

Culturally shared and unique meanings and expressions of Mmaternal control across four cultures

Article

Accepted Version

Cho, H. S., Cheah, C. S. L., Vu, K. T. T., Selçuk, B., Yavuz, H. M. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2780-1962>, Şen, H. H. and Park, S. Y. (2021) Culturally shared and unique meanings and expressions of Mmaternal control across four cultures. *Developmental Psychology*, 57 (2). pp. 284-301. ISSN 1939-0599 doi: 10.1037/DEV0001136 Available at <https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/124716/>

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To link to this article DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/DEV0001136>

Publisher: American Psychological Association

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Culturally Shared and Unique Meanings and Expressions of Maternal Control Across Four Cultures

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Funded by:

- Koç University
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

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3 Culturally Shared and Unique Meanings and Expressions of Maternal Control across Four

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Cultures

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November 13, 2020

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1 Abstract

2 Maternal control is a major dimension of parenting and has different meanings, practices, and
3 potential consequences across cultures. The present study aimed to identify and compare
4 mothers' conceptualizations of parenting control across four cultures to reveal a more
5 nuanced understanding regarding the meaning and practices of control: European American,
6 Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant, and Turkish. Using a semi-structured open-ended
7 interview, 100 European American, 102 U.S. Chinese immigrant, 103 U.S. Korean immigrant,
8 and 109 Turkish mothers of preschool-aged children reported the ratings of importance,
9 specific reasons, and strategies for exerting control over their children in daily life. Results
10 revealed both shared and unique conceptualizations of maternal control across four cultures.
11 Specifically, all mothers reported that it is important to express maternal control over their
12 children in order to set behavioral norms/standards, maintain child safety, support social
13 relations and respect for others, provide guidance, and guide moral development. Moreover,
14 mothers discussed utilizing nonphysical punishment, setting and maintaining rules,
15 reasoning/negotiating, consistency, physical punishment and verbal control, showing parents'
16 serious/stern attitude, correction, and psychological control forms of control. However, the
17 levels at which mothers emphasize the different reasons and strategies varied across cultures,
18 reflecting culturally-emphasized values. The findings of the present study further enrich our
19 understanding of the complexities of maternal control across cultures.

20

21 *Keywords:* maternal parenting control, culture, Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant,

22 Turkish, European American

23

1 Culturally Shared and Unique Meanings and Expressions of Maternal Control across Four
2 Cultures

3 Parental control refers to mothers' attempts to modify children's thoughts, feelings,
4 and behaviors (Barber, 1996; Baumrind, 2012). Two forms of parental control have been
5 most frequently studied. The first form of control is behavioral control, which refers to
6 maternal practices used to achieve child compliance to family and social norms, and
7 emphasizes regulating children's behaviors (Barber, 1996; Baumrind, 2013). Parents can
8 engage in behavioral control through setting and maintaining rules, removing privileges,
9 physically redirecting, consistently exercising consequences, using facial and voice
10 expressions to show stern attitude, reasoning, and correcting children's behaviors when the
11 child misbehaves (Barber et al., 1994; Baumrind, 2013; Baumrind et al., 2010; Shek, 2005).
12 Behavioral control may also encompass more coercive practices, such as verbal hostility,
13 arbitrary discipline, and physical punishment (Baumrind, 2013; Morris et al., 2013). The
14 second form of parental control, psychological control, refers to manipulative practices that
15 intrude on children's psychological and emotional experiences (Barber, 1996). Examples of
16 such strategies include shaming, guilt-induction, love withdrawal, expressing disappointment,
17 and emotional isolation (Barber, 1994; Barber, & Xia, 2013; Shek, 2005; Yu et al., 2015).

18 Parents' structuring and non-coercive behavioral control is often associated with
19 positive outcomes for children, such as higher self-efficacy, self-reliance, psychosocial
20 maturity, and academic achievement (Kopystynska et al., 2016; Li et al., 2015; Stright & Yeo,
21 2014). These findings appear to be consistent across various cultural contexts (Barber & Xia,
22 2013; Kim et al., 2010; Yağmurlu & Altan, 2010). In contrast, the associations between
23 parents' coercive and psychologically controlling behaviors and child outcomes may differ
24 across cultures. Coercive practices and psychological control are associated with both
25 internalizing and externalizing problems in European American children (Baumrind et al.,

1 2010; Lansford et al., 2012). However, the effects of these controlling strategies on Chinese
2 and Korean immigrant children and adolescents' development appear to be more variable,
3 especially when specific dimensions of psychological control are examined (e.g., Fung & Lau,
4 2009; Kim et al., 2006); For instance, Yu and colleagues (2019) found that Chinese
5 immigrant mothers' use of guilt induction, one dimension of psychological control, was
6 associated with less bullying aggressive behaviors with peers 6 months later. Moreover,
7 Chinese and Korean American mothers' psychologically controlling practices were not
8 significantly associated with their children's externalizing and internalizing problems (Louie
9 et al., 2013). In Confucian-based cultures (including Chinese and Korean cultures), physical
10 punishment and certain forms of psychological control (i.e., guilt induction and shaming) are
11 considered important moral training tools used to guide the child to be aware of others and to
12 teach them right from wrong, and may be more likely to be used without the intention of
13 harming the child (Fung, 1999; Kim & Hong, 2007; Wu et al. 2002). These practices
14 emphasize the importance of child obedience and respect of elders in order to promote
15 harmonious relationships and are also viewed as an important component of being a
16 supportive parent in Confucian culture (Ahn, 1994; Chao, 1994; Kim et al., 2013).

17 Due to the culturally variable meanings, practices, and potential consequences of
18 control, more culturally- and contextually-based examinations of parenting are needed.
19 Specifically, similarities and variations in the ways that parents across cultural contexts strive
20 to promote their children's development should be explored through their maternal beliefs to
21 reveal parental ethnotheories guiding such practices (Harkness & Super, 1992; Kağıtçıbaşı,
22 2007; Pomerantz & Wang, 2009). Thus, a culturally sensitive and systematic examination of
23 *why* and *how* mothers from different cultural backgrounds exert control over their young
24 children may reveal the complexities of maternal control and its effects on child development.

25 **The Role of Culture: A Four-Culture Comparison**

1 Parents are the primary socialization agents who structure and regulate children's
2 behaviors and teach specific beliefs and values during early childhood (Maccoby, 1984).
3 Parental control is particularly important in early childhood as young children begin to
4 internalize parents' socialization messages and learn how to regulate their behaviors and
5 interact with peers (Kochanska et al., 2001). As parental control is a normative and necessary
6 aspect of parenting in socializing children, some shared maternal control beliefs and practices
7 have been observed across different cultures. For example, past research has found culturally
8 similar parenting values and goals regarding child independence, social, emotional, moral,
9 and educational development, and parenting practices when utilizing control with young
10 children (Chao, 1995; Cheah et al., 2018; Vu et al., 2018).

11 However, the extent to which these mothers emphasized specific parenting goals and
12 strategies differs across cultures, reflecting culturally-nuanced ideologies (Chao, 1995, 1996;
13 Cheah et al., 2018; Vu et al., 2018). To understand cultural differences in maternal controlling
14 behaviors, past research has tended to dichotomize and highlight differences between
15 independent-oriented (e.g., European American) and interdependent-oriented (e.g., Chinese
16 and Japanese) cultures (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Olson et al., 2001). For instance,
17 European American culture is broadly characterized as emphasizing individuality, autonomy,
18 and self-esteem (Harwood et al., 1995; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). European American
19 mothers have been found to provide structure and consistency to their children to provide a
20 safe environment for their children to freely explore and express their thoughts and feelings,
21 as well as promote children's sense of autonomy and individuality (Chao, 1995; Vu et al.,
22 2018). These mothers also emphasize respecting others' rights due to their focus on values of
23 equality (Vu et al., 2018).

24 In contrast, the parenting beliefs and practices of interdependent-oriented cultures
25 tend to highlight connectedness, social harmony, and filial piety, and obedience to elders

1 (Choi et al., 2013; Ho, 2008). As such, although mothers from interdependent-oriented
2 cultures may similarly exert control over their young children in areas of interpersonal
3 relations, their reasons for doing so tend to center on fostering interdependent relationships
4 and fulfilling family obligations (Chao, 1995; Choi et al., 2013; Şen et al., 2014; Vu et al.,
5 2018).

6 Importantly, although there is support for general differences in some aspects of
7 parental control across more independent- versus interdependent-cultures, the use of this
8 dichotomy has been increasingly criticized as being overly simplistic and not capturing the
9 nuances both across and within independent- and interdependent-oriented cultures (Park et al.,
10 2014). Therefore, a more in-depth exploration and greater specificity are required to better
11 understand parental control across and within cultures (Bornstein, 2017).

12 To expand the traditional independent-interdependent model and incorporate a more
13 ecological perspective, Kağıtçıbaşı (2005, 2007) proposed three family models: the
14 independence, interdependence, and psychological interdependence family patterns. The
15 independence pattern is proposed to be most descriptive of families living in the
16 industrialized Western contexts, where individualistic cultural values are emphasized (i.e.,
17 European American families), whereas the interdependence pattern is thought to be most
18 characteristic of families residing in rural societies where the collectivistic cultural values are
19 endorsed. Last, the psychological interdependence family pattern is characterized by parents'
20 socialization of both independence and interdependence in their children and reflected in
21 families who come from cultures that traditionally emphasized interdependence but reside in
22 industrialized societies and/or those who experience cultural transitions.

23 However, even within the broader psychologically interdependent family pattern,
24 there may be cultural variations in maternal control beliefs and strategies, perhaps because
25 each cultural group has unique situational demands and expectations. For instance,

1 Kağıtçıbaşı's (1990, 1996) theoretical proposition was derived based on families residing in
2 Turkey, which is geographically located both in Europe and the Middle East and influenced
3 by both Western and Eastern ideologies. Furthermore, the rapid economic, demographic, and
4 societal changes in Turkey have reshaped family structures, and consequently, parenting
5 cognitions and practices (Nacak et al., 2011; Şen et al., 2014). As a result, Turkish parents
6 tend to be indulgent with their young children and view interdependence and obedience to
7 parents as important but also emphasize and acknowledge the need to raise self-autonomous
8 children (Durgel et al., 2012; Kağıtçıbaşı & Ataca, 2005; Yağmurlu et al., 2009). Reflecting
9 these social changes, contemporary Turkish mothers were found to use less harsh and
10 controlling strategies and more likely to provide reasoning to their children, and express
11 warmth and verbally praise their children to reinforce positive behaviors (Akçınar & Baydar,
12 2014; Bayram Özdemir & Cheah, 2015, 2017; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1996; Kırcaali-Iftar, 2005), which
13 reflect continued consideration of emotional closeness and relatedness with their children
14 along with increasing attention to child autonomy.

15 Immigrant families from heritage cultures with traditionally interdependent cultural
16 models residing in societies with more independent family models provide another unique
17 opportunity to understand maternal control. Specifically, Chinese and Korean immigrant
18 families in the United States necessarily negotiate both cultural values of independence and
19 interdependence as they incorporate new goals and practices emphasized by the larger
20 Western American culture while maintaining aspects of their heritage Asian culture (Cheah et
21 al., 2013; Seo et al., 2017). For instance, Chinese notions of *chiao shun* and *guan* focus on
22 educating, teaching, and training children, which reflect Chinese immigrant mothers' valuing
23 of inculcating moral and societal values and positive social behaviors and manners to their
24 children (Chao, 1994; Chen et al., 2012). Chinese immigrant mothers also engage in
25 psychological control to promote emotional obedience and filial piety (Chen et al., 2012).

1 Korean immigrant parents practice *ga-jung-kyo-yuk* (family socialization), which
2 emphasizes the centrality of family, respect for parents and elders, and family obligations and
3 ties (Choi et al., 2013) and use warnings, correction, and reasoning as control strategies to
4 socialize these cultural values (Kim & Hong, 2007). Korean immigrant parents also utilize
5 physical punishment as it is perceived as part of their parental care and responsibilities (Ahn,
6 1994), but usually as a last resort (Kim & Hong, 2007).

7 Despite their shared Confucian cultural heritage, variations in parenting cognitions
8 and practices between Chinese and Korean immigrant families have been found, likely due to
9 differences in language, history of immigration, pre- and post-migration factors, and recent
10 sociocultural changes in their homelands. Some of these changes include the increased role of
11 Christianity and Westernization in Korea after the Korean war versus communism and rapid
12 capitalization and Westernization in China over the last two decades (Sun & Ryder, 2016;
13 Zhou & Kim, 2006). Korean immigrant families may emphasize values that are more
14 congruent with American cultural values, such as social assertiveness and achievement-
15 orientation, than Chinese immigrant families due to a longer period of Westernization and
16 influence of Christianity in South Korea (Park & Cheah, 2005). Korean immigrants are also
17 more extensively involved in religious organizations in the United States than Chinese
18 immigrants, whereas Chinese immigrant families tend to settle in geographically-bound
19 ethnoburbs (i.e., ethnic suburbs/cities). The varying available socio-psychological supports,
20 educational and informational resources, and economic assistance (Min & Kim, 2002; Zhou,
21 2014; Zhou & Kim, 2006) in these immigrant contexts may differentially impact Chinese and
22 Korean immigrant families' socio-psychological and behavior adjustment in the United States,
23 including their parenting (Cheah et al., 2016; Min & Kim, 2002; Zhou, 2014). However,
24 empirical evidence for Korean immigrant mothers' beliefs and practices of maternal control
25 and examinations of different Confucian-based cultural groups continue to be lacking (Choi

1 et al., 2013).

2 Collectively, European American, Turkish, Chinese immigrant, and Korean
3 immigrant mothers may simultaneously share similar and different beliefs about parental
4 control and the strategies they engage in when interacting with their children due to
5 culturally-shared and -specific parenting goals. Past research has predominantly used Likert-
6 type scales and questionnaires to assess and compare levels of maternal control across
7 cultures (e.g., Claes et al., 2018; Rothenberg et al., 2020). Some researchers have also used
8 structured interviews to measure the frequency of certain parental control strategies (e.g.,
9 Gershoff et al., 2010). Although these methods have been used to compare the rates of
10 maternal control beliefs and practices, the reasons and specific strategies that mothers from
11 different cultures engage in have not been captured through parents' own perspectives (Cheah
12 et al., 2015; Rohner et al., 2005).

13 The derived etic approach is sensitive to cultural and ecological contexts (emic) and
14 consider shared meanings across cultures (etic) simultaneously, allowing researchers to
15 identify culturally-unique parenting ethnotheories and practices through parents' own
16 perspectives and provide a more comprehensive understanding of shared *and* unique
17 meanings and expressions of maternal control across cultures (Shordike et al., 2010). Thus, in
18 the present study, we aimed to identify and compare how European American, U.S. Chinese
19 immigrant, U.S. Korean immigrant, and Turkish mothers conceptualize and utilize maternal
20 control with their children in their daily lives to further understand the close intertwining of
21 culture and parenting. Specifically, our study aimed to explore beliefs and practices regarding
22 maternal control in an independence-oriented culture (i.e., European American) and three
23 psychologically interdependence-oriented cultures (i.e., Chinese immigrant, Korean
24 immigrant, and Turkish) to understand similarities and differences between more independent
25 and more interdependent cultures as well as variations among psychologically

1 interdependence-oriented cultures.

2 **Maternal Control and Child Gender**

3 Parents' socialization goals and parenting practices may vary for boys versus girls
4 due to socially-defined gender roles (Wood & Eagly, 2002, 2012). Parents of girls in the
5 United States were found to use more sensitive maternal control strategies and emphasize
6 kindness, perspective-taking, empathy, and interpersonal closeness, whereas parents of boys
7 were found to use more harsh and controlling strategies and emphasize power assertion,
8 aggression, and dominance (Kochanska et al., 2009; Mandara et al., 2012; Tamis-LeMonda et
9 al., 2009). Such gender differences in maternal control may be more salient in Chinese,
10 Korean, and Turkish cultures that adhere to more rigid and traditional gender roles
11 (Kağıtçıbaşı & Ataca, 2005; Park & Cheah, 2005; Wang & Liu, 2014).

12 However, many studies have also found no gender differences in maternal control
13 across various ethnic groups, including European American, Chinese, and Turkish families
14 with younger children (Bayram Özdemir & Cheah, 2015, 2017; Cheah et al., 2018; Endendijk
15 et al., 2016; Nacak et al., 2011; Pettit et al., 2001; VanZeijl et al., 2007; Vu et al., 2018). The
16 lack of child gender differences in maternal control may be due to the young age of the
17 children in the studies, or mothers may encourage egalitarian gender role orientations and
18 promote their children's success and global development because of societal changes in
19 gender role (Leaper, 2015; Vu et al., 2018). Due to these mixed findings, the present study
20 directly examined potential differences in control perceptions and practices between mothers
21 of girls and boys.

22 **The Present Study**

23 The overall goal of this study was to explore maternal ethnotheories regarding
24 parenting control across four groups (i.e., European American, Chinese immigrants in the
25 United States, Korean immigrants in the United States, and Turkish). The current study used

1 the derived etic approach to understand and compare culturally-shared and -nuanced
2 conceptualizations of maternal control as mothers shared their own interpretation of their
3 parenting goals and explain how they utilize maternal control with their children in daily life
4 during semi-structured interviews.

5 The first aim of the study was to assess European American, Chinese immigrant,
6 Korean immigrant, and Turkish mothers' perceptions of the *importance* of maternal control.
7 Generally, mothers from all groups were expected to report viewing maternal control as
8 important, but the levels in which they rate how important exerting maternal control over
9 their children were expected to differ across cultures. Mothers originally from Confucian-
10 influenced cultures (i.e., Chinese and Korean immigrants) are generally expected to report the
11 highest ratings for control, and more than Turkish and European American mothers.

12 In order to explore mothers' conceptualizations of parenting control in-depth, the
13 second aim of the study was to identify and compare the reasons *why* European American,
14 Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant, and Turkish mothers exert control over their young
15 children. Mothers from all groups were generally expected to discuss similar overarching
16 reasons for engaging in maternal control, but their focus on or endorsement of various
17 reasons was expected to differ across cultures. European American mothers were expected to
18 emphasize control to provide their children a safe or structured environment for their children
19 to develop a sense of autonomy and individuality. In contrast, mothers from cultures with
20 psychological interdependence family patterns (i.e., Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant,
21 and Turkish mothers) were generally expected to emphasize using control to promote social
22 harmony and obedience to elders, although further variations were predicted within groups as
23 each cultural group has unique situational demands and expectations.

24 To reveal the ways in which mothers may conceptualize the strategies that they use to
25 achieve their parenting goals, the third aim of the present study was to identify and compare

1 *how* European American, Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant, and Turkish mothers utilize
2 control with their young children. Generally, mothers from all groups were expected to
3 identify similar types of control strategies, but their emphasis on these strategies was
4 expected to differ across cultures. European American mothers were expected to highlight
5 setting boundaries and providing structure and consistency to their children. Chinese
6 immigrant, Korean immigrant, and Turkish mothers were expected to use strategies that
7 promote emotional closeness and interdependence within a family, such as using facial and
8 voice expressions to show stern attitude and relatively harsher strategies, including physical
9 punishment and psychological control. However, Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant, and
10 Turkish mothers' emphasis on the different controlling strategies were also predicted to
11 further differ despite all coming from interdependent-oriented cultures. The last aim of the
12 study was to explore the role of child gender in these maternal control reasons and strategies.
13 In general, few gender differences were expected as mothers of young children tend to focus
14 on promoting their children's global development, although mothers may endorse greater
15 engagement in control towards boys versus girls in cultures that endorse more traditional
16 gender roles.

17 **Method**

18 **Participants**

19 The participants comprised 100 European American, 102 Chinese immigrant, 103
20 Korean immigrant, and 109 Turkish mothers of children between the ages of 3 to 6. The
21 European American, Chinese immigrant, and Korean immigrant families resided in the Mid-
22 Atlantic region of the United States and self-identified as ethnically European American,
23 Chinese, and Korean, respectively. Chinese immigrant mothers had been in the United States
24 for about 10 years ($M = 10.1$ years, $SD = 6.7$), and Korean immigrant mothers had been in the
25 United States on average for almost 9 years ($M = 8.7$ years, $SD = 5.3$); all immigrant mothers

1 were first generation. Turkish mothers resided in Istanbul, Turkey and self-identified as
2 ethnically Turkish. Specific demographic information for the four cultural groups is presented
3 in Table 1.

4 There were significant group differences in child age, maternal age, and maternal
5 education level (see Table 1). European American children were older than Chinese
6 immigrant, Korean immigrant, and Turkish children. European American mothers were older
7 and had higher levels of education than the Korean immigrant and Turkish mothers, and the
8 Chinese immigrant mothers were older than the Korean immigrant mothers and had higher
9 education levels than Korean immigrant and Turkish mothers. There were no significant
10 group differences in child gender. Furthermore, there was no significant group difference in
11 the length of stay in the United States between Chinese and Korean immigrant mothers.

12 **Procedures**

13 Participants were recruited from various organizations, including supermarkets,
14 churches, schools, public libraries, and community centers. A team of trained research
15 assistants who were fluent in participants' preferred language (English, Cantonese or
16 Mandarin Chinese, Korean, or Turkish) visited the family at a place of their choice for data
17 collection. Mothers first provided informed consent before completing an interview and a
18 demographic questionnaire (i.e., maternal age and education, and child age and gender).
19 Research assistants conducted the interviews in mothers' preferred language or dialect. The
20 interviews lasted approximately 20 minutes and were audio-recorded, transcribed, and coded.
21 Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Boards at the
22 University of Maryland, Baltimore County for the project titled "Immigrant Chinese and
23 Korean Preschooler's Social Development: The Role of Parents and Social Context"
24 (Protocol ID: Y16CC20229) and Koç Üniversitesi for the project titled "Preschooler's Social
25 Development: The Role of Parents and Social Context."

1 **Measures**

2 **Maternal control.** A semi-structured open-ended interview (Interview on
3 Parenting – Parent Report; Cheah et al., 2018) was conducted to elicit mothers'
4 conceptualizations and perceptions of the importance of maternal control, and the specific
5 control reasons and strategies for exerting control. Mothers were asked, “How important is it
6 to you to control, regulate, or be strict with your child?” and responded on a 5-point scale
7 ranging from 1 (*not at all important*) to 5 (*extremely important*). To indicate the reasons
8 behind the first response, mothers were asked, “Why is it important (or not important) to
9 control, regulate, or be strict with your child?” Next, mothers were asked, “What do you do
10 when you are controlling, regulating, or being strict with your child?” to elicit their
11 descriptions of specific practices or strategies they used. Mothers provided specific reasons
12 and at least three examples of strategies and were prompted and probed to guide them in
13 clarifying the three examples of strategies they engaged in when interacting with their
14 children and to reveal potential cultural nuances (e.g., “Could you explain the reason in more
15 detail?” “Could you describe how you are being strict?”) during the interviews.

16 **Interview Coding**

17 **Maternal control reasons and strategies.** The Maternal Expressions of Strictness
18 Coding Scheme was developed to capture mothers' responses on specific reasons and
19 practices for exerting control over their children. Codes were created following the
20 procedures suggested by Shaver et al. (1987), which have been refined and used in previous
21 studies (e.g., Cheah et al., 2015; Cheah et al., 2018; Li, 2002, 2003; Vu et al, 2018). A
22 European American team and a Chinese American team, with native-speaking researchers in
23 each team, initially grouped and generated distinct conceptual ideas and developed the coding
24 scheme. First, following the guidelines for content analysis, each team randomly chose 30
25 cases, balancing for child gender and socioeconomic background, and met several times to

1 discuss and identify distinct ideas from each culture's data. Second, each team independently
2 created conceptual groupings of the distinct ideas based on similarities in the meaning. Then,
3 the two coding teams met to merge the two cultures' conceptual groupings between the two
4 cultures. Through a series of intensive discussions, the labels and definitions of the codes
5 were revised to better capture the meaning of each code, and thus to increase content validity.
6 The Korean American and Turkish teams of researchers underwent a similar iterative process
7 to identify and group distinct ideas. Thus, in addition to the initial codes generated from the
8 European American and Chinese American data, culturally unique ideas and themes were
9 identified in the Korean American and Turkish data. Next, these new ideas and themes were
10 discussed intensively among the European American, Chinese American, Korean American,
11 and Turkish coding teams. Again, overlaps in conceptual groupings between cultures were
12 merged, definitions of the codes were redefined, and any unique groupings not mentioned by
13 the other culture were included in the final coding scheme to preserve culturally unique ideas
14 and themes while allowing for cross-cultural comparisons (Cheah et al., 2015; Li, 2003, 2004;
15 Vu et al., 2018). The final coding scheme included five reason codes and eight strategy codes
16 (see Figure 1 for the illustrative procedure, and Table 2 for the definition and examples of
17 each code).

18 Teams of English-, Chinese-, Korean-, and Turkish-speaking research assistants
19 coded all the interview transcripts. Coders in each team first coded independently, and coding
20 teams regularly met to resolve any discrepancies. The specific reasons and strategies mothers
21 mentioned were quantified by a frequency count and were used in the analyses.

22 **Interview coding reliability.** To assess the interrater agreement of the coding, the
23 coding teams coded the same 20% of transcripts which was selected randomly (Shaver et al.,
24 1987; Yamamoto & Li, 2012). Cohen's Kappas for the maternal control reasons
25 were .68, .64, .81, and .80, and those for maternal control strategies were .75, .79, .89, and .90,

1 for European American, Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant, and Turkish coding teams,
2 respectively. The Cohen's Kappas ranged from substantial (i.e., .61 - .80) to almost perfect
3 agreement (i.e., above .81), suggesting acceptable interrater reliability (McHugh, 2012). All
4 transcripts were coded in their language of origin, except the 20%, which were translated and
5 back-translated to English in order to enable reliability checks.

6 **Statistical Analyses**

7 A 2 (Child Gender: Boy and Girl) x 4 (Culture: European American, Chinese
8 Immigrant, Korean Immigrant, and Turkish) analysis of covariance analysis (ANCOVA) was
9 conducted to examine the differences in ratings of importance in expressing control across
10 cultures and child gender. For maternal reason and strategy categories, as the number of
11 responses varies between mothers due to the open-ended nature of the interview questions,
12 proportion scores were calculated for each reason and strategy category. Proportion scores
13 were created by dividing the total number of responses in each category by the total number
14 of reasons or strategies across all categories. After computing proportion scores, 2 (Child
15 Gender) x 4 (Culture) multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVAs) analyses were
16 conducted to examine the differences in mothers' conceptualizations of their reasons for
17 engaging in control and their specific strategies across cultures.

18 Bonferroni corrections were applied to all post-hoc univariate tests to control for
19 Type I error. Excluding the cases with missing data on the main and demographic variables,
20 the final samples consisted of 99 European American, 91 Chinese immigrant, 91 Korean
21 immigrant, and 109 Turkish mothers for the ratings of importance in expressing control
22 analysis, and 99 European American, 95 Chinese immigrant, 92 Korean immigrant, and 109
23 Turkish mothers for the reasons and strategies analyses. Results are reported and presented in
24 Table 4, Figures 2 and 3.

25 **Results**

1 **Preliminary Analyses**

2 Mothers from all ethnic groups reported at least one reason and three different
3 control strategies. The five reasons that we revealed included: (1) Behavioral
4 Norms/Standards, (2) Child Safety, (3) Social Relations and Respect Others, (4) Providing
5 Guidance, and (5) Moral Development. The eight strategies that were coded included (1)
6 Nonphysical Punishment, (2) Setting and Maintaining Rules, (3) Reasoning/Negotiation, (4)
7 Consistency, (5) Physical Punishment and Verbal Control, (6) Show Parents' Serious/Stern
8 Attitude, (7) Correction, and (8) Psychological Control. The percentages of mothers who
9 mentioned control reason and strategy categories at least once were calculated for each
10 cultural group (see Table 3) and assigned ranks by the researchers from most frequently to
11 least frequently mentioned.

12 Overall, mothers in four cultural groups endorsed the Behavioral Norms/Standards
13 reason the most for why they utilize maternal control when interacting with their children.
14 For the control strategies, mothers from all four cultural groups primarily used Nonphysical
15 Punishment strategies and mentioned Psychological Control strategies less frequently.

16 Correlational analyses were conducted to examine the relations between child age,
17 maternal age, maternal education level, and the ratings of importance, with the five reasons
18 and eight strategies. For European American families, child age was negatively correlated
19 with mothers' use of Show Parents' Serious/Stern Attitude, $r(98) = -.26, p = .010$. For
20 Chinese immigrant families, maternal age was negatively correlated with their use of
21 Psychological Control, $r(93) = -.27, p = .009$, and maternal education was negatively
22 correlated with Physical Punishment and Verbal Control strategy, $r(98) = -.24, p = .014$. For
23 Korean immigrant families, child age was negatively correlated with mothers' Correction
24 strategy, $r(96) = -.21, p = .043$, and maternal age was negatively correlated with their reasons
25 for Moral Development, $r(94) = -.30, p = .003$, and positively with Behavioral

1 Norms/Standards, $r(94) = .30, p = .003$. Further, Korean immigrant mothers' education level
2 was positively correlated with their strategy of Setting and Maintaining Rules, $r(90) = .24, p$
3 $= .023$. For Turkish families, maternal age was positively correlated with Physical
4 Punishment and Verbal Control, $r(107) = .21, p = .028$, and maternal education was
5 negatively correlated with the ratings of importance, $r(107) = -.19, p = .045$. Therefore, all
6 demographic variables were included as covariates to the final analyses.

7 Chinese and Korean immigrant mothers' traditional cultural beliefs and practices of
8 maternal control may change as they acculturate to Western American culture (Cheah et al.,
9 2018; Kim et al., 2012). Thus, additional partial correlations between Chinese and Korean
10 immigrant mothers' acculturation levels as measured by the Cultural and Social Acculturation
11 Scale (CSAS; Lee, 1996) and their ratings of importance, reasons, and strategy controlling for
12 all covariates were conducted. There were no significant correlations between acculturation
13 and the outcomes of interest for both Chinese immigrant and Korean immigrant groups (p -
14 values ranged from .088 to .971).

15 **Importance of Expressing Control**

16 The 2 (Child Gender) x 4 (Culture) ANCOVA conducted on the ratings of importance
17 in expressing control revealed only a significant main effect of culture, $F(3, 379) = 15.69, p$
18 $< .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .11$. There were no significant main effects of child age, $F(1, 379) = 0.34,$
19 $p = .559$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$, maternal age, $F(1, 379) = 0.39, p = .530$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$, and
20 maternal education, $F(1, 379) = 0.66, p = .417$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$. Post hoc comparisons
21 revealed that Korean immigrant mothers rated the importance of control when interacting
22 with their children significantly higher than mothers in all three groups, and Chinese
23 immigrant mothers rated importance significantly higher than Turkish mothers.

24 **Maternal Control Reasons: Why Mothers Express Control**

25 The 2 (Child Gender) x 4 (Culture) MANCOVA conducted on the five control

1 reasons revealed only a significant main effect of culture, Pillai's Trace = .28, $F(15, 1146) =$
2 $7.80, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .09$. Post hoc comparisons revealed significant group differences
3 in four out of five maternal control reasons. Mothers of all four cultural groups did not differ
4 in their endorsement of Behavioral Norms/Standards reasons. For Child Safety reasons,
5 European American mothers were higher than Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant, and
6 Turkish mothers. For Social Relations and Respect Others reasons, Korean immigrant
7 mothers were higher than Chinese immigrant and Turkish mothers, and European American
8 mothers endorsed this maternal control reason more than Turkish mothers. For Providing
9 Guidance reasons, Turkish mothers were higher than European American mothers. Moreover,
10 for Moral Development reasons, Chinese immigrant mothers were higher than European
11 American and Turkish mothers. No significant main effect of child age, Pillai's Trace = .03,
12 $F(5, 380) = 1.94, p = .088$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$, maternal age, Pillai's Trace = .01, $F(5, 380) =$
13 $0.60, p = .703$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$, and maternal education, Pillai's Trace = .01, $F(5, 380) = 0.57,$
14 $p = .722$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$, child gender, Pillai's Trace = .00, $F(5, 380) = 0.24, p = .945$, partial
15 $\eta^2 = .00$, and Culture x Child Gender interaction effect were found, Pillai's Trace = .02, $F(15,$
16 $1146) = 0.56, p = .906$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$.

17 **Maternal Control Strategies: How Mothers Express Control**

18 The 2 (Child Gender) x 4 (Culture) MANCOVA conducted on the eight maternal
19 control strategies revealed a significant main effect of culture, Pillai's Trace = .47, $F(24, 1137)$
20 $= 8.84, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .16$. Post hoc comparisons revealed significant group differences
21 in six out of eight maternal control strategies. Mothers of all four groups did not differ
22 significantly in their enforcement of Nonphysical Punishment and Reasoning and Negotiation
23 with their children.

24 For Setting and Maintaining Rules strategies, European American mothers were
25 higher than Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant, and Turkish mothers. For Consistency

1 strategies, European American mothers were higher than Chinese immigrant and Korean
2 immigrant mothers. For Physical Punishment and Verbal Control strategies, Korean
3 immigrant mothers were higher than European American, Chinese immigrant, and Turkish
4 mothers, and Chinese immigrant mothers reported utilizing these strategies more than
5 European American mothers. For Show Parents' Serious/Stern Attitude strategy, Turkish
6 mothers were higher than European American mothers. For Correction strategies, Chinese
7 immigrant mothers reported higher levels than mothers from the other three cultural groups.
8 Last, for Psychological Control strategy, Turkish mothers reported higher levels than
9 European American and Korean immigrant mothers, and Chinese immigrant mothers
10 reported applying these strategies more than European American mothers.

11 There was no significant main effects of child age, Pillai's Trace = .02, $F(8, 377) =$
12 0.88, $p = .532$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$, maternal age, Pillai's Trace = .03, $F(8, 377) = 1.38$, $p = .202$,
13 partial $\eta^2 = .03$, maternal education, Pillai's Trace = .02, $F(8, 377) = 0.74$, $p = .655$, partial η^2
14 = .02, and child gender, Pillai's Trace = .03, $F(8, 377) = 1.36$, $p = .212$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. There
15 was a significant Culture x Child Gender interaction effect, Pillai's Trace = .11, $F(24, 1137) =$
16 1.87, $p = .007$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$. Follow-up univariate analysis of covariance (ANCOVAs)
17 revealed that compared to other cultural groups, Turkish mothers reported enforcing
18 Nonphysical Punishment significantly more to boys, $F(1, 384) = 17.95$, $p < .001$, partial η^2
19 = .05, and using Show Parents' Serious/Stern Attitude strategy more to girls, $F(1, 384) =$
20 17.68, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$. In contrast, no gender differences were found in Nonphysical
21 punishment strategies for European American, $F(1, 384) = 0.74$, $p = .392$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$,
22 Chinese immigrant, $F(1, 384) = 3.09$, $p = .079$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$, and Korean immigrant
23 mothers, $F(1, 384) = 0.01$, $p = .944$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$. Similarly, there were no gender
24 differences in Parents' Serious/Stern Attitude strategy for European American, $F(1, 384) =$
25 0.10, $p = .753$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$, Chinese immigrant, $F(1, 384) = 0.20$, $p = .652$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$,

1 and Korean immigrant mothers, $F(1, 384) = 1.79, p = .182$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$.

2 **Discussion**

3 The present study aimed to extend our understanding of maternal control across four
4 cultures. Using a derived etic approach, European American, U.S. Chinese immigrant, U.S.
5 Korean immigrant, and Turkish mothers' own conceptualizations of the importance of
6 maternal control, the reasons for mothers' engagement in control, and the specific maternal
7 control strategies were identified and compared. The role of child gender was also explored.

8 Findings revealed that mothers across all groups viewed the use of control during
9 mother-child interactions as important, with average ratings over 3.5 out of 5 for all groups,
10 indicating the core role of parenting control in childrearing (Maccoby, 1984). However,
11 Korean immigrant mothers rated the importance of expressing control while interacting with
12 their children more highly than European American, Chinese immigrant, and Turkish
13 mothers. This finding may reflect Korean immigrant mothers' methods of socializing their
14 children through *ga-jung-kyo-yuk* (family socialization), which attributes children's
15 successful adjustment and development to the influence of the family and close parent-child
16 relationship (Choi et al., 2013). Therefore, Korean immigrant mothers may view engaging in
17 control as an especially important part of their childrearing responsibilities.

18 Furthermore, compared to the other two cultural groups with psychological
19 interdependence family models, Turkish mothers were less likely to emphasize the
20 importance of maternal control with their young children, reflecting these mothers' less strict
21 expectations of young children's demonstration of specific behaviors. Thus, Turkish mothers
22 may instead focus more on establishing a good relationship and indulging their young
23 children (Durgel et al., 2012). European American mothers have been found to highlight the
24 importance of providing consistent structure and boundaries to promote young children's
25 autonomy and independence (Chao, 1995).

1 **Cultural Similarities in Maternal Control Reasons and Strategies**

2 It is important to note that there were similar overarching themes in mothers' reasons
3 and practices across these cultures. Mothers from all cultural groups reported the same five
4 reasons and eight control strategies to some extent, perhaps reflecting shared goals,
5 cognitions, and practices of parenting during early childhood in urban contexts. Furthermore,
6 mothers across all groups reported Behavioral Norms/Standards reasons for utilizing control
7 the most, and the level of their endorsement of this reason did not differ across cultural
8 groups. Thus, mothers across the four cultures in the current study similarly emphasized their
9 children's need for knowing boundaries, limits, and rules. Mothers may believe that utilizing
10 control in their interactions with their children is important for helping young children
11 understand expectations for appropriate behavior and the consequences of their behaviors on
12 others to promote socially appropriate behaviors (Cheah et al., 2018; Grolnick, 2012).

13 Our findings also revealed that mothers across these cultural groups similarly
14 emphasized using nonphysical punishment and reasoning and negotiation with their children.
15 Mothers discussed taking away privileges, such as toys and TV or screen time, and using
16 time-out when the child misbehaved. Furthermore, mothers gave reasons and explanations to
17 their children for their controlling behaviors and possible consequences of children's
18 behaviors. In general, this finding likely reflects shared knowledge among urban, educated
19 mothers of preschool-age children regarding recommendations for regulating young children
20 in daily life without using coercive and arbitrary control strategies (Baumrind, 2012). Our
21 findings are also consistent with past research on maternal control across these cultures.
22 Specifically, European American (Cheah & Rubin, 2003) and Chinese immigrant mothers
23 (Cheah et al., 2018) both preferred using nonphysical punishment. Previous research also
24 found that contemporary Korean immigrant and Turkish mothers endorsed and employed
25 non-coercive strategies to socialize their young children due to their higher education levels

1 and changes in social perceptions regarding of physical punishment (Kim & Hong, 2007;
2 Park & Cheah, 2005; Yağmurlu et al., 2009).

3 **Cultural Differences in Maternal Control Reasons and Strategies**

4 The present study also identified culturally-shared and -distinct parenting beliefs and
5 strategies among independence-oriented and psychologically interdependence-oriented
6 cultures. Importantly, our findings revealed heterogeneity between cultures that are typically
7 monolithically classified as psychologically interdependence-oriented cultures (e.g., Chinese
8 American, Korean American, and Turkish cultures). Consistent with the traditional value of
9 independent-oriented cultures, European American mothers were more likely to report using
10 maternal control to ensure their children's physical and psychological safety compared to
11 other interdependent-oriented cultural groups. Previous research findings have posited
12 European American mothers may emphasize the importance of providing and creating a safe
13 environment for their children to freely explore the world based on their individual interests,
14 which may foster children's high self-esteem, positive sense-of-self, and independence (Chao,
15 1995; Vu et al., 2018).

16 Moreover, European American mothers were more likely to emphasize children's
17 need for respecting and appreciating other people than Turkish mothers. This result may
18 appear contrary to past findings where European American mothers emphasized promoting
19 children's independence and self-esteem, whereas Turkish mothers were found to highlight
20 relationships with family and non-kin members (Kağıtçıbaşı & Ataca, 2005; Yağmurlu et al.,
21 2009). However, the endorsement of respecting and appreciating others and elders appear to
22 underlie a different understanding of respect for others. Specifically, European American
23 mothers discussed, "... I think the most important part of that is that freedom shouldn't
24 impinge on other people's freedoms as well," which reflects cultural values of equality and
25 individual rights of others and American notions of respect (e.g., the Golden Rule; treating

1 others the way they want to be treated) (Chao, 1996; Vu et al., 2018).

2 Furthermore, European American mothers were most likely to set and maintain rules
3 for their children and reported being more consistent with established rules than Chinese
4 immigrant and Korean immigrant mothers. Overall, these strategies may reflect European
5 American mothers' emphasis on providing clear expectations ahead of time in order to
6 promote children's future independence and problem-solving skills (Chao, 1995, 1996).

7 Our findings also support Kağıtçıbaşı's (2005, 2007) psychologically interdependent
8 family pattern, which expands the dichotomized independent versus interdependent view of
9 cultures. Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant, and Turkish mothers were found to share
10 parenting beliefs and practices that emphasized the combination of fostering close family
11 relationships and children's autonomy. Specifically, these mothers did not significantly differ
12 in their endorsement of providing guidance and showing their serious and stern attitude to
13 their young children, which suggests culturally-shared values that emphasize mothers' role in
14 guiding children during the early stages of development and in fostering emotional closeness
15 and relatedness with their children. However, variations in the parenting cognitions and
16 practices were also observed across these three groups. Compared to Turkish mothers,
17 mothers from the Confucian-based cultures emphasized children's moral development and
18 used more physical punishment and verbal control. Together, these findings further illustrate
19 the different ways that families from psychologically interdependence-oriented cultural
20 backgrounds balance their values of independence and interdependence, which reflect each of
21 their unique socio-cultural contexts.

22 Our findings revealed that Chinese immigrant mothers were more likely to
23 emphasize children's moral development than European American and Turkish mothers. For
24 example, one Chinese immigrant mother mentioned, "... no matter child or adult, you need to
25 know about discipline and manners. Sometimes my child does not know what is right and

1 what is wrong or what is good or bad, so you need to point it out sometimes.” Chinese
2 children are traditionally expected to master their impulses at a young age and engage in
3 proper conduct (Hulei et al., 2006); thus, mothers are expected to assist their children towards
4 this goal in areas involving moral-related issues, such as lying.

5 Relatedly, Chinese immigrant mothers also discussed correcting their children’s
6 misbehaviors more than the other groups, employing more physical punishment and verbal
7 control than European American and Turkish mothers, and more psychological control than
8 European American mothers. For example, Chinese immigrant mothers mentioned that,
9 “there is an old saying in China: the power of role models is endless ... if you are strict with
10 him, point out and correct his wrong behaviors, he will remember and won't do the same next
11 time,” “... when my child lies or cheats, I will be very strict. If something like that happens,
12 you have to correct it immediately and tell the child it has serious consequences,” reflecting
13 the notions of *chiao shun* and *guan* (i.e., educating, teaching, and training children) in these
14 practices (Chao, 1994). Thus, Chinese immigrant mothers point out and correct their
15 children’s wrong behaviors, physically discipline and use psychological control (e.g.,
16 shaming, guilt-induction, love withdrawal) to provide stern guidance and promote children’s
17 internalization of parents’ expectations (Chao, 1994; Cheah et al., 2018).

18 Korean immigrant mothers were more likely to highlight respecting others, parents,
19 or elders than Chinese immigrant and Turkish mothers. For example, Korean immigrant
20 mothers explained the importance of being strict and controlling with her child with,
21 “because I want my child to respect my authority as a parent,” “although I may be quite strict,
22 I need to appropriately guide my child because s/he may not respect me as a parent and
23 become selfish,” reflecting the specific cultural emphasis of *Hyo* on family ties and
24 obligations within a family (Choi et al., 2013). Korean immigrant families in the United
25 States tend to be closely involved in religious organizations, which provides socio-

1 psychological and economic support and educational resources (Min & Kim, 2002; Seo et al.,
2 2018). Thus, their parenting values and practices may also be influenced by the Korean
3 church. The cultural value of respecting and appreciating others, especially parents and adults,
4 can be emphasized, taught, and maintained within these Korean immigrant communities in
5 ways that are unique to these particular social and community structures (Min, 1992).

6 Furthermore, compared to all other groups, Korean immigrant mothers were most
7 likely to report using physical punishment and verbal control. Korean immigrant mothers
8 have been found to consider these strategies as normative and legitimate ways to guide and
9 discipline children's misbehaviors and perceive them to reflect their parental care and
10 responsibility (Ahn, 1994). At the same time, Korean immigrant mothers acknowledge the
11 coercive nature of physical punishment and verbal control and consider their children as
12 extensions of themselves. Thus, they view physically disciplining their children as hitting
13 themselves and report only using physical punishment as a last resort (Ahn, 1994; Kim &
14 Hong, 2007).

15 Finally, Turkish mothers were more likely to emphasize providing guidance to their
16 children due to their young age and plasticity than European American mothers. Endorsement
17 of this reason can reflect these mothers' beliefs regarding young children's greater need for
18 parental guidance and direction as compared to older children (Akçınar & Baydar, 2014).
19 This idea is reflected in one Turkish mother's explanation, "... until the child is mature
20 enough and he is capable of making his own way, mothers develop their child's right and
21 wrong behaviors," "this is important for my child's development because he will not have his
22 mother and father in his life all the time." Turkish mothers were previously found to believe
23 that children do not develop certain skills and behaviors until they are older (Durgel et al.,
24 2012); hence, they may provide guidance to their children to encourage and motivate them to
25 internalize their parents' expectations from young age (Yağmurlu et al., 2009).

1 Furthermore, Turkish mothers were found to show seriousness and stern attitude
2 through facial and vocal expressions more than European American mothers. As Turkish
3 mothers show stern attitude by changing their facial and vocal expressions, they expect their
4 children to understand and comply with these emotionally-laden messages (Bayram Özdemir
5 & Cheah, 2015). For example, Turkish mothers mentioned, “my facial expression would
6 change, would become more serious, then I catch my child’s eye and then she [my child]
7 would understand,” “my speech would become harsher, I would say ‘I am not laughing,’ and
8 she would realize that I am angry.” Hoffman (2000) noted that parental discipline that elicits
9 moderate levels of interpersonal distress in children increases their likelihood of internalizing
10 the parent’s message. Therefore, Turkish mothers’ use of vocal and facial expressions with a
11 stern attitude could help children understand their mothers’ seriousness and internalize their
12 socialization message.

13 Turkish mothers were also found to use psychological control more than European
14 American and Korean immigrant mothers. Psychological control is a way of ensuring
15 obedience in the child and has been found to be higher in cultures with higher interdependent
16 orientations (Rudy & Halgunseth, 2005). Although Turkish mothers ranked psychologically
17 controlling behaviors as among the last strategies to be used (similar to the ranking in other
18 cultures), these findings illustrate some continued endorsement of obedience in children via
19 psychologically controlling practices even amongst more highly educated Turkish mothers
20 (Kağıtçıbaşı & Selçuk, 2015; Selçuk, 2015).

21 **Maternal Control and Child Gender across Cultures**

22 Only two gender differences were revealed, both in the Turkish sample. Turkish
23 mothers were more likely to utilize nonphysical punishment (i.e., take away privileges, time-
24 out) with boys than girls, and show their serious and stern attitude (i.e., express seriousness
25 through facial and vocal expressions) with girls than boys. Although these findings are

1 contrary to some previous studies showing no gender differences in parental control strategies
2 among Turkish families (e.g., Bayram Özdemir & Cheah, 2015, 2017), specific gender-based
3 expectations may still prevail to an extent when mothers enforce non-coercive strategies in
4 Turkey (Kağıtçıbaşı & Ataca, 2005). Turkish mothers' specific control practices may change
5 due to expectations in gender differences in child temperament. Turkish girls were found to
6 be more temperamentally fearful than boys (Yavuz et al., 2017), thus Turkish mothers may
7 focus on emotional sensitivity and use more subtle ways to control their girls, and utilize
8 more direct nonphysical punishment with boys.

9 Overall, the general lack of gender differences in European American, Chinese
10 immigrant, and Korean immigrant families was consistent with more recent studies (e.g.,
11 Cheah et al., 2018; Leaper, 2015; Vu et al., 2018) that reflect current cultural and societal
12 changes in values regarding gender role in the United States (Leaper, 2015). Despite the
13 patriarchal tradition, Chinese immigrant and Korean immigrant mothers may not
14 differentially emphasize the reasons for and specific use of control strategies for boys versus
15 girls due to the gender-egalitarian values in the Western society in order to promote their
16 young children's adjustment in the United States (Chao, 1995; Vu et al., 2018).

17 **Limitations and Future Directions**

18 Several limitations of this study need to be discussed. First, the present study relied
19 only on mothers' conceptualization of their control reasons and strategies. Although
20 interviews of mother' conceptualization is an important method to capture their socialization
21 ethnotheories, which was the goal of the current study, some of the maternal control strategies
22 (e.g., physical punishment and verbal control, psychological control) may be perceived more
23 negatively in some societies than others (Lansford et al., 2005). Thus, mothers may be more
24 reluctant to share their actual controlling practices and values due to social desirability and
25 perceived social pressure (Richman et al., 1999). Also, mothers' self-reported strategies may

1 not match their actual behaviors. Thus, controlling for social desirability, spousal reports, and
2 direct observations of mothers' controlling behaviors can provide a broader understanding of
3 maternal control cognitions and practices.

4 Second, the current study only included mothers. However, fathers may endorse and
5 employ different control reasons and strategies, and the effect of the parent gender on child
6 outcomes may be more salient in the cultures with rigid gender roles, such as East Asian and
7 Turkish culture (e.g., Erkman & Rohner, 2006; Kim et al., 2010). Thus, future research is
8 needed to explore both mothers' and fathers' conceptualizations of parental control across
9 cultures. Moreover, the majority of our samples were highly educated, and parenting
10 practices and cognitions can vary as a function of maternal education level (Mistry et al.,
11 2008). Thus, future research should include samples with more diverse SES and
12 systematically examine and disentangle the role of SES in maternal control across cultures.
13 Furthermore, within-culture differences were not considered in this study. For example,
14 mothers within a cultural group may vary significantly in their parenting beliefs and practices
15 due to individual characteristics or cohort effects (Chen, 2015). Thus, future studies should
16 examine heterogeneity within cultures in addition to cross-cultural differences.

17 Moreover, we did not assess the specific situations or settings mothers from different
18 cultural backgrounds engage in maternal control. The situations in which mothers deliver key
19 socialization messages and express varying levels of control towards their children have been
20 found to differ across cultures (Vu et al., 2018). Therefore, future research should also
21 explore why, how, and when mothers from different cultures engage in control.

22 Last, although we proposed that these differences reflected variations in cultural
23 values and family models, these constructs were not directly assessed; as such, future
24 research will gain a better understanding of the specific role of cultural values and models by
25 assessing their association with parental control beliefs and practices.

1 **Overall Conclusions**

2 Despite these limitations, the present study significantly enriches our understanding
3 of the complexities of maternal control across cultures. Past research examining maternal
4 control has dichotomized cultures into independent- and interdependent-oriented groups (e.g.,
5 Chao, 1995; Hulei et al., 2006), which provide a less nuanced understanding of maternal
6 control both across and within cultures. Extending this cultural perspective, our findings
7 revealed both culturally-shared and culturally-specific maternal control cognitions and
8 practices.

9 While the European American mothers' responses reflected an independent family
10 model, we found variations amongst the three psychologically-interdependent cultures (i.e.,
11 Chinese immigrant, Korean immigrant, and Turkish). These mothers emphasized different
12 maternal control cognitions and practices, which suggest that they balance their goals of
13 socializing autonomous-related selves in their children in unique ways (Bornstein, 2017;
14 Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). For immigrant families, parenting values and practices can be differently
15 influenced by the traditional values of the specific heritage culture, levels of exposure to the
16 mainstream cultural values, the process of adjustment to a new country, and co-ethnic
17 community (e.g., Seo et al., 2017; Yu et al., 2016; Zhou & Kim, 2006). Similarly, economic
18 changes and increased educational levels due to urbanization can uniquely influence mothers'
19 endorsement of traditional Turkish values and parenting practices (Şen et al., 2014).

20 Thus, the present study enriches our understanding of maternal control and reveals
21 the complexity of culture as reflected in the control socialization goals and practices of
22 mothers from diverse backgrounds. Our findings can guide future efforts to develop
23 culturally-appropriate measures of maternal control and culturally-sensitive parenting
24 programs for each cultural group to support the socialization efforts of diverse families.

Table 1*Demographic Information for European American, Chinese Immigrant, Korean Immigrant, and Turkish Families*

	European American	Chinese Immigrant	Korean Immigrant	Turkish	Group differences
<i>n</i>	100	102	103	109	
Child gender					$\chi^2(3, N = 414) = 2.18$
Male (%)	55%	50%	45%	51%	
Child Age in years; <i>M (SD)</i>	4.8 (1.0)	4.4 (0.9)	4.3 (1.1)	4.4 (1.2)	$F(3, 403) = 5.41^{***}$
Maternal Age in years; <i>M (SD)</i>	38.3 (4.4)	37.7 (4.7)	35.6 (3.7)	36.2 (4.7)	$F(3, 396) = 8.23^{***}$
Length of Stay in the U.S. in years; <i>M (SD)</i>	N/A	10.1 (6.7)	8.7 (5.3)	N/A	$t(197) = 1.59$
Maternal education level (%)					$\chi^2(12, N = 400) = 103.91^{***}$
Less than high school	0%	0%	1%	0%	
High school graduate	1%	3%	8%	0%	
Partial college	4%	3%	17%	11%	
College/university graduate	38%	26%	42%	72%	
Graduate degree	56%	66%	21%	17%	
Did not report	1%	2%	11%	0%	

 $p < .001$.

Table 2

Maternal Control Reasons and Strategies Coding Categories, Definitions, and Direct Quotes

Coding Category	Definition	Direct Quote
Reasons		
Behavioral Norms/Standards	Children’s need for knowing boundaries, limits, and rules	<p>European Americans: “I think it gives children an ability to know how to function in the world when they have rules and boundaries. And they know where they stand all the time.”</p> <p>Chinese immigrants: “A child needs boundaries because you cannot let a child develop freely. Just like a tree, when the tree grows to a certain extent, you have to cut it and do some pruning. Children can’t let them develop freely. We usually have boundaries within which he is free, but that is to say, he cannot get beyond these boundaries.”</p> <p>Korean immigrants: “I believe children do need discipline. They need boundaries for what they can do and can’t do;” “Parents need to set rules and boundaries until children can set their own.”</p> <p>Turkish: “I want my child to be raised free and have high self-esteem, but you need to establish the line between a happy child versus a spoiled child.”</p>
Child Safety	Ensuring physical safety and making children feel secure/safe	<p>European Americans: “I like to be in control so that I can protect them;” “When you set good boundaries and good limits on children, that is another way they can feel safety and security and knowing their boundaries. And from there, they understand the world around them and can feel safer in making choices.”</p> <p>Chinese immigrants: “[parental control can] prevent dangerous behaviors, such as electrical shocks or playing with fire;” “Setting firm boundaries helps her feel secure.”</p> <p>Korean immigrants: “I’m strict when my child’s behavior puts him into danger;” “Children feel secure and develop self-regulation within clear rules.”</p> <p>Turkish: “I would like my child to be able to protect her/himself from any harm. For example, I would like her/him to be able to protect her/himself from other kids in school [when needed].”</p>

<p>Social Relations and Respect Others</p>	<p>Children’s need for respecting and appreciating other people and elders</p>	<p>European Americans: “Children can respect other people, their teachers, and friends, and appreciate people;” “I think the most important part of that is that freedom shouldn’t impinge on other people’s freedoms as well.” Chinese immigrants: “I want him to know, especially at a young age, that adults are in charge and to have respect for adults.” Korean immigrants: “If children can strictly follow the rules at home, they can also follow the rules outside in society;” “It is Korean culture that we respect elders, and I want my child to learn how to be polite and respect elders.” Turkish: “I am strict about making him learn to share with others.”</p>
<p>Providing Guidance</p>	<p>Greater need for guidance due to young age, lack of self-discipline, plasticity, and possible difficulties in the future</p>	<p>European Americans: “Mostly just because of his age. We recognize that he’s learning and testing, and we’re trying to teach him to make better decisions on his own;” Chinese immigrants: “I think, especially at their age, if you don’t [exert control, regulate, or be strict], they’ll keep doing it. And I think the more you reinforce that it’s not right, hopefully, then you can stop and prevent it from happening;” “Because a child is like a piece of white paper, he needs some instructions.” Korean immigrants: “There is a Korean saying, “a habit fixed at three years continues until eighty,” and I think it is parents’ responsibility to set boundaries and teach right from wrong so it can prevent bad consequences in the future.” Turkish: “Unfortunately, it is necessary to be a little strict for him/her to learn something, to be ready for life. Even if it hurts me, it is for the good of my child, so I need to be strict when it is necessary.”</p>
<p>Moral Development</p>	<p>Children’s need for knowing right from wrong</p>	<p>European Americans: “Children can learn what is right and what is wrong.” Chinese immigrants: “It provides him with guidance not necessarily limitation or parameters, but I think that’s how you start to learn what good and bad choices are.” Korean immigrants: “If I only say nice things and allow everything, my child will grow without knowing right from wrong. And mothers need to say no so children can make the right decisions.” Turkish: “Otherwise, my child cannot learn when to do the right behavior.”</p>

Strategies

Nonphysical Punishment

Taking away privileges and giving time-out

European Americans: “I might take something away that is really important to her;” “We take her upstairs and away from the situation. So, it might be like kind of a time-out for her, and we still sometimes set a timer. We say, ‘for four minutes, you have to stay in your room.’”

Chinese immigrants: “I’ll give him a time out, and he gets a time out for as long as his age is.”

Korean immigrants: “There is no TV, game, and smartphone;” “I make my child sit on the thinking chair.”

Turkish: “I would say you cannot do this today [upon wrongdoing], for example, you cannot play with your favorite toy today, or you cannot watch a movie;” “I would send her/him to her/his room.”

Setting and Maintaining Rules

Setting expectations and rules, and reminding children of these rules

European Americans: “I’ll probably be very concrete in terms of the expectations I have. I offer a time limit in which I expect it to be done. So that it should be very clear;” “We post house rules on the refrigerator. Sometimes those rules change, but they are posted rules, so they clearly know what they are. So if they break a house rule, then they’re in trouble.”

Chinese immigrants: “Sometimes I will call him a penalty stop. Will explain to him that the family has family laws;” “We will try to encourage or promote him by giving him prizes or incentives.”

Korean immigrants: “We establish rules that both my child and I agree upon.”

Turkish: “We have a set of rules, and my child knows that I will follow those rules [if s/he does not follow them].”

Reasoning/Negotiation

Discussing reasoning, giving verbal instruction, and negotiating

European Americans: “I calm him down, explain what he did, ask him why he did it, and explain why it wasn’t the right behavior;” “I usually try to give them a little understanding of why. It’s not arbitrarily ‘just because.’ There’s usually a purpose too for the limit or the rule.”

Chinese immigrants: “A lot of talking and explaining, and when that doesn’t work, I give them examples, a lot of examples.”

Korean immigrants: “I explain a lot verbally about “why.” And what happens when you

don't do it, or why you need to do it. I'll explain verbally. I think that's a big thing."
 Turkish: "I talk to him about the reasons why I say no;" "I explain to my child that this behavior shall not be done, and I do not want him to do it again."

Consistency

Being consistent with rules

European Americans: "It's like you need to have a consistent message throughout everything so that he understands listening is something that a child is supposed to do."
 Chinese immigrants: "When I tell my child something, he needs to do it;" "We strictly enforce the family rules that we established."
 Korean immigrants: "When I say "no," I stick to it. Both my husband and I discuss rules in advance, so everyone in the house follows the rules."
 Turkish: "I try to be consistent; that is, I try to stay behind what I said."

Physical Punishment and Verbal Control

Using physical means (e.g., spanking), threatening, and scolding

European Americans: "On the very rare occasion he gets a spanking, but that doesn't usually happen;" "I grab my child;" "I pull my child aside, physically making it stop;" "I yell sometimes;" "I give her a warning. Like the '1, 2, 3 magic.'"
 Chinese immigrants: "Sometimes I will threaten to spank them;" "I spank his palm."
 Korean immigrants: "I tell my child that I'm going to be very angry and scary if he doesn't stop;" "I make my child face the wall and raise her arms;" "I spank my child with 'the rod of love.'"
 Turkish: "Sometimes I slap his hand."

Show Parents' Serious/Stern Attitude

Express parents' seriousness through facial and vocal expressions

European Americans: "I look at him, talk to him, and get down on his level;" "Usually, I'll probably change my tone of voice so as opposed to a nice, friendly tone, to have a more authoritative tone."
 Chinese immigrants: "I speak in a firm tone of voice;" "I look directly into his eyes with a stern look."
 Korean immigrants: "First, I glare fiercely and then raise my voice."
 Turkish: "My facial expression would change, would become more serious, then I catch my child's eye and then s/he would understand." "I would get down to her/his level and make eye contact and say no."

Correction	Pointing out and requiring children to admit bad behaviors	<p>European Americans: “We’ll tell him strictly what he’s doing is wrong and if he tries to push our limits;” “I ask them what they did wrong ... they have to apologize.”</p> <p>Chinese immigrants: “If you are strict with him, point out and correct his wrong behaviors, he will remember and won't do the same next time;” “I correct my child's wrongdoings immediately and tell the child it has serious consequences.”</p> <p>Korean immigrants: “I tell my child to think what he did wrong one by one.”</p> <p>Turkish: “I expect him to apologize.”</p>
Psychological Control	Shaming, love withdrawal, making children feel guilty, giving silent treatment	<p>European Americans: “I just go away. I just leave him there. I don’t pay attention to him;” “I have a conversation with them that I’m disappointed.”</p> <p>Chinese immigrants: “Sometimes I do not look at him and ignore him. Then he will know he should not behave like this.”</p> <p>Korean immigrants: “I usually ignore him until he figures out what he made a mistake and what he was doing wrong.”</p> <p>Turkish: “I say ‘I will not be your mother, I will not talk to you or I will be sad and will cry if you do this behavior.’”</p>

Table 3*Rank and Percentages of Reasons and Strategies for Maternal Control*

	European American		Chinese Immigrant		Korean Immigrant		Turkish	
	Rank	Percentage	Rank	Percentage	Rank	Percentage	Rank	Percentage
Reasons								
Behavioral Norms/Standards	1	61	1	37	1	39	1	40
Child Safety	2	26	5	2	5	5	4	2
Social Relations and Respect Others	3	21	4	5	2	29	4	2
Providing Guidance	4	10	3	26	4	20	2	27
Moral Development	5	9	2	36	3	22	3	13
Strategies								
Nonphysical Punishment	1	80	1	67	2	65	1	51
Setting and Maintaining Rules	2	79	6	28	5	20	5	24
Reasoning/Negotiation	3	62	5	42	4	34	4	34
Consistency	4	55	8	19	7	10	6	20
Physical Punishment and Verbal Control	5	54	2	61	1	78	3	37
Show Parents' Serious/Stern Attitude	6	46	3	48	3	42	2	41
Correction	7	21	4	44	5	20	8	11
Psychological Control	8	6	7	24	8	7	6	20

Note. Percentages represent mothers' endorsement of the category at least once. Ranks with the same value have the same percentages.

Table 4*Descriptive Statistics and MANCOVA of Cultural Group on Importance of Expressing Maternal Control and Maternal Reasons and Strategies*

	European American		Chinese Immigrant		Korean Immigrant		Turkish		Group differences		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i> ¹	<i>p</i>	Partial η^2
Importance of Expressing Control	3.7	0.8	3.9 ^d	0.8	4.4 ^{abd}	0.8	3.5	1.0	15.69	<.001	.11
Reasons											
Behavioral Norms/Standards	.33	.34	.24	.37	.27	.38	.35	.46	2.10	.100	.02
Child Safety	.10 ^{bcd}	.18	.01	.06	.03	.15	.01	.07	12.55	<.001	.09
Social Relations and Respect Others	.08 ^d	.18	.02	.11	.16 ^{bd}	.29	.01	.11	11.78	<.001	.08
Providing Guidance	.04	.15	.16	.29	.16	.33	.22 ^a	.40	5.08	.002	.04
Moral Development	.03	.10	.23 ^{ad}	.34	.13	.30	.09	.27	9.48	<.001	.07
Strategies											
Nonphysical Punishment	.25	.20	.23	.22	.27	.23	.24	.28	0.43	.732	.00
Setting and Maintaining Rules	.23 ^{bcd}	.20	.05	.11	.05	.12	.07	.14	29.71	<.001	.19
Reasoning/Negotiation	.15	.17	.11	.16	.09	.13	.12	.20	1.74	.159	.01
Consistency	.11 ^{bc}	.13	.05	.14	.03	.10	.08	.20	5.22	.002	.04
Physical Punishment and Verbal Control	.11	.13	.21 ^{ad}	.24	.34 ^{abd}	.27	.14	.20	20.68	<.001	.14
Show Parents' Serious/Stern Attitude	.09	.12	.12	.16	.14	.19	.17 ^a	.25	3.23	.023	.03
Correction	.03	.06	.12 ^{acd}	.16	.05	.10	.03	.11	13.62	<.001	.10
Psychological Control	.01	.03	.06 ^a	.12	.02	.09	.07 ^{ac}	.15	6.38	<.001	.05

Note. Means reflect the proportion scores of maternal control reasons and strategies.

¹ $F(3, 379)$ for importance of expressing control; $F(3, 384)$ for both maternal control reasons and strategies

^a Significantly greater than European American mothers

^b Significantly greater than Chinese immigrant mothers

^c Significantly greater than Korean immigrant mothers

^d Significantly greater than Turkish mothers

Figure 1

Illustration of the Coding Procedures to Create the Final Codes Scheme

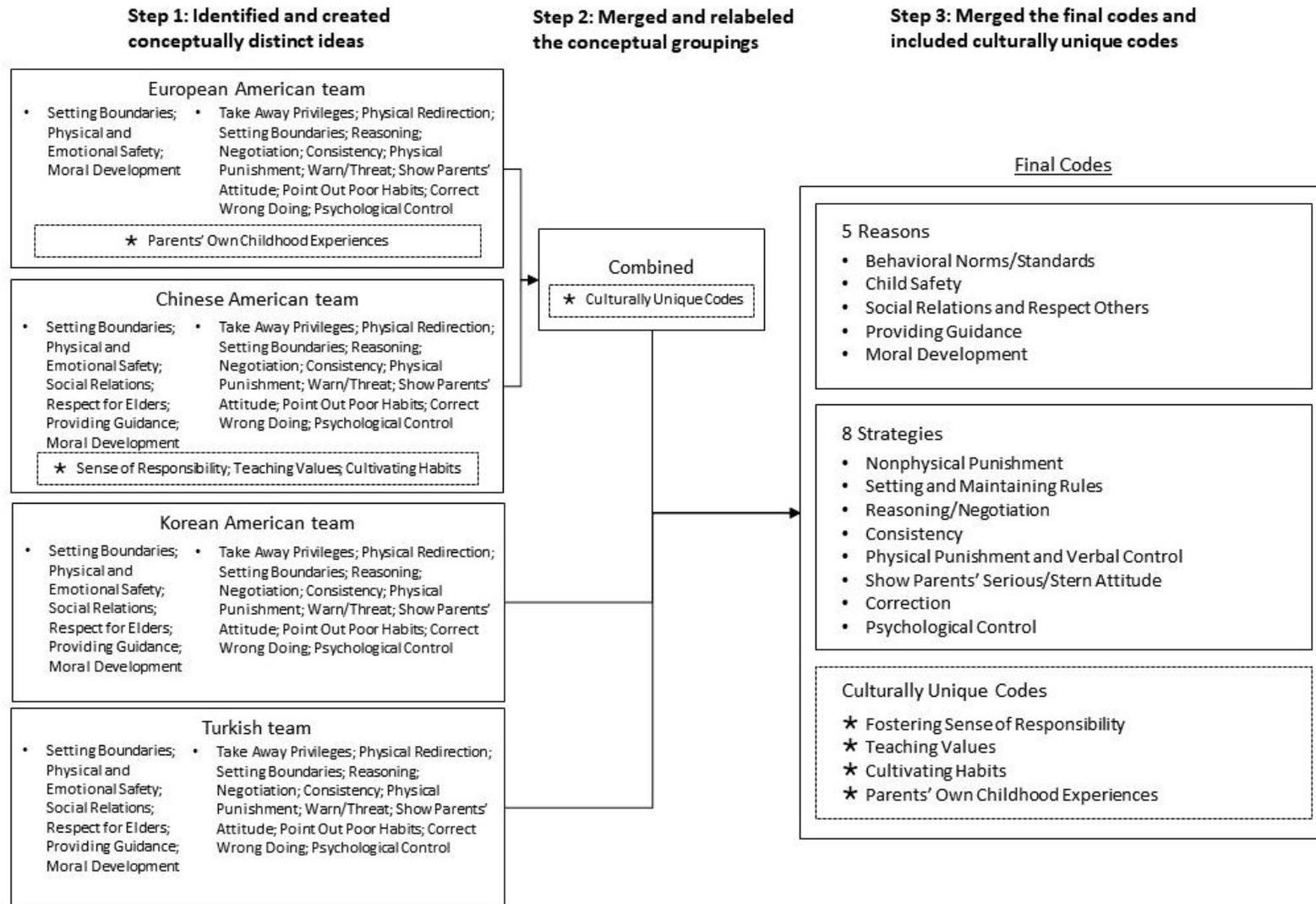
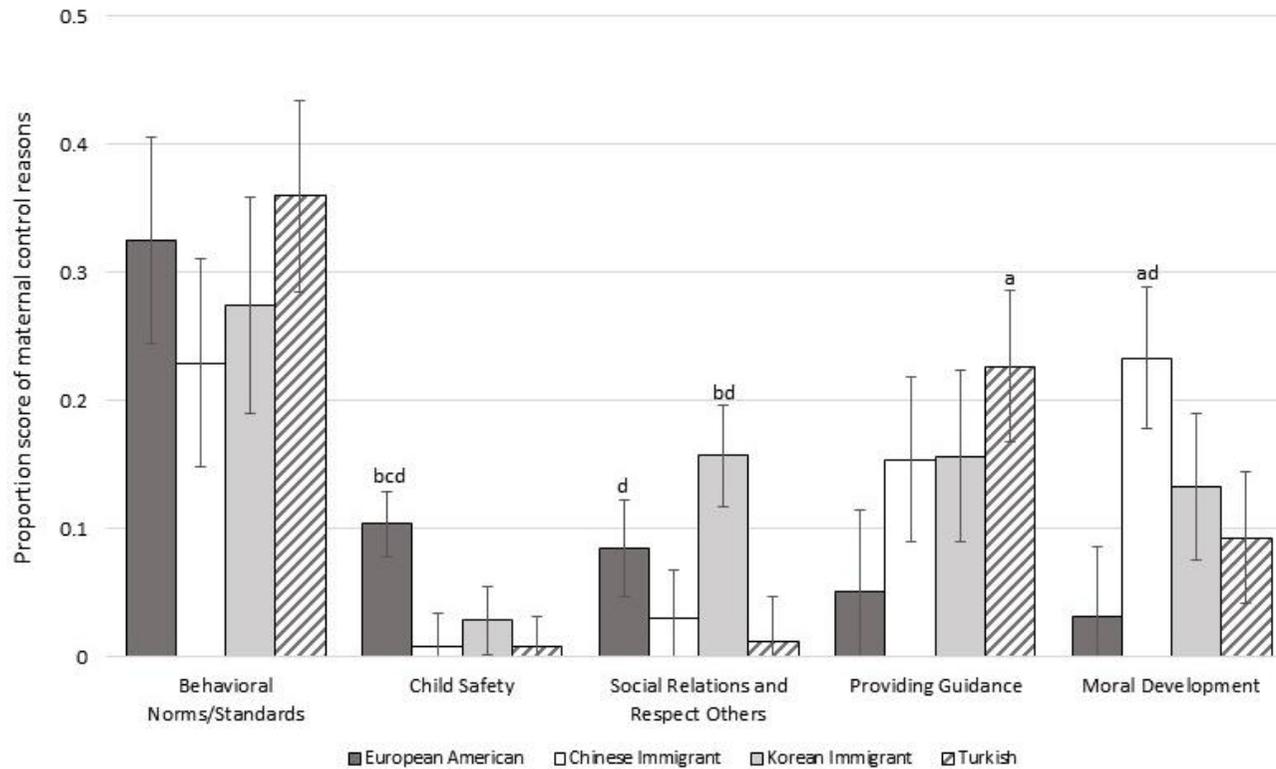


Figure 2

Mean Differences in Five Maternal Control Reasons Across Four Cultural Groups

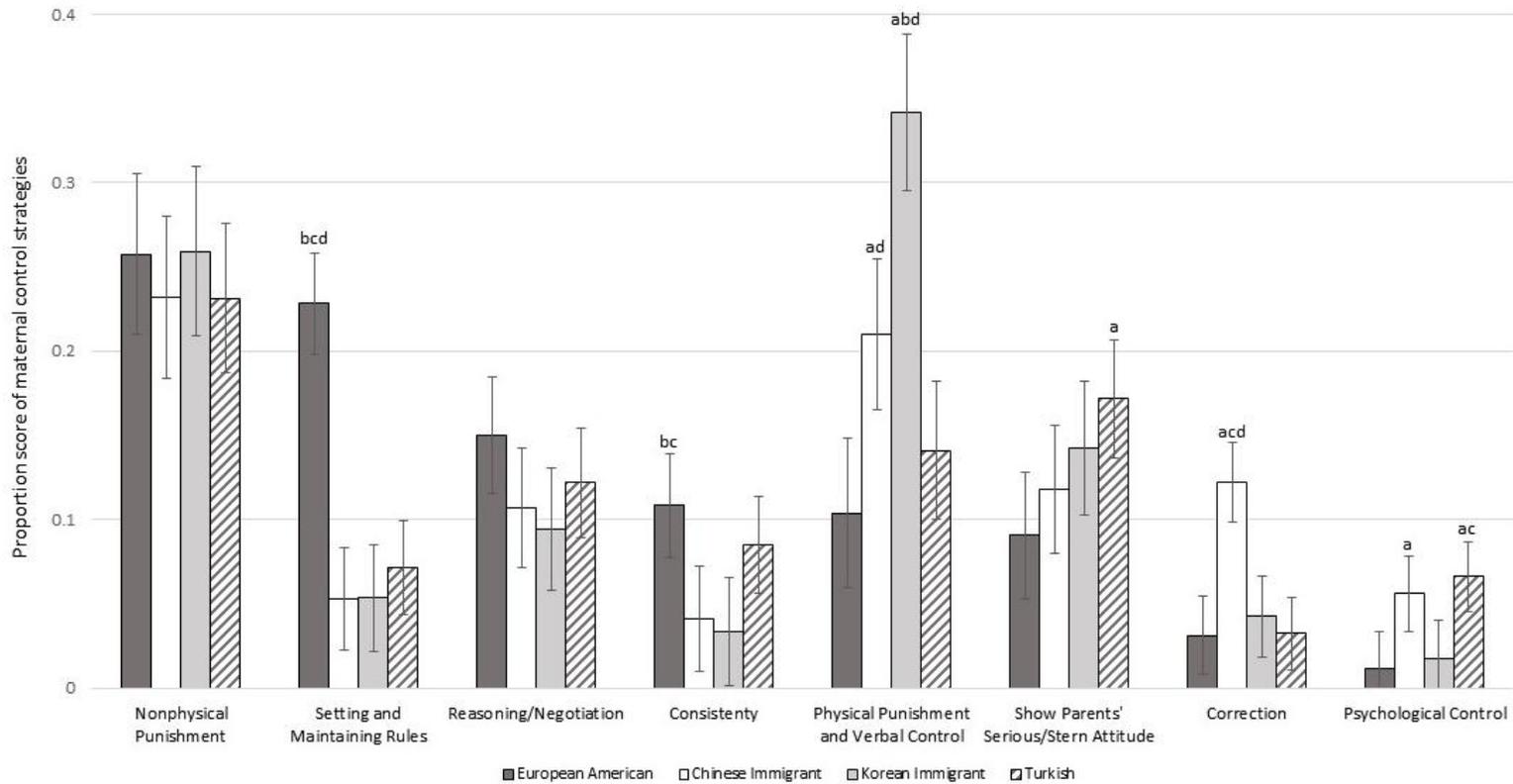


Note.

- ^a Significantly greater than European American mothers
- ^b Significantly greater than Chinese immigrant mothers
- ^c Significantly greater than Korean immigrant mothers
- ^d Significantly greater than Turkish mothers

Figure 3

Mean Differences in Eight Maternal Control Strategies Across Four Cultural Groups



Note.

- ^a Significantly greater than European American mothers
- ^b Significantly greater than Chinese immigrant mothers
- ^c Significantly greater than Korean immigrant mothers
- ^d Significantly greater than Turkish mothers

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