

The description latino population education essay

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Kimberly KongamnachTexas A&M University - CommerceDoes Participation of Hispanic/Latina Mothers in KEYSS Program at Plano ISD Improve their Daughter(s)'s School Experience? The growth of the Hispanic/Latino population in the United States has prompted the need to better understand culture and how this impacts Hispanic/Latino students' lives including the ability to complete high school. Research shows that when one retains cultural heritage while adapting to life in the United States increases the chances for success in school (Balsano, 2009, Kaplan, Piotrkowski, Silber, 2009). Along with the need for cultural retention, mentoring relationships can enhance teens' social and emotional competence (Molinuevo, 2010). Particularly of interest to Hispanic/Latino students is the impact of maternal involvement in after school programs.

Literature Review

As an emerging and rising population, the Hispanic/Latino culture within the United States has undergone changes during the past decade. A further analysis of the variation of the Hispanic culture is necessary in regards to meeting the educational needs and goals of young Hispanic children in school. Currently there are school programs aimed at aiding in Hispanic children's goals of graduating school, entering workforce, and doing so while maintaining Hispanic cultural identity (Edward 2009, Kaplan, Turner, Piotrkowski, & Silber 2009). Key topics to explore within the Hispanic/Latino demographic are the increasing numbers of Latino immigrants living in the United States, strong adherence to cultural traditions and norms, key role of mothers, and the current school programs for at risk Hispanic school aged children.

Description Latino population

The term Hispanic/Latino is generally a generic umbrella term defined by the Federal government for a group of peoples that have heritage and ethnicity rooted in Hispanic/Latino culture (US Census, 2010). In actuality, it comprises a very diverse cross-segment of Spanish-speaking countries, namely Cubans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, South or Central Americans, or other Spanish cultures that as a result form an ethnic category, rather than a race according to the 2010 US Census reports. The term Hispanic refers to persons of Spanish-speaking origin or ancestry, while Latino generally refers to anyone of Latin American origin. Currently Hispanic/Latino persons accounts for 16. 7 percent of the national population, or around 52 million people (2010). Consequently, half the growth of the total population in the United States from 2000 to 2010 was attributed to the exponential growth of Hispanic/Latino segments of the overall population (2010). This spike in population in just a decade's time certainly warrants a closer inspection when observing this population as it relates to education and employment. Studies show a direct, positive correlation between education and employment (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2012; Carvajal, S. K. 2002; Green, 2011; National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). So how does the Hispanic/Latino population fare? According to 2012 data supplied by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, only sixty six percent of Hispanics are employed. Ten percent of the Hispanic population is unemployed, a statistic significantly higher than the national average of nearly eight percent for all other ethnicities. Furthermore, for both males and females between the ages of 16 to 19, the unemployment rate skyrockets to 20 percent (2012). The higher unemployment rates among Latinos are reflected in the population's

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lower education performance. On average, Hispanic students have higher High School dropout rates and lower High School completion rates than Black students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). Additionally, one study shows that a smaller proportion of Hispanics complete college compared to other ethnicities. This disproportionate college completion rate is mirrored in further research has shown that only about two out of five Hispanics 17 years old and over ever participates in adult education (2003). <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/hispanics/images/spacer.gif> This statistic is important to remember, especially when implementation at risk Latino youth school programs. Focus for these school programs should be directly maintained on short-term educational goals, while developing long-term employment goals due to research findings suggesting that Hispanic populations have many short comings when compared with other populations (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2012; National Center for Education Statistics, 2003, Carvajal, S. K. 2002).

Family Dynamics

To create and implement social services and programs that aid the Hispanic/Latino population, an essential, deep introspection into the dynamics of Hispanic family and culture must be undergone so that the programs are directly applicable to the family unit (Niemeyer, 2009). Cultural values typically dominate the socialization style of Hispanic parents, with styles of interaction that are vastly different from their more mainstream American counterparts (Lorenzo, 2012). One of these specific characteristic parenting styles of Hispanic family dynamics is the strong emphasis on family closeness (Lorenzo, 2012, Rivera et. al., 2008, Zayas et. al. 2005). "

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Familismo" emphasizes trust between family members, loyalty to family, and a general orientation to the family (Rivera et. al. 2008). Familismo is characterized by large family size, multigenerational family members living under one roof, high frequency of interaction among members of kin networks, and beliefs stressing family unity and solidarity (Harwood, Leyendecker, Carlson, Asencio, & Miller 2002). Within the Hispanic family system, there is strong importance placed upon family loyalty as a means to problem solving and support (Niska, 1999). Family loyalty is reiterated in other research showing that Hispanic families provide individual members support and aid in difficult times (Coatsworth, 2002). Hispanic families have been described as socializing their children to traditional gender role values (Zayas et. al. 2005). Hardwood, Leyendecker, Carlson, Asencio, and Miller (2002) concluded that " respeto", an emphasis on children's demonstrating respect and obedience, is valued by Hispanic families from a wide range of national, economic, and social backgrounds. The extended family represents nurturing, as well as material, emotional and informational support in the family (Niska, 1999). Utilizing familismo and resepto in relation to working with Hispanic families can help these families feel understood and help them develop a better working relationship in community and schools (Niemeyer, 2009).

Mother daughter relationship

In a study by Niska (1999) the importance of females in the Hispanic family was analyzed. For medical problems, older men and women rely on their daughters, and younger men rely on their mothers. Social support is defined by helpfulness of social relationships, the manner of human attachments and

the resources exchanged through support systems (Green, 2011). This type of social support by female Hispanic/Latinos can positively affect outcomes for a variety of issues both within the home and outside the home such as in school. The complexity of the Hispanic family nature and strong familismo ties (Niemeyer, 2009) complicates the typical challenges of the parenting-adolescent relationship, namely accommodating distance and mainstream cultural norms while maintaining attachment and Hispanic culture. The Hispanic/Latino familial bond is at times thrown into jeopardy as adolescents desire greater privacy in their pursuit to individuate themselves from their parents. Hispanic parents find upsetting cultural norms difficult in the face of anxiety prompted by ensuring safety for the adolescent, and even more difficult to relinquish control (Joshi, 2006). Research on Hispanic/Latino maternal relationships is limited due to minimal attention that has been given to maternal support and its role in the academic persistence (Kaplan, Turner, Piotrkowski, & Silber, 2009). Research does point out the importance of the maternal relationship and its relevance to future studies. For example, one study found that when examining motivating variables for Mexican American women's success in college, the sample reported that their mother was the one person who provided the most influence and academic support. Furthermore, the mothers were the most emotionally supportive out of other family persons such as father, spouse, or siblings (Ma, 2009). Similarly found in research was the influence and importance mothers had on their adult children in concurrence with educational mobility. The research reported that the strong influence of the mother played an integral part in the development of the Hispanic women's abilities in their adult life (Solorzano, 2008). Additional interpretation of these relationships of mother influence

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showed that Hispanic women would find it difficult to take on nontraditional behaviors and attitudes that are looked upon by their culture as disrespectful (Cofresi, 2002). Many Hispanic young women will forgo further education in order to meet family obligations, expectations, and responsibilities (Cofresi, 2002). These responsibilities include expectations to do housework, take care of their elders and/or siblings or serve as interpreters and intermediaries when contact with the outside world is necessary (Carvajal, 2002; Cofresi, 2002). Finding the balance between American culture and Hispanic culture in regards to Hispanic students' school experience, can appear to be attributed to the role of the mother.

Description of After-school Mentoring Programs

Currently, the U. S. Department of Education appropriates over \$1 billion annually to fund approximately 8, 000 after-school programs nationwide (Bender, et. al 2011). With this funding allotted, importance is stressed on quality and outcomes (Bender, et. al, 2011). Support for after-school programs stems in part from research indicating that the hours following release from school constitute a high-risk period of the day for children and adolescents (Kaplan, Turner, Piotrkowski, & Silber, 2009; Moody, Childs, & Sepples, 2003). Studies show that youth who are regularly monitored are significantly less likely to participate in delinquent behavior while youth who spend greater amounts of time socializing without adult supervision are at increased risk for substance use and other antisocial behavior (Mueller, 2011). After-school programs have multiple goals, including improving outcomes in academic performance, promoting positive development, and preventing delinquency, substance use, and other problem behaviors

(Mueller, 2011). Participation in after-school programs is associated with a variety of positive outcomes. Studies indicate that problem behavior such as delinquency and aggression is reduced among children that participate in such programs (Moody, Childs, & Sepples, 2003; Molinuevo, 2010). After-school participants indicate that they frequently receive greater emotional and developmental support in after-school settings than they do in traditional settings (Mueller, 2011; Molinuevo, 2010). After school mentoring programs focus on positive youth development components such as competence, confidence, connect, character, and self-esteem. These elements emerge when the strengths of youth and their abilities to select healthy, valued goals are met in school and outside of school in the community. These programs must be able to optimize the presence of resources or use strategies to attain the means needed to reach these goals, otherwise they must compensate when goals are blocked or when optimization strategies fail (Balsano, 2009). This is important when considering the Hispanic youth population and the obstacles they face in education and employment (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2012; Carvajal, S. K. 2002; Green, 2011; National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). The ability of activity involvement to foster social connections is of particular interest to school engagement as it allows students to develop supportive networks of friends and adults at school. During extracurricular activities students have the opportunity to both develop mentoring relationships with adults from the school as well as personal relationships with peers who share similar interests that may not be as readily available during the fast-paced school day (Dworkin, Larson, & Hansen, 2003). Among the most consistently documented relationships are the ability of connections to supportive

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individuals, including mentors and teachers, and involvement in extracurricular activities to generate positive youth outcomes (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; Zaff, Moore, Papillo, & Williams, 2003). This idea further illustrates the importance the maternal role in Hispanic students' school experience.

Child and parent participation

Studies show that actual participation in after school mentoring programs decline in a steady period of time in regards to participation in programs aimed at promoting positive youth development (Balsano, 2009, Burton, 2005). Particularly, Balsano's (2009) study shows some link towards children being involved in more than one activity, which can account for the decline in participation of other programs. Furthermore, it shows the importance of all after school mentoring type programs and extracurricular activities to work in congruence with each other. Fletcher and colleagues (2000) found that students whose parents were involved in the community were most likely to be involved in extracurricular activities. Although this study did not specifically relate to parents' school involvement, it is likely that the relationship will be similar based on comparable understandings that parents who place greater emphasis on involvement will have children who are more involved. Parents who are involved in their children's schooling might also be more aware of the available options and therefore encourage their children's participation (Zimmerman-Orozco, 2011). Although research has not examined whether students who have parents involved in school are more likely to approach teachers for support, following the same understanding, students whose parents are involved in school may be more likely to have

relationships with teachers because their parents are more likely to assist in the development of these relationships through school involvement (Fletcher, 2000). Parent involvement in their children's schooling, often predicted by other parenting variables including parental warmth and parental supervision, has been shown to be related positively to student achievement (Edward, 2009). This indicator provides basis for a look at Hispanic mother/daughter programs. According to Coatsworth (2002), research dealing with parental involvement has been focused within the elementary schools and more research on this topic needs to be explored at the secondary level. Hispanic parents need to be encouraged to become involved in school intervention programs that will increase their knowledge of the various elements of their children's education (PACEEHA, 2003). If Hispanic parents are given explanations in relation to their language and cultural values of what parental involvement is, how it is done, and how it benefits their children, misunderstandings will be alleviated (Quiocho & Daoud, 2006). Effective and appropriate programs are an important element for decreasing the problems faced by the diverse group of Hispanic students that not only affect the students' lives academically, but both in the home (Hammer, 2008). Some ways to enhance parent involvement are to remove language barriers between the parents and the schools, address economic obstacles that hinder parental involvement, schedule activities to make transportation easier for parents, empower and motivate parents to get involved, promote teacher-parent relations, and to acknowledge and empower parental aspirations (Zimmerman-Orozco 2011).

Challenges of evaluation of school program

Much of the research concerning Hispanics has been focused on the population as a whole without regards to subgroups such as those hailing from the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Columbia, Peru, and Ecuador. The focus on research has looked mainly at Mexican Americans exclusively, which limits conclusions that can be drawn (National Research Council, 2006, Solorzano, 2008, Wienick, Jacobs, Stone, Ortega & Burstin, 2004). Another limitation found in research of after school mentoring programs is the importance of being able to fully understand the impact of individual activity in youth: all of their activities must be taken into account. This was suggested in the Busseri (2010) study that looked critically at which individual activities have unique associations with the outcomes of interest such as academics, or self-esteem, as all activities provided some different type of conclusion. However, the majority of studies fail to investigate antecedents that may influence a student's choice to utilize these resources. Self-selection has been described as a major limitation of studies investigating the outcomes of activity involvement and mentoring (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). This can further be complicated by the traditional family model of the Hispanic culture and family. One study shows that many Hispanic females will choice family obligations over school and outside involvement (Cofresi, 2002).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the presented literature regarding Hispanics as a whole population in the United States shows that as a collective, they face many deficits in both education and employment. In developing programs to assist

Hispanics/Latinos in reducing drop-out rates and unemployment, one must take into consideration their family structures, cultural values, and unique characteristics of the Hispanic/Latino demographic. When analyzing specific, individual family units, the role of the female and especially the importance of the mother is to be given attention. Her role in parental participation is instrumental in child participation in these after school mentoring programs aimed at high-risk youth. However, these programs come with their own set of challenges during the implementation process, mostly due to the uniqueness of the Hispanic culture. Only after careful review of current literature, can future research be built upon to further explore maternal involvement in Hispanic after school mentoring programs, synthesize the findings, and weave the implications of the research into the fabric of after-school programs aimed at high-risk Hispanic youth.