**Protective Factors and Barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Parents**

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**Background**

Current parenting models emphasise Western frameworks of parenting and families and often overlook Australian Indigenous parenting. For example, Western-typical models of resilient parenting include factors such as family functioning, parental wellbeing, and parental self-efficacy. Such models often do not consider specific cultural factors impacting families and communities. An Indigenous Australian model of Social and Emotional Wellbeing describes the cultural impacts upon Indigenous wellbeing. This model highlights factors such as family and kinship, mind and body, and spirituality as significant contributors to Indigenous wellbeing. This study aimed to explore the cultural interface between western and Indigenous models of parenting and wellbeing. Specifically, the study aimed to identify cross-cultural and culturally unique factors impacting upon Indigenous parenting.

**Method**

A qualitative research project was conducted with a sample of six Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander parents who participated in interviews exploring their parenting experience. Thematic analysis was conducted within an IPA framework.

**Results**

Parents described cultural, social and psychological factors that assisted in building and maintaining parental resilience and wellbeing. Child and family characteristics, family functioning and self-efficacy provided important non-culturally specific influences on parental resilience. Culturally based factors such as connection to land, spirituality, culture, and family were reported as important contributors to parental wellbeing. Adaptive parenting is a culturally unique factor not included in either model. Adaptive parenting was reported to impact upon the parenting practices of Australian Indigenous parents.

**Discussion**

Parenting and wellbeing models contain protective factors relevant to the parenting practices of Australian Indigenous parents. However, parents in the current study identified factors that impact upon parenting practices that are not represented in these models. An integrated holistic model designed specifically for Indigenous parents was developed from these results. Such a model more fully describes parenting experiences and would be useful when supporting Australian Indigenous parents.