

within social networks (Bourdieu, 1986). Race and ethnicity appear to influence the nature of social capital that parents deploy to support their children's education (Diamond, Wang, & Gomez, 2006; Louie, 2006). The relationships among social capital, parent involvement, and children's outcomes in ethnically diverse families have not been simultaneously examined in Head Start. The proposed study will extend prior research by examining social capital, parent involvement, and children's preschool competencies in Puerto Rican, non-Hispanic White, and Latino immigrant families in Head Start (n=250). Data will be gathered through interviews, parent questionnaires and child preschool competency assessments. Descriptive analyses will describe the characteristics of parents' social capital, and a path model will be tested that posits parent involvement as a mediator of the relationship between social capital and children's preschool competencies. Findings will inform Head Start strategies to build parent involvement and support children's school readiness in families of different ethnic backgrounds.

Sample:

Across three target programs, the survey sample will include 250 parents, roughly divided into three groups: 80 Puerto Rican, 80 Latino immigrant, and 80 Non-Hispanic White. Children of all parents participating in the surveys will be assessed. Finally, a sub-sample of approximately 40 parents as well as center-based Family Service Coordinators will participate in interviews about social capital.

Measures:

- Family Involvement Questionnaire (Fantuzzo, Tighe, & Childs, 2000)
- Bracken School Readiness Assessment (Bracken, 2007)
- Parent Education Communication Survey (This measure was designed for the study and will be refined through course of study)

Sandra Plata-Potter

Mentor:

Lisa Knoche, Ph.D.

Project Funding Years:

2010-2012

University Affiliation:

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Project Title:

Parental Literacy Belief and Engagement in Homes of Dual Language Learners: A Mixed Methods Study

Project Abstract:

The primary objective of the proposed study is to better understand how the engagement of Latino parents in a Head Start emergent literacy project evolves into tangible home literacy practices and how these contribute to their child's literacy outcomes. The hypothesis is that Latino parental engagement in a Head Start emergent literacy project and Latino parental beliefs regarding literacy practices relate to changes in their observed home literacy practices. It is further hypothesized that these home practices are related to child literacy outcomes. A concurrent triangulation mixed methods design will be used for the study. The quantitative component consists of secondary data analysis involving a hierarchical linear model (i.e., multilevel regression models) to statistically test the research hypotheses. For the qualitative component of the study, in-depth interviews will be conducted with a subset of the participating families. One hundred forty two Latino parents and their children from a rural Midwest community will be participants in this study. A better understanding of how Latino parental beliefs and engagement in home literacy practices relates to Head Start dual language learner outcomes will help to inform Head Start practitioners when designing and implementing strategies that are targeted at supporting Latino parents in their endeavor to create home environments that contribute to their children's literacy development.

Sample:

Participants for this study will consist of families who have self-identified as Latino residing in a rural Midwest community with a preschool age child, enrolled in a Head Start program. The quantitative component of the study will consist of 142 Latino families who have participated in an emergent literacy intervention program for preschoolers. For the qualitative component of this study, a subsample of 30 families from the 142 families will be invited to participate in in-depth interviews.

Measures:

Child measures:

- Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening – Preschool (PALS-PreK; Invernizzi, Sullivan, Meier, & Swank, 2004)
- The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – Third Edition, Part A and Part B (PPVT-III, Part A and Part B; Dunn, & Dunn, 1997)
- The Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey–Revised Spanish Form (WMLS-R Spanish Form; Alvarado, Rueda, & Schrank, 2005)

Parental Measures:

- Parent attendance at Family Literacy Events (parent-child focused interactions held in the evening, twice monthly, at the center-based preschool program)
- Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ; Fantuzzo, Tighe, & Childs, 2000)
- The Family Literacy Portfolio (collection of documentation that demonstrates the actions of families learning and working together on literacy development)
- Parent Interview on experiences, opinions, values, behaviors and beliefs regarding emergent literacy

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Mentor:

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Project Funding Years:

2010-2012

University Affiliation:

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Project Title:

Shared Reading, Guided Participation, and Mind-Mindedness among Appalachian Head Start Families

Project Abstract:

This study seeks to develop, deliver and evaluate the results of a program targeting family reading practices in rural Head Start families in Appalachia. Shared reading (i.e., the act of reading together) has profound implications for children's long-term cognitive and social-emotional development and on their home and school life. Additionally, shared reading is an authentic, meaningful, relevant activity setting that affords children from diverse backgrounds and abilities opportunities to learn about reading and literacy, taking into account their individual needs and level of development. To this end, the shared reading program provides opportunities for adults to understand the dynamic learning processes that occur in children's zone of proximal development (ZPD) and strategies for scaffolding children's development to gain reading and literacy skills. This project will assess the shared reading program's effects over time on adults' frequency and use of the scaffolding, guided participation, and mind-mindedness techniques presented in the program. This program meets the needs of the Head Start