Beliefs about the Education of Children: A Comparison of Hispanic Immigrant and Anglo-American Parents

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ABSTRACT

BELIEFS ABOUT THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN:
A COMPARISON OF HISPANIC IMMIGRANT
AND ANGLO-AMERICAN PARENTS

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In light of the fact that the number of Hispanic children enrolled in American schools is dramatically increasing and that these children are at higher risk of academic difficulty than any other group, the present study investigates the educational and child-rearing beliefs held by Hispanic parents. Understanding these beliefs is pivotal in any attempt to improve Latinos’ educational attainment since current research recognizes that parental educational beliefs influence home-literacy practices which in turn influence subsequent academic achievement. The research questions focus on two types of potential differences in terms of educational and child-rearing beliefs: (1) intercultural (Anglo-Americans vs. Hispanics), (2) intracultural (Hispanics with varying educational levels). To address these questions, 199 participants (114 Hispanics and 85 Anglo-Americans) filled out two surveys, *The Parental Modernity Scale* and *The Rank*
Order of Parental Values, about educational and child-rearing beliefs. The two instruments used yielded a total of five scores for each participant. One-way ANOVAs followed by Tukey post-hoc tests revealed the existence of statistically significant intercultural differences (p < .0001) while no significant intracultural differences were observed. Overall, Hispanic participants had a propensity to endorse the following beliefs while Anglo-Americans tended to disagree with the same beliefs: (1) the home and the school are two separate entities and parents should not question the teacher’s teaching methods, (2) children should be treated the same regardless of differences among them, (3) children are naturally bad and must therefore be trained early in life, (4) the most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to adults, and (5) learning is a passive process where teachers fill children’s heads with information. However, both groups shared the following beliefs: (1) what parents teach their children at home is important to their school success, (2) children learn best by doing rather than listening, (3) children have a right to their own point of view and should be allowed to express it. Possible explanations behind the apparent paradox of having Hispanic parents agree with opposite beliefs are presented. Implications for the results of this study and suggestions for future research are discussed.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Background: an increasingly diverse population

The United States has experienced high rates of immigration throughout the past
decade with the Asian and Hispanic populations growing much faster than the population
as a whole. The Hispanic population constitutes the United States’ largest minority
community with 39.9 million people in 2003, which represented approximately 14% of
the entire country’s population (Blacks or African Americans came next (12%), followed
by Asians (4%)). The growth rate of the Hispanic population between 2000 and 2003 was
about four times that of the population as a whole and their number is expected to grow
to 102.6 million by 2050. This will nearly double their share of the nation’s population as
it will increase to 24.4%, or almost one fourth of the United States’ population (U.S.
Census Bureau, 2004).

The growth of the Hispanic population on a national level is accompanied by a
significant increase in the number of Latino children enrolled in the American school
system. Indeed, it is projected that, by 2020, one in five children under 18 will be of
Hispanic origin (NCES, 2003).

Hispanic children and academic achievement

Besides the rapid growth of their number, Hispanic children have attracted
significant attention because they tend to perform below other ethnic groups
academically (Garcia, 2002; NCES, 2003). Indeed, a 2004 report by the U.S. Census
Bureau explains that while the United States’ population as a whole is becoming more
educated, Hispanics’ educational attainment has not significantly improved over the past
decade. For instance, the proportion of Latinos 25 or older with a high school diploma increased from 53% in 1993 to 57% in 2003 (89.4% in 2003 for Non-Hispanic Whites, 80% for Blacks, 87.6% for Asians), the proportion of those who had some college went from 26% to 30% (56.4% for Non-Hispanic Whites, 44.7% for Blacks, 67.4% for Asians) and the proportion of those who held a bachelor’s degree increased from 9% to 11% (30% for Non-Hispanic Whites, 17.3% for Blacks, 49.8% for Asians) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). In other words, while the number of Hispanic children enrolled in American schools is massively increasing, the number of Hispanic children actually graduating from the same schools is not increasing at a comparative rate. A major educational dilemma is thus to find effective ways to educate this growing number of minority children who will soon be a majority.

Finding effective ways of educating Hispanic children

An important body of research on education focuses on the impact of home literacy practices on subsequent academic achievement. Indeed, August and Hakuta (1997) clearly establish through their review of literature that children who come from literate households, with educated parents and/or exposure to literacy on a regular basis, are most likely to succeed in school than those who do not. Nevertheless, the same review indicates that few studies describe the literacy practices in the homes of language-minority children. The few studies that are available focus on the dichotomy between poor and rich students as the main explanation for evaluating success among immigrant children (Snow et al. 1991). Yet, “being poor itself does not create reading problems; rather, what is critical are the kinds of literacy activities generated in the home” (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993, p.317). Furthermore, the kinds of literacy practices
generated in the home depend on the parental beliefs on what literacy is and how it develops, as well as on the way parents perceive their role and that of the school in the education of their children (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). In summary, parental beliefs about literacy influence the type of literacy activities generated in the home; activities which in turn have been found to influence academic achievement. However, not much has been done to identify the parental beliefs and literacy practices in the homes of Hispanic children, even though this group stands at higher risk of academic difficulty.

The studies that have attempted to examine the parental beliefs about literacy and education and the resulting home literacy practices of Hispanic families have typically been qualitative in nature and have focused on small samples ranging from one family to approximately 30 (e.g. Duke Gitelman Brilliant, 2001; Peña, 2000; Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Valdés, 1998; Volk, 1999; Volk & de Acosta, 2003). Patterns emerge from these works as each study concludes that it is typical for the Latino parents in their sample to value education. However, most of the previously mentioned studies also explain that the Hispanic participants in their research do not seem to define education and literacy development the way teachers in US schools might. For instance, several researchers have emphasized that the Hispanic parents they worked with perceived their role as mainly teaching their children to be good, to behave well in society, and to obey adults, with the strong belief that if children obey then they will learn effectively (Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Valdés, 1996; Volk, 1999). The academic part of education is left almost entirely to teachers who are formally trained to do that well (Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Valdés, 1996).
In other words, previous studies on Hispanic parents’ beliefs and practices related to literacy have shown that there seems to be a gap between what they and their children’s teachers believe and expect. As a result, teachers may expect parents to do certain things a certain way at home, and when it does not happen, or when it happens differently, teachers may presume that parents do not value and support the education of their children. However, this assumed lack of parental involvement seems to rather be the expression of a struggle to adjust to the Anglo-American culture and ways of doing things (Duke Gitelman Brilliant, 2001). For instance, Valdés (1998) describes the difficulty of two Hispanic mothers to understand how American schools work: “like other immigrants, [they] did not quite understand a lot of things that seem straightforward to those of us who have been in this country since birth” (p.11).

It thus appears that, while Anglo-American beliefs and assumptions constitute the norm in American schools, researchers must identify Hispanics’ beliefs and assumptions and see how they resemble and/or differ from that norm that dictates teachers’ expectations. Indeed, as long as teachers expect one thing and Latino parents expect another, with neither party being aware of this gap in expectations, it is unlikely that Hispanic children will be more successful academically than they have in the past.

Although the studies mentioned previously on Hispanic parents’ educational beliefs and practices have contributed much to our awareness and understanding of the nature of observed home-school discontinuities, there seems to be a need for studies with larger samples so that the research findings can become more generalizable to the country’s Hispanic population as a whole. Moreover, all the studies mentioned earlier in this chapter have focused on Hispanics with a low socio-economic (SES) status, thus
possibly confounding the variables of cultural background and SES. Indeed, are the parental beliefs identified in those studies different from the Anglo-American accepted “norm” due to cultural background or to SES? In other words, would we obtain the same results with Hispanics with a higher SES? Moreover, what would Anglo-American parents with varying SES be found to believe?

The two issues identified in the previous paragraph have begun to be considered by Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) in their study of the educational and child-rearing beliefs of 30 Mexican-American and 30 Anglo-American mothers, with both cultural groups being characterized by a low SES. The aforementioned study, published in the American Journal of Speech Language Pathology, identified statistically significant differences between the two cultural groups in focus. This conclusion seems to confirm that the beliefs and values identified by previous research as being specific to Hispanic parents might indeed exist as a result of cultural background and may not necessarily have a connection to SES. However, one study is definitely not enough to argue in favor of one side or the other.

In light of all the issues raised previously, the present study is a replication of a portion of the Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) study and it sets out to use a large sample of participants to answer the following research questions:

1) Do Hispanic and Anglo-American parents hold significantly different beliefs about education and literacy?

2) Does SES influence parental beliefs about education and literacy of Hispanic and Anglo-American parents?
The researcher believes that identifying possible similarities and/or differences in parental beliefs about education and literacy between Hispanic and Anglo-American parents will help education professionals better serve the growing number of Latino children who stand at higher risk of academic difficulty. Only as Hispanic parents and Anglo-American teachers learn to better understand each other will they be able to truly combine their efforts to reach their common objective of helping the children succeed academically.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

As was discussed in the previous chapter, a major challenge faced by American schools today is the need to find effective ways to educate the growing number of Hispanic students who stand at higher risk of academic difficulty than other ethnic groups. In light of research findings on the impact of parental beliefs about literacy and actual home literacy practices on later student academic achievement, the present study sets out to identify and compare the educational beliefs of Hispanic and Anglo-American parents with varying socio-economic backgrounds. In the context of this study and for reasons discussed later in this chapter, socio-economic status (SES) is defined as the mean level of parental education.

In order to adequately address this important issue, this chapter will first define concepts of literacy, literacy practices, emergent literacy, cultural models of literacy, beliefs, and values. All of these concepts are interrelated and make it clear that understanding Hispanic parents’ educational beliefs is key in the process of improving education for Latino children. Following those definitions, the major findings from existing studies on Hispanics’ educational beliefs will be presented and discussed. This discussion will lead into the presentation of the present study and the research questions it intends to investigate. It is important to note that the terms Latino and Hispanic will be used interchangeably in the remainder of this thesis.

Defining literacy and literacy practices

As the influence of home literacy practices on student academic achievement is being recognized, several researchers have attempted to describe the scope of what is
meant by literacy (Makin & Jones Diaz, 2002; Paratore, Melzi & Krol-Sinclair, 1999; Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Verhoeven & Snow, 2001; Volk & de Acosta, 2003; Volk, 1999). Makin and Jones Diaz (2002) explain that literacy is broader than the mastery of the skills of reading and writing as it includes “talking, listening, visual literacies such as viewing and drawing, as well as critical thinking” (p.7). They go on to explain that “traditional perspectives, which restrict literacy to an ability to read and write, situate literacy in the individual rather than in the social worlds in which individuals actively participate” (p.7) and this narrow view of literacy limits our understanding of the different ways in which children learn. In other words, a definition of literacy as a “social and cultural phenomenon rather than a cognitive achievement” has emerged (p.8). This notion of literacy as a social practice emphasizes the mastery of reading and writing not only as skills but rather “as tools with which students can participate in the world” (Wiese, 2004, p.88). Literacy defined as a social practice permeates life through daily living routines, entertainment, work, religion and school related activities to name but a few literacy mediated domains (Teale, 1986).

Drawing on this definition of literacy as a social and cultural practice, Volk and de Acosta (2003) have defined literacy practices as “cultural ways of utilizing literacy” (p.11). They identify both the actions that people take as well as the ways in which they understand and value literacy to be an integral part of literacy practices. In other words, literacy practices are a combination of what people believe literacy to be and how they think it develops with the actual activities that they engage in based on those beliefs.
The concept of emergent literacy

Another key concept in literacy studies is that of emergent literacy, which refers to the literacy development that occurs during a child’s early years. Most researchers agree that learning to be literate begins in the home, long before a child enters school (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993; Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). In addition, the more children are exposed to literacy at home the more likely they are to do well in school later on (August & Hakuta, 1997). Hence, the kinds of home literacy practices generated by the parents determine, to some extent, the academic future of the children. As explained before, the term literacy practices encompasses both actions and beliefs, which means that the beliefs the parents hold about literacy influence the activities they generate. These activities in turn influence subsequent student academic achievement. Moreover, with literacy being defined as a social practice, the parent-generated activities just mentioned include nearly any adult-child interaction throughout the day. In summary, the way parents interact and talk with their children throughout the day has a bearing on later academic achievement and is dictated by the way the same parents understand literacy and its development. Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) clearly assert that the “activities in which children engage as an ordinary part of their daily lives have a profound impact on the cognitive and communicative functions they develop” (p.316).

In a multilingual and multicultural context such as the one found in the United States there is thus a question that arises: do parents from various cultural backgrounds share a common view and understanding of what literacy is and how it develops? That is to say, can we expect all the children currently enrolled in the American school system to come to school with the same ‘literacy baggage’?
Several researchers do not believe so, as they have observed that children who grow up in bilingual homes and multilingual communities develop a specific “linguistic and cultural capital” which differs greatly from the Anglo-American capital valued in school. Indeed, Jones Diaz and Harvey (2002) explain that:

in early childhood settings, where the rules of the literacy game are mostly constituted in Standard English, book-based literacy practices, children who are in possession of this cultural capital will experience congruence and even privilege over other children whose cultural capital and linguistic habitus is different.” (pp.180-181).

Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) confirm the fact that in the United States, the school system reflects the beliefs and values of the dominant Anglo-European culture. They add that those values are markedly different from the beliefs and values of families from different cultures and that as a consequence, “families and professionals often operate from separate cultural perspectives that impede collaboration and negatively influence the effectiveness of educational programs” (p.453).

Based on those comments it appears that there is an implicit alliance between teachers and Anglo-American parents, which alliance implicitly and involuntarily operates at the expense of children who come from diverse cultural backgrounds which may not emphasize the educational beliefs and values accepted and appreciated in the United States. It is important to understand that this implicit alliance just described does not equate with the assumption that one culture may hold better educational beliefs than another one, but rather, it implies that the views of the dominant culture must be made explicit to language-minorities who are trying to adjust to the American way of doing things. The process of making Anglo-American beliefs and assumptions known to language-minorities has to begin with the identification of both Anglo-American and
minorities’ educational beliefs in order to first identify the gap and then intervene to try to fill that gap.

Recognizing the need to better understand the educational beliefs and values that minorities in general, and Hispanics in particular, bring with them to American schools, several researchers have attempted to define those cultural assumptions in an effort to lessen existing home-school discontinuities (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993; Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003; Valdés, 1998; Valdés, 1996). Most published studies on home-school discontinuities for Latino children begin with some sort of definition of culture, cultural models, beliefs and/or values. These definitions are important since current research acknowledges that even though some variability exists within cultural groups, the general consensus seems to be that there are nonetheless recurring patterns within a specific cultural group.

Cultural models of literacy

Most researchers agree that the challenging aspect of trying to identify cultural beliefs is that while culture dictates in large measure our beliefs, assumptions, and actions, it is usually invisible to us. As explained by Reese and Gallimore (2000): “cultural models are so familiar and mundane that they are often invisible and unnoticed by those who hold them” (p.106). They further describe cultural models as “the mental schemata into which are coded environmental and event interpretations, what is valued and ideal, what activities should be enacted and avoided, who should participate and the rules of interaction […] “our taken-for-granted assumptions” (p.106). Hence, cultural models are at the origin of a lot of the parents’ beliefs about their children’s education and the types of literacy events that take place at home. Cultural models are responsible
for the existence of “culturally defined desirable traits” that parents seek to develop in their children (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003, p.453). Cultural models are not only the system of shared beliefs that members of a group use to interact in society, but they are also typically passed on from one generation to the next (Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Rodriguez and Olswang, 2003).

Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) add two definitions to this notion of cultural models which are beliefs and values. “Beliefs,” they explain, “are constructions of reality that incorporate one’s knowledge and do not require evidence for their truthfulness” while values, in their view, “are those elements to which individuals attach a high worth” (p.453). Cultural models, beliefs, and values then all refer to subjective ways of looking at the world and interacting in it with cultural models carrying the assumption that those subjective ways of interpreting and doing things have their root in the cultural background of a person. In a way, beliefs and values are an expression of the cultural model, or mental schemata, that every person possesses without necessarily realizing it since it constitutes such an integral part of one’s native culture.

Reese and Gallimore (2000) give a good example of how cultural models influence parental models of literacy development in children. They mention the bedtime story ritual, which is widely accepted in the United States as a common and natural way for parents to interact with their children and to enhance their literacy development. Such a widespread practice in the United States was almost never observed by Reese and Gallimore (2000) during more than 220 hours of observation of Latino kindergartners at home. The researchers conclude that, in the Latino setting, “the bedtime story and related
literacy activities are not a routine part of household life, and quite different practices are taken for granted instead” (p.106).

Along the same line, Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) have developed five “activity settings variables” in an effort to operationalize cultural activities in ways that can guide empirical research on home-literacy practices. These variables are as follows: (1) the personnel present during an activity, (2) salient cultural values, (3) the operations and task demands of the activity itself (= an inclusive definition of the ways reading and writing play a part in the lives of the children and their parents), (4) the script for conduct that governs the participants’ actions, (5) the purposes or motives of the participants.

Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) have used these variables to contrast and compare the kinds of literacy activities that take place in the homes of Latino families and in the school. Their study reveals that as far the personnel present and the main cultural values are concerned, it seems that the necessary conditions for emergent literacy events are present. Indeed, Latino children in their samples usually had an adult available to interact with them and that adult typically greatly valued education and wanted the child to do well academically, just like when a child interacts with a teacher at school. The actual literacy tasks, the third component in their literacy model, were also present even though not always optimal for literacy development.

The differences between what happens at school and at home arise with the script – or type of language – used to conduct the task and the purposes and motives of the participants. To illustrate this point, Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) give the example of comparing a mother on one hand, and a teacher on the other, making a puzzle with a child. While the task (a puzzle) and the personnel (a child and an adult woman) are
identical, the nature of the interaction is completely different because of the adults’ respective purposes and motives. Latino parents’ purposes and motives as they engage in making a puzzle with their children is usually simply to finish the puzzle. A teacher on the other hand uses the opportunity to elicit critical thinking on the part of the child through various questions; the puzzle is just a pretext and not an end in itself. In other words, while it may seem that parent-child literacy-mediated interactions are somewhat similar in Hispanic and Anglo-American environments, there is some evidence that these interactions have a different effect on children’s literacy development because of the parental beliefs that dictate such interactions. Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) express it best in the following quote:

Given the personnel and at least some literacy tasks, what aspect of an activity setting is likely to have the greatest impact on a child’s experience? Probably, it is the purpose that the more capable individuals sees in the task they are jointly performing with the emerging literate. On the surface, a task may seem the same, and the personnel may appear similar; but depending on the purpose in the minds of the participants, a child’s experience can greatly vary. In other words, what the participants “think” they are doing affects how they go about it, and that determines how the event contributes to emerging literacy skills (pp. 323-324).

Such an observation clearly urges research to focus on the study of Latinos’ parental beliefs and not just the observable literacy practices that take place in their homes. There is a need for research to understand how Hispanic parents define their role in the educational process, how they define the school’s role in this process, how they view children in general, and how they believe children learn best. These beliefs need to be identified because they dictate what Hispanic parents think they are doing when they engage in literacy-mediated activities with their children at home. These beliefs therefore directly influence how observed home-literacy practices contribute to the overall literacy development of the child.
Hispanic families thus come to the United States with their cultural model of literacy expressed through specific beliefs and values about education and literacy, beliefs and values which in turn influence the way they interact with their children since “culture is inextricably linked to patterns of adult-child interactions” (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003, p.458). This notion of a cultural model at the origin of a person’s “taken for granted assumptions” serves as a preface to existing studies on educational beliefs and values of Hispanic parents.

Educational beliefs of Hispanics

Patterns emerge from existing studies on the educational beliefs held by Latino immigrant families (e.g. Duke Gitelman Brilliant, 2001; Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993; Peña, 2000; Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003; Valdés, 1998; Valdés, 1996; Volk, 1999). Indeed, a number of educational beliefs have been identified by several independent studies and may thus be, at least in part, related to the Hispanic cultural model of literacy development. The main educational beliefs identified are discussed below.

The majority of Latino parents who have participated in studies on educational beliefs and values perceive that their most important responsibility is the moral upbringing of their children (Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Valdés, 1996, Volk, 1999). The rationale behind this belief is the idea that if children obey the teacher and behave well in class then they are bound to learn. Valdés (1996), who worked with ten Mexican families over a three year period, observes that the first question Velma (a mother in her sample) would ask her children as they returned home from school was how they had behaved. She firmly believed that good behavior was an absolute prerequisite to academic learning.
and that fostering it represented her main contribution to the education of her children. Along the same line, Valdés also observes that all the parent-initiated interactions with the school personnel focused on behavior rather than on academics; “since this was the parents’ realm of responsibility, they thought it to be their duty to be informed of the children’s conducta (conduct)” (p.165).

Reese and Gallimore (2000) observed similar beliefs in the context of their four-year case study of 29 Spanish-speaking families. Indeed, as the researchers inquired about the reasons why parents in their sample read to their children, a little over 40% of the parents indicated doing so for moral reasons, to teach their children right and wrong. For instance one mother in the sample explained that her favorite story was the Bible story of Jonah because she could use it to teach her son that if he did not behave well he would end up in the belly of a whale. In the context of the same case study, Latino parents were asked to prioritize 12 activities that are considered important during a child’s preschool years. Reading to children was ranked extremely low, as it came in as number nine of twelve, while teaching children right and wrong and teaching them good manners were among the top three activities.

This belief that the most important thing for parents to teach their children is good behavior is embedded in the meaning of the Spanish term educación. Indeed, while the English term education usually refers to school learning, the Spanish term on the other hand has a broader meaning as it refers to manners and moral values (Valdés, 1996). For someone to be bien educado or “well educated,” schooling is not enough, a well educated person is well-behaved, knows how to act properly in society, and treats others respectfully (Volk, 1999). In the typical Hispanic mind, the education of children then
implies teaching them how to behave, how to know right from wrong, how to treat others, as well as how to appropriately fulfill one’s roles in life such as that of brother or sister, son or daughter or husband or wife (Valdés, 1996).

While Latino parents take care of the moral aspect of the education of their children, these parents have a tendency to believe that the teachers are entirely responsible for anything having to do with academics (Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Valdés, 1996). In fact, Valdés (1996) explains that when the parents in her sample attended an open house at school they never thought that it could be an opportunity to talk with their children’s teachers. They mainly saw this social practice as an occasion to see the children’s classroom and the school building, and to listen to the principal in a big auditorium.

Another expression of this belief that teachers are exclusively in charge of teaching academics was observed when one of the young girls in the Valdés ethnographic study was transferred to a lower reading group. The girl was upset and told her parents who inquired of the teacher about the change. The teacher said that being in a lower reading group would give the girl more time to learn the words. The parents did not question the teacher further and simply told their daughter to learn her words (Valdés, 1996). This was the end of the incident. Since teachers are formally trained to teach academics, Hispanic parents do not question their teaching methods. In a way, it seems that Latino parents conceive of the school and the home as two distinct entities that have different roles. In fact, there is some evidence that while Hispanic parents do not question teachers in their academic province, it seems that they do not like teachers to interfere, directly or indirectly, with family life. For example, when children insist that they need
something for the following day’s activities in school, some parents in the Valdés (1996) study simply replied that the teacher was not to give orders at home.

This strict refusal to let anything interfere with family life and balance is another important belief held by the Latino parents in existing studies on educational beliefs. In fact, this value is so central for Hispanic parents that Valdés (1996) talks of *familism*. Every member of the family has a specific role to fulfill within the family unit and that role supersedes any other responsibility, including school work. Moreover, this value of *familism* leaves little room for the individual who only exists as part of the family (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003). Latino parents do not see the value of teaching math or writing, among other subjects, to a child if the family unit does not function well (Volk, 1999). The family is so important to Hispanic immigrants that doing well in school is only important to the degree that children can then help support the family and give something back in return for all the sacrifices made by their parents (Valdés, 1996). This view does not leave much room for individualism, and personal goals and progression. In her book, Valdés gives several references of researchers who believe that such a traditional view of the family is problematic in American schools where individual accomplishment and credit is not only recognized but also encouraged.

Yet, this concept of extreme *familism* leaving no room for outside influences to affect the family is nuanced by findings from the Reese and Gallimore (2000) as well as from the Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) studies. While both studies do not question the importance of family ties in the lives of Hispanic families, they nonetheless express a willingness from the same families to adapt to their new environment and to incorporate teacher’s suggestions in the way they integrate literacy into their daily living routines,
especially if that equates to a better future for their children. Several mothers in both studies explained that they did not use to believe that children under the age of two needed to be read to but that they changed their minds after seeing the difficulty that their older children had experienced in school.

Another important education-related belief held by Hispanic parents, according to previous studies, is the idea that young children do not really begin to learn until they begin school (Reese & Gallimore, 2000). In fact, the parents in the Reese and Gallimore (2000) case study expressed their belief that since children do not really understand explanations until the age of five, when they begin school, it is a waste of time to read to them before then. A mother even expressed her disbelief after observing an American dad read with his two-year old son. She concluded that this strange practice must be a custom that Americans have, while another mother believed that Americans read with their young children because they have nothing else to do (Reese & Gallimore, 2000). This belief has far reaching consequences since it leads Latino parents to ignore early attempts at literacy made by their children, such as pretending to read or write, on the grounds that the children are too young to be doing anything developmentally significant. As Reese and Gallimore stated: “most of the parents do not perceive children’s early literacy awareness and experimentation to be of developmental significance and therefore do not respond to it” (Reese & Gallimore, 2000, p.115).

In their work with Hispanic families, Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) have reached a similar conclusion as they observe that parents in their sample hold a belief that the children’s early attempts at reading or writing are at best amusing and not meaningful at all in the overall literacy development. In fact they refer to early attempts at writing as
“puros garabatos” (pure scribbling). The general impression of the researchers was that “opportunities for meaningful oral interchanges about texts were present, but they were not exploited” because of specific beliefs about literacy development held by the caregiver (p.323). On several occasions, researchers observed young children ask for books to read or for a piece of paper so that they could write and either obtained no reaction at all from their parents or were told that they did not even know what they were doing. The observed lack of parental response to children’s early attempts at literacy did not appear to be a lack of interest, but rather a natural response to the belief that literacy is a formal process that begins and takes place in school once the children have reached the age of reason after which they begin to understand explanations (Reese & Gallimore, 2000).

Yet another belief identified by several studies has to do with the nature of the learning process. When parents in the Reese and Gallimore (2000) study were asked how learning to read develops, they all, without exception, described the traditional syllabic or phonetic methods that were used with them as they grew up in their native Latin country. They perceived learning as repeated practice so that the material to be learned would end up sticking to one’s memory (Reese & Gallimore, 2000).

Another study emphasizes Hispanic parents’ extreme concern with superficial features when trying to help their children learn something (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993). For instance, when the school initiated a reading program involving the students’ families, Hispanic parents were specifically encouraged to focus on the story content when reading with their children and they were counseled not to worry about pronunciation or word recognition. They were told that the main purpose of the project
was to read for enjoyment and to give the children a chance to learn. All the parents agreed, yet, when researchers observed them actually carry out the task at home, they all focused on the superficial features of correctly sounding out syllables and words. The anticipated meaning-oriented interactions did not occur, probably because the Hispanic parents wanted to do their best to help their children learn from the activity and that the guidelines provided were inconsistent with their understanding of how learning develops. Such an intense focus on superficial features seems to be an obstacle to parent-child interactions that foster critical thinking and problem solving skills the children will need to be successful academically. As Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) point out: “meaningful experiences with simple texts are probably the most important influences in early literacy development” (p.317).

To summarize, a number of educational beliefs have been identified by several independent studies as possibly being part of the Hispanic cultural model of literacy. As researchers have attempted to identify Latino’s beliefs and values about literacy and education, the existence of similarities across samples have been revealed, thus suggesting that there must exist culturally embedded beliefs and assumptions shared by Hispanic parents in general. These cultural beliefs include the idea that parents are responsible for the moral upbringing of their children, while teachers are accountable for anything having to do with academics. As a result, Hispanic parents seem to consider the home and the school to be somewhat separate entities. In addition, the family is such an essential part of Latinos’ lives that they raise their children to fulfill their roles and obligations within the family unit, roles and obligations which supersede individual pursuits and accomplishments. Moreover, Hispanic parents in previous studies seem to
believe that early attempts at literacy by young children who have not begun formal schooling are at best cute and amusing. They believe that learning is a formal process that takes place at school and therefore they tend to neglect potential learning opportunities at home. The Spanish-speaking parents have also shared their belief that learning is a result of repeated practice and that reading is taught by sounding out syllables and words.

The identification of all the aforementioned beliefs together with the finding that a majority of Hispanic parents are willing to adapt to new circumstances (Reese & Gallimore, 2000) seems to be a step towards the goal of lessening home-school discontinuities in an effort to improve education for Hispanic children. Volk and de Acosta (2003) believe that the “literacies constructed in the homes and communities of children from diverse backgrounds, similar in some ways to those valued in school and different in others,” are presently invisible to teachers (p.11). As these “literacies” begin to be identified and better understood they can become visible to families and teachers alike who will then have a chance to combine their efforts to reach their common goal of successfully educating the children.

Research gaps and the present study

However, while existing studies are definitely enlightening in terms of educational beliefs of Hispanic parents, there seems to arise the question of whether or not findings can be generalized from such small samples. For instance, Valdés worked with ten families (1996) and two families (1998), Reese and Gallimore (2000) conducted their case study on 29 families, while their ethnographic study looked at 10 families. The latter researchers do mention conducting a survey with 121 families, but they do not report on the findings from this survey. Volk (1999) worked with one family, while Volk
and de Acosta (2003) studied the literacy practices of three families. There is a definite need for similar research, focusing on the educational beliefs and values of Hispanic parents, with larger samples. Such a need is at the origin of the present study which surveys the beliefs and values of 199 participants (114 Hispanics and 85 Anglo-Americans).

Moreover, the present study not only sets out to use a larger sample to describe Latinos’ views about literacy and education but it also proposes to bridge a gap in the current research which has focused mainly on Latino families characterized by a low socio-economic status (SES) (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993; Paratore, Melzi & Krol-Sinclair, 1999; Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003; Valdés, 1996; Valdés, 1998). In other words, it seems possible that what these studies have identified as a cultural model of literacy might in fact be due mainly to the SES of the families that were observed and interviewed. This raises two important questions: (1) would one obtain the same results with another low-SES group from a cultural background other than Hispanic?; (2) would one obtain the same results with Hispanics characterized by membership in a higher SES group?

Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) attempted to answer the first question as their study was a comparison of 30 Mexican-American and 30 Anglo-American mothers’ beliefs about education and child rearing. All 60 mothers were characterized by a low SES. The instruments used consisted of two surveys originally created and published by Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) as tools to identify parental educational beliefs. The results highlight the existence of statistically significant differences between the two
cultural groups, which suggests that the educational beliefs and values identified may likely be primarily connected to cultural group membership as opposed to SES.

The present study is thus designed to be a partial replication of the Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) study, as the instruments used are the same and will be described in great detail in the following chapter. The objectives of the two studies are a little different though, as Rodriguez and Olswang were interested in the effect of the degree of acculturation on the Mexican mothers’ beliefs, while the present study is interested in the influence of SES on parental beliefs. By degree of acculturation, Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) meant the degree to which Mexican mothers had adjusted to and to some extent blended with the dominant Anglo-American culture. Their study thus looked both at potential intercultural (i.e., Mexican-American vs. Anglo-American) as well as intracultural (i.e., Mexican-American with varying levels of acculturation) differences. The present study is interested in the same two types of potential differences but proposes to examine the intracultural issue through the lens of SES, as opposed to level of acculturation.

It is important to note that while most studies define SES as a combination of elements including family average yearly income, qualification for free school lunch and other governmental help, and parental level of education, the present study has adopted Leseman and De Jong’s (2001) definition of SES as the mean of both parents’ educational levels. The reason behind this choice is best stated by Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993): “being poor itself does not create reading problems; rather, what is critical are the kinds of literacy activities generated in the home” (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993, p.317). Moreover, as stated previously, the children who seem to do
better in school are those who come from literate households, with educated parents and/or exposure to literacy on a regular basis, regardless of family yearly income (August & Hakuta, 1997). In short, mean level of parental education seems to have a considerable bearing on the types of literacy-related activities in the home, but its influence has nonetheless never been studied in isolation of other SES descriptors. The choice to use mean level of parental education as the definition of SES in the context of the present study seemed particularly appropriate since the majority of the highly educated Anglo-American parents were still college students and consequently had very limited financial means, but were still believed to hold potentially different educational beliefs than less educated parents.

Conclusion

Following the literature review of current research on the educational beliefs and values of Hispanic parents, the researcher has identified two important gaps in the research: (1) existing studies invariably looked at small samples, (2) existing studies typically considered Hispanic parents who had little or no education. Therefore, the present study involves a large sample while attempting to identify the effect of mean level of parental education on the educational beliefs and values of Hispanics. The total number of participants also includes Anglo-Americans with varying levels of education in an effort to more completely assess the respective influences of level of parental education and of cultural background on parental beliefs about the education of children. The research questions are stated in the following chapter together with a description of the research instruments and a description of the methodology.
Chapter 3

Research Design

The present study was designed to identify and compare Hispanic immigrants and Anglo-Americans’ beliefs regarding the education of children and the respective roles of parents and teachers in this process. It is anticipated that the awareness of existing similarities and/or differences between Hispanic immigrants and Anglo-Americans will enable education professionals to better understand their audience and thus to cater to its needs more effectively. The present study was a replication of a portion of the Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) study which examined the educational and child-rearing beliefs of 30 Mexican-American and 30 Anglo-American mothers.

This chapter begins with the statement of the three research questions. A description of the different subject groups ensues, followed by a discussion of the instruments used. The chapter ends with a description of the procedures used to collect and analyze the data.

Research questions

The research questions are as follows:

(1) Are there significant differences in terms of educational and child-rearing beliefs between Hispanics and Anglo-Americans?

(2) Are there significant differences in terms of educational and child-rearing beliefs among Hispanics with varying levels of education?

(3) Are there significant differences in terms of educational and child-rearing beliefs among Anglo-Americans with varying levels of education?
Participants

A total of 199 subjects participated in this study. The participants, who were all parents (with the exception of 13 who did not mention having children, but were still included in the study for reasons explained later in this chapter), were divided into four groups. The key differences between the groups were ethnicity and mean level of education. In other words, two groups consisted of Anglo-American parents while the other two groups included Hispanic immigrants. Each ethnic pair included a set of more educated parents (parents who had attended school for an average of 12-15 years or more as a couple) and a set of less-educated parents (parents who had attended school for an average of less than 12-15 years as a couple). The choice to use an average of 12-15 years as the cut-off point when grouping the participants was based on the fact that 12-15 years corresponds to the time needed to get a high school education. Previous research in educational beliefs of Hispanics has only included in their sample those that did not have a high-school education (Reese & Gallimore, 2000, Valdés, 1998, Valdés, 1996). It thus seemed suitable, in order to make comparisons with previous research possible, to include a group of parents with less than a high-school education and to add a control group of parents with more education.

The mean level of parental education was computed as follows: questions 8 and 9 in the demographics section of the questionnaire respectively asked the number of years the participant had spent in school and the number of years the participant’s spouse had attended school (see appendix C). It is important to note that the decision to use the number of years spent in school as opposed to the actual names corresponding to the various educational levels such as middle school, high school and so forth, was made in
an effort to minimize existing differences between the respective educational systems of the participants’ countries of origin. To be included in the more educated group, both spouses had to have been in school for at least 12-15 years. In other words, if one parent had attended school for 12-15 years and the other had only spent 8-11 years in school, then that couple was included in the less-educated group. With single-parent families, the average level of parental education was the number of years that the one parent spent in school.

This procedure was slightly modified with the Anglo-Americans since it was very difficult to find Anglo-American parents who did not have at least a high-school education in Utah County where a major portion of the population is involved with the local private University either as faculty, current student, or alumni. Therefore, in the context of this study, Anglo-American couples where both parents had 12-15 years of education were still part of the lesser educated group. The higher educated group was essentially made of college-educated parents (16 years or more). It is important to note that this significant difference in categorizing between the Hispanic participants and their Anglo-American counterparts was taken into account in the choice of the statistical procedure used to analyze the data. This point will be further explained in the data analysis section of the present chapter.

Table 3.1 summarizes the educational level of the four groups just described. As mentioned previously, questions 8 and 9 in the demographics (see appendix C) asked the participants to indicate how much formal schooling they had had by selecting one of five brackets: 0-3 years, 4-7 years, 8-11 years, 12-15 years, or 16 or more years. The researcher then gave each participant an educational level comprised between 1 and 5 and
based on the bracket selected (1 = 0-3 years, 2 = 4-7 years, 3 = 8-11 years, 4 = 12-15 years, 5 = 16 or more years). The mean level of education was then computed for each couple by averaging the two educational levels. For instance, if one parent had attended school for 0-3 years and his/her spouse had gone to school for 4-7 years, the mean level of parental education was the average of categories 1 and 2 which is equal to 1.5. The average educational level for each group was the average of each individual couple mean and is reported in table 3.1.

It is important to note that a one-way ANOVA confirmed that the educational level of the more educated participants in each cultural subgroup was significantly higher statistically than the educational level of the lesser educated participants, (F(195,3) = 180.498, p < .0001).

Table 3.1
Mean level of parental education of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Group</th>
<th>Higher level of education</th>
<th>Lower level of education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>Avg. level = 4.36(^{+})</td>
<td>Avg. level = 2.73(^{+})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 56</td>
<td>n = 58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo-Americans</td>
<td>Avg. level = 4.85(^{+})</td>
<td>Avg. level = 3.80(^{+})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 58</td>
<td>n = 27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{+}\) Level of education
1 = 0-3 years
2 = 4-7 years
3 = 8-11 years
4 = 12-15 years
5 = 16 or more years

While the only descriptor used as an SES indicator in the context of the present study was mean level of parental education question 12 in the demographics (see appendix C) also asked subjects about their average yearly income so as to better characterize the sample population. Just as the educational level question, the income question had the participants select an income bracket. Brackets ranged from less than $10,000 to over $70,000 and increased by $10,000 increments ($10,000-$19,999,
$20,000-$29,999...). The Hispanics in both subgroups had an average yearly income between $10,000 and $19,999, while the Anglo-Americans with less education averaged between $20,000 and $29,999, and the more educated Anglo-Americans averaged between $30,000 and $39,999 a year.

The vast majority of the participants (n= 63, 82%) resided in Utah County in the state of Utah at the time of the survey, while 36 (18%) of the subjects lived in North West Phoenix, Arizona. It is important to note that even though the participants came from two different states, their demographics were very comparable. Thus this difference is not believed to have caused any threat to the validity of the study and its findings. All the participants but 13 (6.5%) indicated that they had children. The results from the 13 participants without children were still included in the final analysis since the instructions clearly asked participants to circle the answer that best “indicate[d] how [they] fe[l]t in general, not just about [their] own child.”

Among the Hispanic participants, 87.9 % (n=51) of the lesser educated and 59.2% (n=32) of the more educated were from Mexico. The other Hispanic participants came from a variety of countries from Central and South America which included Argentina, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru and Venezuela. The number of participants from each of the aforesaid countries ranged from one to seven. The distribution in the sample seems to roughly mirror the make-up of the Hispanic population on a national level where two thirds of the Latinos are of Mexican origin (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003). The Hispanic immigrants who participated in this study had been in the United States for an average of approximately 8 years (range = 2 months – 20 years).
Instruments

Two instruments were used to test the research hypotheses. They were respectively referred to as the Parental Modernity Scale and the Rank Order of Parental Values. Both instruments were used in the Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) study and were originally used and published by Schaefer and Edgerton (1985) as tools to identify parental beliefs about education, school, and the respective roles of teachers, parents and children. Both instruments were translated following a rigorous process of translation/back translation so as to ensure the accuracy of the Spanish version (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003).1

The major goal of Schaeffer and Edgerton, as they designed the Parental Modernity Scale and the Rank Order of Parental Values, was “to conceptualize, to measure, and to analyze child behavior correlates of parent attitudes, beliefs, values, and self-reports of behavior” (p.291). One of their three research hypotheses stated that “parental beliefs on child rearing and education [were] significantly correlated with child academic competence [as measured by teacher ratings and scores on the Test of Basic Experience (TOBE)]” (p.291). They established, through their review of literature, that attitudes, beliefs and values were significantly correlated with behavior and that changes in beliefs resulted in changes in behavior. Hence they set out to create brief and reliable measures of parental beliefs about child-rearing and education. They created a set of scales based on the dichotomy between traditional authoritarian and progressive democratic beliefs; the aforementioned dichotomy being commonly used in the literature

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1 Rodriguez and Olswang had the instruments translated, following a rigorous process of translation/back translation as described in their article, and they then agreed to share their translation with the researcher of the present study.
they reviewed on research on parental beliefs. This dichotomy is best described in the following terms:

Scales were developed of parent beliefs of the nature of the child as basically good or basically bad, of the nature of the learning process as active engagement or passive absorption, of the nature of knowledge as static or relative, of aims of education for the teacher to instill information or for the child to learn how to learn, and of policies of uniform treatment or individual treatment of children. (p.292)

It is important to understand that the terms *traditional authoritarian* and *progressive democratic* as used by Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) may not reflect the conventional meanings that naturally come to mind upon hearing these terms. In the remainder of this paper, both expressions are used in reference to the names of the subscales created by Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) and not with the commonly accepted meaning.

Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) modified and refined their instruments through three sequential studies until measures of reliability and validity confirmed that both surveys were “brief, validated measures of parental beliefs and values that show[ed] substantial correlation with child competence” (p.309). Indeed, Schaeffer and Edgerton found that traditional authoritarian beliefs consistently showed negative correlations with child competence, while progressive democratic beliefs had a lower but significant positive correlation with child achievement.

*Parental Modernity Scale*

The first questionnaire, the Parental Modernity Scale, consists of 30 statements about education, the respective roles of teachers and parents, as well as sentences that describe possible adult perceptions of children. Subjects had to read each statement and
circle the option that best described their opinion on a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree = 1, Strongly Agree = 5).

Every item in the questionnaire reflects either a traditional or a progressive view on education and child rearing, traditional and progressive referring to the names of the subscales created by Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) as explained previously. The traditional authoritarian subscale consists of 22 items while there are 8 progressive statements. Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) explained that “because traditional authoritarian items showed higher correlations with (children’s academic) competence, fewer progressive democratic items were selected” (p.308). The traditional authoritarian statements corresponded to five main notions about education and child-rearing, while the progressive democratic items covered four main sets of views regarding education. All of these are discussed below.

The first traditional authoritarian notion is that the home and the school are two different entities that have no real connection. Teachers, who are formally trained in education, teach academics to children at school while parents are responsible for what happens at home. Teachers should not question the parents’ ways of doing things at home while parents have no right to interfere with what happens at school. Statements 1, 17, 22 and 30 describe these beliefs about the respective roles of parents and teachers:

1. Since parents lack special training in education, they should not question the teacher’s teaching methods.

17. The school has the main responsibility for a child’s education.

22. Teachers need not be concerned with what goes on in a child’s home.

30. A teacher has no right to seek information about a child’s home background.
This first traditional authoritarian notion was worthy of investigation in the present study since previous research on Latinos’ beliefs and home literacy practices had emphasized that Hispanic parents who had a low level of education tended to believe that learning only began when a child entered school, they did not view themselves as key actors in the teaching of academics to their children (Reese & Gallimore, 2000).

The second traditional authoritarian notion holds that children should all be treated the same, regardless of differences among them. The individual primarily exists as part of the group. Previous research had found that the Hispanic parents in their study population seemed to hold fast to this belief of uniform treatment for all where “children [were] socialized to fulfill role obligations within the family rather than maximize the self” (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003; Valdés, 1996). Statements 2, 9 and 25 refer to this concept of uniform treatment:

2. Children should be treated the same regardless of differences among them.
9. In order to be fair, a teacher must treat all children alike.
25. Teachers should discipline all the children the same.

The third traditional authoritarian notion is that children are naturally bad and must therefore be trained early in life if they are to accomplish anything worthwhile in the future. Children need constant adult supervision and direction in order to be productive and to remember to prepare for the future. Statements 4, 5, 7, 12, 18, 19 and 28 represent this third notion (that children are naturally bad and thus need continuous adult supervision):

4. Preparing for the future is more important for a child than enjoying today.
5. Children will not do the right thing unless they must.
7. Children should be kept busy with work and study at home and at school.
12. Children must be carefully trained early in life or their natural impulses will make them unmanageable.
18. Children generally do not do what they should unless someone sees to it.
19. Parents should teach their children that they should be doing something useful at all times.
28. Children will be bad unless they are taught what is right.

This notion seems to greatly influence the fourth one that emphasizes that the most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to whoever is in authority. In other words, if children need constant adult supervision then they must be trained to be obedient so that they can fully benefit from that adult direction. Statements 3, 10, 16, 21, 24 and 26 represent this fourth notion (that children need to be taught strict obedience to adults):

3. Children should always obey the teacher.
10. The most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to whoever is in authority.
16. The most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to parents.
21. Children should always obey their parents.
24. Parents should teach their children to have unquestioning loyalty to them.
26. Children should not question the authority of their parents.

The idea that the most important thing for parents to teach to their children is to behave and obey was clearly an important one to survey, since previous research with Latinos who had little or no formal education pointed to the conclusion that they felt their role was to impart good morals and good manners to their little ones, who would then learn academics from a trained teacher at school (Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Valdés 1996). Valdés (1996) gives a good example of that with a mother in her ethnographic study who would invariably ask her children, as they came home from school, how they had behaved because “she believed firmly that if they were going to learn anything at all, they had to learn to behave first” (p.2).

The fifth and final traditional authoritarian notion has to do with the nature of the learning process. In the traditional authoritarian view, learning is a passive process where
teachers fill children’s heads with information, while the latter absorb the information in an attitude of strict obedience to the teacher’s authority. Moreover, learning is defined as mere repetition. This notion is represented in statements 8 and 14 and was also discussed in previous research as a belief held by Latino parents with little or no education who expressed that you just keep repeating something until it sticks (Reese & Gallimore, 2000):

8. The major goal of education is to put basic information into the minds of the children.
14. Children’s learning results mainly from being presented basic information again and again.

The progressive democratic statements are almost polar opposites of the traditional authoritarian items. It is important to reiterate that traditional authoritarian and progressive democratic, as used in this paper, simply refer to the names Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) gave to their scales.

To begin with, the progressive democratic view holds that what parents teach at home influences children’s academic success, as stated in item 27:

27. What parents teach their child at home is very important to his/her school success.

Another view represented by progressive democratic statements 6, 13, 20 and 29 is that children are active participants in any interaction, and as such, they should be allowed to have their own ideas and opinions and to express them:

6. Children should be allowed to disagree with their parents if they feel their own ideas are better.
13. Children have a right to their own point of view and should be allowed to express it.
20. It’s all right for a child to disagree with his/her parents.
29. A child’s ideas should be seriously considered in making family decisions.

The third progressive democratic view has to do with the nature of the learning process and it states that learning is an active process where children will remember best
if they have a chance to experience things firsthand. Statements 11 and 15 cover that idea:

11. Children learn best by doing things themselves rather than listening to others.
15. Children like to teach other children.

The last progressive democratic notion is about the value of child play in the learning process. It is stated in item 23:

23. Parents should go along with the game when their child is pretending something.

This item was an interesting one to survey, since the Hispanic parents in the Reese and Gallimore (2000) study stated over and over again their belief that when their children pretended to do something such as reading or writing, it was merely cute and amusing but nothing else. According to them, it had no value whatsoever in the progress and development of their children’s academic skills.

The Parental Modernity Scale is therefore a combination of 30 statements about education and the rearing of children. Some statements express a traditional authoritarian view while others are progressive democratic, as was just explained. The instrument was designed in such a way that every time participants circled a number on the 5 point-Likert scale they increased one of two subscores: either the traditional authoritarian subscore or the progressive democratic subscore. In other words, if participants circled a 5 (Strongly Agree) on the scale following a traditional authoritarian statement they would then increase their traditional subscore by a 5-point value. The traditional authoritarian subscale yielded a total raw score ranging from 22 to 110 and the progressive democratic subscale yielded a total raw score ranging from 8 to 40.
Rank Order of Parental Values

The second questionnaire was the Schaefer and Edgerton (1985) revision of M. L. Kohn’s (1977) Rank Order of Parental Values that Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) used as part of their comparison of Mexican and Anglo-American mothers’ beliefs.

This questionnaire consisted of three sets of five statements each that the subjects were asked to rank in order of importance to them (1 being the most important and 5 the least). Each statement reflected something that most parents feel is important for their child to learn and fell into one of three categories: conformity, self-directing or social. Conforming values included [it is important for my child to learn] “to keep him/herself and his/her clothes clean,” “to be polite to adult,” “to obey parents and teacher,” “to keep things neat and in order,” “being a good student,” and “good manners.” Self-directing values consisted of “to think for him/herself,” “to be curious about many things,” “to be responsible for his/her own work,” “to use imagination,” “interest in how and why things happen,” and “ability to look after him/herself.” The three social values represented were “to be kind to other children,” “to be kind and considerate,” and “ability to get along with people.” Each set of statements consisted of two conforming values, two self-directing values and one social value that the participants had to prioritize.

The first set is presented below as an example (see Appendix G for complete questionnaire):

(The most important thing for my child to learn is:)
   a. to think for him/herself
   b. to keep him/herself and his/her clothes clean
   c. to be curious about many things
   d. to be polite to adults
   e. to be kind to other children

   The values included in this second questionnaire were a way of triangulating the
data from the Parental Modernity Scale. Indeed, the conforming values reinforced the traditional authoritarian notion of the importance of teaching children to behave, to obey and to be clean, while the self-directing values mirrored the progressive democratic view on the nature of the learning process as the active engagement of children in firsthand experience. The social values were not of direct interest to the present study and were mainly included as part of the replication process.

The Rank Order of Parental Values was designed in such a way that as participants ranked items in each set they increased one of three subscores: a conforming score ranging from 9 to 27, a self-directing score ranging from 9 to 27 and a social score ranging from 3 to 15. The procedure for computing the scores was as follows: as the parents ranked each statement in a set in order of importance to them they assigned a numerical value between 1 and 5 to each item. The researcher then assigned a point value to each statement according to its rank. Every statement ranked first received a 5-point value; every item ranked second received a 4-point value and so forth. The researcher then added the total point value of all the statements in the conformity section and thus obtained the conformity score for each participant. The same procedure was followed to obtain the self-directing and the social scores.

Data collection procedures

The questionnaires were distributed at various locations where participants were offered to fill it out in exchange for a discount coupon at a local chocolate and candy store. The various locations included the following: American Fork Public Library, Provo Public Library, Dixon Middle School in Provo, MountainLand Headstart Program in Provo, Brigham Young University English Language Center (ELC), Glendale
Elementary School in Arizona as well as people from the community in Utah which were found through acquaintances of the researcher. Table 3.2 summarizes the different places where surveys were handed out.

Table 3.2
Places where surveys were distributed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Fork Public Library</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYU ELC</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MountainLand Headstart Program</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dixon Middle School</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provo Public Library</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glendale Elementary School</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>199</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher contacted the administrators of those programs who then agreed to hand out the surveys to parents involved with their institutions. The researcher was usually not in attendance when the parents were given the survey, since the different administrators typically arranged for their employees (teachers, family specialists, literacy specialists, etc.) to hand out the surveys during their regular workdays as they visited homes, held parent-teacher conferences, taught classes and so forth. This was true of the American Fork Library, the MountainLand Headstart program, the Dixon Middle School, and the English Language Center in Provo. This was also true of the Glendale Elementary school in Arizona where the researcher sent the surveys to an acquaintance who, after obtaining proper approval, handed them out during a parent-teacher conference. The researcher was present at the Provo Public Library and directly handed the surveys to parents as they came to attend a storytime session. As far as the people
from the community are concerned, the researcher had personal acquaintances hand out the survey to friends and family members.

In an effort to minimize differences of administration of the questionnaires, the researcher instructed all the people involved to refrain from giving any type of personal interpretation of the questions. The only instructions allowed were instructions regarding the format of the surveys such as how to use a Likert scale, or instructions on how to go about the Rank Order of Parental Values.

Data analysis procedures

After the surveys were collected and organized in the four groups described earlier in the chapter, the researcher computed the scores for each participant, as described previously. Each participant thus had five scores: a traditional authoritarian score and a progressive democratic score on the Parental Modernity Scale, as well as three scores on the Rank Order of Parental Values (conforming, self-directing, and social). Twenty participants either did not fill out at all or did not properly fill out the Rank Order of Parental Values and therefore only received scores on the Parental Modernity Scale. Moreover, some participants left a few answers blank on the Parental Modernity Scale. A mean value replacement procedure was used to fix the surveys that had a few unanswered questions. This means that whenever a participant had a few blanks, each blank was replaced with the mean value assigned to the particular statement by the participant’s subgroup.
Once all the individual scores were computed, and after consulting with a statistician\textsuperscript{1}, one-way ANOVAs were performed on the data. The researcher had originally considered doing 2x2 ANOVAs but this statistical procedure was then replaced by one-way ANOVAs as the differences in categorizing the participants’ mean level of parental education described earlier in this chapter were considered; namely, that “less educated” did not exactly have the same meaning for Hispanics than it did for Anglo-Americans. The Hispanics with a lower educational level had a mean level of parental education of less than 12-15 years, while the lesser educated Anglo-Americans had a mean level of parental education of 12-15 years (included) or less. In other words, because the four groups were not identically symmetrical, one-way ANOVAs followed by Tukey post-hoc tests were chosen as the best statistical procedures for this particular data set.

Another important element of the data analysis procedure is the alpha level. Even though .05 is the conventional alpha level in the field of Applied Linguistics, the alpha level in the present study was set at .01 in order to account for the fact that five successive tests were conducted on the data. Indeed, the higher the number of successive tests the higher the chance that the results obtained were obtained by chance alone and the higher the risk of saying that something is significant when it really is not. The statistician consulted confirmed that lowering the alpha level to .01 counterbalanced the fact that there were five consecutive tests; namely, in the context of the present study .01 corresponded to the typical five percent chance or less that the results were obtained by chance alone.

\textsuperscript{1} The researcher met with Dr. Eggett from the Brigham Young University Statistics department who confirmed that when doing research in the Social Sciences, scores computed from Likert scales can be considered to be truly interval and can thus be used in an ANOVA.
Conclusion

This chapter began by stating the three research questions which, in essence, ask whether cultural background and SES (as defined by mean level of parental education) influence the educational beliefs and values of Hispanic and Anglo-American parents. The 199 study participants, which include two Hispanic groups with different educational levels and two Anglo-American groups with varying levels of education, were then described together with the surveys they were asked to fill out. The two surveys used in the present study were initially created and published by Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) and were recently used by Rodriguez and Olswang (2003); they are respectively referred to as the *Parental Modernity Scale* and the *Rank Order of Parental Values*. Each instrument yielded two and three scores respectively for each participant. After describing the procedures for collecting the data, the researcher explained the data analysis procedures. Mean scores were computed for each of the subgroups using the individual scores from each participant. One-way ANOVAs were then performed on the data followed by Tukey post-hoc tests. The following chapter discusses the results obtained.
Chapter 4

Results and discussion

The purpose of the present study was to identify and compare the parental beliefs on education and the rearing of children held by two main groups: Hispanics and Anglo-Americans. Each cultural group was further divided into two subgroups: a group of parents who were less educated and a group of parents who had achieved a higher level of formal education (see chapter 3 for details). The three research hypotheses focused on whether or not cultural group membership as well as mean level of parental education impacted parental beliefs on education and the rearing of children. The data was obtained through the use of two questionnaires originally designed and published by Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) and more recently used as part of the Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) study of maternal beliefs of 30 Mexican-Americans and 30 Anglo-Americans.

The present chapter presents and discusses the results of one-way ANOVAs and subsequent Tukey post-hoc tests. Following the discussion of the descriptive and inferential statistics, the response distributions on representative items are discussed.

Results

Parental Modernity Scale

Descriptive statistics

Table 4.1 shows the means and the standard deviations of the scores obtained from the responses of the four groups of participants on the two subscales of the Parental Modernity Scale. The four groups are respectively referred to as: Anglo High which stands for Anglo-Americans High (Anglo-Americans with a higher level of education), Anglo Low, which stands for Anglo-Americans Low (Anglo-Americans with a lower
educational level), Hisp. High, which stands for Hispanics High, and Hisp. Low, which stands for Hispanics Low.

Table 4.1  
*Descriptive Statistics - Scores on the Parental Modernity Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey: Parental Modernity Scale</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anglo High ((n = 58))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional, Authoritarian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(total possible = 22-110)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>55.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>10.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive, Democratic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(total possible = 8-40)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>32.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>3.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Traditional Authoritarian Subscale*

As is evident in Table 4.1 the observed mean scores on the traditional authoritarian subscale are markedly different cross-culturally with an average of 56.96 for the Anglo-Americans (all educational levels collapsed) and an average of 83.97 for the Hispanic parents (all educational levels collapsed). There does not seem, however, to be much of a difference in the mean scores among Anglo-Americans with varying levels of education (55.93 vs. 58.00) as well as among Hispanics with varying levels of education (80.56 vs. 87.39). It is important to remember that the traditional authoritarian score ranged from a total raw score of 22 to 110.

*Progressive Democratic Subscale*

Table 4.1 shows that cultural group membership does not seem to affect the progressive democratic subscore on the Parental Modernity Scale. Indeed, Anglo-Americans (all educational levels collapsed) scored an average of 32.81, while Hispanics
(all educational levels collapsed) scored an average of 34. Moreover, mean level of parental education does not seem to affect the progressive democratic score either since the more educated Anglo-Americans averaged 32.25, while the Anglo-Americans with less education averaged 33.38. The same can be said of the Hispanics with the more educated averaging 34.17 and the less educated averaging 33.84. It is important to remember that the progressive democratic score ranged from a total raw score of 8 to 40.

_Inferential statistics_

The results of two one-way ANOVAs (see Table 4.2) show that there is a statistically significant difference with the participants’ traditional authoritarian scores (p<.0001), but not with their progressive democratic scores (p<.0575).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional authoritarian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37801.961</td>
<td>89.88</td>
<td>&lt; .0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive democratic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>119.868</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>0.0575</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at p < .01.

Following the ANOVAs, Tukey post-hoc tests were performed in an effort to identify the origin of the aforementioned statistically significant difference. The post-hoc tests (see Table 4.3) identified statistically significant differences (p<.0001) between Hispanics (regardless of educational level) and Anglo-Americans (regardless of educational level). No statistically significant differences were identified within each cultural group; that is to say that the more educated Hispanics did not obtain scores significantly different from less-educated Hispanics. The same was true for the Anglo-Americans.
To summarize, the results of the ANOVA and the Tukey post-hoc test highlight the existence of a significant difference in the educational beliefs of Hispanic and Anglo-American parents. The Hispanic parents (all educational levels collapsed) obtained a significantly higher score on the traditional authoritarian subscale than their Anglo-American counterparts (all educational levels collapsed). No significant difference was observed with the scores on the progressive democratic subscale. These results imply that overall, the Hispanic parents in the sample tend to endorse the educational and child-rearing beliefs described in the traditional authoritarian subscale while Anglo-Americans in the sample tend to disagree with the same beliefs. However, both groups have a propensity to agree with the beliefs from the progressive democratic subscale. These findings and their implications will be further discussed later in the chapter.
Table 4.4  
*Descriptive Statistics - Scores on the Rank Order of Parental Values*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey: Rank Order of Parental Values</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conformity (total possible = 9-27)</td>
<td>Anglo High</td>
<td>Anglo Low</td>
<td>Hisp. High</td>
<td>Hisp. Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>((n = 58))</td>
<td>((n = 27))</td>
<td>((n = 51))</td>
<td>((n = 41))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>13.96</td>
<td>14.37</td>
<td>18.35</td>
<td>19.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-directing (total possible= 9-27)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>20.25</td>
<td>19.03</td>
<td>18.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social (total possible = 3-15)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>10.77</td>
<td>11.59</td>
<td>8.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Conformity subscale*

The mean scores on the conformity subscale appear to point towards the existence of a cross-cultural difference as Anglo-Americans (all educational levels collapsed) have a mean score of 14.16 while Hispanics (all educational levels collapsed) have a mean score of 18.78. The scores are very close together within each cultural subgroup meaning that parents with varying levels of education seem to have a similar profile.

*Self-directing subscale*

The mean scores on this subscale are all very close together regardless of cultural background or mean level of parental education.

*Social subscale*

The mean scores on the social subscale appear to show the existence of a cross-cultural difference as Anglo-Americans (all educational levels collapsed) have an average score of 11.18 while Hispanics (all educational levels collapsed) have an average score of
The scores are very close together within each cultural subgroup meaning that parents with varying levels of education seem to have a similar profile.

**Inferential Statistics**

The results from three one-way ANOVAs (see Table 4.5) show that there are statistically significant differences with the participants’ conformity (p < .0001) and social (p < .0001) scores but not with their self-directing scores.

Table 4.5

*Results of one-way ANOVAs - Rank Order of Parental Values*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>973.338</td>
<td>29.01</td>
<td>&lt; .0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-directing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>165.079</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0.0107+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>312.746</td>
<td>18.41</td>
<td>&lt; .0001*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at p < .01.
+ Borderline but not statistically significant at p < .01.

The Tukey post-hoc tests (see Tables 4.6 and 4.7) identified the existence of significant differences (p < .0001) between Hispanics (all educational levels collapsed) and Anglo-Americans (all educational levels collapsed) for both conformity and social scores. However, no statistically significant differences were identified within each cultural group, which means that Hispanics, and Anglo-Americans alike, did not score significantly higher or lower based on mean level of parental education.

Table 4.6

*Tukey post-hoc test – Rank Order of Parental Values*

*Conformity subscale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A_H</th>
<th>A_L</th>
<th>H_H</th>
<th>H_L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A_H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A_L</td>
<td>.6040</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H_H</td>
<td>&lt; .0001*</td>
<td>&lt; .0001*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H_L</td>
<td>&lt; .0001*</td>
<td>&lt; .0001*</td>
<td>.2184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at p < .01.
In short, the results from the descriptive and inferential statistics for the Rank Order of Parental Values imply that Hispanics in the sample tend to prioritize the values expressed by the conformity subscale, while the Anglo-Americans in the sample do not attach as much importance to those values. Conversely, the Anglo-Americans in the sample attach more importance to the values described in the social subscale than do the Hispanic participants. Finally, both groups attach roughly equal importance to the self-directing values. The implication of these findings will be discussed later in the chapter.

To recapitulate, the inferential statistics for the Parental Modernity Scale and the Rank Order of Parental Values have revealed that Hispanics and Anglo-Americans in the present sample are significantly different from each other in three out of five scores. This means that the answer to the first research question, about whether or not Hispanics and Anglo-Americans are different from each other in terms of parental beliefs about the education of children, is affirmative. Indeed, there are differences in terms of parental beliefs about the education and rearing of children between Hispanic immigrants and Anglo-Americans. It is noteworthy to mention that this finding is in complete agreement with findings from the Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) study. Furthermore, the inferential statistics have shown that mean level of parental education does not account for the
statistical differences found in the data thus leading us to answer both the second and third research questions in the negative. In other words, there is no difference in terms of parental beliefs about the education of children among Hispanics with varying levels of education as well as among Anglo-Americans with varying levels of education.

The results presented above are discussed in the following section together with some of their implications.

A closer look at cross-cultural differences

Investigating whether or not Hispanic and Anglo-American parents held different beliefs about the education and rearing of children was the initial and chief question of the present study, and has largely been answered in the previous section where statistics revealed that there are indeed some cross-cultural differences. However, the ultimate goal of the present study is to help Hispanic parents and education professionals better understand each other and their respective educational beliefs, values, and expectations; therefore, the researcher believes it is important to go a step further. Indeed, both parties not only need to be made aware that there is a gap between what they each believe and expect, but they also need to know more about the nature of the cross-cultural difference that seems to cause this gap. Trying to paint a description of the nature of the cross-cultural difference in educational beliefs between Hispanic parents and Anglo-American parents and teachers is the purpose of the following section.

As discussed in the first part of this chapter, the Hispanic parents in the sample obtained a much higher traditional authoritarian score than the Anglo-Americans. In other words, the Hispanic parents tended to agree with most traditional authoritarian statements about the education of children while Anglo-Americans tended to disagree with the same
statements. As explained previously in chapter 3, traditional authoritarian statements expressed five major concepts about the education of children which are that (1) the school and the home are two different entities functioning separately, (2) children should be treated the same in spite of differences among them, (3) children are naturally bad and must be trained early in life, (4) the most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to adults, and (5) learning is a passive process where teachers fill children’s head with information. As we compare Hispanics’ and Anglo-Americans’ responses on specific items describing these five sets of beliefs, we will gain a better understanding of the nature of the cross-cultural differences discovered in the previous section.

The choice of which items to present hereafter was guided by a number of considerations. First, all the traditional authoritarian beliefs belong to one of the five categories cited in the previous section. This implies that several items looked at a similar belief in an effort to make sure that parents really believed in the notion expressed by a set of statements and did not just circle numbers without thinking about what was said. As a result, the response distribution on similar items is very comparable and thus does not need to be presented visually for every single item. In other words, one representative item from each set will be discussed in detail and the response distribution for that item will be presented visually in a bar graph while other similar items will be briefly mentioned. Throughout the following discussion, participants are numbered among those agreeing if they circled either 4 or 5 on the Likert scale, whereas participants who disagree are those who circled either 1 or 2. While the proportions of participants who circled each actual number can be found on the bar graphs, the researcher believes that such a grouping makes it easier to identify patterns and that it does not distort the facts.
Indeed, with 1 standing for “Strongly disagree”, it seems natural to consider 2 as disagreeing as well, only to a lesser degree. The same is true for 4 and 5. In addition to the analysis of specific items from the Parental Modernity Scale, examples from the Rank Order of Parental Values are inserted whenever pertinent to the discussion of the cross-cultural differences.

Another important element concerns the fact that the figures presented in this chapter represent the response distributions for Hispanics on one hand, and Anglo-Americans on the other, with all educational levels being collapsed in each cultural group. The reason for this is that, as the statistics have revealed, there are no significant differences in each cultural group based on mean level of parental education. In other words, the response distributions for Hispanics, whether they be highly educated or less educated, are so comparable that it is not relevant to present them separately. The same is true for the Anglo-Americans.

The cross-cultural differences begin to be better understood by looking at the response distribution on the first traditional item on the Parental Modernity Scale. The first item states that “since parents lack special training in education they should not question the teacher’s teaching methods.” As is evident in Figure 4.1, the majority of the Anglo-American parents disagree with that statement; indeed about 80% of those parents have circled either 1 or 2 on the Likert scale (1 meaning Strongly Disagree and 5 meaning Strongly Agree), only 1.2% circled 4 and no one circled 5. The Hispanic parents’ response on the other hand, is more spread out on the Likert scale. Indeed, about 35% have circled either 4 or 5, meaning that they agree, about 30% are right in the middle with 3 and approximately 35% circled either 1 or 2. It is interesting that none of
the Anglo-American parents agree with that statement while a little more than a third of the Hispanic parents do.

A similar distribution can be observed with item 17 on the survey, which states that “the school has the main responsibility for a child’s education.” Indeed, one third of the Hispanic parents circled either 4 or 5, meaning that they agree with that statement, while only 3.6% of the Anglo-American parents agree and about 80% disagree (since they circled either 1 or 2).

Items 22 and 30 respectively stating that teachers should not be concerned with what goes on in a child’s home and that they have no right to seek information about a child’s home background also have similar response distributions with an obvious majority of Anglo-Americans disagreeing (90% and 86% respectively) while Hispanics are more evenly spread out on the Likert scale with a fairly large proportion of parents agreeing (23% and 37% respectively).
The response distribution on those four items thus seems to partially confirm findings from previous research saying that Hispanic parents have a tendency to believe, unlike Anglo-American parents and teachers, that learning is what happens at school and that trained teachers are more qualified than parents to help with the learning process (Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Moreover, Hispanic parents do seem to consider the home and the school as two separate entities. This belief may explain the assumed lack of parental involvement from Hispanics who are not often seen to mingle with teachers during school-initiated events (Valdés, 1996).

As far the second traditional authoritarian belief of uniform treatment is concerned, the response distribution on all three items focusing on this issue clearly demonstrates the existence of a cultural difference between Anglo-Americans and Hispanics. Indeed, as illustrated by Figure 4.2, about 75% of the Hispanic parents agree with statement 2 that children should be treated the same regardless of differences among them, while only about 27% of the Anglo-American parents do. As a reminder,
participants are numbered among those agreeing if they circled either 4 or 5 on the Likert scale. The difference is even more obvious with statement 9 which reads that “in order to be fair a teacher must treat all children alike.” Close to 95% of the Hispanic parents agree while only 20% of the Anglo-Americans do. Over 81% of the Hispanic parents agree with statement 25 (that teachers should discipline all the children the same) while only 17% of the Anglo-Americans do and a strong 72% disagree.

This difference appears to confirm previous findings that describe Latino parents’ concern about the overall well-functioning of the family unit over the personal accomplishments of each individual member. Children’s education is valued to the extent to which it benefits the family as a whole as children go to school with the hope that they will later be able to better help the family survive (Valdés, 1998).

The third traditional authoritarian notion which holds that children are naturally bad and must therefore be trained early in life is another clear-cut example of the
existence of a cross-cultural difference between Hispanic and Anglo-American parents in terms of their child-rearing beliefs. While all the statements in this category have a similar response distribution with the majority of Anglo-Americans disagreeing with this idea and the majority of Hispanics agreeing, the response distribution on item 28 (stating that children will bad unless taught what is right) is a striking example of an obvious cross-cultural gap (see Figure 4.3).

This belief that children are naturally bad is important in the sense that it seems to confirm findings from previous studies on Hispanic parents’ strong commitment to the moral upbringing of their children, which they conceive as their main contribution to the overall educational process of their little ones (Valdés, 1996). Moreover, this belief about the nature of children also seems to have a bearing on the belief that absolute obedience to whoever is in authority is the most important thing for parents to teach their children.

The response distribution for statement 10 on this issue stands as powerful evidence of
that fact since a little more than 80% of the Hispanic parents agree with this idea while only approximately 18% of the Anglo-Americans do (Figure 4.4).

![Figure 4.5. Rank Order of Parental Values – Statement 2:a: Bar Graph representing response distribution](image)

This tendency for Hispanic parents to strongly believe that teaching children to obey and to behave is central to their education is also illustrated in the ranks parents assigned to a number of educational values in the context of the Rank Order of Parental Values. As described in the previous chapter, parents were asked to prioritize statements in a set about things they feel are important to teach their children. As shown in Figure 4.5, close to 72% of the Hispanic parents assigned the highest value to teaching children to be obedient to parents and teachers. The other statements in that set included: [the most important thing to teach children is] to be responsible for their work, to be kind and considerate, to keep things neat and in order, to use imagination. The Anglo-Americans’ ranking on this set does not display such an important cluster around any statement.
The major goal of education is to put basic information into the minds of the children (statement #8)

![Bar Graph](image)

Figure 4.6. Parental Modernity Scale – Statement # 8: Bar Graph representing response distribution

The final traditional authoritarian belief about the nature of the learning process also acts as a distinguishing feature between the two cultural groups considered. Indeed, when faced with statement 8 which reads that “the major goal of education is to put basic information into the minds of the children,” roughly 80% of the Hispanic parents surveyed agree, while only about 30% of the Anglo-Americans do (see Figure 4.6). The difference between the two cultural groups is not as striking, although still clearly observable, with item 14 which states that “children’s learning results mainly from being presented basic information again and again.” Almost 90% of the Hispanics agree with this statement against 62% of the Anglo-Americans.

These numbers appear to confirm findings from previous studies regarding Hispanic’s view on the nature of the learning process as being mere repetition of the material until it sticks (Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Moreover, the fact that the majority of the Hispanic parents understand the main goal of education to be to put basic information
into the minds of children may explain their extreme concern with superficial features when reading with their children (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993).

While the above examples from the Parental Modernity Scale have mainly highlighted differences in educational and child-rearing beliefs between Hispanic and Anglo-American parents, one must remember that there are also a number of similarities since both groups obtained comparable scores on the progressive democratic subscale. In addition, not only were those scores similar, but they were high (32.81 average for Anglo-Americans, 34 for Hispanics) considering that the highest possible total on that subscale was 40. This means that both cultural groups tend to agree with the beliefs described by the statements on that subscale.

As explained in the previous chapter, the progressive democratic beliefs express four main sets of ideas about education and child-rearing which are that: 1) what parents teach at home influences school success, 2) children should be allowed to express their own point of view and to disagree, 3) children learn best by doing themselves and by teaching other children, 4) when children pretend something parents should go along with the game.

The fact that Hispanic parents seem to endorse both the traditional authoritarian beliefs and their opposites, the progressive democratic views, may seem a little disconcerting. A similar observation was made by Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) who simply quoted Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) when they explained that “although it would appear that traditional authoritarian beliefs and progressive democratic beliefs on education and child-rearing are polar opposites, apparently some parents agree with both”
(Schaeffer & Edgerton, 1985, p.297). Both sets of researchers left it at that which is slightly unsatisfying.

The following section discusses several possible explanations behind the observed paradox of having Hispanic parents agree with both the traditional and the progressive subscales. It appears probable that both sets of parents could share some educational beliefs without necessarily sharing a similar view on how those beliefs are carried out into action in everyday life. In addition, the wording of the statements may have been a little vague and thus have opened the way for a few different interpretations. Another explanation might be that Hispanics who live in the United States are caught between two different worlds, the one that they left behind and the one that makes up their new reality. As a result, it is possible that as they are trying to adjust to the American way of doing things, they experience a period of confusion during which they don’t really know what they believe any more. Following are examples from the data illustrating each potential reason just described.

The suggestion that Hispanics and Anglo-Americans may agree with some beliefs without necessarily acting upon those beliefs in a similar fashion is illustrated by the response distribution on item 28 which states that what parents teach their children at home is very important to their school success. A little over 80% of the parents in each cultural group strongly agree with that statement (see Figure 4.7). Hence, even though both groups of parents do not seem to share a common view of their role in the education of their children, they do share a belief that they are an essential part of the educational process.
As discussed previously, Hispanic parents seem to define their role mainly as raising well-behaved and responsible children who will thus be attentive in class and therefore will learn. Anglo-Americans, on the other hand, may feel that the way they contribute is through encouraging early attempts at literacy. Either way, the fact that both sets of parents express a conviction that what they do, as parents, matters, is encouraging in an effort to lessen observed home-school discontinuities with Latino families. Any shared belief or assumption between Anglo-American parents and teachers and Hispanic parents constitutes a starting point for potential intervention plans.

Another example that may illustrate this concept of both groups of parents agreeing on a belief but perhaps not on the way it is put into action is found in the response distribution of statements 11 and 15 which basically state that children learn best by doing rather than merely listening and that children enjoy teaching other children. Approximately 43% of the Anglo-American parents and 62% of the Hispanics circled either 4 or 5 on the Likert scale for the first statement, thus indicating that they agree with
it. The second statement about children teaching other children was endorsed by 88% of the Anglo-Americans and 79% of the Hispanics. These figures reveal that both groups of parents do believe that children’s learning is enhanced by firsthand experience and by having to use acquired skills and knowledge to teach them to other children. How can Hispanic parents hold such a belief in conjunction with the belief that learning is a passive process where children’s head are filled with information that is repeated over and over until it sticks?

One possible answer is that Hispanics may perhaps not look at these beliefs of children learning by doing and of children enjoying to teach other children in terms of academic learning, as Anglo-Americans might. Indeed, Hispanic parents have expressed in several studies that they rely on schools and teachers to teach academics (Valdés, 1996; Valdés, 1998). It would thus make sense to have them answer questions about educational beliefs chiefly about the learning that takes place at home such as learning to do chores, learning to be a good sibling and so forth. This potential explanation has some support in research, since Valdés (1996) explains that the parents in her ethnographic study believed that the best way for children to learn how to do household chores was simply to let them do the various tasks until the result was acceptable. Valdés (1996) gives the example of learning to wash dishes. The way to know whether or not children can do it is to have them do it and then look at the dishes; if they are clean the task is considered to be mastered; if not, some more learning through practice needs to take place. In that sense then Hispanic parents may believe that children learn best by doing themselves rather than listening to others.
Similarly, it is plausible that Hispanic parents may have answered the question about children enjoying to teach other children with the home life in mind (as opposed to school). Several studies have pointed out that Hispanic families rely a lot on the concept of older siblings teaching and mentoring younger ones (Valdés, 1996; Volk, 1999). For instance, Valdés (1996) explains that in the families she observed, older siblings were in charge of teaching the younger children how to use the toilet, tie their shoes, braid their hair, and so forth.

Unlike the two preceding examples, some observed paradoxes are more difficult to clarify. Indeed, how can one explain that 78% of the Hispanics believe that children should have unquestioning loyalty to their parents, that 83% believe that children should not question the authority of their parents while 81% also believe that children should be allowed to disagree with their parents if they feel their own ideas are better?

There are a few possible answers to that question. First, it is possible that the wording of the statements was a little vague. For instance the word disagree in the statement about children being allowed to disagree with their parents does not necessarily mean disrespect; a child could show loyalty to his/her parents and still disagree with them. Hence, it may not be paradoxical for Hispanic parents to agree with both statements.

Another possible answer is that perhaps this is an example of what was described earlier as a phase of confusion that Hispanics may undergo as they are trying to adjust to the values of their new country of residence. Indeed, it is possible that some parents are caught up between the values of their country of origin and the values recognized in the United States and portrayed all around them by the media, the school, and so forth.
There might also be a link between the number of years spent in the United States and the beliefs held by Hispanic parents. Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) did analyze the effect of the level of acculturation on 30 Hispanic mothers’ responses on the survey. In the context of their study, level of acculturation was defined by looking at a number of parameters which included: language use and preference, ethnic identity and classification, cultural heritage and ethnic behaviors, and ethnic interaction. These researchers did find that there were significant differences in the scores of the Mexican mothers in their sample based on their level of acculturation. The more US-oriented mothers had scores that were closer to the Anglo-American mothers than did the more Mexican-oriented mothers. Therefore, it is possible that the observed paradox in educational beliefs of Hispanic parents might be a result of intracultural diversity, which diversity might have caused possible differences to cancel each other out. Further research is definitely needed to investigate the possible explanations behind this observed paradox.

Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to identify whether or not cultural group membership as well as SES (defined as mean level of parental education) respectively influenced the parental educational beliefs and values held by Hispanics, as well as Anglo-Americans. While the previous chapter described the data analysis procedure, the present chapter presented and discussed the results obtained. Descriptive and inferential statistics following ANOVAs and Tukey post-hoc tests have revealed that educational and child-rearing beliefs of Hispanic parents significantly differ statistically from the beliefs held by Anglo-American parents in many regards. The same statistics revealed
however that mean level of parental education did not significantly influence those beliefs.

Following the presentation of those findings, a more detailed picture of the nature of the cross-cultural differences identified was given. With, the ultimate goal of this study being to help Anglo-American teachers and Hispanic parents alike better understand each other’s expectations regarding the education of children, it seemed important to describe how different both cultural groups appear to be. This description was made possible by looking at the response distribution of specific items instead of merely analyzing the differences in total scores.

While there were obvious differences between the two cultural groups, this study also identified a number of similarities which is encouraging from the perspective of endeavoring to fill the gap that exists between Anglo-American beliefs and Latinos’ educational values. Any shared belief between Anglo-American parents and teachers, and Hispanics has the potential to be a starting point in undertaking to make explicit the taken-for-granted assumptions of each group. Perhaps only as such culturally-based educational beliefs begin to be recognized and understood will Latino children optimize their success in the public schools of America.
Chapter 5

Conclusion

The goal of this study was to identify and compare the educational beliefs and values of Hispanic and Anglo-American parents with varying levels of education. This study was a replication of a portion of the Rodriguez and Olswang (2003) study which looked at the educational and child-rearing beliefs of 30 Mexican-American and 30 Anglo-American mothers. The rationale for undertaking the present study was based on a combination of facts.

First, the number of Hispanic children enrolled in American schools is dramatically increasing and these children are considered to be at higher risk of academic difficulty than any other ethnic groups (Garcia, 2002; NCES, 2003).

Second, a growing body of research has emphasized the impact of home literacy practices on subsequent academic achievement while also recognizing that few studies describe the literacy practices in the homes of language-minority children (August & Hakuta, 1997). Moreover, studies on the home literacy practices of Hispanic families have identified that even though some literacy-mediated activities in Latino families may resemble activities that take place in Anglo-American homes and schools, these activities still differ in their outcome because of different parental educational and child-rearing beliefs (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Hence, there is a definite need for research to investigate how Hispanic parents view their role in the education of their children, how they define the role of the school in this process, how they view children in general, and how they believe learning is most likely to occur.

These beliefs then need to be compared to the Anglo-American beliefs and values that are
the norm in American schools in the hope of narrowing the gap between what happens in Hispanic homes and at school in terms of children’s literacy development.

Based on the review of literature and in light of previous research, three research questions were established asking whether Hispanics and Anglo-Americans hold different educational and child-rearing beliefs and whether mean level of parental education influences these beliefs.

Summary of results

Two surveys of parental educational and child-rearing beliefs were used to answer the research questions. These instruments are the Parental Modernity Scale and the Rank Order of Parental Values and they were initially designed and published by Schaeffer and Edgerton (1985) and used recently by Rodriguez and Olswang (2003).

Each instrument yielded two and three scores respectively for each participant. One way-ANOVAs followed by Tukey post-hoc tests revealed the existence of statistically significant differences (p<.001) between Hispanics and Anglo-Americans on three out of five possible total scores. This finding suggests that there is indeed a difference in educational beliefs and values based on cultural group membership. However, the inferential statistics did not show a significant effect due to mean level of parental education. Cultural group membership thus seems to account for most of the differences identified by the present study.

Most of the beliefs identified by previous research as potentially being an expression of the Hispanic cultural model of literacy were indeed found to be held by a large number of Latino parents in the sample. For instance, a majority of Hispanic parents had a propensity to agree with the following beliefs while Anglo-Americans tended to
disagree with the same beliefs: (1) the home and the school are two separate entities and parents should not question the teacher’s teaching methods, (2) children should be treated the same regardless of differences among them, (3) children are naturally bad and must therefore be trained early in life, (4) the most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to adults, and (5) learning is a passive process where teachers fill children’s heads with information.

Besides the aforementioned differences, a few items also revealed the existence of similarities between the two cultural groups. Both groups of parents believe that (1) what they teach their children at home is important to their school success, (2) children learn best by doing rather than listening, (3) children have a right to their own point of view and should be allowed to express it.

While it may look like Hispanic parents agree with conflicting beliefs, the researcher suggested that Latinos may well endorse beliefs similar to Anglo-Americans, but that they might have a different idea of how those beliefs are carried out. Moreover, it is possible that the wording of the questions was too vague and thus opened the way for several different interpretations. Another possible explanation is that Hispanics may be experiencing some confusion due to their attempting to adjust to a new country. This apparent paradox is further discussed in the section about the suggestions for future research.

Implications

The findings from this study confirm the existence of a gap in educational beliefs and expectations between Anglo-American parents and teachers, and Latino parents. In other words, it seems that one way to help Hispanic children achieve higher academically
entails helping both aforementioned parties realize that they may be operating from two
different cultural perspectives, and as a result, their respective efforts may not be as
productive as they could be through collaboration. As described in the literature review, it
seems that there is an implicit alliance between Anglo-American parents and teachers
who operate from a similar cultural background and this alliance unintentionally excludes
Latino families who do not share those Anglo-American values. This alliance can extend
and include language-minorities through different potential intervention measures.

One way that both cultural groups could begin to understand each other’s
educational beliefs would be through training sessions. Indeed, teachers and other
professionals in education could be explicitly told about the findings from this study and
previous ones like it so as to be able to better understand the population they serve.

Along the same line, Hispanic parents could be invited to meetings where the
school values in the United States are presented and explained. Family literacy specialists
could create modules about the educational beliefs and values recognized in the
American school system and use these modules to help Latino parents better understand
how schools work in the United States. A lot of existing programs for Hispanic parents
have focused on teaching them basic literacy skills such as reading and writing. While no
one questions the value of such programs, findings from the present study suggest that it
would be helpful to add a component about American teachers’ educational expectations
to those existing programs. Indeed, since findings from this study suggest that cultural
background seems to influence parental educational beliefs and values even more than
level of education, it would seem appropriate to make sure that Latino parents understand
what their children’s teachers believe and expect when it comes to education.
It is important to understand that recognizing the existence of a cultural gap does not equate to saying that one culture has all the right answers and that the other one needs to change completely. In fact, it seems that both cultural groups involved in this study hold beliefs that the other group could learn from. For instance, Anglo-American teachers (and parents) could learn from the strong commitment Hispanic parents seem to feel towards the moral upbringing of their children. Hispanic parents, on the other hand, may benefit from learning about the ways Anglo-American parents and teachers appear to foster children’s literacy development through everyday activities. While Hispanics undoubtedly have to adjust to the American ways of doing things, there is nonetheless potential for both parties to learn from each other. Intervention programs should focus on the positive from each culture and try to incorporate it into a collaborative effort where parents and school professionals feel like equal partners in the common endeavor of helping children succeed academically.

Limitations

The fact that parental beliefs were identified and gathered through a survey raises some issues that warrant caution in interpreting the results. To begin with, the survey format, with items being ranked on a Likert-scale, may have been construed differently depending on the participants’ culture.

Moreover, there is the question of how each participant understood each statement, since no explanations were given about the meaning of the sentences presented. The only explanations allowed by the researcher were instructions about the survey format. For any other questions, the participants were told to answer according to what they understood the statement to mean. The fact that several statements related to
the same educational belief was however a way to counterbalance that limitation. In other words, since parents were asked the same thing several times in different ways and usually displayed the same attitude towards each statement, there are legitimate reasons to believe that each statement was generally understood similarly by all the participants.

Another limitation has to do with the fact that Anglo-American parents were surveyed and that it was assumed that their beliefs and values, as identified by the survey, were similar to those of Anglo-American teachers. Since teachers are also parents, this assumption seems legitimate. However, it might be important to survey teachers as well in the future.

Finally, even though the sample size was fairly large with 199 participants total (114 Hispanics and 85 Anglo-Americans) caution is needed in generalizing the findings from this study to the larger population. Further research, as discussed in the following and final section, is needed to confirm those findings.

Suggestions for further research

As was mentioned in the previous section about limitations, one can wonder if each statement was understood the same across all study participants. One way that future research could verify that would be through conducting focus-groups along with administering the survey. Such sessions would not only give the participants a chance to express what they understood each statement to mean, but it would also be an opportunity for participants to expound on their educational beliefs and values. This would shed some light on the observed paradox with Hispanic parents seemingly endorsing opposite beliefs, as was discussed earlier.
Another direction for future research would be to survey teachers and other professionals in education as well. Indeed, as briefly discussed in the previous section, the present study assumed that Anglo-American parents and teachers held similar beliefs about education and this assumption needs to be verified empirically.

Additionally, future research could investigate the educational and child-rearing beliefs of other language minority groups who are successful in American schools, such as Asians, and compare the findings to those of the present study.

Finally, future research could also focus on the design and implementation of training seminars intended to share findings from this study and others like it with both Hispanic parents and Anglo-American parents and teachers. Following the design and implementation of such programs future research could analyze their impact on Hispanic children’s academic achievement.
References


Appendix A
Consent form (English)

This research is being conducted by Elodie Petelo, graduate student at Brigham Young University, to collect parents’ beliefs about their children’s education.

You will be asked to complete a set of questionnaires, which will take approximately 10-15 minutes. One questionnaire consists of 30 statements about teachers, parents, and children. You will be asked to circle the answer that best describes your opinion about each statement (on a scale of 1 to 5.) Another questionnaire is made up of three sets of five statements each about things that most parents feel are important for their children to learn. You will be asked to rank the statements in each set in order of importance to you.

There are minimal risks for participation in this study. However, you may feel emotional discomfort when answering questions about personal beliefs.

There are no direct benefits to subjects. However, it is hoped that through your participation researchers will learn more about parents’ beliefs regarding their children’s education and will thus find ways to improve education in general.

All information provided will remain confidential and will only be reported as group data with no identifying information.

Participants will receive a discount coupon redeemable at Somethin’ Sweet (chocolate, candy and ice cream store located on 20 West Center in Provo)

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at anytime or refuse to participate entirely.

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Elodie Petelo at 489-4749, elodie@byu.edu or Dr. William Eggington at 422-3483, william_egginton@byu.edu.

If you have questions you do not feel comfortable asking the researcher, you may contact Dr. Renea Beckstrand, IRB Chair, 422-3873, renea_beckstrand@byu.edu.

I have read, understood, and received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will and volition to participate in this study.

Signature: _____________________________   Date: ____________
Appendix B

Consent Form (Spanish)

Este estudio es realizado por Elodie Petelo, estudiante graduada de la Universidad Brigham Young, a fin de recaudar información importante en cuanto a las nociones de los padres con respecto a la educación de sus hijos.

Usted deberá contestar dos encuestas lo cual le tomará aproximadamente 10-15 minutos hacerlo. Una de las encuestas consiste de 30 argumentos de maestros, padres e hijos. Usted deberá marcar (con un circulo) la respuesta que describa de la mejor manera (en escala del 1 al 5) su opinión en cuanto al argumento en cuestión. Otra de las encuestas consta de 3 grupos de 5 argumentos, usted deberá ordenar cada argumento en el orden de importancia que más le parezca apropiado.

Existen riesgos mínimos en este estudio. Sin embargo, es posible que usted se sienta un tanto incomodo emocionalmente al responder esta encuesta.

No existen beneficios directos para los participantes en este estudio. Sin embargo, se espera que por medio de sus participación, los especialistas puedan aprender más en cuanto a las creencias de los padres en cuanto a la educación de sus hijos y así se puedan encontrar maneras de mejorar la educación en general.

Toda la información personal de este estudio será confidencial y será reportada únicamente como grupo en general y sin particularidades.

Los participantes recibirán un cupón de descuentos canjeable en “Somethin’ Sweet”(localizado en 20 West and Center Street en Provo).

La participación es voluntaria. Usted tiene el derecho de abandonar or negarse a participar en este estudio en el momento que así lo desee.

Si necesita información adicional en cuanto a este estudio usted puede contactar directamente a Elodie Petelo (801-489-4749, elodie@byu.edu) o al Dr. William Eggington (801-422-3483, william_egginton@byu.edu).

Si existen preguntas con las cuales no se sienta cómoda para contactar directamente al investigador, usted puede contactar a Dr. Renea Beckstrand (801-422-3873, renea_beckstrand@byu.edu).

He leído, entiendo y he recibido una copia del consentimiento para este estudion y deseo de mi propia voluntad y deseo participar en este estudio.

Firma: ________________________________
Fecha: ________________________________
Appendix C

Demographics (English)

Please answer the following questions:

1. What’s your gender?
   Male ___    Female ___

2. Where are you from?
   - Country of Origin: _____________
   - Place of Origin (name of city/town or village): ________________

3. If you come from a country other than the United States, how long have you been in
   the United States?

4. Where did you grow up? (Mark ONE BOX)
   □ town/city
   □ rural area

5. How many children do you have?

6. How old are they?

7. Who spends the most time with your children in general? (Mark ONE BOX)
   □ You – (Circle the appropriate answer: mother     father)
   □ Your spouse
   □ A relative – Please specify their relationship to the children: ________________
   □ Other – Please specify: ____________________

8. What level of education have you achieved (taking into account everything: K-12,
   High School, college and above)? (Mark ONE BOX)
   □ 0-3 years
   □ 4-7 years
   □ 8-11 years
   □ 12-15 years
   □ 16 or more years

9. What level of education has your spouse achieved (taking into account everything:
   K-12, High School, college and above)? (Mark ONE BOX)
   □ 0-3 years
   □ 4-7 years
   □ 8-11 years
   □ 12-15 years
   □ 16 or more years
10. Do you work?
   ___ No \hspace{2cm} ___ Yes, occupation: ___________________

11. Does your spouse work?
   ___ No \hspace{2cm} ___ Yes, occupation: ___________________

12. What is your average yearly income?
   □ Less than $10,000
   □ $10,000 - $19,999
   □ $20,000 - $29,999
   □ $30,000 - $39,999
   □ $40,000 - $49,999
   □ $50,000 - $59,999
   □ $60,000 – $69,999
   □ Over $70,000

13. What is your mother’s occupation?

14. What is your father’s occupation?

15. If you immigrated from another country, what was your occupation there?

16. Do you read with your children?
   ___ No \hspace{2cm} ___ Yes, how often?
   □ Several times a day
   □ Every day, once
   □ 2-3 times a week
   □ Once a week
   □ 2-3 times a month
   □ Once a month
   □ Other: ________

17. What language do you usually speak with your spouse?

18. What language do you usually speak with your children?
Appendix D

Demographics (Spanish)

Favor de contestar las siguientes preguntas

1. ¿Cúal es su sexo?
Masculino ___ Femenino ___

2. ¿De dónde es? _________________
Lugar de nacimiento (nombre de la ciudad): ___________________

3. ¿Dónde creció? (Marque el espacio apropiado a su respuesta)
   □ Pueblo/Ciudad
   □ Área rural

4. Si usted proviene de otro país diferente a los Estado Unidos, ¿por cuánto tiempo ha residido en los Estados Unidos?

5. ¿Cuántos hijos tiene?

6. ¿Cuántos años tienen sus hijos?

7. ¿Quién pasa más tiempo (en lo general) con sus hijos?
   □ Usted
   □ Su esposo(a)
   □ Un familiar-Favor de especificar la relación del familiar con el niño: ___________
   □ Alguien más -favor de especificar quién:____________________

8. ¿Cuántos años asistió usted a la escuela/al colegio/a la universidad?
   □ 0-3 años
   □ 4-7 años
   □ 8-11 años
   □ 12-15 años
   □ 16 o más años

9. ¿Cuántos años asistió su esposo(a) a la escuela/al colegio/a la universidad?
   □ 0-3 años
   □ 4-7 años
   □ 8-11 años
   □ 12-15 años
   □ 16 o más años
10. ¿Trabaja usted?
   No ___     Si___, ¿Cuál es su ocupación? _______________

11. ¿Trabaja su esposo(a)?
   No ___     Si___, ¿Cuál es su ocupación? _______________

12. ¿Cuál es su salario anual?
   □ Menos de $10,000  
   □ $10,000 - $19,999  
   □ $20,000 - $29,999  
   □ $30,000 - $39,999  
   □ $40,000 - $49,999  
   □ $50,000 - $59,999  
   □ $60,000 - $69,999  
   □ Más de $70,000

13. ¿Qué ocupación tiene su madre?

14. ¿Qué ocupación tiene su padre?

15. Si usted emigró de otro país, ¿cuál era su ocupación en ese país?

16. ¿Les lee a sus hijos?
   No ___     Si___, ¿Qué tan seguido lee usted con sus hijos?
   □ Varías veces al día  
   □ Una vez por día  
   □ 2-3 veces por semana  
   □ Una vez a la semana  
   □ 2-3 veces al mes  
   □ Una vez al mes  
   □ Otro: ________

17. ¿Qué idioma habla con su esposo(a)?

18. ¿Qué idioma habla con sus hijos?
Appendix E

Parental Modernity Scale (English)

**Ideas about Raising Children**

Here are some statements other parents have made about rearing and educating children. For each one, please fill in the box that best indicates how you feel in general, not just about your own child.

1. Since parents lack special training in education, they should not question the teacher’s teaching methods.
   
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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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2. Children should be treated the same regardless of differences among them.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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3. Children should always obey the teacher.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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4. Preparing for the future is more important for a child than enjoying today.

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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

5. Children will not do the right thing unless they must.

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<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. Children should be allowed to disagree with their parents if they feel their own ideas are better.

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<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>
7. Children should be kept busy with work and study at home and at school.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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8. The major goal of education is to put basic information into the minds of the children.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

9. In order to be fair, a teacher must treat all children alike.

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<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

10. The most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to whoever is in authority.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

11. Children learn best by doing things themselves rather than listening to others.

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<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

12. Children must be carefully trained early in life or their natural impulses will make them unmanageable.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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13. Children have a right to their own point of view and should be allowed to express it.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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</table>
14. Children’s learning results mainly from being presented basic information again and again.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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</table>

15. Children like to teach other children.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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</table>

16. The most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to parents.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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17. The school has the main responsibility for a child’s education.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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18. Children generally do not do what they should unless someone sees to it.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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19. Parents should teach their children that they should be doing something useful at all times.

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<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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20. It’s all right for a child to disagree with his/her parents.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>
21. Children should always obey their parents.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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22. Teachers need not be concerned with what goes on in a child’s home.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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23. Parents should go along with the game when their child is pretending something.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

24. Parents should teach their children to have unquestioning loyalty to them.

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<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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25. Teachers should discipline all the children the same.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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26. Children should not question the authority of their parents.

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27. What parents teach their child at home is very important to his/her school success.

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
28. Children will be bad unless they are taught what is right.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

29. A child’s ideas should be seriously considered in making family decisions.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

30. A teacher has no right to seek information about a child’s home background.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree
**Appendix F**

**Parental Modernity Scale (Spanish)**

**Ideas Sobre la Crianza de los Niños**

Aquí siguen algunos argumentos que otros padres han hecho acerca de la crianza y formación de los niños. Por cada uno, por favor marque con un círculo el número que más indique sus sentimientos en general, no exclusivamente acerca de su(s) propio(s) hijo(s).

1. Porque los padres no tienen formación especial en educación, ellos no pueden dudar a las maestras en sus métodos de enseñar.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muy en Desacuerdo</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Muy De Acuerdo</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Los niños deben ser tratados del mismo modo a pesar de las diferencias entre ellos.

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<td>2</td>
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3. Los niños siempre tienen que obedecer a la maestra.

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<td>Muy De Acuerdo</td>
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4. La preparación para el futuro es más importante para un niño que pasarla a gusto hoy.

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<td>Muy De Acuerdo</td>
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5. Los niños no hacen lo que deben de hacer a menos que se les mande.

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<td>Muy De Acuerdo</td>
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6. Los niños deben tener la oportunidad de tener diferentes ideas y opiniones que las de sus padres si creen que son mejores.

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7. Los niños deben estar ocupados con tarea en la casa como en la escuela.

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8. La primera función de la educación del niño es poner información básica en la mente del niño.

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9. Para ser imparcial, la maestra debe tratar a todos los niños con igualdad.

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10. La cosa más importante para enseñarles a los niños es la obediencia a cualquier persona que esté encargada de ellos.

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<td>Muy De Acuerdo</td>
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11. Los niños aprenden mejor cuando ellos hacen cosas en vez de escuchar a otros.

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12. Los niños tienen que ser entrenados cuando son pequeños porque si no, sus impulsos naturales los harán difíciles de corregir.

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13. Los niños deben tener la oportunidad de tener sus opiniones y expresar sus ideas.

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<td>Muy De Acuerdo</td>
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</table>
14. Los niños aprenden mejor cuando la información básica es repetida varias veces.

1 2 3 4 5
Muy en Desacuerdo Muy De Acuerdo

15. A los niños les gusta enseñar a otros niños.

1 2 3 4 5
Muy en Desacuerdo Muy De Acuerdo

16. La cosa más importante para enseñar a los niños es la obediencia a sus padres.

1 2 3 4 5
Muy en Desacuerdo Muy De Acuerdo

17. La escuela tiene la responsabilidad de educar al niño.

1 2 3 4 5
Muy en Desacuerdo Muy De Acuerdo

18. Los niños no hacen lo que deben sin que alguien les mande.

1 2 3 4 5
Muy en Desacuerdo Muy De Acuerdo

19. Los padres deben enseñar a sus niños que tienen que hacer algo todo el tiempo.

1 2 3 4 5
Muy en Desacuerdo Muy De Acuerdo

20. Está bien que el niño esté en desacuerdo con sus padres.

1 2 3 4 5
Muy en Desacuerdo Muy De Acuerdo

21. Los niños siempre tienen que obedecer a sus padres.

1 2 3 4 5
Muy en Desacuerdo Muy De Acuerdo
22. Las maestras no deben preocuparse con lo que pasa en la casa de los estudiantes.

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23. Los padres deben apoyar a sus niños cuando estén pretendiendo y jugando.

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24. Los padres deben enseñar a sus niños a ser totalmente leales a ellos.

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25. Las maestras deben disciplinar a todos los niños con igualdad.

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26. Los niños no deben poner en duda la autoridad de sus padres.

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27. La enseñanza de los padres es muy importante para el éxito de sus niños.

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28. Los niños se portarán mal si no se les enseña lo que es bueno.

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</table>

29. Los padres deben poner atención a las ideas de los niños cuando estén tomando decisiones familiares.

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30. La maestra no tiene el derecho de preguntar a la familia información sobre su origen.

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Appendix G

Rank Order of Parental Values (English)

Following are three sets of five statements each. Each statement is something that most parents feel is important for their child to learn. Begin with the first set, read each statement and order the statements with what you most want for your child to learn first (1). What’s second-most important next (2), and so on, with what’s least important to you last (5).

1. First set:
   a. to think for him/herself
   b. to keep him/herself and his/her clothes clean
   c. to be curious about many things
   d. to be polite to adults
   e. to be kind to other children

2. Second set
   a. to obey parents and teachers
   b. to be responsible for his/her own work
   c. to be kind and considerate
   d. to keep things neat and in order
   e. to use imagination

3. Third set
   a. interest in how and why things happen.
   b. ability to get along with people
   c. being a good student
   d. ability to look after him/herself
   e. good manners
Appendix H

Rank Order of Parental Values (Spanish)

Orden de Valores Paternales

Aquí siguen tres grupos de cinco argumentos cada uno. Cada argumento es algo que la mayoría de los padres siente que es importante que cada niño aprenda. Comience con el primer grupo, lea cada argumento y ponga los argumentos en orden según lo que usted considere importante que su hijo aprenda primero (1). Lo que sea la segunda cosa más importante (2) y así hasta el 5. (El 5 siendo lo que sea lo menos importante para usted.) Haga lo mismo con cada grupo de argumentos.

1. Primer grupo:
   a. pensar por él/ella mismo/misma
   b. mantener su persona y su ropa limpia
   c. tener curiosidad sobre muchas cosas
   d. ser cortés con los adultos
   e. ser amable con otros niños

2. Segundo grupo:
   a. obedecer a sus padres y maestros
   b. ser responsable por su propio trabajo
   c. ser amable y considerado
   d. cuidar las cosas y mantenerlas en orden
   e. usar su imaginación

3. Tercer grupo:
   a. interés en cómo y por qué las cosas pasan
   b. habilidad de llevarse bien con la gente
   c. ser un buen estudiante
   d. poder cuidarse a sí mismo
   e. tener buenos modales