words that carry major stress in their tone units (p. 118).

The analysis of the data will be guided by the aim of the study: to arrive at a theory of how unwed, adolescent, fathers of Mexican origin (UAFMO) discursively talk about fatherhood and how this talk aims to attain self-defined social goods (e.g., power, status, recognition). In addition the analysis steps provided by Gee will be applied to answer each of research questions independently: What and how are meanings, interpretations and cultural models utilized by UAFMOs to discursively construct fatherhood, father-identity and father-involvement? What purposes, goals and social goods are UAFMOs trying to attain with their talk about fatherhood? Figure 1 presents a diagram showing the four levels of analysis that will occur.

An interpretation of the results will be provided in the discussion section of the final report and will highlight the study’s validity by discussing levels of convergence agreement, coverage, and linguistic details as recommended by Gee. The findings of this study will also contribute to the literature on biological father absence, fragile families and child wellbeing and teenage pregnancy from
the adolescent father’s perspective. Ultimately this study’s focus is on providing insight into the
discourse of unwed adolescent fathers in hopes of identifying opportunities by which to affect policy
and programs in order to strengthen the new types of families we are seeing and the health outcomes for
generations to come.

Figure 1. Data analysis process
Limitations, Potential Problems, Alternative Approaches

Limitations may be encountered in the recruitment of participants. Not all adolescents who have fathered children will identify with fatherhood. This study may only attract those participants who have accepted their father status providing a limited perspective from those who do identify as fathers and are involved with their children. In such a case, this sample will still provide important information helping to understand the discourse of a certain group of unwed father and increase knowledge about fathers who do decide to stay in their children’s lives. An additional study employing recruitment methods for fathers who have not taken the role of father and are not involved with their children would provide important findings for comparison with this study.

Second, the topic of fatherhood may be a sensitive one for young adolescent males. Some young men may have accepted their role as fathers but may not be ready to disclose this information. The transition into fatherhood, particularly in adolescence, can be a traumatic one and could require some phases of processing the changing identity. Teenagers who have recently become fathers may be in a different place of acceptance than those who have been fathers for a longer period of time. Some teenagers may be hesitant because they are unaware of confidentiality protections and may fear their parents finding out.

Schwalbe & Wolkomir (2003) list some potential problems that may arise when interviewing male adolescents: 1. struggle for control, 2. nondisclosure of emotions, 3. exaggerated rationality, autonomy and control, and 4. bonding ploys: or, “You know what I mean”. The authors advise that the researcher should identify when these are occurring and be comfortable using strategies for sharing control, using nonthreatening facilitation of the interview and getting agreement on interpretations (p. 59-70). The researcher has extensive experience interviewing and working with the targeted population.
Finally, a full explanation of confidentiality and the researcher’s role as a mandated reporter will be emphasized beyond the consent form and at the beginning of the interview. This will provide participants with a clear understanding of the boundaries of confidentiality.

Table 1. provides a tentative and sequenced timetable of the research project.

**Table 1. Tentative Sequenced Project Timetable**

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Protection of Research Participants and Subjects

In accordance with federal regulations and in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Institutional Review Board at the University of Texas at El Paso, this study has followed guidelines to ensure the protection of research participants and subjects.

1. Human participants will be involved by responding to the study’s recruitment efforts via a phone call. Upon this first contact, participants will answer basic screening questions to determine their eligibility to participate. Participants will then attend an interview session, conducted in either English or Spanish, where they will read and be afforded an opportunity to ask questions about the consent form. The voluntary nature of their participation in the study will be emphasized through the study. If the participant agrees and signs the consent form, they will then be administered a survey to collect demographic information. After this, a face-to-face interview utilizing qualitative interview methods will begin. The full process may take up to two hours. Upon completion of the interview, participants will be offered another opportunity to ask questions, state if they would like to receive a copy of the study’s findings and/or a list of community resources. At the end of the session, participants will receive a $20.00 gift certificate.

A community sample of up to ten individuals who respond to recruitment efforts, meet inclusion criteria and consent to participate will be selected. All participants must meet the following inclusion criteria:

*Unwed* – Participants must have never been married but they may live with their partners in an unmarried relationship.

*Adolescent* – Participants must be 18 or 19 years of age at the time of the interview.
**Fathers** – Participants must self-report that they have fathered one or more children. Varying ages of the young fathers at time of the pregnancy and the birth of child will provide important information, which can be used to contrast with other participants.

**Mexican Origin** – Participants must report that they are of Mexican origin. Citizenship status will not be asked for and participants may have recently arrived in the Southwest or be long time residents of the United States. These variables will also provide important contrasts between participants in the analysis.

**Able to have meaningful communication** – Participants must be able to have meaningful communication in order to participate. Participants will be asked if they believe they are suffering from any emotional or mental health issues, such as depression or anxiety disorders, which may be aggravated by the interview process. Those individuals who respond “yes” to this question will not be included in the study.

The National Institutes of Health’s (1998) policy on the inclusion of children as participants in research defines a child as an individual under the age of 21 years. This same policy also explains that this may not apply to consent forms depending on the age of consent in the State where the research is being conducted. In Texas, the age of consent is 17 years of age and therefore, participants in this study are eligible to consent on their own. Based on the aims of this study will only include 17 and 18 year old participants.

2. In addition to the screening interviews, the demographic survey and the face-to-face interviews, the researcher will conduct field observations of the study’s settings and population. An audit trail will record each step in the process and include the PI’s reflections, which will then assist in the analysis of the data and will provide a map of the steps taken to do the study.
3. The recruitment process will begin once IRB approval is received. Flyers will be distributed in the community through social service agencies and posted at places frequented by the target audience. The researcher will also call, email and visit key community informants with access to the target population. Upon initial contact by potential participants over the phone, the researcher will provide an overview of the study and answer any questions the individual might have. The researcher will then screen the interested candidate to ensure they meet the criteria. Once deemed eligible, a time, date and location for the interview will be agreed upon with the participant. The participant will be reminded that he can change his mind at any time but will be asked to call the researcher if he should decided to cancel his participation.

Participants will only participate in one interview session, therefore retention after that session will not be required. At the time of the interview, the researcher will proceed with explaining the consent form and interview. The interview will consist of two parts: a demographic questionnaire and a semi-structured, face to face interview asking participants two grand tour questions: What does fatherhood mean in your life? What does fatherhood means in society? Sub questions will be asked to ensure that meanings, interpretations, cultural models and social goods are addressed. An Interview Guide will be used to ensure that all aspects of the study are addressed in the interview. This section of the interview will be audio recorded and will take approximately two hours. After the interview has been completed each participant will receive a $20 gift certificate, the demographic questionnaire and audio recordings will be assigned a code and the de-identified data will be entered into a password protected database and audio records will be transcribed. Records will be stored in a secure place and will be retained for further analysis.

4. The potential level of risk to human subjects participating in this study is assessed as minimal risk as defined by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Code of Federal Regulations (Protection of Human Subjects, 2009): “Minimal risk means that the probability and magnitude of harm
or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.”

Potential risks to the participants from study participation may include: exacerbation of a pre-existing mental or emotional issue, a potential perception of stigmatization to the participant resulting from recruiting through advertisement and through the snowball effect, disclosure of sensitive and potentially harmful information that mandates the researcher to report to officials, and finally, there could potentially be a breach in confidentiality.

5. Precautions have been taken to minimize the potential risks listed above. The potential of exacerbating an existing mental or emotional issue will be minimized through the screening interview when participants will be asked whether they have such an issue which may be affected by the study. If someone answers “yes”, they will not be included in the study.

The PI will also address the potential for stigmatization of participants by emphasizing the need for confidentiality with key informants who will help with recruitment for the study. All recruitment flyers will list a phone number that can be called directly by individuals interested in participating without them having to inform anyone else.

At the time of the interview, the researcher will explain the Informed Consent Form which explains the nature of the study, emphasizes the voluntary nature of participation and explains the researcher’s role as mandated reporter. The researcher will ensure that all participants understand the boundaries of confidentiality prior to the beginning of the interview.

Steps have been taken to minimize the risk of a breach in confidentiality. A Data Management System has been developed to ensure confidentiality protocols are in place and monitored. This system includes the following precautions:
The researcher has completed and will refer to training required by IRB and legal requirements for safety and confidentiality. Such training includes: general protocols, statutes and guidelines for mandated reporters, monitoring and reporting of adverse events that could “reasonably occur” or unanticipated events, opportunities for personal reflection on the subject matter, and guided discussion addressing issues that might affect objectivity. Copies of all training materials will be kept in the study file as reference material.

The researcher has completed and will refer to the NIH’s computer based training on *Protecting Human Research Subject Participants* training and a completion certificate will be required and maintained in the study files for the researcher and any person assisting with the study.

Upon the occurrence of any anticipated or unanticipated adverse event, the researcher will immediately stop the study protocol. This will also apply if the researcher is unsure if the event qualifies as an adverse event. The threshold used to determine an adverse effect will be whenever the investigator believes that continuing the protocol could cause harm to the participant or if the participant discloses information that must be reported (e.g., harm to self or others). Upon suspension of the protocol, the researcher will immediately notify the faculty advisor and or other authorities as required (e.g., medical, law enforcement). The PI will be responsible for accurate documentation of the event. The PI will also immediately notify the IRB and funding entities and begin an investigation to be documented and submitted as part of formal documentation to both agencies. The Data Monitoring Plan below includes detailed steps that will be taken to safeguard subject information and confidentiality.

Paper forms will be used to collect subject information, including demographic and personal information. Forms will be kept in a storage cabinet secured with lock and key and at a secure location that is locked when researcher and the advisor are not present. Only the researcher and the advisor will have keys and access to these records. Each subject will be assigned a code to de-identify personal information which will be the only link between identifying information collected on paper forms and
subject responses to interview questions. Data entry of study information will occur at a separate location and electronic files of this data will be password protected. Backups will be part of the protocol and will occur on a weekly basis. Digital audio recordings and backup of electronic files of subject interviews will be kept at a separate locked cabinet drawer. Electronic files will be password protected and only authorized, trained members of the research team will have access to this de-identified data. Passwords will be changed after any change in staff. The Data Management System will be submitted for IRB approval. The PI will review any breaches or potential breaches of confidentiality on a case-by-case basis and will make modifications as needed. These will be reported to IRB and subjects affected.

6. The risks to participate in this study are minimal but a small benefit of participating in the study is that each subject will be given a $20.00 gift certificate upon completion of the study. Beyond that, the benefits of this research may include: an increased awareness among participants regarding their own views about themselves, of fatherhood and of their involvement with their children. Increased awareness through participation in this reflective process may lead to a better understanding of personal goals and an exploration of positive options. In addition, it is the aim of this study to contribute to the dominant discourse of fatherhood in this country.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A. GEE’S THEORY AND METHOD AS APPLIED TO THE STUDY
Gee’s Theory & Method as Applied to the Study of Unwed Adolescent Fathers of Mexican Origin (UWAFMO)

Domain: Language in Use (Interviews)
- What are UWAFMO saying about fatherhood?
- What are UWAFMO being?
- What are UWAFMO doing?

Games & Practices
Participants interviewed as UWAFMO

Understanding comes from knowing:
- What are participants saying about fatherhood?
- What are they trying to be as UWAFMOs?

Language in Politics
- Social Goods - What are participants trying to accomplish with their talk?

Theory
The interviews gain meaning in the practice they are enacting – a research study of UAFMOs.

Method
7 Building Tasks:
- UWAFMOs create identities for the interview.
- 6 Tools of inquiry

Analysis:
Descriptive, discourse, Critical, Discourse and Comparative.
APPENDIX B. GEE’S SEVEN BUILDING TASKS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seven Building Tasks:</th>
<th>Given what the speaker has said or the writer has written and how it has been said or written,</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Significance</td>
<td>What things and which people in this context are relevant and significant and in what ways are they significant? How is the speaker or writer trying to give significance to things?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Practices (Activities)</td>
<td>What practice (activity) or practices (activities) are relevant in this context and how are they being enacted?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Identity</td>
<td>What identity or identities (for the speaker/writer, the listener/hearer, and in terms of how others are depicted) are relevant in this context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Relationships</td>
<td>What relationships are relevant and at stake in this context and how are they being distributed or how is their distribution being viewed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Politics</td>
<td>What social goods are relevant and at stake in this context and how are they being distributed or how is their distribution being viewed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Connections</td>
<td>What are the relevant connections and disconnections between things and people in this context and how are these connections or disconnections being made or implied?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Signs Systems and Knowledge</td>
<td>What are the relevant sign systems (e.g., languages or social languages) and forms of knowledge (ways of knowing) that are relevant in this context and how are they used and privileged or disprivileged? (Gee, 2011, 17-20)</td>
</tr>
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APPENDIX C. GEE’S SIX TOOLS OF INQUIRY
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Six Tools of Inquiry:</th>
<th>Given what the speaker has said or the writer has written and how it has been said or written,</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situated meanings</td>
<td>The specific meanings words and phrases take on in actual contexts of use. Speakers and writers construct their utterances or sentences to guide listeners and readers in constructing these specific meanings based on what was said and the context in which it was said.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social languages</td>
<td>Any style of language (which may involve special words, special uses of grammar, or special discourse features, or special pronunciations, or all of these) used when one is speaking or writing (and these might well be different) as a specialist or expert of a certain sort. People who share a specialty or expertise often develop their own “ways with words.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Figured worlds</td>
<td>A figured world is a theory, story, model, or image of a simplified world that captures what is taken to be typical or normal about people, practices (activities), things or interactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intertextuality</td>
<td>When we speak or write, our words often allude to or relate to, other texts or certain types of texts, meaning words other people have said or written.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discourses</td>
<td>Big “D” Discourse – Social languages (see below) are a variety of styles of language used to enact specific socially situated identities and activities (practices) associated with those identities. If you want to get recognized as a street-gang member of a certain sort you have to speak in the right way, but you also have to act and dress in the right way, as well.</td>
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<td>Conversations</td>
<td>“Conversations” (with a capital “C”) are debates in society or within specific social groups (over focused issues like smoking, abortion, or school reform) that large numbers of people recognize, both in terms of what “sides” there are to take in such debates and what sorts of people tend to be on each side. Gee (2011, p 201-2011)</td>
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APPENDIX D. GEE’S QUESTIONS FOR INQUIRY
Building Task 1: Significance: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in context?

Building Task 2: Practices (Activities): How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?

Building Task 3: Identities: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to enact and depict identities (socially significant kinds of people)?

Building Task 4: Relationships: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, and Conversations being used to build and sustain (or change or destroy) social relationships?

Building Task 5: Politics: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to create, distribute, or withhold social goods or to construe particular distributions of social goods as “good” or “acceptable” or not?

Building Task 6: Connections: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to make things and people connected or relevant to each other or irrelevant to or disconnected from each other?

Building Task 7: Sign Systems and Knowledge: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to privilege or disprivilege different sign systems (language, social languages, other sorts of symbol systems) and ways of knowing? (Gee, 2011, p. 102, 121-122)
APPENDIX E. VISUAL DISPLAY OF GEE’S 42 QUESTIONS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>42 Questions</th>
<th>Situated Meanings</th>
<th>Social Languages</th>
<th>Figured Worlds</th>
<th>Intertextuality</th>
<th>Discourses</th>
<th>Conservations</th>
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<td>How are….. →</td>
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<td>Question 2</td>
<td>Question 3</td>
<td>Question 4</td>
<td>Question 5</td>
<td>Question 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>Question 7</td>
<td>Question 8</td>
<td>Question 9</td>
<td>Question 10</td>
<td>Question 11</td>
<td>Question 12</td>
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<td>Practices</td>
<td>Question 13</td>
<td>Question 14</td>
<td>Question 15</td>
<td>Question 16</td>
<td>Question 17</td>
<td>Question 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identities</td>
<td>Question 19</td>
<td>Question 20</td>
<td>Question 21</td>
<td>Question 22</td>
<td>Question 23</td>
<td>Question 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Question 25</td>
<td>Question 26</td>
<td>Question 27</td>
<td>Question 28</td>
<td>Question 29</td>
<td>Question 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Question 31</td>
<td>Question 32</td>
<td>Question 33</td>
<td>Question 34</td>
<td>Question 35</td>
<td>Question 36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>Question 37</td>
<td>Question 38</td>
<td>Question 39</td>
<td>Question 40</td>
<td>Question 41</td>
<td>Question 42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sign Systems and Knowledge</td>
<td>Question 37</td>
<td>Question 38</td>
<td>Question 39</td>
<td>Question 40</td>
<td>Question 41</td>
<td>Question 42</td>
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Demographic Questionnaire

Participant Code #:  

1) Your Age:  
2) Number of Children:  

3) Your Age At Your Child(ren)’s Birth:
   Child #1:  Child #2:  Child #3:  Child #4:  

4) How many women have you had children with?:  

5) Who raised you? (☐ Check one):
   Mother & Father  Mother Only  Grandparent(s)  
   Other:  

6) Religious Affiliation (if any):  

7) Educational level (☐ Check one):
   Less than  High School:  High School Graduate:  College (Level):  

8) What type of pregnancy prevention information or sexual education had you received prior to your child’s birth, and where did you receive it?:  

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9) Earned annual income (☐ Check one):
   No  Income  | $1,000 -  | $6,000 -  | $26,000 to  | $46,000 and  |
   Income  | $5,000  | $25,000  | $45,000  | $46,000 and  |

10) What are your current living arrangements?
   Live Alone  Live with Parent(s)  Live with Children’s Mother  
   Other  

11) How long had you been involved with the mother(s) of your Child/Children prior to the pregnancy?

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<th>Child 1</th>
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<th>Child 3</th>
<th>Child 4</th>
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12) How old was your father when you were born? ____________

13) How old was your mother when you were born? ____________

14) Are your parents currently (☑Check one):☐

   Married ☐ Never Married ☐ Separated ☐ Divorced ☐

15) Level of involvement with your child/children (☑Check one):☐

   None ☐ Slight: Less than 3 x year ☐ Some: 1-2x month ☐ Weekly ☐ More than 1x week ☐

16) Where were you born? ____________________________

17) How long have you lived in the United States? _______________

18) Are you in a relationship with your child(ren)'s mother? _______________

19) Do you provide financial support for your child(ren)? ______________

20) Zip Code where you live? __________
Cuestionario Demográfico

Código de Participante #: __________________________

1) Tu Edad: __________________________

2) Número de Hijos: __________________________

3) Tu edad cuando nacieron tu(s) hijo(s):
   Hijo(a) #1: __________________________
   Hijo(a) #2: __________________________
   Hijo(a) #3: __________________________
   Hijo(a) #4: __________________________

4) ¿Con cuántas mujeres has tenido hijos?: __________________________

5) ¿Quién te creó? (Marca una):
   Madre y Padre __________________________
   Sólo Madre __________________________
   Abuelo(s) __________________________
   Otro: __________________________

6) Afiliación religiosa (si las hay):

7) Nivel de Estudios (Marca una):
   Menos de la Escuela: __________________________
   Alguna Escuela: __________________________
   Graduado de la Escuela: __________________________
   Colegio (Nivel): __________________________

8) ¿Qué tipo de información sobre la prevención del embarazo o la educación sexual habías recibido antes del nacimiento de tu(s) hijo(s), y de dónde usted lo recibiste?:

   Nacimiento del 1er niño __________________________
   Nacimiento del 2do niño __________________________
   Nacimiento del 3er niño __________________________
   Nacimiento del 4to niño __________________________

9) Ingresos anuales (Marca una):
   No __________________________
   Ingresos: $1,000 - __________________________
   $5,000 - __________________________
   $6,000 - __________________________
   $25,000 - __________________________
   $26,000 to $45,000 __________________________
   $46,000 y por encima __________________________
10) ¿Cuáles son tus hábitos de vida actuales?

Vivo Solo ☐ Vivo con mis padres ☐ Vivo con la madre de mis niños ☐

Otro __________________________________________________________________________

11) ¿Cuánto tiempo habías estado involucrado con la(s) madre(s) de tu(s) hijo / hijos antes del embarazo?

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<tr>
<th>Hijo(a)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Hijo(a)</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Hijo(a)</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Hijo(a)</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12) ¿Qué edad tenía tu padre cuando tu naciste? __________________________________________________________________________

13) ¿Qué edad tenía tu madre cuando tu naciste? __________________________________________________________________________

14) Tus padres son (☑ Marca una):

Casados ☐ Nunca se casaron ☐ Separados ☐ Divorciados ☐

15) Nivel de participación con tu niño / niños (☑ Marca una):

Ninguna ☐ Leve: Menos de 3 veces al año ☐ Alguna: 1-2 veces al mes ☐ Semanal ☐ Más de 1 vez semana ☐

16) ¿Dónde naciste? __________________________________________________________________________

17) ¿Cuánto tiempo has vivido en los Estados Unidos? __________________________________________________________________________

18) ¿Estás en una relación con la madre de tus hijos? __________________________________________________________________________

19) ¿Proporcionas apoyo financiero para tus hijos? __________________________________________________________________________

20) ¿Código Postal de donde vives? __________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX G. INTERVIEW GUIDE
Study Aim: The aim of this study is to arrive at a theory of how unwed, adolescent, fathers of Mexican origin (UAFMO) discursively talk about fatherhood and how this talk aims to attain self-defined social goods (e.g., power, status, recognition). The research questions to be answered are: What and how are meanings, interpretations and cultural models utilized by UAFMOs to discursively construct fatherhood, father-identity and father-involvement? What purposes, goals and social goods are UAFMOs trying to attain with their talk about fatherhood?

Grand Tour Questions (Gee, 2011):

• The “Life” Part: What is it life like as a teenaged father?

• The “Society” Part: What is it like to be a father in this society?

Sub-questions will further explore the following topics:

Meanings, interpretations and cultural models of: Fatherhood, Father-identity, Involvement with children, desired social goods (i.e., being recognized as "a good father")

This guide will be used to provide as a reference during the interview process to ensure that all aspects are covered. The actual questions will be individualized for each participant, allowing them to guide through the grand tour questions.
APPENDIX H. RECRUITMENT FLYERS TARGETING KEY INFORMANTS
**TEENAGE FATHERS WANTED FOR RESEARCH STUDY**

The purpose of this study, "The Talk of Unwed Adolescent Fathers of Mexican Origin: A Discourse Analysis" will explore how teen fathers talk about fatherhood. Findings from this study will be useful in contributing, and possibly intervening in, the dominant Discourse of fatherhood, which is used to shape public policy, interventions and social services without including those most directly affected – teen fathers. The findings will also contribute to: the literature on biological father- absence, fragile families and child wellbeing, and teenage pregnancy from the adolescent father’s perspective.

Criteria for inclusion in this study will consist of the following: participants must be unmarried biological fathers, 18 or 19 years old, of Mexican Origin who have one or more children and are able to meaningfully participate in an interview setting. Participants must be willing to participate in a 2 hour interview consisting of questions related to fatherhood and their experience of being a teenage father.

The study will be conducted at a time, place and location agreed upon by participants and the researcher. Participants will receive a $30 gift card upon completion of the interview. If interested, please contact Arturo Jaime at (915) 873-4402.

Research Facility: University of Texas at El Paso  
500 West University Avenue  
El Paso, Texas 79968
APPENDIX I. PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT FLYERS, ENGLISH / SPANISH
Are you a Teenage Father?

Are you:
18 or 19 years old?
Hispanic?
Unmarried?
Mentally & emotionally healthy?

Want to participate in a research study investigating what fatherhood means to unmarried teen fathers?

Participants will receive a $30.00 gift certificate upon completion of a two-hour interview.

For more information contact:
Arturo Jaime at (915) 873-4402.

Research Facility: University of Texas at El Paso
500 West University Avenue, El Paso, TX 79968
¿Eres un padre adolescente?

¿Eres:
Un joven de 18 o 19 años de edad?
Hispano?
No casado?
Mental y emocionalmente saludable?

¿Quieres participar en un estudio de investigación de lo que significa la paternidad para padres adolescentes solteros?

Los participantes recibirán un certificado de regalo de $30.00 al término de una entrevista de dos horas.

Para más información contactar a:
Arturo Jaime al (915) 873-4402.

Centro de investigación: University of Texas at El Paso
500 West University Avenue, El Paso, TX 79968
APPENDIX J. RECRUITMENT ADVERTISMENT
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Newspaper Ad</th>
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| **Research Participants Wanted**  
| Are you an Unwed Teen Dad? 18 or 19 yrs. old?  
| Tell us your story. $30 gift certificate after interview.  
| Call (915) 873-4402 or ajaime41@gmail.com |

<table>
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<th>Social Media Posting</th>
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| **Research Participants Wanted**  
| Are you an Unwed Teen Dad? 18 or 19 yrs. old?  
| Tell us your story. $30 gift certificate after interview.  
| If you are interested or know someone who is interested,  
| **PLEASE DO NOT REPLY ON THIS SITE.**  
| Call (915) 873-4402 or ajaime41@gmail.com |
APPENDIX K. PARTICIPANT SCREENING SCRIPT
Hello, my name is Arturo Jaime. Would you prefer that I speak English or Spanish?

I am the principal investigator for this study. Thank you for your interest in being a participant.

How did you hear about this study?

I am a PhD student at the University of Texas at El Paso and am doing a study to understand what fatherhood means to unmarried, teenage fathers who are 18 or 19 years old and identify with a Mexican origin.

Participation in this study will require that you consent to participate in a 2 hour interview. If you agree, I will try to arrange an interview at a time and location of your choice.

When we meet to conduct the interview, you should remember that your participation is voluntary and you will be able to discontinue the interview if you feel uncomfortable or don’t want to continue at any time.

I will provide a written consent form to you, which give you written detail about the study and gives me another opportunity to explain the study and answer other questions you may have. You will then have an opportunity to sign the form or decide not to agree to continue.

At this point, do you have any questions I can answer?

Now that you know more about this study, would you be interested in participating in this study?

If no: Thank you for calling. Please feel free to call back if you have more questions and let others know whom you think might be interested.

If yes: Great! I just need to know if you fit the requirements for this study;

• Are you a biological father of at least one child?
• Are you 18 or 19 years of age?
• Are you of Mexican origin?
• Have you ever been married?
• Do you have any mental health or emotional issues which could be affected by the study?

If all answers are yes: Would you like to schedule a time and location for the interview?

Thank you! I look forward to meeting with you at (location) on (date) at (time). If anything changes, please call me at this same number to let me know.

If one or more of the answers is no: I’m afraid that the study required that all answers to the questions be yes. I appreciate your interest in participating but you do not qualify for the study. Please let others know whom you think might be interested.
APPENDIX L. INFORMED CONSENT, ENGLISH/SPANISH
University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Institutional Review Board
Informed Consent Form for Research Involving Human Subjects

Protocol Title: The Talk of Unwed Adolescent Fathers of Mexican Origin: A Discourse Analysis

Principal Investigator: Jose Arturo Jaime,
Advisors: Dr. Elias Provencio-Vasquez, Dr. Leslie Robbins

UTEP College of Health Sciences: Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

In this consent form, “you” always means the study subject.

1. Introduction

You are being asked to take part voluntarily in the research project described below. Please take your time making a decision and feel free to discuss it with your friends and family. Before agreeing to take part in this research study, it is important that you read the consent form that describes the study. Please ask the study researcher to explain any words or information that you do not clearly understand. The researcher is bilingual (English/Spanish), please let him know what language you prefer.

2. Why is this study being done?

You have been asked to take part in a research study to better understand what fatherhood means to unmarried, 18 or 19 years old fathers of Mexican origin. Most of the research on teenage parents is about mothers. This study will help us learn more about teen fathers. If you decide to enroll in this study, your involvement will last about two hours and will be completed in one day at a date, time and location to be agreed upon by you and the researcher.

3. What is involved in the study?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to answer questions about what fatherhood means to you as well as general questions about your income, education, living arrangements and your involvement in your child’s life. The interviews will be audio recorded.

4. What are the risks and discomforts of the study?

There are no known risks associated with this research.

5. What will happen if I am injured in this study?

The University of Texas at El Paso and its affiliates do not offer to pay for or cover the cost of medical treatment for research related illness or injury. No funds have been set aside to pay or reimburse you in the event of such injury or illness. You will not give up any of your legal rights by signing this consent form. You should report any such injury to Jose Arturo Jaime at (915-873-4402) or ajaime41@gmail.com and to the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915-747-8841) or
irb.orsp@utep.edu. Please notify the researcher if you are interested in receiving a free list of or referrals to programs and/or services for teenagers.

6. Are there benefits to taking part in this study?

By participating in this research you might benefit by exploring how you feel about your experience. This research may help us to better understand about the meanings of fatherhood and may lead to further research regarding this topic and possibly help to improve resources available to teen fathers.

7. What other options are there?

You have the option not to take part in this study. There will be no penalties involved if you choose not to take part in this study.

8. Who is paying for this study?

There no funding source for this study.

9. What are my costs?

There are no direct costs. You will be responsible for travel to and from the research site and any other incidental expenses.

10. Will I be paid to participate in this study?

You will be paid twenty dollars for participation in this study. Payment will be provided in the form of gift certificates after you have completed the interview.

11. What if I want to withdraw or am asked to withdraw from this study?

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You have the right to choose not to take part in this study. If you do not take part in the study, there will be no penalty. If you choose to take part, you have the right to stop at any time. However, we encourage you to talk to the researcher so that they know why you are leaving the study. If there are any new findings during the study that may affect whether you want to continue to take part, you will be told about them. The researcher may decide to stop your participation without your permission, if he or she thinks that being in the study may cause you harm.

12. Who do I call if I have questions or problems?

You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may call Jose Arturo Jaime at (915-873-4402) and or email at ajaiime41@gmail.com.

If you have questions or concerns about your participation as a research subject, please contact the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915-747-8841) or irb.orsp@utep.edu.
13. What about confidentiality?

Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential. Your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. Organizations that may inspect and/or copy your research records for quality assurance and data analysis include, but are not necessarily limited to, the UTEP Institutional Review Board. Because of the need to release information to these parties, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The results of this research study may be presented at meetings or in publications; however, your identity will not be disclosed in those presentations. All records will be stored securely with limited access to the researchers. All information that could be used to identify you will be kept separate from your answers and will only be linked by a code that only the primary investigator and advisor will have access to. This information will only be released if required by law (see above).

14. Mandatory reporting

If information is revealed about child abuse or neglect, or potentially dangerous future behavior to others, the law requires that this information be reported to the proper authorities.

15. Authorization Statement

I have read each page of this paper about the study (or it was read to me). I know that being in this study is voluntary and I choose to be in this study. I know I can stop being in this study without penalty. I will get a copy of this consent form now and can get information on results of the study later if I wish.

Participant Name: ___________________________ Date: ____________

Participant Signature: _________________________ Time: ____________

Consent form explained/witnessed by: Signature ___________________________

Printed name: ________________________________

Date: ____________  Time: ____________
University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Institutional Review Board
Formulario de Consentimiento Informado para la Investigación en Seres Humanos

Protocol Title: El hablar de padres solteros adolescentes de origen mexicano: Un análisis del discurso

Investigador Principal: Jose Arturo Jaime
Asesores: Dr. Elias Provencio-Vasquez, Dr. Leslie Robbins

UTEP College of Health Sciences: Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

En esta forma de consentimiento, "tu" significa siempre el objeto de estudio.

1. Introducción

Se te pide participar voluntariamente en el proyecto de investigación que se describe a continuación. Por favor, toma tu tiempo para tomar una decisión y no dudes en hablar de ello con tus amigos y familiares. Antes de aceptar participar en este estudio de investigación, es importante que leas el formulario de consentimiento que describe el estudio. Por favor, pregunta al el investigador del estudio que te explique cualquier palabra o información que no entiendas con claridad. El investigador es bilingüe (Inglés / Español), por favor hazle saber el idioma que prefieras.

2. Por qué se realiza este estudio?

Se te ha pedido participar en un estudio de investigación para comprender mejor lo que significa la paternidad para jóvenes solteros, de 18 o 19 años de edad, que son de origen mexicana. La mayor parte de las investigaciones sobre padres adolescentes se enfocan en las madres. Este estudio nos ayudará a aprender más acerca de los padres adolescentes. Si decides inscribirte en este estudio, tu participación tendrá una duración de unas dos horas y se completará en un solo día en una fecha, hora y lugar que te convenga ti y al investigador.

3. ¿Qué está involucrado en el estudio?

Si aceptas participar en este estudio, se te pedirá que contestes preguntas sobre lo que significa ser padre, así como preguntas generales sobre tus ingresos, tu educación, donde vives y tu participación en la vida de tu hijo(a). Las entrevistas serán audio grabadas.

4. ¿Cuáles son los riesgos y molestias del estudio?

No existen riesgos conocidos asociados con esta investigación.
5. ¿Qué pasará si me lesiono en este estudio?

La Universidad de Texas en El Paso y sus filiales no ofrecen pagar o cubrir el costo del tratamiento médico por una enfermedad o lesión relacionada con la investigación. No se han destinado fondos para pagar o reembolsarte en el caso de dicha lesión o enfermedad. Tu no vas a renunciar a ninguno de tus derechos legales al firmar este formulario de consentimiento. Tu debes reportar cualquier lesión llamando a José Arturo Jaime al (915-873-4402) o a jaima41@gmail.com y a la Junta de Revisión Institucional UTEP (IRB) al (915-747-8841) o irb.orsp@utep.edu . Por favor notifica al investigador si estas interesado en recibir una lista gratis de referencias a programas o servicios para los adolescentes.

6. ¿Hay beneficios en participar en esta investigación?

Al participar en esta investigación hay posibilidad que podrías beneficiarte mediante la exploración de cómo te sientes acerca de tu experiencia. Esta investigación puede ayudarnos a entender mejor acerca de los significados de la paternidad y puede ser que resulte en a una mayor investigación sobre este tema y, posiblemente, ayudar a mejorar los recursos disponibles para los padres adolescentes.

7. ¿Qué otras opciones hay?

Tienes la opción de no participar en este estudio. No habrá sanciones involucradas si decides no participar en este estudio.

8. ¿Quién está pagando por este estudio?

No hay fuente de financiamiento para este estudio.

9. ¿Cuáles son mis costos?

No hay costes directos. Tu serás responsable de los viajes hacia y desde el sitio de investigación y cualquier otros gastos incidentales.

10. ¿Me pagarán para participar en este estudio?

Se te pagará treinta dólares por la participación en este estudio. Dicho pago se establecerá en forma de certificados de regalo después de haber completado la entrevista.

11. ¿Y si quiero retirarse o me pide retirarme de este estudio?

La participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Tienes el derecho de optar por no participar en este estudio. Si no tomas parte en el estudio, no habrá penalización. Si decides participar, tienes el derecho de parar en cualquier momento. Sin embargo, te animamos a
que hables con el investigador para que sepan por qué estás dejando el estudio. Si hay algunos nuevos hallazgos durante el estudio que pueden afectar si quieres seguir participando, se te informará al respecto. El investigador puede decidir dejar de participar sin tu permiso, si él o ella piensa que el estar en el estudio puede causarte daño.

12. ¿A quien llamo si tengo preguntas o problemas?

Puedes hacer cualquier pregunta que tengas ahora. Si tienes alguna pregunta más adelante, puedes llamar a José Arturo Jaime al (915-873-4402) o por correo electrónico al jaime41@gmail.com. Si tienes preguntas o inquietudes sobre tu participación como sujeto de investigación, por favor comunícame con la Junta de Revisión Institucional UTEP (IRB) al (915-747-8841) o irb.orsp@utep.edu.

13. ¿Qué pasa con la confidencialidad?

Se hará todo lo posible para mantener tu información confidencial. Tu información personal puede ser revelada si es requerido por la ley. Organizaciones que pueden inspeccionar y/o copiar tus registros de la investigación para el aseguramiento de la calidad y análisis de datos incluyen, pero no se limitan necesariamente a, la Junta de Revisión Institucional de UTEP. Debido a la necesidad de divulgar información a estos partidos, la absoluta confidencialidad no puede ser garantizada. Los resultados de este estudio de investigación se pueden presentar en reuniones o en publicaciones, sin embargo, tu identidad no será revelada en esas presentaciones. Todos los registros se almacenan de forma segura con acceso limitado a los investigadores. Toda la información que podríamos utilizar para identificarte se mantendrá separado de tus respuestas y sólo será unido por un código que sólo el investigador principal y asesor tendrá acceso. Esta información sólo se dará a conocer si es requerido por la ley (véase más arriba).

14. La notificación obligatoria

Si alguna información se revela sobre el abuso infantil o negligencia, o el comportamiento futuro potencialmente peligroso para los demás, la ley exige que esta información se comunicará a las autoridades competentes.

15. Declaración de Autorización

He leído todas las páginas de este trabajo sobre el estudio (o fue leído a mi). Sé que este estudio es voluntario y elijo participar en este estudio. Sé que puedo dejar de participar en este estudio y sin penalización. Voy a obtener una copia de este formulario de consentimiento y puedo obtener información sobre los resultados del estudio más adelante, si lo deseo.
Nombre del participante: _______________  Fecha: ______

Firma del participante: _______________  Tiempo: ______

Consentimiento explicado/atestiguado por: Firma _______________

Nombre impreso: _______________

Fecha: ______  Tiempo: ______
APPENDIX M. MANUSCRIPT1: THE METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS
Dear Mrs. Jaime:

Your manuscript entitled "The Methodological Considerations and Philosophical Underpinnings of a Study of Unwed Adolescent Hispanic Fathers of Mexican Origin" has been successfully submitted online and is presently being given full consideration for publication in Journal of Family Issues.

Your manuscript ID is JFI-14-0471.

Please mention the above manuscript ID in all future correspondence or when calling the office for questions. If there are any changes in your street address or e-mail address, please log in to ScholarOne Manuscripts at https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jfi and edit your user information as appropriate.

You can also view the status of your manuscript at any time by checking your Author Center after logging in to https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jfi.

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to Journal of Family Issues.

Sincerely,

Journal of Family Issues Editorial Office
The Methodological Considerations and Philosophical Underpinnings of a Study of Unwed Adolescent Hispanic Fathers of Mexican Origin

Jose A. Jaime

University of Texas at El Paso

Corresponding Author: Jose Arturo Jaime

9105 Moye Drive

El Paso, Texas 79925

Phone Number: (915) 873-4402

Email: ajaim41@gmail.com
The Methodological Considerations and Philosophical Underpinnings of a Study of Unwed Adolescent Hispanic Fathers of Mexican Origin

Political definitions and discourses on fatherhood are used to craft policies and services that affect unwed adolescent fathers. Rarely are these young fathers allowed to represent themselves, what they value, and the social goods they seek in order to be good fathers. The purpose of this article is to review the methodological considerations and philosophical underpinnings of a study utilizing discourse analysis, a qualitative design, which is gaining popularity in the social and health sciences disciplines and is used to build evidence for advocacy on behalf of marginalized groups such as the youth in this study. Specifically, Gee’s theory and method for discourse analysis was used to illuminate the meanings that unwed, adolescent Hispanic fathers of Mexican origin ascribed to fatherhood, father-identity and father-involvement.

Keywords: discourse analysis, qualitative methods, unwed adolescent fathers, marginalized, advocacy research
The Methodological Considerations and Philosophical Underpinnings of a Study of Unwed Adolescent Hispanic Fathers of Mexican Origin

This article reviews the methodological considerations and philosophical underpinnings of a study of unwed adolescent Hispanic fathers of Mexican origin. This group has been excluded by policy makers, service providers and by researchers whose focus has been on adolescent mothers when addressing the teen pregnancy and teen parenting phenomena. The findings in the study elucidate this marginalized group’s discourse on fatherhood and build support for inclusion of fathers in the renegotiation of national and politically based definitions of paternity and fatherhood, which underlie contemporary welfare reform politics in the United States. The study also contributes to the emerging body of knowledge on biological-father absence, fragile families and child wellbeing, and to the limited research on teenage pregnancy from the adolescent father’s perspective.

Literature Reviews

The three types of literature reviews identified by Cooper (as cited by Creswell, 2008, p. 28) were used to inform different aspects of this study. First, an integrative literature review helped to summarize the themes in the literature. This process was used to refine the initial topic of interest, which was teen pregnancy and teen parenting. After finding few studies that focused on the adolescent father’s perspective, the research trail then led to clusters of studies on fatherlessness, biological father absence, fragile families and child wellbeing. These areas of research have emerged in response to changes in marriage, family structures and parenting trends in the United States (McHale, Waller, & Pearson, 2012, p. 285). Even in these clusters, little attention was given to adolescent Hispanic fathers and their Hispanic subgroups. The findings of this integrative literature review were used describe the background and significance of the problem in the introduction to the study.

Next, a methodological literature review was conducted to assist with the selection of a specific qualitative approach to inquiry and to understand its philosophical underpinnings. The investigator
explored the literature on philosophy, linguistics and the various types of methods for discourse analysis. Particular focus was placed on understanding the crucial intersect between theory and method for this approach.

Finally, a theoretical review of the literature provided support for the discussion section in the study and served as a basis for comparing and contrasting the findings. These three literature review approaches helped to frame the study in the context of previous findings and theories, which provided contrasts and support for the study. They also helped to strengthen trustworthiness by building confidence in the truth of the findings, by building support for the applicability of the findings and by improving consistency or repeatability of the findings (Guba, 1981, p. 79-80).

**Methods**

**Discourse Analysis**

Discourse analysis (DA), a qualitative design, was selected and used to illuminate the meanings that unwed, adolescent Hispanic fathers of Mexican origin ascribed to fatherhood, father-identity and father-involvement. This method is gaining popularity in the social and health sciences disciplines and is used to build evidence for advocacy on behalf of individuals or groups experiencing a particular phenomenon. This approach to inquiry emerged in the 1960s and has its roots in linguistics studies, literary criticism and semiotics, i.e., the study of meaning making (Starks & Trinidad, 2007, p. 1374).

Broadly defined, DA is the study of language and can be either descriptive or critical. A descriptive approach is concerned solely with describing the mechanics of language: its forms and structures, and how words and grammar are used to compose sentences and paragraphs. A critical approach also explores the descriptive aspects of language but goes further to elucidate meanings and social structures embedded in language in order to affect some type of social or political change (Gee, 2011, p. 9).
DA shares some similarities with other frequently used qualitative methodologies in the health and social sciences. Starks & Trinidad (2007) note that phenomenology, DA and grounded theory are similar in that all three methods mainly analyze interview texts but are able to include other texts as well. All three methods also use purposive sampling to recruit participants and conduct interviews. Starks & Trinidad continue to explain that these interviews generate large amounts of data and, therefore, large samples are not always needed to access rich data. Analysis in these methods follows a process of coding, sorting, identifying themes and relationships, and drawing conclusions. This process of decontextualization and recontextualization results in a specific product for each method (p. 1374).

That is where the similarities end. All three methods are different from each other in their historical origins, philosophical perspectives, goals, methodology, the audiences they are intended for and what they produce from the analysis (Starks & Trinidad, p. 1373). Each method results in a different type of product and a researcher must be careful to select a method best suited to accomplish their investigation’s aims.

DA was selected for this study of unwed adolescent Hispanic fathers of Mexican origin because it is useful in addressing audiences, such as policy makers and interventionists, who have political and social power to influence change. The method provides an opportunity for a group of people to represent themselves; the method provides insight on how what individuals value; and how power and politics are negotiated in their use of language. Proponents for client-driven welfare reform and social services advocate that the voice of fathers, particularly adolescent fathers, have been blatantly left out of the national discourse on fatherhood—an exclusion that directly affects and marginalizes them (Barret & Robinson, 1982; Coakley, 2013; Danziger, Wiederspan, & Douglas-Siegel, 2013; Maxwell, Scourfield, Featherstone, Holland, & Tolman, 2012).

Daily, as we engage in communication, we analyze language instinctively and mostly unconsciously to understand what is being said. For the discourse analyst, this process is a conscious and
methodic approach to building evidence to support a theory on how language is being used to accomplish social purposes (Trappes-Lomax, 2004, p. 133). DA is a not solely an analytic tool for linguists but is a multidisciplinary approach used by scholars in the fields of rhetoric, education, health and social services, marketing and communications, and political science. Trappes-Lomax (2004, p. 134) clarifies that depending on particular disciplinary dispositions, topics of interest and research aims, analysts may focus on different aspects of language (e.g., functionalism, structuralism, social interactionism).

Therefore, when one talks about DA, it is important to define exactly what is included to create what Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) refer to as a complete package, which is comprised of complimentary theoretical and methodological foundations. The authors explain that:

The package contains, first, philosophical (ontological and epistemological) premises regarding the role of language in the social construction of the world, second, theoretical models, third, methodological guidelines for how to approach a research domain and fourth, specific techniques for analysis. In discourse analysis, theory and method are intertwined and researchers must accept the basic philosophical premises in order to use discourse analysis as their method of empirical study. (p. 4)

These philosophical premises guide the analyst to focus on certain concepts or domains of language for their study, such as: language in use, which treats language as an instrument of social control and social change; language above or beyond the sentence, which sees language as reflecting and shaping social order; language as meaning in interaction, which looks at how we make meaning from interacting with symbols and society; and language in situational and cultural context (Trappes-Lomax, 2004, p.134). Each of these domains is guided by a theory of how language works and specific tools of inquiry are used to operationalize that theory when analyzing the domain.

**Gee’s Theory and Method**

Gee’s theory and method for DA was used for this study. When applying Gee’s DA design, the domain under investigation is language-in-use. Gee’s theory states that “language-in-use is about saying-doing-being and gains it’s meaning from the game or practice it is part of and enacts” (2011, p. 80)
Gee defines *understanding* as a combination of knowing what is being said, who is saying it and what they are trying to be or do” (2011, p. 2). According to Gee, a Discourse, big “D,” is a type of “identity kit which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognize” and discourse with a little “d,” is used “for connected stretches of language that make sense, like conversations, stories, reports, arguments, essays; discourse is part of Discourse — Discourse is always more than just language” (Gee, 1989, p. 6-7).

Gee’s (2011) method also states that people use speech and writing to create seven areas of reality or building tasks: significance, practices, identities, relationships, politics, connections, and sign systems and knowledge. This method provides six tools of inquiry or questions for thinking about how to analyze any discourse: situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations (p. 12).

The tools of inquiry that operationalize the theory are designed to describe and explain what the researcher takes to exist and be important in a domain. In this study, the focus was on what was being said about fatherhood, how language was being used to create a father-identity and how language was being used to do fatherly things, such as being involved and providing for their children. The method, therefore, provides 42 questions (seven building tasks times six tools of inquiry) that can be asked of any text, and the full use of these would constitute a *full or ideal* discourse analysis (Gee, 2011, p. 121). For example, the discourse analyst would ask six questions when using *significance*, the first of the seven building tasks: How are (1) situated meanings, (2) social languages, (3) figured worlds, (4) intertextuality, (5) Discourses, and (6) Conversations being used to build relevance or significance for things and people? Similar question combinations are created with the remaining six building tasks. Researchers can select from these tools when analyzing their specific discourse in order to address their research questions.
Gee’s method for discourse analysis is both descriptive and critical. It not only focuses on the grammar (“d”iscourse) to understand how language is being used, but also to identify “D”iscourses being constructed to provide important insight into the meanings, interpretations and cultural models used by unwed adolescent Hispanic fathers of Mexican origin to discursively construct fatherhood, father-identity and father-involvement and to elucidate what social goods are desired in their talk. This method is also a social constructivist approach, with the goal of relying on the participants’ point of view as a way of explaining social interactions (Creswell, 2008, p. 8).

Three Traditions In Gee’s Theory and Method

An understanding of the three different traditions, which Gee infused into his theory and method, provided insight into the use of this methodology (Rogers, 2004, p. 4).

American Anthropological Linguistics and Social Linguistics.

The first tradition Gee incorporates is American anthropological linguistics and social linguistics, which studies language use in the contexts of specific sites such as local communities or social settings. Fieldwork or explorations of the natural environments are used to obtain insight on the sites and how they affect language use and how language is related to the culture, values and identities in that location (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2008, p. 534).

It was important that the researcher conducting the study on adolescent fathers understood the community and culture where participants lived and where the interviews were conducted. The need for fieldwork was minimized because the investigator/interviewer was born and raised in the U.S.-Mexico border city where the study took place. He is Hispanic of Mexican origin, bilingual in English and Spanish, acquainted with the vernacular of both languages, and, as a youth development professional, he has extensive experience working with adolescents. Additionally, in order to provide nonthreatening social settings for the participants, they were asked to select the locations for the interviews and to indicate whether they wanted to communicate using either English or Spanish.
Situated and Embodied Cognition.

The second tradition included in Gee’s method is concerned with cognition and provides theories for how thinking occurs. *Situated and embodied cognition* comes from the *cultural models* literature and proposes that cognition or *thought* does not only occur in our heads but is embodied in social practices, contexts and environments and that knowledge is distributed across people and environments (Rogers, 2004, p. 5).

It is a social constructivist worldview, which assumes that individuals seek to make meaning of their lives and the world and that these meanings are complex and are formed through interactions with other persons (Creswell, 2008, p. 8). These assumptions were reflected in design of the study’s interview questions, which asked participants to talk about the meaning of fatherhood in their lives and in society and during the data analysis that focused on the participant’s definitions, interpretations and explanations of fatherhood.

It was also important to pay close attention to the role of the researcher as a co-constructor of meaning. Jootun, et al. (2009) emphasize that researchers must understand that they are part of the world under study and that reflexivity, or reflecting on oneself, should be a part of every qualitative study (p. 42). To prepare for the study, the researcher used reflective journaling techniques to make explicit his personal knowledge of the phenomenon, values, identities and roles that might affect the study. The researcher took time to reflect at every phase of the study (designing, implementing, analyzing, reporting the findings, etc.) in addition to consulting with colleagues, advisors and IRB personnel.

Michel Foucault.

An in-depth study of Michel Foucault and his philosophies was conducted in order to understand the third tradition, which provides the dominant philosophical underpinnings to Gee’s methodology. Foucault was a French philosopher who died in 1984 at the age of 57 and was then seen as one of the most influential intellectuals of the twentieth century (Ahluwalia, 2010, p. 600). A detailed discussion of
Foucault goes beyond the goals of this paper. However, it is important to highlight a few concepts, which are evidenced in Gee’s method and theory.

Petković (2010) identifies three ontologies in Foucault’s works, which correspond to the chronological phases of Foucault’s theorizing: the ontology of discourse in the 1960s, the ontology of power in the 1970s and the ontology of the self through his work in the 1980s (p. 176). These ontologies are also found in Gee’s method. The ontology of language is found in Gee’s focus on language-in-use. The ontology of power is evidenced in Gee’s treatment of social politics and the distribution of social goods. And, the ontology of the self is reflected in Gee’s explorations of situated identities.

Foucault departed from traditional forms of philosophical reflection and used a new model for the analysis of cultural phenomena, which was influenced by the works of Nietzsche, Marx and Freud (Major-Poetzle, 1983). He argued that there was “another reality behind language” and that deeper meanings could be found depending on the systems each culture used to for interpreting signs (p. 32, 33).

He referred to his approach as an archeology of knowledge. “Archeology is a task that doesn’t consist of treating discourse as signs referring to a real content like madness. It treats discourses, such as medicine, as practices that form the objects of which they speak” (Horrocks & Jevtic, 2009, p.64). In other words, Foucault viewed madness as something that was defined and socially constructed as a social problem by the practice of medicine. This questioning of institutions and their motives for creating social definitions by which to frame things and groups of people is called problematization. “It is more a description of thinking as a practice than a diagnosis of ideological manipulation” (Bacchi, 2012, p. 1).

The issue of teenage childbearing had enjoyed social invisibility in the United States until the 1950s and early 1960s, when rates reached historical peaks (Furstenburg, 2007). Taking note of the cost of early childbearing, Jimmy Carter was the first president to define this issue as a social problem. It has
remained on the domestic agenda of every administration since. In 1995, President Bill Clinton called teenage childbearing, “our most serious social problem,” even though teenage childbearing rates had declined to more than half of what they had been in the 1950s (p. 1). The problematization of teenage childbearing was driven by cost-reduction goals but ignored the goals of the teenagers bearing children. Gee’s method helps to identify the goals and the social goods desired by participants of the study of Hispanic adolescent fathers. The intent of Gee’s DA is to define the problem from the point of view of those who are considered to be the problem.

Foucault (1984) stated that “knowledge is not for knowing: knowledge is for cutting.” This cutting of knowledge leads to excavation of an episteme. Very broadly defined, episteme is the historical grid or network, which guides the creation of knowledge and is different in each historical era. For example, in the Renaissance episteme, knowing was about guessing and interpreting, not observing and demonstrating. The Renaissance man believed in a world that reflected its creator and thought in terms of similitudes, “the theatre of life, the mirror of nature” (Horrocks & Jevtic, 2009, p. 67). On the other hand, in the Classical episteme, people thought about the world in terms of representation, identities and differences. Thought was not about guessing but about finding order in the world. This episteme was reflected in the development of the disciplines of language, history and biology, which are based on the order of things (p. 68).

Gee’s methodology incorporates these Foucauldian concepts in different ways. The archeology part is incorporated as an excavation of the six areas of discourse that we use to build reality: significance, practices, identities, relationships, politics, connections and sign systems. The “cutting” part is reflected in the tools of inquiry that are used to analyze discourse by asking questions about: situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations. Gee’s method replaces the excavation of a historical episteme with the exploration of cultural models to understand how participants think about their lives and the world.
Finally, Foucault believes that the possession of knowledge is power. Power is derived from institutions—such as churches, government and psychiatric and penal systems—that “are undoubtedly essential to the general functioning of the wheels of power” (Foucault, 1984, p. 58). These institutions define and manipulate people’s identities into conformity or what they also define as normal. Power is not only enacted as a negative force in society but Foucault explains that power is also a positive force:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourses. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression”. (p. 61)

Foucault is interested in exploring how power is negotiated in discourse and in the creation of knowledge but also in how individuals are defined as problems by institutions in society.

**Regulatory Requirements**

The study was approved by and complied with the regulatory requirements of an institutional review board (IRB) and followed statutes for the protection of human subjects and ethical guidelines. The informed consent, the voluntary nature of the study and the researcher’s role as a mandated reporter were explained to participants. The investigator consulted with IRB personnel when needed and received approval to make minor modifications to the research protocol, which facilitated the recruitment of participants.

**Recruiting Participants**

The snowball effect was used to access participants for this study who were unwed, adolescent, Hispanic fathers of Mexican origin. This method is used for marginalized groups that are considered hidden and hard-to-reach populations (Noy, 2008, p. 328). Upon approval from the IRB to proceed with the study, key informants—such as community leaders, school staff and social service professionals who had access to adolescents—were informed of the study through phone calls, emails and in-person
visits. Simultaneously, flyers were posted in city recreation centers, public libraries, youth-serving nonprofits and teen parent medical centers across the city.

One month later, the researcher had received no calls from potential participants and decided to adjust his recruitment strategy. First, he consulted the literature on incentives and found that Grant & Sugarman (2004) state that incentives become problematic when certain conditions exist singly or in a combination with each other. These conditions are created:

When the subject is in a dependency relationship with the researcher, where the risks are particularly high, where the research is degrading, where the participant will only consent if the incentive is relatively large because the participant’s aversion to the study is strong, and where the aversion is a principled one—when these conditions are present, the use of incentives is highly questionable. (p. 732)

After consulting with an IRB staff person who agreed that the problematic conditions were not present, a modification to the proposal was submitted and approved by the IRB. The gift certificate amount was increased from thirty dollars to forty dollars and modifications reflecting the increase were made on the recruitment flyers in English and Spanish, and on the consent form. Approval was also given by the IRB for a recruitment ad that was created for local publications.

The distribution of flyers across the city proved to be time consuming and expensive. As an alternative approach, the researcher called the executive level administrators for the city’s recreation centers, the libraries, youth serving nonprofits, school districts and the teen parent medical clinics. This method proved to be more effective and most organizations agreed to have their staff distribute and post the flyers at each of their branches. Additionally, the approved ad was placed in two issues of the community college student newspaper and in another local publication.

Finally, the researcher made follow-up calls to key informants and requested to be allowed to present to youth development professionals at community meetings and directly to adolescents during classes or programs offered by the organizations. This method proved to be the most effective. Calls from interested participants or service providers, who were willing to recruit participants, were received
shortly after each presentation. Within one week, five participants responded after being encouraged to participate by their girlfriends, counselors or a youth development professional, and two responded after seeing the flyer at one of the city’s recreation centers. Two adult fathers also saw the ad and inquired about the study because they were forming an advocacy group to support fathers fighting for joint custody of their children.

Sample Size

Three sources were used to identify appropriate sample sizes: the literature on sampling for qualitative studies, personal communication with Dr. James Paul Gee (the author of the DA method used in the study) and the actual data analysis process.

General guidelines for selecting sample size were found in the literature review. Morse (2000, 2011) has written that in qualitative research studies, sample size depends on five things: the scope of the study, the nature of the topic, the quality of the data, the study design and the use of shadowed data (when participants include others’ experience along with their own).

Mason (2010) adds that the guiding principal for sample size should be saturation. He analyzed the sample sizes used in 560 PhD studies using qualitative approaches and qualitative interviews. Mason identified a range of potential conclusions that he could make from his research. He found that:

On the one hand, PhD researchers (and/or their supervisors) don’t really understand the concept of “saturation” and are doing a comparatively large number of interviews. This ensures that their sample sizes, and therefore their data, are defensible. Alternatively, PhD researchers do understand the concept of saturation but they find it easier to submit theses based on larger samples than are needed “just to be on the safe side” (and therefore feel more confident when it comes to their examination).

Irrepective of their understanding of saturation, PhD researchers are using samples in line with their proposal to suit an independent quality assurance process (i.e., doing what they said they were going to do). (para. 56)

Mason advocates for a proper use of saturation and sample sizes, even if this means having to prepare more diligently for defending these strategies to audiences that may not be well versed in the concept of saturation in qualitative inquiry.
In addition to the review of the literature on sample size for qualitative research, the investigator consulted via email with Dr. James Paul Gee, the author of the DA method selected for the study. The author explained that his method produces a theory for how language is being used. Therefore, he diverts from the guiding principal of saturation and explains that the important consideration used to determine sample size is whether sufficient evidence has been collected to sufficiently support the theory developed through the analysis.

In this same personal communication, Gee suggested that the investigator start the study with seven interviews. Each interview was to be analyzed immediately after it occurred and before the next interview was conducted. This helped the researcher to reflect through analysis on how the themes and theory were emerging. Additional participants could be included as needed. The investigator followed this advice and found strong similarities between the discourses of six participants who reported absent fathers in their lives. The one participant with an involved father provided an important contrast. Common themes began to emerge after each analysis, and every interview provided additional evidence to support the rationale for the theory. After the seventh interview, the theory was well developed and supported by abundant evidence found in each transcript.

**Interviews**

The investigator also prepared for the interviews in various ways: through a review of the literature on interviewing (with a focus on interviewing adolescent males), through mock interviews with classmates and through reflection about power dynamics in interview settings.

The literature review acquainted the investigator with the work of Eder & Fingerson (2002) on interviewing young people. These authors provide three ways for building rapport with children and adolescents. First, they recommend conducting field observations of the population to acquaint the researcher with the cultural and social structures, communication competence, and discourse patterns.
The researcher is a youth development professional and conducted observational fieldwork along with reflective journaling to prepare for the interviews.

Second, the authors recommend that the researcher should be sensitive to power dynamics and attempt to minimize imbalances by incorporating a natural context that participants are familiar with whenever possible. In order to do this, the recruitment flyers and distribution locations were teen friendly, inviting and nonthreatening. The investigator was conscious of avoiding authority symbols, such as dress code, and the participants selected the interview locations where they felt comfortable. All interactions were respectful and nonjudgmental. Individual interviews began with unstructured questions, allowing any anxious concerns to emerge (Eder & Fingerson, 2002, p. 37).

Finally, Eder and Fingerson (2002) address the ethical consideration of getting information without giving something in return and how this may create power inequity (p. 37). In order to avoid this, the researcher self-disclosed along with the participants; was welcoming of questions, comments and exploration of topics; and invited a collective negotiation of interpretations.

Schwalbe & Wolkomir (2003) list some of the problems that can occur in interviews with males, including: (1) struggle for control, (2) nondisclosure of emotions, (3) exaggerated rationality, autonomy and control, and (4) bonding ploys, e.g., “You know what I mean” (p. 203-219). The researcher attempted to identify when these were occurring during the interview and used strategies for sharing control, for using nonthreatening facilitation of the interview and for getting agreement on interpretations. These are strategies familiar to the researcher in his work with youth.

Transcription

The researcher contracted a transcriptionist to transcribe one of the interviews but decided to transcribe the remaining interviews as the first level of analysis and to become acquainted with the data. An adaption of Gee’s (2011) method for transcription was used, which felt more familiar to the researcher but still reflected the nuances that Gee highlighted as important for analysis. For example,
Gee uses notation devices such as a double slash (/\) to indicate a “finished” piece of information. The researcher used a period to indicate the same. Gee’s method of organizing the text into stanzas and underlined words that carried major stress in their tone units were followed (p. 118).

**Data Analysis**

Gee (2010) has compiled a toolkit to acquaint researchers with the tools of inquiry for his method on DA. This book became an invaluable resource for the researcher who became familiar with the explanations and examples provided for each tool, and the data and questions provided were used to practice and to gain a level of skill in the use of the tools in preparation for the study.

The investigator also followed Gee’s steps when conducting the analysis. Each interview was analyzed five times. First, during the transcription process, the researcher became familiar with the data. During the second level of analysis, the researcher focused on the “d’iscourse, the linguistic details, the stories and what participants were saying about fatherhood. In the third and fourth levels of analysis, the focus was on “D”iscourse: the meanings, interpretations, explanations and cultural models that participants were using to talk about father-identity and father-involvement. Important words and phrases were identified during each level and were analyzed using Gee’s tools of inquiry. Broad themes were identified across the transcripts. In the fifth level of analysis, these themes were analyzed to understand what participants were attempting to accomplish with their talk.

The theory that emerged was that unwed, adolescent Hispanic fathers of Mexican origin see fatherhood as something that needs to be repaired. All but one of the teen fathers wanted to be different from their own fathers who were absent. The one participant who had a present father wanted to be just like him. These young fathers talk about themselves as teenagers who have been transformed by their love for their children. They present themselves as good fathers and present providers, willing to sacrifice for their children. Adolescent fathers are politically defined as a problem and costly to society; yet, this study’s participants’ discourse is about wanting to be responsible, self-sufficient and present in
their children’s lives. They all wanted to be recognized as good and legitimate fathers, regardless of their age.

**Validity**

Gee’s (2011) four elements for validity were incorporated into this study: convergence, agreement, coverage, and linguistic details. *Convergence* proposes that a study is more valid when the analysis of discourse is supported by compatible and convincing arguments, which converge with each other. The analysis is performed by asking questions about how participants build Gee’s seven areas of “reality.” Validity increases when the answers to these questions coincide and support the claims made by the analyst (p. 122).

The second area of validity, *agreement*, is found when native speakers of the social languages and other discourse analysts (who accept Gee’s theory and method) agree that the analysis is reflecting a true function of how language operates (p. 123). During the interviews, the investigator asked participants for deeper interpretations and explanations of meanings and frequently asked if what he understood from them was correct. Additionally, another researcher’s analysis of the data resulted in a high level of agreement with the researcher’s analysis. Finally, the findings were discussed with academic advisors who provided feedback and a level of agreement in the findings.

*Coverage* is the third element for validity and is found when the analysis can be applied to related sorts of data. This is where the literature was consulted to support the findings. Several articles are referenced and used to contrast, compare and explain the findings. A study of African American women offered a similar conception of fatherhood as what was found in the study of unwed teen fathers. Several studies were used to explain the “wounding experience” of fatherlessness, which constantly appears in the transcripts of participants with absent fathers. An article on cultural models provided an explanation for how participants structure their talk about father involvement.
The last element of validity is *linguistic details*. Validity increases when the analysis is tied to the structure of the language. In the findings section, the researcher highlights linguistic details and uses them to build support for his findings. Overall, validity is about providing clear and convincing evidence for the analysis and the theory that results from it.

**Conclusion**

This review of the methodological considerations and philosophical underpinnings of a qualitative study of unwed, adolescent, Hispanic fathers hopes to highlight the importance of preparation and reflection as recommendations for any researcher embarking on a qualitative research project.

Preparation began with immersion in the literature on the topic of interest and continued with a selection of the most appropriate theory and method for investigating the research questions. The researcher had to be flexible in order to quickly address unexpected delays and used alternative approaches when initial strategies did not succeed as planned (e.g., participant recruitment). The researcher consulted with advisors, colleagues, and Institutional Review Board (IRB) professionals and was fortunate to have consulted with the author of the method chosen for the study. These individuals provided insight, support and guidance, which helped the researcher to avoid potential pitfalls.

Finally, the practice of reflexivity proved to be an invaluable resource throughout the research process. The investigator used reflective journaling, note taking and documented the steps taken while conducting the project. This review summarizes these reflections and gleans important lessons learned through a challenging and exciting research process.
References


APPENDIX N. MANUSCRIPT 2 THE TALK OF UNWED ADOLESCENT FATHERS OF MEXICAN ORIGIN
Dear Jose Jaime,

Your manuscript entitled "The Talk of Unwed Adolescent Fathers of Mexican Origin. A Discourse Analysis" has been received.

You may log into http://falkcollegeofsporthumanandynamics.submitable.com/login at any time to view the status of your manuscript during the review process. Thank you for submitting your manuscript to Fathering.

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The aim of this study was to apply Gee’s theory and method for discourse analysis to arrive at a theory of how unwed, adolescent fathers of Mexican origin (UAFMO) discursively talk about fatherhood and how this talk aims to attain self-defined social goods (e.g., power, status, recognition). Face to face, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven participants who were unwed biological fathers of one or more children, 18 or 19 years old, reported a Mexican origin and spoke either English or Spanish. The interview data was analyzed using Gee’s 42 questions for discourse analysis. The findings contribute to the literature on biological father absence, fragile families and child wellbeing, and teenage pregnancy from the adolescent father’s perspective.

*Keywords*: teenage pregnancy, unwed adolescent fathers, biological father absence, fragile families and child wellbeing.
The Talk of Unwed Adolescent Fathers of Mexican Origin: A Discourse Analysis

Since the 1990s, the fatherhood responsibility movement has gained bipartisan support resulting in funding for prevention and research programs to understand the societal impact of fatherlessness (Gavanas, 2004). The dominant discourse on paternity and fatherhood underlies contemporary welfare reform politics in the United States leading policy makers to prioritize men’s paternal relations according to the form of those relations, as opposed to the content of their relationships with their children. Political definitions of fatherhood have focused on men’s biological, institutional or financial forms of connection to their children (Haney & March, 2003) and have impacted government policies and programs regarding paternity issues (p. 461).

The fatherhood responsibility movement is not without its critics and is cradled in controversy. Gavanas (2004), for one, claims that “gender, race and sexuality, as social and historical constructions, are strategically challenged and reproduced by those who have a stake in American family politics” in order to promote a certain agenda (p. 7). Proponents for client-driven welfare reform and social services advocate that the voice of fathers, particularly adolescent fathers, have been blatantly left out of this discourse, which affects and marginalizes them (Barret & Robinson, 1982; Coakley, 2013; Danziger, Wiederspan, & Douglas-Siegel, 2013; Maxwell, Scourfield, Holland, Featherstone, & Lee, 2012).

In order to address the phenomenon of father absence, we must elucidate how Hispanic adolescent fathers define fatherhood and, thereby, contribute to the renegotiation of the national and politically based discourse on fatherhood in unwed relationships. With a focus on the adolescent father’s perspective, this study hopes to contribute to the emerging body of knowledge on biological-father absence, fragile families and child wellbeing, and teenage pregnancy from the teen father’s perspective.
Specific Aims

The aim of this study is to arrive at a theory of how unwed, adolescent fathers of Mexican origin (UAFMO) discursively talk about fatherhood and how this talk aims to attain self-defined social goods and goals. The research questions to be answered are: What and how are meanings, interpretations and cultural models utilized by UAFMOs to discursively construct 'fatherhood', 'father-identity' and 'father involvement'? What purposes, goals and social goods are UAFMOs trying to attain with their talk about fatherhood?

Background and Significance

This national dispute has been fueled by the dramatic 41% increase in the rates of unwed parents since the 1970s. The term fragile families was coined in the 1990s to describe unwed families, which are further defined as having a greater risk of living in poverty and having their relationship break up (McLanahan, Garfinkel, Mincy, & Donahue, 2010, p.3). Changes in family and parenting trends have been polemicized among proponents and opponents of a strictly traditional family structure. Family scholars have also embarked on a research journey to try to understand the dynamics of the emerging fragile family phenomenon (McHale, Waller, & Pearson, 2012).

Until recently, most of the research on child wellbeing and single parent families focused on divorced parents. The sharp rise over the past decades in births to unwed mothers, however, has shifted the focus to unmarried single and cohabiting parents (Waldfogel, Craigie, & Brooks-Gunn, 2010, p. 88). As these trends become mainstream, research initiatives have gained support from prominent foundations that are now funding the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study (FFCWS), a multi-year study that is creating a database of publicly accessible data (McLanahan, et al., 2010). Recent findings from the FFCWS suggest that children residing with single or cohabiting parents have less desirable cognitive, behavioral and health outcomes than their counterparts. The negative impact of growing up in a fragile family is later seen in adolescents and young adult’s educational outcomes, risk
of teen birth, and attachment to school and the labor market (Waldfogel, et al., 2010, p. 87). A report of FFCWS key findings prepared by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2014) reported that by age 5, children born in fragile families had higher rates of obesity, asthma and levels of behavior associated with social problems and lower cognitive scores. Research on family structure and child wellbeing has evolved from a focus on divorced parents to unwed parents and, more recently, to biological-father absence.

More than 20 million children (28%) lived in biological-father absent homes in 2011, and one-fourth (5 million) of these children were Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). The National Fatherhood Initiative interprets these statistics as evidence of a father factor that impacts most major social issues in America today (Father Facts, n.d.). A study conducted by this same organization estimates annual federal expenditures to support father-absent homes at about $99.8 billion, a figure that is considered conservative by many standards (Nock & Einolf, 2008, p. 3).

The child welfare system may exclude fathers for several reasons: “because of a pejorative practitioner culture, because mothers fail to identify them or are unwilling to include them, or because workers focus child welfare interventions upon the mother, possibly because of traditional assumptions about gender roles” (Maxwell, Scourfield, Featherstone, Holland, & Tolman, 2012, p. 167). In an attempt to empower single mothers and build their parenting skills, the field of social work runs the risk of reinforcing the father’s absence and downplaying his importance when working with only the mother and child (Sieber, 2008, p. 333).

These systemic practices of focusing on the mother can make a father feel disconnected from his role. The disconnection can be greater for adolescent males desiring assistance with transitioning to fatherhood but finding few if any services or finding services that are irrelevant to their needs, underfunded, or understaffed (Kiselica, 2008, p. 81). In addition, internal barriers to accessing services may include a fear of prosecution for statutory rape, an absence of the desire to meet paternal
responsibilities, a belief that asking for help is a sign of weakness or feeling overwhelmed by the situation (Kiselica, 2008 p. 55-85). Furthermore, the younger the father at the time of a child’s birth, the less likely he is to become and remain involved with the child (Robbers, 2011, p. 174).

The data reveals that adolescent Hispanic mothers are at high risk of having a fragile family with absent fathers. A National Health Statistics Data Brief (Ventura, 2009) reported that nonmarital birth rates were highest for Hispanic women, followed by black women and that 86% of all births to teenagers of any race in 2007 were nonmarital (p. 1). While there has been a dramatic decrease in teen pregnancy and birth rates in the United States, Hispanic teens in 2005 had higher teen pregnancy and birth rates than the overall U.S. population and constituted about 17 percent of the teen population. With the fast-paced growth of the Hispanic population, Hispanic teens are expected to increase to 25 percent of the teen population in 2025 (Ryan, 2005, p. 1).

In order to address the phenomenon of father absence, we must elucidate how Hispanic adolescent fathers define fatherhood and, thereby, contribute to the renegotiation of the national and politically based discourse on fatherhood in unwed relationships.

**Research Design and Methods**

**Gee’s Method for Discourse Analysis**

Gee’s (2011) theory and method for discourse analysis was used for this study. Applying Gee’s design, the domain under investigation is *language-in-use*. Gee’s theory states that “language-in-use is about saying-doing-being and gains its meaning from the game or practice it is part of and enacts” (p. 11). *Understanding*, according to Gee, is a combination of knowing what is being said, who is saying it and what they are trying to be or do (p. 2). According to Gee, a *Discourse* (with the “D” intentionally capitalized) is a type of “identity kit [that] comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognize.” The term *discourse* with a little “d” is used “for connected stretches of language that make
Gee’s method also states that people use speech and writing to create seven areas of reality or building tasks: significance, practices, identities, relationships, politics, connections and sign systems and knowledge. This method provides six tools of inquiry or questions for thinking about how to analyze any discourse: situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations (Gee, 2011, p. 12). The tools of inquiry that operationalize the theory are designed to describe and explain what the researcher takes to exist and be important in a domain.

In this study, the focus was on what was being said about fatherhood, how language was being used to create a “father identity” and how language was being used to do fatherly things (or “father involvement”). The method, therefore, provides 42 questions (seven building tasks multiplied by six tools of inquiry) that can be asked of any text, and the full use of these would constitute a full or ideal discourse analysis (Gee, 2011, p. 121). For example, for “significance” (the first of the seven building tasks), the discourse analyst would ask six questions: (1) How are situated meanings being used to build relevance or significance for things and people?, (2) How are social languages being used to build relevance or significance for things and people?, (3) How are figured worlds being used to build relevance or significance for things and people?, (4) How is intertextuality being used to build relevance or significance for things and people?, (5) How are Discourses being used to build relevance or significance for things and people?, and (6) How are Conversations being used to build relevance or significance for things and people? Researchers can select from these tools when analyzing their specific discourse in order to address their research questions. Table 1 provides Gee’s (2011) full set of building tasks and the corresponding discourse analysis questions that are available to the researcher when analyzing specific stanzas or discourse (p. 121-122).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seven Building Task</th>
<th>Corresponding Discourse Analysis Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices (Activities)</td>
<td>How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identities</td>
<td>How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to enact and depict identities (socially significant kinds of people)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, and Conversations being used to build and sustain (or change or destroy) social relationships?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to create, distribute, or withhold social goods or to construe particular distributions of social goods as “good” or “acceptable” or not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to make things and people connected or relevant to each other or irrelevant to or disconnected from each other?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign Systems and Knowledge</td>
<td>How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses and Conversations being used to privilege or disprivilege different sign systems (language, social languages, other sorts of symbol systems) and ways of knowing?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gee’s method for discourse analysis is both descriptive and critical in that it not only focuses on the grammar (discourse) to understand how language is being used, but also to identify Discourses being constructed that provide important insight into the meanings, interpretations and cultural models used by UAFMOs to discursively construct definitions for *fatherhood*, *father-identity* and *father-involvement* and to elucidate what social goods are desired by these fathers. This method is also a social constructivist approach, with the goal of relying on the participant’s point of view (Creswell, 2007, p. 8) as a way of explaining social interactions.
Regulatory Requirements

This study was approved by and complied with the regulatory requirements of an institutional review board (IRB) and followed statutes for the protection of human subjects and ethical guidelines. At the time of the interview, an informed consent form was provided to participants in their language of choice (English or Spanish). Emphasis was placed on the voluntary nature of the study, and participants were given an opportunity to ask questions or to decide not to participate in the study. All the participants willingly agreed to participate in the study and were given a $40 gift certificate to cover expenses incurred in participating.

Participants

A criterion purposeful sample was used in this study. This is a technique used in qualitative studies and sets up criteria for a sample based on specific purposes associated with answering the research study’s questions. The inclusion criteria required that all participants were: unwed or never married, age 18 or 19, biological fathers of at least one child, of Mexican origin regardless of citizenship or documentation status and able to have meaningful communication in either English or Spanish. The only exclusion criterion was self-reported mental illness, such as depression or anxiety, which could be exacerbated by the study.

Participants were recruited in a U.S.-Mexico border city. The study used the snowball effect, which is commonly utilized to access hidden and hard-to-reach populations by accessing social networks (Noy, 2008, p. 330). Key informants (e.g., community leaders, school staff, social service professionals) with access to adolescents were informed of the study through calls, emails, in-person visits and presentations. Another form of recruitment was through the use of flyers, which were posted in city recreation centers, public libraries, youth-serving nonprofits and teen parent medical centers across the city. Additionally, ads were placed in a community college student paper and another community publication.
Seven participants fitting the inclusion criteria responded and were selected for the study. These participants represented a cross section of residents from the west, south, central, and east parts of the U.S.-Mexico border city. All participants identified with a Mexican origin. Three were 18 and four were 19 years of age (Table 2). Three preferred the interviews in Spanish and four preferred them in English.

All but one of the participants described experiencing some level of father absence in their lives. Participants were in various stages of identifying as a father: one reported expecting his first child, four reported having one child and two reported expecting their second child. Five reported good or stable relationships with their child’s mother, one reported a “broken” relationship and another had separated and had limited contact with his child’s mother. All of the adolescent fathers reported some involvement with their children: one attended all prenatal sessions with his girlfriend, four interacted with their child daily, one interacted weekly and one reported seeing his child once or twice a month.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Pseudonym</th>
<th>Mario</th>
<th>Randy</th>
<th>Joe</th>
<th>Pablo</th>
<th>Jerry</th>
<th>Sergio</th>
<th>Mark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Children Expecting 2nd Child</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant’s Age at Birth of 1st Child</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Will Be 18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Women Participant has had Children With Expecting 1st Child</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who Raised Participant</strong></td>
<td>Mother &amp; Father</td>
<td>Mother &amp; Father</td>
<td>Mainly Mother</td>
<td>Mother &amp; Father</td>
<td>Mother &amp; Father</td>
<td>Mother &amp; Father</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious Affiliation</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Agnostic</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>God, No Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Level</strong></td>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Some High School</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where and what type of Pregnancy Prevention or Sexual Education was received before the pregnancy?</strong></td>
<td>In School, Internet in Mexico and U.S.</td>
<td>Dad, School, Health Class, STDs, Condoms</td>
<td>Mom, Health Class, STDs, Condoms</td>
<td>Mom, 11th grade class, Protection</td>
<td>Parents, School, STDs, Protection</td>
<td>Dad, School in 9th-10th grade, Condoms</td>
<td>School, P.E. Condoms and Birth Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household Earned Income</strong></td>
<td>Self – None, Parents Unknown</td>
<td>Self – None, Parents Unknown</td>
<td>Self – None, Parents $26,000 - $45,000</td>
<td>Self – $1,000 to $5,000, Parents Unknown</td>
<td>Self – None, Parents $26,000 - $45,000</td>
<td>Self – $7,200, Parents Unknown</td>
<td>Self – None, Mother $8,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Relationship to Girlfriend Prior to the Pregnancy</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>3 to 4 months</td>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>1 year and 2 months</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Participant’s Father at Participant’s Birth</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Participant’s Mother at Participant’s Birth</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant’s Parents’ Current Relationship Status</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never Married, Mom</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Never Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant’s Level of Involvement With Their Children</td>
<td>1 to 2 times a month</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Joint Custody, 4 Days a week</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Attends Prenatal Sessions</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants’ Place of Birth</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant’s Length or Residence in the United States</td>
<td>2 Years, 6 Months</td>
<td>18 Years</td>
<td>18 Years</td>
<td>5 Years</td>
<td>18 Years</td>
<td>17 Years, Between U.S. &amp; Mexico</td>
<td>19 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Status as a Couple With Girlfriend</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>Broken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does Participant Provide Financial Support for Child(ren)?</td>
<td>No, Starting to.</td>
<td>Yes, via Parents.</td>
<td>When child is with him. No child support.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes, Prenatal Care.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>As much as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Town Where Participant Resides</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Eastside</td>
<td>Westside</td>
<td>East Central</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Eastside</td>
<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Collection

The information in this study was based on semi-structured, face-to-face, individual interviews. Participants were asked to complete a demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire consisted of 20 items, including items such as age, educational levels, income, living arrangements, information about their children (Table 2). Interviews were conducted at locations chosen by participants and included rooms provided by school counselors or community-based nonprofits or public areas close to the participants’ school or at one participant’s home. The interviews were audio recorded and conducted in either English or Spanish as requested by participants. The semi-structured interview utilized Gee’s interview methods, which included two parts. The “Life” part of the interview asked participants to talk about fatherhood in the context of their life, home and community and the “Society” part asked them to talk about fatherhood in the context of societal interactions (Gee, 2011, p. 149). Sub questions were used as needed to explore the meanings, interpretations and cultural models that participants used to talk about fatherhood, father-identity and father-involvement. For example, when participants said that they wanted to be “good fathers,” the interviewer asked, “Would you explain what it means to be a good father?”

Data Analysis

The analysis method provided by Gee includes steps for a broad approach to Discourse analysis; encouraging modifications by investigators to better address their study’s particular research aims. Gee’s steps include: (1) picking a piece of data, in this case, the study interviews, (2) transcribing the data while looking for sections that address the research questions, (3) analyzing data after each interview and collecting more data until sufficient evidence supporting the theory has been collected, (4) picking some key words and phrases in the data and using the six tools of inquiry questions about the seven building blocks to analyze the data, (5) taking notes and reflecting and looking for themes that may emerge, (6) paying attention to where there may be convergence of themes, (7) organizing the analysis
so that it provides evidence for the themes highlighted and finally, (8) achieving a degree of validity by addressing a variety of linguistic details, convergence, coverage and agreement (Gee, 2011, p. 125).

In this analysis, each transcript was read and analyzed five times. In the first analysis, the interviews were transcribed verbatim and served to acquaint the researcher with the information while identifying general words or phrases for each interview. Analysis 2 focused on identifying how grammar was being used to say things about fatherhood (discourse) and to identify general words or phrases for the term “fatherhood.” Analysis 3 identified how language was being used to “be someone,” i.e., to form a “father-identity.” Likewise, words or phrases were identified for father-identity. Analysis 4 identified how language was being used to do fatherly things (father-involvement) and again, descriptive words or phrases were identified. Analyses 3 and 4 focused on the Discourses being constructed to gain insight on meanings (what was being conveyed or understood), interpretations (elucidations, explications or deeper explanations of meanings) and cultural models (frameworks used to make sense of the world). For each interview, Gee’s tools of inquiry were used to analyze the words or phrases selected after each analysis. The results were compared across interviews and converging themes were identified. Finally, Analysis 5 focused on what participants were trying to attain with their discourse on fatherhood.

Findings

Three major themes and subthemes for each theme were identified, which demonstrated how participants used language to talk (discourse) about fatherhood, father-identity and father-involvement. The theme for fatherhood was Repairing Fatherhood and its subthemes were: The Participants’ Fathers, The Participants as Fathers and Being Teen Dads in Society. The theme for father-identities was Transformed Teens, with the following subthemes: The Vulnerable Son, The Risk-Taking Adolescents and The Loving Father. The theme for father-involvement was The Good Fathers, with the following subthemes: Being Present, Providing and Sacrificing. The social goods desired were “recognition as good fathers” and “legitimacy as fathers” (Table 3). Stanzas or quotations from the transcripts were
used to support the findings and demonstrate how participants used language. Participants’ names have been replaced with pseudonyms to protect their identity.

Table 3. Major themes and subthemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fatherhood: Repairing Fatherhood</th>
<th>Father Identities: Transformed Teens</th>
<th>Father Involvement: The Good Fathers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Participants’ Fathers</td>
<td>The Vulnerable Son</td>
<td>Being Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Participants as Fathers</td>
<td>The Risk Taking Adolescents</td>
<td>Providing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Fathers in Society</td>
<td>The Loving Father</td>
<td>Sacrificing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social Goods Desired:** Recognition as Good Fathers & Legitimacy

**Fatherhood: Repairing Fatherhood**

Participants talked about fatherhood in their lives by comparing themselves to their fathers. For six of the participants, they talked of making amends or reparations to fatherhood, i.e., wanting to be different and better fathers than their own. When they talked about being an adolescent father in society, they talked about feeling supported by certain individuals but stigmatized by strangers.

*The Participants’ Fathers.*

Six of seven participants highlighted certain types of father absence in their lives, such as: emotional absence; abandonment; and separation by divorce, death or incarceration. Their discourse was highly descriptive, implicitly emotive, and mediated their positioning in their relationships to their father. There were hints of anger, grief and detachment from their fathers. “Mark” described the most striking account of father absence:

Honestly, I don’t know his name. I don’t have his last name, I have my mother’s father’s last name, and I guess (because my mom has court problems) I was reading… she told me to read it … I read it and, I don’t think she knows it yet, but I read … So, I was, essentially a rape baby. And my girlfriend tells me, “If you knew how he looked, and if you’d see him in the street, what would you do?” I’m like, “Just pass him like he’s anybody else because I don’t know if it was true.” What actually happened? I don’t know. I don’t know him. I don’t know his name and honestly I could care less.
This statement illustrates some of the discourse on illegitimacy that was found in the interviews. Mark doesn’t know his father’s name, doesn’t have his father’s last name, and couldn’t recognize him if he saw him on the street. Mark says he “could care less” about his father; however, he questions what happened or if the rape even occurred. Mark’s indifference is undermined by the many questions he has about his father. Similar discourses appear in the transcripts of all the teens with absent fathers. “Mario,” for example, expressed indifference towards and detachment from his father who abandoned him as a child; yet, he said that he loved him because he was his parent. Four other participants highlighted lesser levels of detachment, citing reasons for their fathers’ absences (e.g., death, divorce, incarceration). Only one participant, “Jerry,” described a strong relationship with a father who was very involved in his life.

The Participants as Fathers.

All of the participants of this study expressed a desire to be good fathers to their own children. For participants with absent fathers, this meant that they wanted to be different from their own fathers. They wanted to insulate their children from the painful experience of being fatherless. As a child, “Pablo’s” father left his mother, remarried and moved to another city. He references this experience when he describes the type of father that he wants to be:

Well, I want them (my children) to feel proud of me, that they see that, that I truly was a good father. That I wasn’t only someone who engendered them and left them there, scattered, abandoned. I want them to think the best [of me] and I’m going to do everything possible to help them succeed.

For Pablo, being a good father means not being like his own father, who was “only someone who engendered” him and then abandoned him. All of the participants used these types of comparisons to talk about themselves as fathers, with the exception of Jerry who wanted to imitate his father, a man who was always there for him.
The Teen Father in Society.

When participants talked about fatherhood in society, they talked about being supported and stigmatized. They talked about receiving support from individuals, such as counselors, teachers or religious leaders, but also said that they were not aware of any programs that specifically provided support for adolescent fathers and would attend if they learned of any. Four of the participants included accounts of feeling stigmatized by strangers. “Randy” talked about going to Wal-Mart with his girlfriend and his child:

Well, like the older, older people, they give us an ugly look sometimes because of how young we are with the kid. And well, there’s nothing really much that we can really do about it, just, turn the other cheek.

Throughout the interview, Randy referred to his child by name or as “my son.” In this instance, he refers to him as “the kid,” a term that judgmental strangers might use to refer to his son while giving the “ugly look.” He follows this with the phrase “just turn the other cheek,” which portrays him as a teenager who is choosing to do the right thing.

Father-Identity: Transformed Teens

As these young men participated in the interviews, they were using language to create adolescent “father-identities.” They all presented themselves as fathers who were “transformed teenagers” and used three other identities or stages of being to explain what that transformation meant. The transformation account began with participants presenting themselves as vulnerable sons, then as risk-taking adolescents and finally as loving fathers. Each identity/stage was driven by a desire for relationship and connection: as vulnerable sons to their fathers, as risk-taking adolescents to their girlfriends and friends, and as loving fathers to their children. For each identity, they also talked about the different positions of power they held in relation to others in their lives.

The Vulnerable Son.

When the participants talked about their childhood, they used language to present themselves as sons, vulnerable to and affected by their fathers’ actions and decisions. Participants with absent fathers
described themselves as powerless children unable to affect their fathers’ actions, which impacted their sense of self. Pablo stated:

He found someone else, made his own family and well, he moved to another city, and well, he left us aside.... We could say yes (he was a good father), like yes, but no. I wonder how he could have left us; when we were so little, he left us. And now that we got older, well, when we needed a father, there wasn’t anyone to speak to, with whom we could talk.

Pablo uses very emotive language when he talks about his father. He doesn’t understand how his father could have “left [him] aside” and created “his own family.” The phrase, “he left us,” is emphasized three different times—demonstrating how significant this event was to Pablo. The first three lines are about Pablo’s father’s actions. The last two lines summarize the impact of those actions, which Pablo still feels, even as he’s gotten older. The identity that is being created is one of an abandoned son, one that is not valued by his father. This same identity is found in the transcripts of other participants with absent fathers when they talk about their childhood.

On the other hand, Jerry, who said he had a “great father,” presents a very different identity of himself as a vulnerable son:

I have a great father. He has been with me through thick and thin, in situations of school fights, everything. He has always been there to give me advice. He never judges me for things that I do and he always asks me prior to, you know, getting a punishment for any reason … my side of the story, before deciding what to do and if I have the choice, I wish I can definitely be like my dad. Like I said, he’s always been there for me, and I also want to be there for my child.

Jerry was the outlier in the group and provided insight into the impact that an involved father can have on his child’s sense of self-worth. Jerry’s discourse creates an identity of a vulnerable son who feels included, valued and attached to his father.

*The Risk-Taking Adolescent.*

In addition to describing themselves as vulnerable sons, the participants also described themselves as risk-taking adolescents. One teenager talked about being a gang member, five talked about “partying” or using drugs or alcohol, and all of them talked about having unprotected sex. Four of the seven participants said that this was their first romantic relationship and their sexual debut. While all
of them said they had received some type of sexual education, knew about contraception, and had one or more pregnancy scares, they all admitted to making a decision to have a baby. For some it was a passive decision, for others it was a deliberate one. “Joe” explains how he made that decision:

After that [pregnancy scare], she started talking and she would [say] like, “Why can’t we have a baby?” Things like that. It got me thinking, you know, and honestly at the time I was naïve. I think I was, not only did I think, I was in love with her but just, you know, having sex and things like that, I had, things that I liked. We did make the choice to have a baby, you know we tried just to, you know, no condom, nothing. We tried to have a baby. It was a conscious choice; I made a decision.

Joe gradually expresses personal responsibility for the pregnancy. He starts by placing responsibility on his girlfriend’s influence, then on the circumstances, then shares responsibility with his girlfriend and finally places the full weight of his actions on himself. In this short stanza, Joe is constructing a transition of identity, from a naïve adolescent to a responsible young adult. This theme is embedded in all of the transcripts that were analyzed.

*The Loving Father.*

Finally, participants used language to create an identity of themselves as loving fathers. All of the participants talked about a specific moment when they connected emotionally with their children and with fatherhood. For some, it was the sonogram moment—when they first heard their baby’s heart beat. For others, it was being present at their child’s birth. Joe stated:

I say that it was the day he was born. I mean, the second he was born. I thought it was so incredible how you can love a person you don’t know at all. He didn’t have to say anything. He didn’t, he didn’t even look at me, just, the first second I heard him cry, I felt something. I cried too, you know. I just thought it was an amazing thing that he, he doesn’t have to speak, he doesn’t have to say anything, I just … I love him. I just have that love for him, and I don’t know how to explain it.

Joe is talking about being a loving father, full of wonder for his child. His loving father identity involves cognitive characteristics in the following phrases: “I thought it was so incredible,” “I heard him cry” and “I don’t know how to explain it.” In addition, it is expressed emotively through his amazement at his own feelings of unconditional love and his tears of joy. The loving father identity was identified in each of the participant’s discourse about fatherhood.
The transition from vulnerable sons to risk-taking adolescents and finally to loving fathers creates a new identity of transformed teenagers who have matured and are proud of their accomplishments, as Pablo and Randy stated:

I’ve changed, I’ve matured a lot, in my way of thinking, I don’t have the same mind of an adolescent. I know I’m young but, well, now I **do** think twice about things before doing them.

I know that my girlfriend always gets mad cause I would want to tell someone my story. Cause, I started off as a bad kid, and look at me now. I’m here at vocation, in a vocational trade, learning a trade, getting A+ Certification. I already have a safety certification, and a forklift certification. This year, I should get the A+ Certification and then, I’m getting certified in Microsoft and another computer certification. … Cause if it wasn’t for him [my son], I would probably still be smoking pot or something. Yeah, getting in trouble.

The participants’ transformed teenager identity reveals an increased sense of control over their lives. As sons, the locus of power was externalized, and participants felt little control over their father’s decisions. As teenagers, they gained some control through emancipating acts, e.g., decision-making and taking risks through relationships, sex and fatherhood. Finally, as loving fathers, the locus of control is internalized and now these adolescent fathers feel more control over decisions that not only affect them, but also their children and their families.

**Father-Involvement: The Good Fathers**

Participants also use language to do fatherly things, which demonstrate that they are involved fathers. For these participants, “father-involvement” meant being present and providing for their children.

**Being Present.**

Throughout the interviews, participants illustrated a variety of ways in which they were being present fathers, which included: attending prenatal appointments; being present during the delivery of their children; caring, playing and spending time with their children; sharing household duties with their girlfriends; working odd jobs; and fighting to be included in their children’s lives. In the following stanza, Joe, who at 18 had already fought a legal battle to get joint custody of his child, talks about
“believing,” “doing” and “wanting” things that illustrate how he is present:

I’ve always believed that just because I’m his father doesn’t mean that I have any less of a right to see him or any less of input over him. I don’t believe that mothers own their children. Yes, she did carry him nine months in her womb, but it took two of us to make him. She couldn’t have made him by herself and I couldn’t do the same, so I believe that he is both of ours. He’s not just her responsibility; he is both of ours and I don’t believe, “Oh! It’s my responsibility to be in his life” or “it’s something I should do,” but it’s something I want to do! I want to be in his life! I want him to remember, I want to be the one teaching him things, showing him. Just, I want to be in his life.

Joe is being a present father by fighting for the right to be in his child’s life and wanting his share of the responsibility. Joe emphatically wants the things that a present father would want: to be responsible, to be in his child’s life, to be remembered, to be the one teaching and showing and “just to be in his life.” All of the participants used similar language to present themselves as being present in their children’s lives.

**Providing.**

These fathers used language in certain ways to demonstrate how they were providing for their children and families. They were “providing” when they talked about finishing high school, working odd jobs, buying food and pampers, supporting their girlfriends and enlisting in the military or going to college. Jerry summarized how participants equated “father-involvement” to being a present provider:

I want to provide shelter you know, food, just provide in general, but mostly and I hope it doesn’t sound too cliché, I really, really want to give him love. That’s what matters the most in a father-son, father-daughter relationship, I think.

Again, all participants echoed this type of talk about being present providers in very broad terms that involved providing not only for the physical needs but also for the emotional needs of their children and families.

**Sacrificing.**

Finally, all of these adolescents used language to show how they sacrificed for their children. They all confronted situations that presented psychosocial and economic demands that few teenagers are prepared for. Joe speaks of fatherhood sacrifices and Mark illustrates the frustration that can come from those sacrifices.
Being a father, it’s just sacrifices. That’s one thing I’ve learned, its sacrifices. It’s all about whatever’s best for your son, your child. It’s what has to be best [for him].

I had two jobs. I would wake up at three in the morning, go to work, then I would come back. Actually, I wouldn’t come back. I would go straight to the other job, and then come back, around nine. So I had two jobs and then her mom would get mad at me because I wouldn’t take care of her [my girlfriend]. I wouldn’t talk to her. Well, because it’s kind of hard to talk when I’m asleep!

These stanzas show traces of the stressors that commonly impact fragile families, and frequently lead to poverty and broken relationships. All of these teen fathers were struggling financially. Mark said that his relationship was “already broken” but that they still lived together. Joe’s relationship had dissolved after his girlfriend, even though his baby was not yet born. The two fathers, who said they had stable relationships with their girlfriends, were 19 years of age, interviewed in Spanish and were expecting a second child.

Social Goods

These major themes and subthemes provide insight into what these young fathers were trying to accomplish through their discourse on fatherhood. Gee (2011) defines social goods as “anything a person or group in society wants and value, things like: status, money, love, respect, and friendship” (p. 210). The thing that these young fathers sought in these interviews was to be recognized as being “good” fathers. They spoke like responsible teenagers who have been transformed by their love and commitment to their children, and they wanted to be recognized as legitimate fathers, regardless of their age.

Discussion

The findings of this study are similar to what Haney and March (2003) found in their discourse analysis of African American women’s conceptions of fatherhood. In both studies, participants’ definitions of fatherhood were prioritized around the content of father relations, particularly father-identity and father-involvement. Political definitions, which prioritize fatherhood around form, focus on men’s biological, institutional or financial connection to their children. While these teen fathers
identified with their biological connection to their children, institutional connections like marriage were rarely prioritized. Instead, they placed emphasis on being a present father and providing financial support, but also love, time, quality relationships and emotional and psychological support.

Several studies have documented the phenomenon of fatherlessness and its characteristics, which are referenced by six of this study’s participants. The terms “the dad deficit” (Fisher, 2008), “father hunger” (Borduin & Klietz, 2003; Capps, 2000; Perrin, Baker, Romelus, Jones, & Heesacker, 2009; Wineburgh, 2000) and “the father wound” (Miller, 2013) are peppered throughout the literature on biological father absence. The wounding experience, described by Miller (2013) as a “sense of loss or grief” felt by sons regarding their fathers’ absence, explains the way that these participants talked about their fathers. Miller theorizes that the act of these wounded sons becoming fathers themselves may aid in their healing (p. 194). The transformed teen identity, which these teens revealed in the interviews, may be evidence of this healing taking place.

The young men in this study all reported having received some type of sexual education prior to the pregnancy. They also reported making passive or deliberate decisions not to use birth control. Sexual education has been proven to increase knowledge about sexuality and birth control (Visser & van Bilsen, 1994) and encourage contraception use during later sexual debuts (Bourke, et. al, 2014); however, one study found that comprehensive sexual education has been found to have no impact on lowering teen pregnancy rates (Hedman, Larsen & Bohenblust, 2008). For the teen fathers in this study, the pregnancies were not the result of lack of information but were possibly motivated by a desire for relational connection. Along with education, pregnancy prevention efforts must also address psychosocial factors.

The cultural model that was used by participants to talk about fatherhood has previously been described by Milkie & Denny (2014). Using this model, participants specified ideal roles fathers should play, provided evaluations of those roles and described the benefits or effects of their fathers’
interactions. The young fathers in this study talked about a good father as being present and providing. They evaluated their own fathers and most found them lacking. Finally, they talked about wanting to spare their own children from the effects of father absence.

This criterion purposeful sample is limited in that it is not generalizable to all fathers. Only young men who identified themselves as “willing fathers” responded to this study and therefore, further research is needed to understand unwed adolescent males who may have fathered children but have never identified with fatherhood or are unwilling to take on the associated responsibilities. Yet, for fathers like the ones in this study, there is much that can be done to support them in a time of major transition in their lives. The criterion requiring that participants be 18 or 19 years of age ages was selected because these ages signify a time of transition from adolescence into young adulthood. For these participants, it was also a time of transitioning into fatherhood.

Participants in this study had varied economic backgrounds, geographic residence, immigration status and language, which are important in a study that uses qualitative method and focuses on power dynamics enacted through talk. “Discourse analysts often look at two contrasting groups, not to set up a binary contrast, but in order to get ideas about what the poles of a continuum may look like. We can get ideas that can then inform the collection of new data out of which emerges a much more nuanced and complex picture” (Gee, 2011, p. 150).

One participant differed from the others because he had an involved father and consistently talked about wanting to emulate his father, while the others wanted to be different than theirs. The three participants who chose to interview in Spanish were older, had lived for less time in the United States, reported less conflict with their girlfriends, had less parental support and had more financial struggles than those who interviewed in English. It could be that their age, cultural identity and the length in their relationship helped them to perceive stressors in a different manner. Further research on this is needed to understand the unique challenges for young fathers with different levels of acculturation.
Participants in this study said that informal social groups—where they could meet other teen dads, and take their children and girlfriends—would be helpful in building support. These groups could also provide access to community resources and assistance with school, work, finding employment, childcare and financial assistance. Another strategy that might be helpful is a hybrid of the mentoring model, which is an evidence-based intervention used to support at risk youth. This hybrid-mentoring model would connect fragile teenage families with stable and supportive couples.

Additionally, policy makers and social service providers must allow client-driven discourses on fatherhood, such as the one in this study, to help shape policy and services. Robbers’ (2011) recommends that parenting programs for young Hispanic fathers should “focus on increasing interaction opportunities between fathers and children, rather than focusing on support.” Robbers also states that since many young Hispanic fathers grew up without fathers, programs should “focus on the role of father absence and use the effects of this as a motivator to get young fathers involved with their own children” (p. 169).

Participants in this study challenge stigmatizing, punitive and exclusionary assumptions that have commonly been the guide for how we as a society respond to unwed, adolescent fathers. The phenomenon of absent fathers is concerning because of the negative, broad-reaching and lasting impact it can have on our society. While much research is needed to understand why some fathers refuse to be involved with their children, we can begin by listening to the discourses of all types of fathers and building the social scaffolding needed to support those who choose to do right by their children.
References


DATE: January 28, 2014

TO: Jose Jaime, MPA, BSW

FROM: University of Texas at El Paso IRB

STUDY TITLE: [547093-4] The Talk of Unwed Adolescent Fathers of Mexican Origin: A Discourse Analysis

IRB REFERENCE #: 547093-4

SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: January 28, 2014

EXPIRATION DATE: December 17, 2014

REVIEW TYPE: Administrative Review

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this research study. University of Texas at El Paso IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This study has received Administrative Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.
Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after termination of the project.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Christina Ramirez at (915) 747-7693 or cramirez22@utep.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

cc:
VITA

Dr. Jose Arturo Jaime was born in El Paso, Texas to Arturo Jaime and Maria Alicia Jaime. The oldest of three siblings, he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work from the University of Texas at El Paso in 1993. He was awarded the National Urban/Rural Fellowship and completed his Master of Public Administration in 2008 from Baruch College, The City University of New York. In 2009, Dr. Jaime was officially accepted into the Interdisciplinary Health Sciences doctoral program at The University of Texas at El Paso and in 2013, Dr. Jaime received a certificate in Qualitative Research Methods from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Dr. Jaime presented his research proposal at the University of Texas at El Paso’s Research Expo in 2014 and his dissertation, “The Talk of Unwed Adolescent Fathers of Mexican Origin: A Discourse Analysis” was supervised by Dr. Leslie Robbins and Dr. Elias Provencio-Vasquez.

Dr. Jaime has more than 30 years’ experience working in the nonprofit and public sectors and has worked for Thomason Hospital in El Paso, Texas and at the LA Free Clinic and The Casey Family Programs in Los Angeles, California. Dr. Jaime is currently the Chief Professional Officer for Boys & Girls Clubs of El Paso and serves on various local and national nonprofit committees.

Dr. Jaime has assisted with various quantitative research projects and community needs assessments. In 1993, he co-authored an article with Dr. Robert Villa entitled, La Fe de la Gente which was published in Elderly Latinos: Issues and Solutions for the 21st Century, a publication of the National Hispanic Council on Ageing. Dr. Jaime has extensive grant writing experience and in 2009 served as a grant reviewer for the Department of Health and Human Services.

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This dissertation was typed by Jose Arturo Jaime.