

# Is there Parental Burnout in Costa Rica? <sup>1</sup>

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## Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es avanzar en la comprensión de las características culturales específicas del agotamiento parental en Costa Rica al analizar configuraciones familiares específicas de agotamiento parental durante la crianza. Se seleccionó una muestra intencional de madres y padres en algunos centros educativos accesibles, quienes completaron un cuestionario incluyendo las variables principales del estudio. Los análisis descriptivos, así como los análisis de regresión y de varianza, del agotamiento parental, respecto a otras variables, evidencia que en esta muestra hay una baja prevalencia de agotamiento parental y un rol importante del individualismo moderado en la crianza. La discusión señala que es indispensable realizar estudios de agotamiento parental con muestras de madres y padres mejor controladas y equilibradas y realizando comparaciones entre grupos con características sociales y educativas claramente contrastantes para lograr determinar con mayor claridad el rol del agotamiento parental en la crianza en contextos culturales urbanos de la sociedad costarricense.

<sup>1</sup>This paper covers the findings of the Costa Rica branch of the “International Investigation of Parental Burnout” (IIPB) consortium, a 40-nation study aiming at comparing the prevalence of parental burnout across cultures, conducted by Isabelle Roskam and Moira Mikolajczak, Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium. The Costa Rican study has been carried out in the Institute for Psychological Research at University of Costa Rica.

## Abstract

The objective of this article is to advance in the understanding of the specific cultural characteristics of parental exhaustion in Costa Rica by analyzing specific family configurations of parental burnout during parenting. An intentional sample of mothers and fathers was selected in some accessible educational centers, who completed a questionnaire including the main variables of the study. Descriptive analyzes, as well as regression and variance analyzes, of parental burnout, compared to other variables, evidence that in this sample there is a low prevalence of parental burnout and an important role of moderate individualism in parenting. The discussion indicates that it is essential to carry out studies of parental burnout with better controlled and balanced mothers and fathers samples and making comparisons between groups with clearly contrasting social and educational characteristics in order to determine more clearly the role of parental burnout in parenting in urban cultural contexts of the Costa Rican society.

## INTRODUCTION

How parents deal with the daily challenge of raising their offspring is seen by most researchers as the needed equilibrium between the childrearing - burden and the level of satisfaction whereas being in this role on an everyday basis. As a matter of basic conceptual framework that enables psychology to compare diverse cultural determinants of this contemporary phenomena in the globalizing world nowadays, the model of the Balance between Risks and Resources has been proposed by Mikolajczak & Roskam (2018). The authors posit that a bent toward one end of this basal structure will determine the grade of success or failure in confronting the psychological demands involved hereto.

While extensive research has been conducted into job burnout (more than 23,000 studies to date), parental burnout has only very recently become the focus of scientific interest (see

Pelsma, 1989 for the only exception before 2007). Therefore, there is still a dearth of empirical evidence about how parenting stress leads eventually to parental burnout (Glasberg, Norberg, & Soderberg, 2007; Lindstrom, Aman, & Norberg, 2010; Lindström, Aman, & Norberg, 2011; Norberg, Mellgren, Winiarski, & Forinder, 2014).

The main subject to be discussed is how routine parenting - tasks can psychologically overwhelm parents to the extent that the quality of the familial relationships - system decreases and the stress - level grows out of control at least to a certain point. Under these circumstances, each member of the family as well as the entire familial psychological atmosphere suffer the consequences of living in a negative emotional overloaded relationship, compromising mostly the psychological development of growing children thereafter. Parents' most frequent reaction toward children tend to oscillate between neglect and violence, whereas the couple faces increasing conflicts.

An additional aspect that should be considered is the valence of the factors involved in the process. Presence or absence of certain traits in the psychological dynamic within the family or of the socioeconomic/psychosocial scaffold supporting the family, and even those resources supplied by the socio-environment, do not necessary represent risk of protection on their own. It is not the absence or presence of particular factors that ensues in stressful conditions, but the likely shift of each factor from low to high scores and vice versa, as well as the entanglement of all the factors in the familial relationship - system as in the individual measures accounted for. In order to integrative such a perspective, the measures of the risk/protection factors should underscore size and weight of each factor in order to determine different grades of balance or imbalance, i.e, if measures of protection compensate, equal or outnumber risk or the other way around. So parental burnout will be the result of interlocking risk and protection, as proposed by Mikolajczak & Roskam (2018), whose findings suggest to operationalize parental burnout as a linear function of the balance between risks and resources.

However, to a fully comprehension of parental burnout the model should include culturally sensitive risk/resources factors in each social context to be researched.

On the other hand, parental burnout could be harmful for parent's well-being and parental practices alike, therefore affecting parent-child interaction and child development when the stressors last or even become chronic by weakening the psychological resources to cope with the burden of child rearing and family life (Mikolajczak, Raes, Avalosse & Roskam, 2018). The three dimensions the authors conceive to conceptualize parental burnout comprise: first, overwhelming exhaustion since parents experience their role as too demanding and tiring in everyday life. Second, arousal of an emotional distancing from their children that diminishes the quality of interactions. Third, a sense of ineffectiveness that undermines parental skills to cope with daily parenting challenges.

The main component that ensues the fundamental dimension of parental burnout is the condition of being exhausted, which is a feeling of lacking physical or emotional resources to assimilate the burden of parenting. (Roskam, Raes, & Mikolajczak, 2017). Parental burnout is a unique and context-specific syndrome resulting from a chronic imbalance of risks over resources in the parenting domain (Manrique-Millones, Ricci, Rey, Oyarce, Pérez Diaz, Tapia, Submitted).

In more detail, the three dimensions of parental burnout comprise, first, overwhelming exhaustion related to one's parental role: parents feel that being a parent requires too much involvement; they feel tired when getting up in the morning and having to face another day with their children; they feel emotionally drained by the parental role to the extent that thinking about their role as parents makes them feel they have reached the end of their tether. Second, an emotional distancing from their children: exhausted parents become less and less involved in the upbringing of and relationship with their children; they do the bare minimum for their

children but no more; interactions are limited to functional/instrumental aspects at the expense of emotional aspects. Third, a sense of ineffectiveness in the parental role: parents feel that they cannot handle problems calmly and/or effectively. As shown recently by Roskam, Raes, and Mikolajczak (2017), parental burnout is a unique syndrome, empirically distinct from job burnout, parental stress or depression. Research on parental burnout is still scarce, but studies up to date have shown that it can be reliably measured (Roskam, et al., 2017), that it concerns both mothers and fathers (Lindström, et al., 2011; Roskam, et al., 2017), that its prevalence (between 8% and 36% depending on the types of parents studied; Lindström, et al., 2011; Roskam, et al., 2017)) warrants further investigation, that it is related to sociodemographic, situational, personal, parental, and marital factors (Le Vigouroux, Scola, Raes, Mikolajczak, & Roskam, in press; Mikolajczak, Raes, & Roskam, in press; Roskam & Mikolajczak, under review), and that it has specific consequences in terms of child-related outcomes, i.e. neglect and violence, and in terms of escapist and suicidal thoughts (Mikolajczak, Brianda, Avalosse, & Roskam, under review). However, up to date, parental burnout has mainly been studied in European countries, in particular in Belgium and Sweden.

The current study adds to the purpose of the International Investigation of Parental Burnout (IIPB) which is to test the conceptual validity, prevalence and intercultural variation of parental burnout in different cultures around the world. Henceforth, an international consortium has been initiated by Professors Isabelle Roskam and Moïra Mikolajczak in collaboration with Maday Valdes Pacheco.

The study has been presented to the participating parents under the title "Factors in parental satisfaction and exhaustion around the world". The term "parental burnout" has not being used to avoid sampling and social desirability biases.

The international project aims at reaching conceptual validity and at testing intercultural variability of the parental burnout construct in different contexts around the world.

Therefore, the main objective of the current study is to gather data about parental burnout amid families from Costa Rica's Central Valley. Middle class families were interviewed which have at least one child under one roof. Thereby, the study strives to highlight the culturally specific characteristics of the parental burnout. Specific familial configurations of parental burnout, extreme fatigue, emotional detachment and lack of efficacy are brought to bear. Of particular interest are the likely variations of parental burnout within families, i.e., intracultural dissimilarity.

Our first hypothesis claims that parental burnout rates arise among the mothers of the sample but not among fathers. A second hypothesis points toward parental burnout as socioemotional risk factor for mothers but not necessarily so for fathers. A third hypothesis stresses that cultural factors such as individualism versus collectivism function as a protective factor to parental burnout.

## METHOD

### *Design*

This is a correlational study based on Likert Scales measures for the most part.

### *Participants*

The sample consists of 248 participants among which 146 are mothers and 102 fathers, *M* age 37 years old. The selection criteria was recruiting mothers and fathers with a male or female child residing under one single roof. Sample's education level is high since average of formal education is 16 years hence university level. They reside mostly at Great Metropolitan Area of San Jose, the Capital City of Costa Rica but also at San Ramón County in the northern province of Alajuela, but also mid country. Besides, some participants are from the provinces of Alajuela, Cartago and Heredia, also mid country with high urbanization standard and basic social services.

Participants were recruited in educative centers for childhood and in mental health centers for adults. Some other participants were recruited in police departments and two private entrepreneurs. Both by word of mouth. Besides, researchers and assistants recruit through personal Facebook pages and one of a political party. The research project was submitted to and approved by the Ethical Scientific Committee of the University of Costa Rica (IRB, session number 93, record VI-1071-2018).

Considering the type of family, it was found that 74.8% correspond to two-parent families, 6.9% to single-parent families, 7.7% to step-families, 7.3% to multigenerational families and 3.2% to other types of family structure. Families represented by a single participant of the sample were excluded from subsequent analyses.

### *Instruments*

Participants completed whether a paper - pencil version of the instruments (10 participants) or an online version in Limesurvey on the IIP's platform. The online version generated 1384 incompletes surveys from March 6 to June 25, 2018. 248 individuals questionnaires were collected altogether.

*Sociodemographic factors.* The 18 item - survey explores diverse sociodemographic factors. It was created ex profeso for this research project by Isabelle Roskam and coworkers and comprises the following aspects: age, education level in years, type of family, number of biological children, number of children living under one single roof, age of oldest child, age of youngest child, number of women living in household who look after children daily, number of men living in household who look after children daily, ethnies of participant, whether participant was born in current country of residence; type of neighborhood, type of paid job, whether children stay with mother or father during paid job hours and the amount of hours which parents spent with children.

*Parental burnout assessment PBA* (Roskam, Brianda, & Mikolajczak, 2018; Roskam, Raes, & Mikolajczak, 2017; 22 items). This scales evaluates the grade of parental burnout in four dimensions: emotional exhaustion in parental role (9 items; e.g., “I feel completely run down by my role as a parent”); contrast in parental self (6 items; e.g.” I’m no longer proud of myself as a parent”); feelings of being fed up (5 items; e.g., “I can’t stand my role as father/mother any more”); and emotional distancing from one’s children (3 items; e.g., “I do what I’m supposed to do for my child(ren), but nothing more”). Items are rated on 7-point Likert scales: never (0), a few times a year or less (1), once a month or less (2), a few times a month (3), once a week (4), a few times a week (5), every day (6). In the current study the Cronbach's Alpha reaches 0.93 for emotional exhaustion in parental role; 0.77 for emotional distancing from one’s children; 0.91 for feelings of being fed up.

*Gender roles GR* (Constantin & Voicu, 2015; 12 items). The GR Scale measures beliefs regarding appropriate male and female roles. Toward gender roles three main attitudes are to be considered: traditionalism (4 items; e.g., “In general men are best political leaders that women”), according to which women are different but inferior to men; specialist (4 items; e.g., “A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children”), referring to women and men as equal but with different socialization tasks; androgenism (4 items; e.g., “Men ought to do a larger share of household work than they do now”), which rejects women's inferiority as well as the specialized roles. It is a 7 points Likert scale from total disagree to total agree. In this study Cronbach's Alpha reaches: traditionalism: 0.68; specialist: 0.66; androgenism: 0.44.

*Independent-interdependent Self IIS* (Singelis, 1994; 30 items) The scale evaluates independent self-construal (individualism) and interdependent self-construal (collectivism), assuming that both tendencies are present simultaneously in people. According to the author, one of the cultural tendencies of the self will be predominant over the other, although evidence



of the dual self can also be found. The scale contains items with a 7-point Likert response scale, where participants choose between "Totally Agree" and "Totally Disagree" response options. Examples of self-construal independent items are: "I can talk openly with a person who I meet for the first time, even when this person is much older than I am" and "I do my own thing, regardless of what others think". Some interdependent self-construal items are: "I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in", and "I feel good when I cooperate with others".

*Involvement in parental function and duties PF* (Roskam, Valdes, Mikolajczak; 23 items). This scale has been developed in the framework of IIPB and it specifically refers to parental involvement from an instrumental, observable and measurable behavioral point of view. The authors were based on the LeVine's universal model of parental functions: a) to ensure the health and survival of child, b) to stimulate the child in order to ensure his social and cognitive development adaptation, and c) to transmit the values adapted to the child that allows him to interact adequately inside his ownership group (LeVine, 1977; Roskam et al., 2015). In summary, the scale allows having an overview about in which extent mother and fathers are involved in their parental tasks. According to the authors, the scale includes three principal factors: Basic needs, childrearing and material subsistence.

*Parental goals and values GV* (Suizzo, 2007; 41 items). This scale measures the relevance parents give to 41 goals and values by signing their priority for their children's future life as adults. The GV scales covers 5 dimensions: tradition and conformity (10 item, e.g. "respect for those who are senior to you"); power and achieve (7 item, e.g. "to be known: get public recognition for achievements"); relatedness (4 item, e.g. "to have close friends"); agency and self-direction (11 item, e.g. "to think for yourself: have your own views even if they differ from those of the others"); benevolence and prosocial (7 item, e.g. "forgiveness: able to forgive others"); separateness (2 item, e.g. "autonomy: not needing anyone's approval

for your decisions”). A 7 point Likert scale reaches from non important to most important. Cronbach's Alpha in the current study reaches: tradition and conformity 0,85; power and achieve 0.79; separateness 0.73; agency and self.direction 0.90; benevolence and prosocial 0.90; and separedness 0.65.

### *Procedures*

We apply the paper / pencil version at the Wem Institute of Masculinity and Sexuality. In this institution were recruited 12 participant of which 2 withdrew. For the online version, a call poster was posted on Facebook pages such as: pages of friends and people known by the researcher and research assistants on Facebook; in Facebook page from Coronado and Moravia district and community, in Northern San José city; in Facebook from political movement “Coalición Costa Rica”; in three Catholics private high schools and other similar educational centres; in the nursery “Centro Infantil Gotitas de Sabiduría”, Coronado district; in National Police; in the “Centro Infantil Laboratorio” at the University of Costa Rica, Rodrigo Facio campus; in the “Centro Infantil Laboratorio” at the University of Costa Rica, Western campus; in transnational company “General Cable”, in Belén district, province of Heredia, Costa Rica; in transnational company “Double Digit”, in Tibas district, province of San José.

## RESULTS

### *Descriptive results*

Table 1 shows the main descriptive results for each scale and subscales.

Table 1. Descriptives of scales and subscales.

<b>Scale</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
PBA Exhaustion	247	12.50	11.95	0	52

PBA Constrast	247	4.61	6.43	0	36
PBA Saturation	247	4.29	5.58	0	29
PBA Emotional distancing	247	2.50	3.28	0	18
PBA total score	247	23.91	24.89	0	133
PF Childrearing	247	2.22	0.53	0.36	4
PF Basic needs	247	2.18	0.61	1	4
PF Material subsistence	247	2.08	0.96	0	4
PF mean	247	2.16	0.46	1.03	3.71
GR Traditionalist	247	0.96	1.91	0	30
GR Specialist	247	7.32	5.55	0	30
GR Androgynist	247	19.23	3.90	4	24
IIS Individualism	247	67.21	9.09	38	90
IIS Collectivism	247	52.97	10.55	25	80
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GV Tradition & Conformity	171	32.74	7.85	15	50
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GV Power & Achievement	171	17.25	6.1	4	35
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GV Relatedness	171	7.43	3.77	0	20
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GV Agency & Self-direct	171	47.11	6.73	20	55
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GV Benevolence & Prosocial	171	26.95	5.44	13	35
GV Separateness	171	7.54	2.03	1	10

*Note.* PBA= Parental Burnout Assessment, PF= Parental Functions, GR= Gender Roles, IIS= Independent-Interdependent Self, GV = Parental Goals and Values.

### ***Parental burnout prevalence***

Regarding the prevalence of parental burnout, the following results were found: 3.04% (n= 5) of mothers are in burnout, while 6.08% (n= 10) are at risk condition; in addition, none fathers are in burnout, whereas 3.09% (n= 3) is at risk condition. Considering the sample as a whole, there is only a 2% prevalence of parental burnout. Cut-off groups were established according to the criteria of the authors of the PBA (Roskam et al., 2018). On the one hand, parents who reached 92 points or more in PBA were defined in parental burnout condition. They correspond to the participants who present at least  $\frac{2}{3}$  (66%) of all the symptoms defined in the scale with a daily frequency. On the other hand, parents who presented  $\frac{2}{3}$  of all the symptoms with a few times a week frequency, reached between 76 and 91 points and they were defined in risk condition.

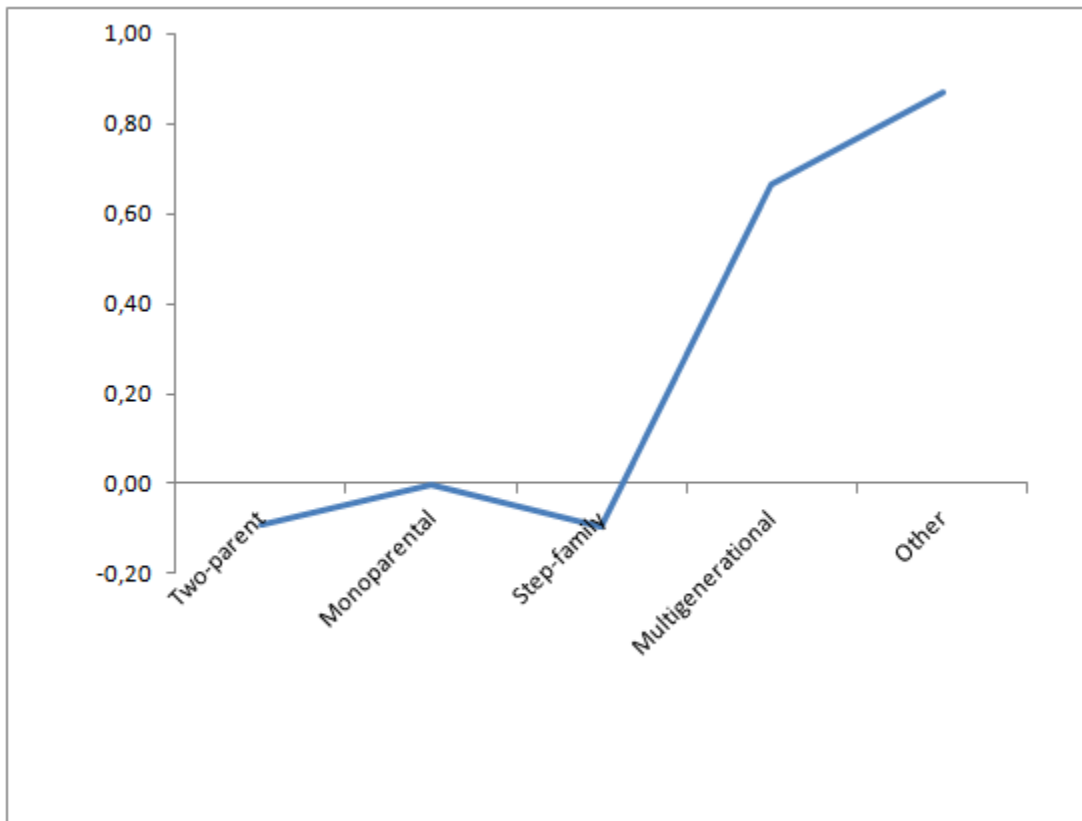
### ***Parental burnout score and its relation to other variables***

In a first stage, multiple regression analysis was carried out in order to discriminate which variables are relevant with respect to the dependent variable of parental burnout. The criterion of statistical significance as well as the exclusion of variables that presented problems of collinearity with the dependent variable were considered. From these, 6 main variables were highlighted to be considered within the model: a) the individualism IIS subscale, b) the gender

of the participants, c) the specialist GR subscale, d) the number of hours spent with the child, e) the family type, and f) the GV relatedness subscale.

Analysis of variance was carried out in order to test model that includes the relevant variables. Variables that did not meet the criteria of significance, effect size as well as observed statistical power were excluded from the model. Final model included the following factors: a) number of hours spent with the child, b) the family type, c) the individualism IIS and d) the gender of participants. This final model explained 44% of the variance. Significant differences between means according to family type were found in parental burnout total score ( $F(4)= 5.9$ ,  $p < .0001, \eta^2_p = .24$ ,  $1-\beta = .97$ ). Means are shown in Figure 1. Bonferroni's post-hoc tests confirmed mean differences between two-parent and multigenerational family types ( $p=.02$ ).

Figure 1. Marginal means in PBA score according to type of family.



Note. n= 247.

A significant effect of interaction between family type and individualism score was also found ( $p = .02, \eta^2_p = .31, 1-\beta = .93$ ). Thus, considering the parental burnout score as a whole, an influence of family type in interaction with individualism was found. In particular, multigenerational families has shown much higher scores compared to the two-parent families. In this sense, it seems that individualism could play a moderating role in the relationship between family type and parental burnout score. Further analysis would be required to corroborate this possible moderating effect.

### ***Profiles of parents according to their condition of parental exhaustion***

As mentioned, this sample does not tend to present high scores of parental burnout. Just a few families appear with the minimal scores to be considered as burnout ones. As a matter of fact, only 2% of the participants are in a condition of parental burnout. They're all mothers. Of this small percentage, 0.8% corresponds to two-parent families, 0.8% to multigenerational families and 0.4% to another type of family structure. These mothers, in addition, 0.4% spend from 4 to 8 hours with their children, 1.2% from 9 to 16 hours and 0.4% go from 17 to 24 hours. The percentage reported within the parental burnout condition is too low. Besides, no significant associations were found between the variables mentioned.

On the other hand, if it considered the percentage of people who are not in parental burnout nor in risk conditions, 74% belong to two-parent families while 6.5% belong to multigenerational families. Regarding the time they spend with their children, 7.8% go from 0 to 3 hours, 52.9% from 4 to 8 hours, 21.3% from 9 to 16 hours and 16% from 17 to 24 hours.

Finally, according to the mean as well as the standard deviation, cut-off points were established to determine the low, medium and high level of individualism. Considering the level of individualism of the parents, the following table shows the percentages according to their exhaustion/not exhaustion condition.

<b>Individualism level</b>	<b>Burnout</b>	<b>No burnout</b>
	n (%)	n (%)
Low individualism	1 (0.4%)	45 (18.2%)
Moderate individualism	4 (1.6%)	161 (65.2%)
High individualism	0 (0%)	36 (14.6%)
Total	5 (2%)	242 (98%)

As can be seen in the table above, most parents have an average level of individualism. As mentioned previously, it is important to consider these scores in conjunction with the family type, and not as separate variables, since they showed an interaction effect on the parental burnout score. However, considering that the majority of the sample does not meet the parental burnout diagnostic condition, it is also relevant to interpret these results cautiously. It rather seems to be that a trend to moderate individualism is related to a protective factor as for parental burnout.

## DISCUSSION

In this study data were gathered about parental burnout amid families from Costa Rica's Central Valley. Middle class families were interviewed which have at least one child under one roof. Thereby, the study strives to highlight the culturally specific characteristics of the parental burnout. Specific familial configurations of parental burnout, extreme fatigue, emotional

detachment and lack of efficacy are brought to bear. Of particular interest are the likely variations of parental burnout within families, i.e., intracultural dissimilarity. Some of these aspects have been confirmed which will be discussed in contrast with the hypothesis aforementioned.

The first hypothesis claimed that parental burnout rates arise among the mothers of the sample but not among fathers. This hypothesis has been partially confirmed. Although the 2% prevalence of parental burnout in the sample meets the lower rank-limit cited by Roskam, Raes, & Mikolajczak (2017), it has only been observed among mothers in the current study, but only a few parents reports risk of parental burnout. Albeit it is true that more mothers than fathers qualify in such conditions, the bulk of both mothers and fathers still score way underneath the minimum to be classified as burned out. Beyond doubt, data lead rather to the conclusion that the general trend in this sample of Costa Rica's Central Valley with high education level is to enforce parenting styles with low or very low grades of parental burnout. Theoretically, the trend to parental burnout, if any, is in a certain balance between risk factors and resources, so that parents do not feel overwhelmed by the parenting tasks (Mikolajczak & Roskam, 2018).

Nevertheless, data could shed some light on a likely cultural trait that perhaps enables parents to perceive parenting as not exhausting or overwhelming since it is organized around the appropriate distribution of tasks among different family members. This kind of familial tasks-distribution is for instance also characteristic to black american families in which such a strategy enables younger mother to more freely assume work and responsibility in child care (Stark & Burton, 2016). On the other hand, in this context multigenerational families seem to deal with a greater amount of parental burnout. It is also the case of the non classical familial configurations, namely, no necessarily biparental ones. In other words, multigenerational and



non classical families are likely to experience a greater level of conflict and caring demands due most likely to multiple and concurring parenting styles.

It is noteworthy that parent-child interactions under the depicted circumstances in Costa Rican Central Valley families seem to be based most likely on strong psychological resources to deal with rearing duties so that neither exhaustion nor emotional distancing interfere meaningfully in familial life quality (Mikolajczak, Raes, Avalosse & Roskam, 2018).

A second hypothesis pointed to parental burnout as socioemotional risk factor for mothers but not necessarily so for fathers. Since the prevalence of parental burnout is rather low in this sample, statistically significant differences between mothers and fathers were not detected. Nevertheless, it could mean that the low rates in parental burnout are somehow related to the even lower rates in individualism, enabling parents to fair distributions of tasks which was proposed in the third hypothesis. Therefore, according to the third hypothesis low individualism may represent a protective factor to parental burnout.

Anyway, as Suizzo, Tedford & McManus posed (2019), increasing research suggests that collectivism or, in the current study, low individualism is not necessarily contraire to promote independence and agency, then these dimension are not dichotomous, but orthogonal and multidimensional so that the link between individualism and other psychological traits and socialization goals requires further research as for the specific dimensions that play a central role.

The lower the level of individualism the lower the level of parental burnout and so the better for mothers to take care of self interests and to devoid themselves to parenting duties in a more appropriate way, as this sample shows.

It is important to highlight that the main limitation of this study was the sampling process then it conformed a sample of participants from the Central Valley Costa Rica's with high urbanization rates and high level of education. To some extent, people who were recruited

belong to a similar social middle-class-milieu of the Costa Rican society with access to technology and technological media. This social group gather psychosocial strengths and usually have access to information about best parenting practices that enable them to apply a more accurate knowledge in their own parenting experience. In a certain way, these findings represent a restricted cluster of costa rican society, i.e., not necessarily representative of other social configurations.

To overcome such limitation, in future studies about parental burnout in costa rican society and culture is mandatory a first sampling process among social clusters of interest, evaluating the cultural characteristics in advance. It is further important to randomly select the families. For instance, families could be selected from public schools in specific zones classified as high risk due to poverty or social désavantage to compare with middle or high class-families of children attending private schools. From a methodological point of view, it is more likely to find mothers and even fathers with burnout. Variables such a gender roles, individualism vs collectivism, level of education, parenting practices and the relevance of values in child rearing practices would be also better to differentiate. Without such methodological concerns taken cared of it is very difficult to establish specific cultural traits of the costa rican society attached to parental burnout.

## CREDITS

Javier Tapia coordinated the Costa Rican project, conceptualized the whole study in Costa Rica, wrote the methodological paragraph and collaborated with the data analysis and discussion. Jorge Sanabria wrote the introduction and collaborated with the final analysis of findings and the discussion. Alejandra Rodríguez ran the statistics and collaborated with the discussion. The research team acknowledge the contribution and thank the coworkers Mariana

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