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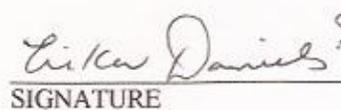
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Contextual Factors that Contribute to the Level of Latino Parent Involvement in a Dual
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by

Rosa I. Ortiz

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Abstract

This study examines the factors that contribute to the involvement of Latino parents in a dual language elementary school, located in southern California. The research used a triangulation of mixed-methods approach (e.g., surveys, interviews, theory of Cultural Capital). Results indicate that Latino parents (n=13), were overall less involved in school practices, compared to parents of the dominant group. The primary factors or barriers to parent participation were parents' financial, educational, and cultural contexts. A language barrier did not hinder parent involvement at this school. The findings will assist educators to look beyond the common misconceptions of "parents are just not interested" or "they don't want to be involved." This research provides educators with recommendation and strategies to involve Latino parents in affirming and empowering ways. Overall, there is still a great need for further and deeper research on Latino parent involvement in dual language schools to truly provide parents with opportunities to take a more meaningful role in the education of their children.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Factors to Latino Parent Involvement, Increasing Parent Involvement, Latino Parents, Dual Language Parent Involvement.

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Chapter One: Definition of Problem

A considerable amount of research indicates that parent involvement is considered a foundation to children's academic success and motivation (Bennett-Conroy, 2012; Durand, 2011; Gerena, 2011; Kuperminc, 2008; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Quezada, Diaz, & Sánchez, 2003; Stetson, Sinclair, & Nix, 2012). As a result, educators are aware of the significant influence that parents have in students' achievement in school. As Hispanic/Latinos represent the largest racial/ethnic minority group in the country (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008), student enrollment in California schools is primarily composed of Hispanic/Latino students, numbering 3,360,562 in the 2015-2016 school year, approximately 54% of the total student enrollment (the California Department of Education, 2015). This means that teachers often have to communicate and work with families that come from different linguistic, cultural, educational, and socioeconomic backgrounds. However, do educators receive specific training to ensure the active involvement of all parents including culturally and linguistically diverse families? What happens when the nationally accepted parent involvement strategies and approaches do not result in the active involvement of all parents?

This chapter will highlight the purpose of the research, preview of Latino parent involvement literature, description of methodology, and significance of research.

Purpose of Research/Statement of the Problem

Multiple studies demonstrate that in addition to coping with the many challenges that come with being an ethnic minority in the United States, unequal financial resources, lack of

transportation/child care, and language/cultural differences are major contributors and/or barriers to Latino parent involvement (Olivos, 2009; Orozco 2008; Peña, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003; Waterman, 2008). On the other hand, Olivos (2008) argues that Latino parents have historically been treated disrespectfully, and their input is often minimized and disregarded by educators and policymakers. To support this notion further, De Gaetano (2007) claims that a major reason for the limited school involvement of Latino and other minority groups is their marginalization due to race and class. Thus, Latino parents tend to take a more passive role and participate less in parent involvement practices such as taking part of school committees (De Gaetano, 2007; Guo, 2010; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Kuperminc, 2008).

As a result, assumptions are made about this group, and there is a tendency to assume that Latino parents are not as interested in their children's education and failed to support their children's achievement (Waterman, 2008). On the contrary, various studies demonstrate that Latino families place a high value on education and want opportunities to be part of their children's education (Jasis, 2005; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Orozco, 2008; Waterman, 2008). Therefore, there is clear imbalance on the level of parent involvement, and the potential factors/barriers that may influence the involvement of some Latino parents.

The purpose of this study was to understand the Latino parent involvement attitudes and practices in a dual language elementary school, located in southern California. In addition, identify any potential factors and/or barriers that contribute to the level of Latino parent involvement in school.

The two main research questions that guide this study are the following:

- 1) What is the level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language school setting?
- 2) Are there any factors and/or barriers as to why some Latino parents may not be as actively involved?

Preview Literature

The first part of the literature review focuses on the benefits of parent involvement in students' education. The second part of this literature points to six contextual factors/barriers that interfere with the level of Latino parent involvement in school: 1) language differences, 2) cultural differences, 3) unfamiliarity with the school system, 4) racist attitudes of some teachers, 5) low-socioeconomic status, 6) informal educational experiences, and 7) immigration status. Lastly, the third part of the literature review focuses on the most effective strategies to invite Latino families to be active participants in their children's school.

Research shows that parents who actively participate in the education of their children, both at home and school, promote students' academic achievement and better attitudes toward learning and school (Bennett-Conroy, 2012; Durand, 2011; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Stetson et al., 2012). Therefore, it is important that parents are involved in their children's education at home and school activities, so students are motivated to learn and do better academically.

However, literature on parent involvement points to six primary barriers that hinder Latino parents from actively participating in their children's schooling experience. For linguistic minority parents, who do not speak or have limited proficiency in the official language of

communication in United States' schools, a language barrier can highly influence the level of parent involvement (Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Ladky & Peterson, 2008; Pena, 2000). Other studies demonstrate that the level of parent involvement is highly influenced by the cultural differences regarding home-school communication and interactions (Durand, 2011; Guo, 2010; Kuperminc, 2008; Ladky & Peterson, 2008). Many parents that come from minority cultural backgrounds define "good parenting" differently and support their children's education based on their cultural perspective.

In addition to a language and cultural barrier, unfamiliarity with the school system is another barrier that prevents some Latino families from actively participating at school. Often, parents are unfamiliar with the school's procedures resulting in misunderstanding of appropriate parent involvement behavior (Baqueado et al., 2013; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003; Waterman, 2008). This further adds to teachers' deficit perspectives toward families from ethnic minority backgrounds as being incapable of supporting their children's learning or participating in school activities (Ladky & Peterson, 2008; Olivos, 2008; Waterman, 2008; Yanghee, 2009). These misconceptions between teachers and parents prevent an effective support system for students' academic success.

The literature also points to a low socioeconomic status as a major factor that hinders Latino parent involvement. Ethnic minority families, who are from a low-socioeconomic status, experience significantly more situational and personal barriers that limit their ability to be involved in ways that are expected and most valued by the school (Durand, 2011; Orozco, 2008;

Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003). Additionally, some studies show that ethnic minority parents with a low-socioeconomic status don't have the financial resources to a higher education; thus, a less formal education is associated to parents' lack of involvement (Feuerstein, 2000; Panferov, 2010; Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003; Waterman, 2008).

Furthermore, the level of involvement of some ethnic minority families is also related to an immigration status. Parents from non-dominant groups face many struggles living in the United States and identify immigration as one main equity issue that has the most impact in parents' limited involvement in their children's school (Baquedano et al., 2013; Olivos, 2009). Thus, parents' immigration status contributes to some parents' unwillingness to attend school activities or communicate with school personnel.

Although some of these barriers may be hard to change, it is necessary to learn of the most effective practices to communicate and invite minority families to be part of their children's education. Research shows that effective communication and collaboration (Ladky & Peterson, 2008; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Panferov, 2010; Sheldon, 2005), strong home-school partnerships (Gerena, 2011; Jasis, 2005; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012), a welcoming environment (De Gaetano, 2007; Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003), and parents' workshops (Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Olivos, 2008; Panferov, 2010) can better address the challenges of minority parent involvement at schools. These suggested practices are associated positively, increasing parent involvement at school and home.

Theoretical Framework

In this study, the researcher use Bourdieu's (1977) Theory of Cultural Capital to analyze Latino parent school involvement and the potential factors and/or barriers that influence the level of involvement of some Latino parents. The research findings demonstrate that Latino parents face various barriers and/or challenges that influence their level of involvement in their children's education and school (Durand, 2011; Guo, 2010; Kuperminc, 2008; Ladky & Peterson, 2008). In the same manner, Bourdieu (1977) Theory of Cultural Capital claims that working-class and ethnic minority parents lack cultural capital; the linguistic and cultural competence in dealing with the school culture. According to Bourdieu (1977), school's culture is the presentation and reproduction of middle and upper class values and forms of communication. As a result, this puts linguistically diverse parents, who come from a different cultural frame, in a distant disadvantage in the education system.

Preview Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was used in this study through a collection of quantitative and qualitative data. The study draws on quantitative data from a parents' survey, and qualitative data from six interviews: three parents, two teachers, and the principal. First, the survey allowed the researcher to learn more about the parents' demographic profile (e.g., language, profession, highest grade level earned). As well as, the current level of parent involvement at school/home and the parent involvement opportunities offered by the school. Second, the implementation of open-ended interview questions allowed the researcher to determine a more precise level of

Latino parent involvement at school, including the extent to which potential factors/barriers influence level of involvement. Lastly, the school's staff interviews allowed the researcher to learn about the parent involvement opportunities offered to Latino families, as expressed by the teachers and principal. In addition, to learn about school's staff perspectives and attitudes toward Latino parent involvement, including potential factors/barriers to why some parents may not be as involved. After data collection, the researcher coded the parents' survey responses and transcribed the audiotaped interviews to triangulate the data analysis with the theoretical framework. By a methodological triangulation, the researcher was able to identify common themes that play a significant role in the level of Latino parent involvement.

Significance of Research

This research is of significance to the field of Latino parent involvement in school, primarily a dual language setting. Often the home-school partnership is studied from a school-centric perspective and there is not enough focus on the mechanisms that encourage or prevent ethnic minority parents to become engaged in their children's schooling (Baquedano et al., 2013; Feuerstein, 2000). Furthermore, most school efforts aimed at involving bicultural parents tend to be geared towards low-impact rhetoric and mere traditional school involvement practices such as volunteerism which leads to superficial involvement (Durand, 2011; Olivos, 2009). In addition, few studies have examined the factors that influence parent involvement and meaningful engagement among Latino families (Durand, 2011); thus, making those factors less well understood. This research builds upon previous literature that highlights certain factors and/or

barriers as responsible for the level of Latino parent involvement in school. The purpose of this study is to examine the level of Latino parent involvement, and the potential factors that influence such involvement within a dual language schooling community. The findings from this study will assist educators to understand potential factors and/or barriers that may play a role in the different levels of Latino parent involvement within a dual language school setting. In addition, it will provide educators with the most effective strategies to communicate, invite, and work together with Latino parents to support dual language students' success.

Summary of Chapter

Parents can make a difference in the educational experience of their children; thus, parents need to be present at home and school in supporting their children's learning. It is critical to encourage parent involvement from all parents, primarily, parents from ethnic minority backgrounds, which have been reported to have low to limited involvement at schools (De Gaetano, 2007; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Kuperminc, 2008). Identifying the barriers or challenges that prohibit an active minority parent involvement should be the first step to understand such limited access and be able to provide the appropriate opportunities to increase parent involvement. In this chapter, the researcher introduced the statement of the problem, the purpose of research, previewed the literature, provided a summary of the methodology, gave the significance of research, and included related definitions at the end of this section.

In chapter two, the researcher will focus on the literature review related to the benefits of parent involvement, potential barriers that hinder ethnic and language minority parents'

participation in their children's school, and suggested practices to increase minority parent involvement. Chapter three describes the methodology and theoretical framework. Chapter four will provide the reader an analysis of the data. Finally, chapter five discusses how the results contribute to some Latino parents' absence or limited involvement at school. This chapter will also share the practical implications for educators who aspire for language minority parents to take a more active role in supporting their children's schooling, particularly in dual language education.

Definitions

1. **Academic Achievement/Performance:** Is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher, institution has achieved their educational goals.
2. **Bilingual Paraprofessional:** Aides who provide primary language support or primary language instruction to English learners.
3. **Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Capital:** Cultural capital consists of familiarity with the dominant culture in a society, the possession of cultural capital varies with social class, yet the education system assumes the possession of cultural capital. This makes it very difficult for lower-class students and parents to succeed in the education system.
4. **Ethnicity/Race:** Used to describe groups to which individuals belong, identify with, or belong in the eyes of the community. The designations are used to categorize U.S. citizens, resident aliens, and other eligible noncitizens.

5. **Habitus:** It refers to the physical embodiment of cultural capital, to the deeply ingrained habits, skills, and dispositions that humans possess due to their life experiences.
6. **50/50 Instructional Model:** This refers to dual language immersion program model where students are taught 50% of their day in their Native language (i.e., Spanish) and 50% in their second language (English).
7. **Latino/a:** A person of Latin-American origin or Spanish-speaking descent living in the United States. In this study, the term “Latino” is used to include “Hispanic” and is intended to be inclusive of both genders.
8. **Social Capital Framework:** The interactions, trust, and norms of reciprocity inhering in one’s social networks.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature shows that compared to White, English-speaking parents, ethnic minority parents have school involvement rates that have been described as low to nonexistent (De Gaetano, 2007; Guo, 2010; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Kuperminc, 2008). To support this notion further, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2013) reports that lower levels of school involvement were among ethnic minority children's parents, namely, Hispanics and Blacks. In addition, Hispanic parents are less likely to attend general school events, parent-teacher organization or association, and serve on school committees (NCES, 2013).

At the same time, according to the California Department of Education (2014-2015) and the NCES (2010), minority students, primarily, Black and Hispanic students have significantly higher dropout rates than White students. This general downward trend in dropout rates among Black and Hispanic students has been consistent over the last four decades. As a result, many educators and policy makers view the achievement gap between White and ethnic-minority students as an outcome of minority parents' lack or limited involvement (Baquedano, Alexander, & Hernández, 2013; Guo, 2006; Jasis, 2005; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Kuperminc, 2008; Waterman, 2008; Yanghee, 2009).

The high number of academic failure and school dropout rates among Latino youth in the United States can be influenced by numerous factors. However, because of the positive relationship between parent involvement and student achievement (Durand, 2011; Jasis &

Ordonez, 2012; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Stetson, Stetson, Sinclair, & Nix, 2012), the level and factors that influence parent involvement should be of considerable interest to educators.

Thus, the principal research questions of this study are:

- 1) What is the level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language school setting?
- 2) Are there any factors and/or barriers as to why some Latino parents may not be as actively involved?

The primary purpose of this chapter is to discuss the literature review pertaining to the barriers and challenges that hinder Latino parent involvement in education. Also, to report ways to overcome such barriers and the importance of involving parents at school and their children's schooling. The literature review will introduce three major themes concerning parent involvement. The first section of the literature review focuses on the benefits of having more parent involvement in their children's education and school. The second section, examines barriers faced by ethnic minority parents in efforts to actively participate in their children's schooling. Finally, the last section discusses strategies to promote and increase ethnic and linguistic minority parent involvement and build strong teacher-parent partnerships.

Benefits of Parent Involvement

How important is parent involvement in students' schooling? According to the research, increased parent involvement is positively associated to a range of students' academic achievement and motivational outcomes (Kuperminc, 2008). Most teachers, administrators, and parents agree that family involvement is important and results in positive outcomes for all (Pena,

2000; Sheldon, 2005). Parent involvement can increase students' cognitive growth, academic and language achievements, improve behavior, parent-child relationships, help parents improve their own self-confidence and expertise, and improve home-school relations (Quezada, Diaz, & Sánchez, 2003). However, this section will highlight academic achievement and motivational outcomes.

Academic Success

Multiple studies highlight parent involvement, as an important influence to students' academic success, because it contributes to children's positive attitudes toward schooling and improves their literacy and learning abilities (Bennett-Conroy, 2012; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Stetson et al., 2012). Mestry and Grobler's (2007) study shows that parent and community involvement is essential in the education of the learners. Parents who play an active role in the homework and schooling process of their children contribute to their good learning and behavior in school (Mestry & Grobler, 2007). To support this notion further, Bennett-Conroy's (2012) study evaluates a low-cost intervention to promote effective parent involvement among parents of 8th grade students in a low-resource, high-immigrant and minority school district. The findings show that involving parents in homework assignments had a positive effect on student homework submissions, and student homework grades. Likewise, Pena's (2000) study demonstrates that effective parent involvement correlated with students' earning high grades and test scores. Also, Feuerstein (2000) agrees that increased parent involvement is associated with better grades and the amount of time that students speak with their parents about school at home.

In addition, parent involvement in children's early education results in academic and attitudinal benefits for the children (Durand, 2011; Flynn & Nolan, 2008). In Durand's (2011) study, higher levels of parental involvement at home and school resulted in Latino children's higher literacy skills and improved behavior in the classroom. Flynn and Nolan (2008) also state that principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels reported that teachers who foster alliances with parents benefit from better student performance and reduced parent confrontations. Similarly, Stetson and colleagues (2012) recent study shows that 75% of teachers reported that home visits increased parent involvement which positively improved students' classroom behavior, students' work habits, and academic achievement. In this study, 60 elementary teachers arranged one home visit with the parent(s) of their most problematic student, identified as having either academic and/or behavioral difficulties. Seventy-two percent of the students were from language minority families, who were also economically disadvantaged. Home visits were used as an outreach program for positively impacting the educational lives of problematic students and improving relations with parents and students. The home visits increased parent involvement which had a positive impact on the students' school performance and attitudes.

Academic Motivation

Additionally, Gerena (2011) focuses on the importance of parent involvement in successful educational programs and finds that children's home environment and family structures strongly influence how well they do in school and how capable they feel. In Gerena's study, English dominant, Spanish dominant, and bilingual parents all agreed that their

participation was the most important variable in the effectiveness of the school's bilingual program and believed that their children were more motivated to learn, because of their supported family participation. Kuperminc (2008) shares the same opinion and states that for Latino students, parental involvement can function to support and maintain young people's sense of school belonging, which contributes to academic motivation and achievement. In Kuperminc's study, a social capital framework suggests that parental involvement may contribute indirectly to the academic adjustment of Latino middle and high school students depending on students' sense of belonging and teacher expectations for students' educational performance. The findings show that the higher levels of parent involvement contributed to more positive teachers' expectations for youth academic achievement and youth perceptions of school belonging. In the same way, Flynn and Nolan (2008) extensive literature review on parent involvement shows that when parents are involved, students do better academically, have fewer absences, are more willing to do school work, have higher graduation rates, and feel more competent about their abilities.

As a result, active parent involvement at home and school promotes students' academic success and better attitudes toward schooling. When parents are involved in their children's education, students tend to have better grades, less absences, and positive behaviors in the classroom. Thus, parents play an important role in their children's own perceptions of school belonging and academic competence.

Potential Barriers to Parent Involvement

These studies demonstrate that students' positive academic success and motivation result from increased parent involvement. Furthermore, other studies on parent involvement show that for ethnic minority parents, their children's education is of primary importance and many parents want opportunities to be more involved in their children's school and support their education (Jasis, 2005; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Orozco, 2008; Waterman, 2008).

Waterman's (2008) study analyzes Mexican families' dreams for their children and the findings show that Mexican immigrant parents place high value on their children's education and willingness to support their children's success in U.S. schools. In 2004-2005, Mexican mothers requested English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to learn English and better support their children with school-home assignments. In addition, mothers asked for parent involvement skills to improve parent-teacher communication. The interviewed mothers, who assisted the ESL classes, state feeling more capable of assisting their children with homework and having better communication skills when approaching teachers. Similarly, Latino immigrant families in California organized in parent-organization projects worked together to overcome school staff's assumptions of uninterested attitudes towards their children's schooling (Jasis, 2005; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012). In the three projects examined, Latino parents emphasized the importance of partnership with the school to benefit the students' academic success. In another study, Orozco (2008) focuses on low-income, immigrant Latino families' perspectives on their parenting roles in the United States and what they value as parents. The findings demonstrate that Latino parents

highly value family and often think about what is in the best interest of their children. Orozco's study highlights minority parents' high hopes for their children's success and willingness to be more involved in their children's schooling experiences.

These studies reflect ethnic minority parents' high aspirations for their children's education and desire to be more involved; however, there are still minimal levels of Latino parent involvement at schools. Therefore, what influences the lack of active involvement of ethnic minority students' parents across school districts in the United States? The literature review on parent involvement points to the following barriers that may hinder the level of ethnic and language minority parent involvement in their children's schooling: 1) language differences, 2) cultural differences, 3) unfamiliarity with the school system, 4) teachers' racist attitudes, 5) low-socioeconomic status, 6) less formal education, and 7) immigration status. These areas will be discussed in the following sections.

Language Differences

Inconsistencies with Latino parent involvement can be related to the language barrier caused by the dominant language of the school, since some Latino parents do not speak or have limited English proficiency. Thus, the language barrier can pose a significant impediment to home-school communication and school involvement practices (Ladky & Peterson, 2008; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Pena, 2000).

Many teachers in multicultural schools report that the most highly ranked problem in working and communicating with ethnic minority parents is the language and cultural barrier

(Mestry & Grobler, 2007). Similarly, Ladky and Peterson's study investigates the perspectives of 61 teachers and 32 principals on communicating with immigrant parents, who are second language speakers, and found that 85% of the questionnaire responses indicated language as a major barrier in communicating with language minority parents. Furthermore, Ladky and Peterson argue that some teachers are unfamiliar with the language and culture of their students and their families, which makes communication more difficult. Most of the time, if the cultures and languages of parents differ from the dominant culture, parents are ignored, denigrated, or treated unimportantly (De Gaetano, 2007). De Gaetano suggests schools use a multicultural approach as a way to include students' families in the process of teaching and learning.

On the other hand, Pena's (2000) study focuses on the factors that Mexican American parents' voiced as influencing their level of involvement at school. The findings show that besides parent cliques, parents' education, and cultural influences, language is also particularly influential in determining Mexican American families' level and type of involvement at school. The participating parents state that language differences became apparent in parent meetings which are mainly conducted in English; thus, parents are unable to actively participate and voice questions or concerns. Many language minority parents' inability to understand English makes them feel that no one in the school will listen to them, if they cannot communicate in the dominant language. Pena states that language differences make ESL parents participate in more passive roles that are culturally relevant and do not involve having to speak English to school's staff. As a result, Latino parents generally engage in more traditional, informal school

involvement practices such as volunteering in a child's classroom, volunteering for cafeteria duty, helping out with field trips, or occasionally volunteering for a cultural day (De Gaetano, 2007; Ladky & Peterson, 2008).

In addition, Guo (2010) relates language barrier to parents' psychological difficulties which include a lack of confidence and feeling of embarrassment in the presence of their children due to a lack of English proficiency. Many times Latino parents use their children as interpreters, and in the Hispanic culture when children are placed in a position of power over the parents, the traditional parental role is undermined (Orozco, 2008). Latino parents' feelings of self-worth are also diminished, because of their inability to help their children with homework assignments written in English (Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003). In another study, Panferov (2010) found that parents understood the importance of helping their children with homework, nevertheless felt frustrated and disempowered due to their own English language struggles. In the same way, in Waterman's (2008) study, the interviews' responses revealed that all participating Mexican mothers (n=87) highly valued supporting their children's education; however, it also became clear that sociolinguist barriers created a wall impeding their involvement and capacity for fully engaging in their children's schooling. For example, according to Waterman, when mothers were asked, what barriers, if any, impeded them from supporting their children's education, all mothers quickly replied "language!" (p.155). These studies show that language and cultural barriers were critical factors to Latino parents' involvement in their children's school.

Cultural Differences

Another barrier to Latino parent involvement in schools is the cultural differences regarding home-school communication and interactions (Guo, 2010; Ladky & Peterson, 2008). Ladky and Peterson argue that parents, who speak English as a second language, may be reluctant to get involved in their children's schooling, because the views on acceptable forms of involvement in their home country's schooling differs from those of Canadian school contexts. For example, in the United States, parents are expected to volunteer at school functions, attend routine parent-teacher conferences, and initiate contact to set up meetings with their child's teacher, if they have any particular concerns (Guo, 2010; Huss-Keeler, 1997); however, that type of active and constant parent involvement is neither expected or practiced in other countries. Guo (2010) states that parent involvement is mainly a North American concept. Also, many parents, who are immigrants, have a different cultural perspective of what defines "good parenting." They usually demonstrate their interest by assisting and supporting their children's education at home according to their cultural expectations (Guo, 2010; Huss-Keeler, 1997). Quezada and colleagues (2003) agree that teaming with the school system is not a tradition in the Latino culture.

Moreover, most Latino parents view teachers as the professionals in education, and believe that their presence in school can be viewed as monitoring the teacher's job; thus they do not intervene (Durand, 2011; Kuperminc, 2008; Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003). Besides a language barrier, Latino parents often assume a passive role in their children's schooling,

because of cultural traditions that encourage them to leave more professional decisions to teachers (Durand, 2011; Kuperminc, 2008). According to Kuperminc (2008), the low levels of parental involvement among Latinos reflect a range of barriers including minority parents' perceptions of teachers as the experts who "know best" making parents be less involved in the school. Furthermore, immigrant and ethnic minority families are more likely to expect teachers to initiate opportunities for involvement and in charge of educating their children (Durand, 2011).

Unfamiliarity with The School System

Some researchers attribute limited ethnic minority parental involvement in the U.S. schools to parents' unfamiliarity with the school systems (Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003). Often, the educational system reflects and validates the culture, language, expectations, ways of thinking, and values of the dominant group, and that is what is promoted in most schools (Baquedano, Alexander, & Hernandez, 2013). Thus, this makes it harder for ethnic minority families to become more involved at school. Pena (2000) adds that parent involvement is affected by school's staff assumptions that Mexican American parents understand school procedures and practices. However, Latino parents new to the U.S. or those who have no experiences with our school systems are unaware that they have rights to ask about their child's schooling (Quezada et al., 2003). To support this notion further, in Jasis and Ordonez (2012) study, the interview responses of 30 participating Spanish-speaking parents show that Latino immigrant parents often lack information to understand how the school system operates; thus, are

not formally involved in their children's schooling. Likewise, in Waterman's (2008) study, when Mexican mothers were interviewed further about possible barriers that may hinder their own involvement in their children's schooling, many mothers explained that their lack of familiarity with the U.S. school system limited their ability to be involved and help their children as they desired. The study also reports that due to their unfamiliarity with the U.S. school system, minority parents lack knowledge of school officials' expectations of their involvement in school. Many times, misunderstandings occur between the teachers and parents, because school expectations from parents are not openly, nor clearly discussed (Pena, 2000). The miscommunication and misunderstanding of what defines parental involvement according to school's expectations adds to the lack of Latino family involvement in the school setting.

Teachers' Racist Attitudes

Furthermore, an extended review on parental involvement literature shows that parents' involvement is strongly shaped by the perceptions of parents' backgrounds, and whereas these perceptions affect all parents, the negative equity outcomes of such beliefs particularly affect parents of minority backgrounds (Baquedano et al., 2013). Yanghee (2009) argues that the lack of parent involvement is due to teachers' negative attitudes and perspectives towards ethnic and language minority parents as not being sufficiently capable of supporting their children's education. Yanghee's study focuses on the school barriers that prevent Latino parents' involvement in their children's U.S. schools. The findings show that among other barriers, the following school barriers are primarily responsible for the level of ethnic minority parent

involvement: a) teachers' perceptions about the efficacy of minority parents, b) teachers' perceptions concerning the capacity of minority parents, and c) teachers' beliefs in the effectiveness of parental participation. Often, teachers believe that ethnic minority parents' education-related values are different from White middle-class parents, as a result, those families are viewed as deficient (Yanghee, 2009). Similarly, Waterman (2008) claims that the deficit views of Mexican families hinder both teachers and parents from effectively supporting youth's achievement. Some teachers believe that Mexican parents do not value their children's education and that they lack the skills necessary to be involved and support their children's schooling (Waterman, 2008). Moreover, Mexican parents are often bypassed, because teachers make the assumption that they do not have the time, interest, money, English language skills, or appropriate education to support and participate in school activities (Yanghee, 2009; Waterman, 2008).

Likewise, Ladky and Peterson (2008) study highlights principals' and teachers' own perceptions about the limited efficacy of ethnic minority parents to contribute in valuable ways to their children's schooling. This is evident in the following teacher statement; "...there comes a responsibility on the part of the parents to learn English. And, of course, many of the parents are not even schooled in their own country" (Ladky & Peterson, 2008, p.89). Many times, teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of second language parents' capacities to assist their children with homework; thus, teachers are hesitant to send school work home (Guo, 2010).

In Jasis (2005) study, the school staff interviewed frequently identified an apparent lack of parent involvement and interest as a major factor affecting Latino youths' under-performing at the middle school. The school's official liaison with Latino students and families, expressed her ongoing frustration working with ethnic minority families. In contrast, Latino parents' statements express their frustration trying to communicate with teachers and asking for opportunities to be more involved in their children's schooling. This is also ascertained in Jasis and Ordonez's (2012) study where 30 Latino immigrant parents' narratives revealed that they all shared a past of frustrating interactions with school personnel. For example, in the words of one mother, "they always tell you that your son is doing just fine, and then you see his report card full of bad grades," (p.75) or another father who wonders how his daughter who was a stellar student in her native Mexico became a "problem child" in her American school. These parents' statements demonstrate that teachers make fewer efforts to communicate and work with ethnic and language minority families. To support this notion further, Flynn and Nolan's (2008) study explores teacher-parent relations as perceived by 144 principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Of the elementary principals surveyed, 77% reported that many teachers are ineffective at fostering teacher-parent communications, and 98% of middle and high school principals shared the same opinion. The primary reasons given at all levels was that: a) teachers lack skills and confidence, b) teachers view parents as a threat to their authority, and c) teachers do not place a high value on parent involvement in their children's educational process.

In addition, Kuperminc (2008) adds that teachers' perceptions of Latino parents' involvement at school is lower; thus, their involvement is neither welcomed nor solicited. As a result of the negative perceptions received from school administrators and teachers, Spanish-speaking parents feel unwelcome, unwanted, and unvalued in the school (Olivos, 2009). Parents' previous negative experiences or feelings with schooling in general or their child's school in particular can highly affect parents' willingness to become involved in their children's schooling (Flynn & Nolan, 2008; Quezada et al., 2003). These studies show that teachers' attitudes and institutional racism diminish the importance they place on ethnic and language minority parent involvement. Jasis (2005) suggests that both Latino parents' perspectives toward teachers and the school staff's perspectives on minority parents need to change in order to be able to collaboratively contribute to students' academic success.

Low-Socioeconomic Status

On the other hand, multiple studies highlight low-socioeconomic status (SES) as a major barrier that inhibits ethnic and language minority parental involvement in their children's education and school (Fruchter, 1984; Orozco, 2008; Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003). Low-income parents face greater obstacles that inhibit an active parent involvement role in their children's schooling; some of these obstacles include unequal financial resources such as lack of transportation and childcare (Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003). Quezada and colleagues add that even though these barriers may not apply to every parent, they are significant for many Latino families. Orozco (2008) agrees that working class parents, often ethnic minority, have unequal

resources with which to participate in their children's education and school. The participating parents in Orozco's study came primarily from low socioeconomic backgrounds, with most of them engaged as farm workers. In addition, most low-income and ethnic minority parents are too consumed by the demands of work and caring for their family's needs to be actively involved in their child's schooling process (Flynn & Nolan, 2008; Quezada et al., 2003). In order to be able to provide for their family, low-income parents have too many responsibilities and often work two jobs, which interferes with their attendance at school meetings and activities (Quezada et al., 2003).

Furthermore, Waterman's (2008) study shows that inflexible work schedules decrease the opportunities for parent involvement at school and home. Mexican mothers interviewed in this study state that the demands of work did not allow for opportunities to participate in school activities nor to sit and read with their children at home. Durand (2011) and Feuerstein (2000) studies found that higher socioeconomic status and better grades were consistent with higher parent volunteerism at school and school-related discussions at home. This shows that low-income parents' lack of involvement affects students' academic success. Moreover, Durand argues that whereas Latino parents engage in more traditional school involvement practices such as volunteering in a child's classroom or assisting children with homework at home this may not be the case for parents who are low-income and/or have limited education. Sheldon's (2005) study also illustrates that families with low incomes and living in large urban areas are less likely to be involved in their children's schooling. Thus, he identifies socioeconomic status and

school's demographics have the two strongest predictors of parent involvement at schools. These studies demonstrate that low-income Latino families lack the resources necessary with which to actively be involved in their children's school and those schools serving economically disadvantaged parents are less likely to have parents involved in the school setting.

Less Formal Education

Some researchers believe that a low-socioeconomic status is intertwined with a less formal education; thus, they claim that a majority of low-income parents have received little formal schooling in their home countries which makes them feel vulnerable in their lives in the U.S. (Ladky, & Peterson, 2008; Orozco, 2008; Panferov, 2010). Low-income parents with a less formal education often feel that they don't have the potential to assist their children with school assignments or be involved in formal ways in school (Orozco, 2008; Panferov, 2010). Pena's (2000) study shows that many Latino parents perceived their SES differences and lack of formal education as barriers to an active involvement in schools. Pena adds that a serious handicap for Mexican American parents in supporting their children's education is their own limited education. A lack of education also makes Latino parents feel that they do not have the required education to participate in school events or have academic discussion with school staff (Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003). Similarly, Feuerstein (2000) study found that low-SES parents with less than a high school diploma did not voice their concerns and were less involved in decision making such as grade-placement decisions.

Furthermore, some Latino parents' lack of literacy skills in their own native language can create an even greater sense of helplessness and embarrassment, causing them to believe that they are unable to support their children's education (Quezada et al., 2003). Panferov (2010) recent study examines how parents' own literacy skills and schooling influences their involvement in their children's education and school. The findings demonstrate that parents who are more literate are more involved in their children's schooling and able to help their children with school work, compared to less literate parents. Likewise, Durand's (2011) study illustrates mothers' education as the most significant variance to Latino parents' involvement at home, followed by parents' SES. In this study, less educated mothers are less capable of helping their children with homework and are overall less involved in their children's education.

Additionally, as previously mentioned, Waterman's (2008) study shows that Mexican mothers have high aspirations for their children's education; however, language and cultural barriers, a low-socioeconomic status, as well as, a less formal schooling received in Mexico and their parents' minimal involvement in their own education strongly affected their abilities to support their children's schooling. At the same time, many of the mothers stated that their childhood experiences yield a strong commitment to a better education for themselves and their children. Despite parents' high aspirations for their children, ethnic minority, low-income parents with less formal education are overall less involved in the school setting compared to more advantaged, educated parents (Orozco, 2008). These studies demonstrate that parents' level of

education highly impacts their confidence to be more involved in their children's school and support their learning.

To support this notion further, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (2010), the lower levels of parental education are among Hispanic children's parents. For example, among Hispanic children, 39 percent had mothers whose highest level of education was less than a high school completion. This percentage was higher than the percentage for any other ethnic group including Whites, Blacks, and Asians. As well, the percentage of Hispanic children's fathers with less than a high school completion was higher compared to any other ethnic group. In addition, trends in education of racial and ethnic minorities demonstrate a link between higher parental education levels and children's positive academic experiences and success. For example, highly educated mothers are more involved in early childhood education programs and home literacy activities (NCES, 2013). This demonstrates that children with more highly educated parents tend to have richer academic experiences and do better academically than children with less-educated parents.

Immigration Status

Other studies demonstrate that ethnic minority parents' immigration status in the U.S. is another difficult barrier that prohibits an active involvement in their children's school (Baquedano et al., 2013; Olivos, 2009). Baquedano and colleagues' (2013) study examines the literature on parent involvement and highlights immigration as one main equity issue that has the most impact in constructing effective relations among teachers and parents from non-dominant

groups. Historically, immigrant parents have been either excluded from schooling or forcefully Americanized, creating a social distance between home and school (Baquedano et al., 2013). However, a significant number of the Latino population in the United States is comprised of immigrants; thus, teachers must realize that whereas the children of Latino parents can be native-born citizens, many times their families are undocumented immigrants (Olivos, 2009). Olivo's (2009) study demonstrates that many Latino family members may refuse to attend school events, talk to their children's teachers, or fill out paperwork that exposes their immigration status. Olivos adds that Latino parents tend to view teachers as government employees accountable for implementing federal immigration laws.

Although, Baquedano and colleagues' and Olivos' studies demonstrate that Latino parents generally remain uninvolved in the particular ways expected from the school due to their immigration status. Ladky and Peterson (2008) study shows that immigrant parents have high desires to be involved in their children's schooling. Ladky and Peterson analyze the perspectives of 21 immigrant parents who had been in Canada for less than six years, and expressed high aspirations for more informal contact with the school such as communicating with their children's teacher through newsletters or signing homework. Thus, even though some parents may be hesitant to become involved in their children's school due to their immigration status, immigrant parents want opportunities to support their children's education.

In summary, despite some studies that reflect minority parents' high aspirations for their children's academic achievements, the involvement of some Latino parents is limited. Latino

parents as compared to parents from the dominant group, face greater challenges in becoming more involved at school and actively participating in their children's education. The studies highlight the following primary barriers: a language barrier, cultural differences, unfamiliarity with the school system, teachers' racist attitudes, low-socioeconomic status, less formal education, and immigration status, to the limited involvement of Latino families.

Strategies for Increasing Parent Involvement

There is no precise method that will automatically increase ethnic and language minority parents' involvement; however, considering and understanding the barriers that influence such limited involvement can help provide more opportunities for parental involvement. And although it may be impossible to get all parents involved, it is important to learn of the most effective practices to invite Latino parents to be more involved in their children's education. Multiple studies reveal different strategies that can be implemented to help increase parental involvement at school and their children's education.

Effective Collaboration and Communication

Mestry and Grobler's (2007) study investigates the factors that contribute to effective ethnic minority parental involvement in education, and the findings show that primarily two factors, namely, collaboration and communication, determine the parents' commitment to their children's education and the role they play in school governance. It is important to view parents as contributors and collaborators, and make efforts to communicate and invite Latino parents to participate in school (Quezada et al., 2003). Pena (2000) also emphasizes that school staff have

regular communication with parents through various methods in order to meet the language needs of all parents. In Ladky and Peterson (2008) and Panferov (2010) studies, school communication strategies that proved to be helpful for parents, who speak English as a second language, were regular, written and spoken forms in parents' first language and messages that conveyed positive content. Both strategies proved helpful in establishing an open line of communication between teachers and parents. Another suggestion is to offer support such as bilingual assistants and translators to aid in teacher and parents' communication and help parents participate in school events (Guo, 2010; Ladky & Peterson, 2008).

Furthermore, Pena argues that in order to increase Latino parent involvement, teachers must change their negative perspectives about ethnic minority families and recognize the benefits of teachers and parents working collaboratively. Teachers must view parents as partners in education, who have the abilities to effectively contribute to the academic achievement of the students and even share some of the responsibilities of the school's staff (Mestry & Grobler, 2007). Yanghee (2009) and Orozco (2008) share Pena's view and believe that the uncertainty of teachers to invite ethnic minority parents may be based on the negative perceptions and attitudes about these parents. Thus, Yanghee suggests for teachers to have an open mind to the availability of minority parents and actively ask for their involvement. When parents perceive that they are receiving more communication and invitations from teachers, they are more likely to become involved in their children's education and in school. Likewise, Orozco (2008) claims that in order for low-income, immigrant Latino families to build caring and trusting relationships with

school staff, teachers need to communicate with parents and make them feel as though their contributions are valued and honored.

In the same way, Sheldon's (2005) study shows that school outreach and invitations are important influences on low-income, minority parents' decisions to get more involved in their children's schooling and more likely to attend open-house events and parent-teacher conferences. Maintaining Latino parents informed builds trust and encourages them to take more authoritative roles in school events and be more involved in the decision making (Olivos, 2009). These studies show that efforts made on the part of the school to contact language minority parents were associated positively, increasing parent involvement at school.

Home-School Partnerships

Sheldon (2005) also supports the notion that the level of minority parent involvement in school is partly a function of school organization, partnership planning and community involvement. The following two studies demonstrate that engaging minority families in parent and community organizations is successful in building strong home-school partnerships. First, Jasis's (2005) study explores the emergence of *La Familia Initiative*, a Latino parent-organizing project at a public middle school, where Latino parents were motivated to improve their children's education by establishing a strong partnership with the school. Despite the conflicting perceptions of the school's staff and parents, the project was a success and was itself a journey of empowerment for the 112 participating Latino families. Second, in a more recent study, Jasis and Ordonez (2012), examine *La Familia Initiative*, *Charter School Parent Initiative*, and *Project*

Avanzando, three school-based parent participation projects involving Latino immigrant families, located in low-income areas in California. The findings show that all participating parents stated being more comfortable asking more questions, staying informed, communicating with teachers, relating to other parents, and feeling more confident in their personal abilities and strengths as Latino parents (Jasis & Ordonez, 2012).

These studies demonstrate Latino parents' ability to partner with the school and an opportunity to establish more meaningful and effective educational partnerships with other ethnic minority families. In addition, the two studies demonstrate that the engagement of parents of minority groups increased and became more meaningful within school contexts where their parental roles, individual and family aspirations, life experiences and knowledge were valued and incorporated as valuable educational contributions (Jasis, 2005; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012). This supports the previous notion that when parents feel valued they are more open to be involved in their children's schooling process.

Gerena (2011) recommends teachers to proactively involve parents as teachers and learners, and invite parents to share their valuable skills, practices, and knowledge rather than following the traditional, limited role of supplementing the school agenda. The multiple advantages of having parents as partners in their children's education call for successful inclusion and involvement of parents in a variety of roles and areas (Pena, 2000). Thus, schools need to provide more diversity of parental involvement programs where minority parents can assume meaningful roles and not feel restricted to limited choices of parent involvement

(Baquedano et al., 2013; Yanghee, 2009). Baquedano and colleagues (2013) believe that traditional parent involvement structures such as Back-to-School Night and the Parent-Teacher Meetings are insufficient ways to engage Latino families. These parents need to be involved in ways that are more affirming and powering to them. In contrast, Quezada and colleagues argue that Latinos parents respond more effectively when they are invited to less formal gatherings such as “informal café and pan dulce” (coffee and sweet bread) gatherings. Informal gatherings make Latino parents feel more comfortable and are great opportunities for parents to talk to teachers in less formal ways (Quezada et al., 2003).

Welcoming Environment

Whether Latino parents prefer formal or informal opportunities to be more involved in their children’s schooling, educators need to establish a welcoming climate and an open-door policy, so that any parent feels confident and comfortable being involved (Quezada et al., 2003). Pena (2000) agrees that the simplest, yet most powerful suggestion is to make the parents feel welcomed. Educators need to keep in mind that all parents, regardless of ethnicity, have a rich history including their language and traditions that deserve to be respected and valued (Orozco, 2008). For example, De Gaetano’s (2007) study shows how a small group of educators working together in a project were able to increase Latino parents’ involvement in schools by focusing and building on their language and cultural backgrounds. When ethnic minority parents’ languages and cultures are focused on positive ways, they are able to engage substantively in their children’s schooling process (Olivos, 2009; Ladky & Peterson, 2008). Thus, similar to

Gerena's (2011) suggestion to invite parents to participate in the classroom, Panferov (2010) suggests teachers to create opportunities for parents to participate in school events and volunteer in classes to engage in sharing their home language and cultures. When parents feel valued and appreciated in the school setting, this increases the possibilities of ethnic minority parental involvement.

Parent Workshops

Moreover, in order to facilitate ethnic minority parent involvement, Panferov (2010) also suggests districts to offer bilingual parent workshops to educate parents more directly about the various ways in which they can help their children with school work and about the opportunities for parent involvement in school. Another common suggestion is family literacy workshops to improve Latino parents' support of literacy and English language development, so parents are able to assist their child with homework and improve school and parent communication (Quezada et al., 2003). Also, as previously mentioned in Mestry and Grobler's (2007) and Bennett-Conroy's (2012) studies, parent-child assignments proved to increase parent involvement which resulted in students' academic success and motivation. Parent education programs for Spanish-speaking families can also facilitate understanding of the school system and educate parents on their rights over their children's education (Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Olivos, 2008). Additionally, workshops can create opportunities for parents to communicate issues and concerns, and to make social contacts with school staff (Mestry & Grobler, 2007). Schools can also assist in overcoming limitations related to self-efficacy, perceived lack of

respect, and trustworthiness by creating school-level ESL parents' committees (Guo, 2010).

These committees should include bilingual members who are knowledgeable about the school system and its programs and who are willing to act as intermediaries between parents and school personnel. In the same way as workshops, Guo claims that committees will allow parents to feel more comfortable to ask questions and raise concerns regarding their children's education, to be more informed, and to increase the chances for more parent involvement at school.

Summary of Chapter

In summary, the literature stresses the importance of parent involvement in the academic achievement/performance of students. At the same time, studies demonstrate that minority families tend to be less involved in their children's education; thus, participating less in school activities and events (De Gaetano, 2007; Guo, 2010; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Kuperminc, 2008). Language and cultural differences, unfamiliarity with the school system, teachers' racist attitudes, low-socioeconomic status, less formal education, and immigration status were identified as factors/barriers to the limited involvement of some Latino parents. The literature also highlights the importance of working against such barriers to encourage parent involvement and provide parents with the necessary tools to support their children's education. The following strategies: effective communication and collaboration, strong home-school partnerships, a welcoming environment, and parents' workshops have resulted in greater parent involvement at home and school.

This chapter focused on the advantages of having parents as partners in the education of their children, and the barriers faced by ethnic minority parents in actively participating at school and supporting their children's education. The chapter also suggested strategies to communicate and invite parents to be more involved in their children's schooling process. In the next chapter, the researcher will highlight the study's methodology including its design, participants, setting, procedures, theoretical framework, and analysis.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Educational research has demonstrated that parent involvement plays an important role in students' academic success including improved literacy and learning skills, better grades, and attendance (Bennett-Conroy, 2012; Kuperminc, 2008; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Stetson et al., 2012). Also, parent involvement at home and school reflects parents' interest in their children's education to promote better attitudes toward schooling and academic motivation (Durand, 2011; Gerena, 2011; Kuperminc, 2008). In addition, higher levels of parent involvement contribute to positive parent-teacher partnership and increase of parents' own self-confidence (Pena, 2000; Quezada, Diaz, & Sánchez, 2003; Sheldon, 2005). Thus, parent school involvement results in positive outcomes for the parents, students, and educators.

However, despite the benefits of parent involvement, education administrators and educators continue to struggle to increase involvement at schools, primarily involvement of ethnically and linguistically minority parents (De Gaetano, 2007; Guo, 2010; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Kuperminc, 2008). Since the 1970's, educators raised concerns about the limited parent involvement at schools and suggested that parents play a greater role in school governance (Feuerstein, 2000). The continuous struggle to increase parent involvement at schools suggests that further and deeper research is needed to investigate the potential factors/barriers that encourage or prevent some parents' involvement, primarily in Latino communities.

Thus, the focus participants of this study are Latino parents of children in a dual language program. The study used a mixed-methods approach to investigate the level of Latino parent

involvement in a dual language elementary school. In addition, the researcher analyzed potential factors/barriers that may influence the level of involvement of some Latino parents in dual language program. The aim of this study is to identify the potential factors/barriers to be able to provide recommendations to encourage Latino parent involvement. The results from this study are meant to provide educators and administrators with the most effective strategies to reach out and involve minority Latino parents in dual language programs to take a more active role in their children's education.

Therefore, this study is guided by the two following questions:

- 1) What is the level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language school setting?
- 2) Are there any factors and/or barriers as to why some Latino parents may not be as actively involved?

This chapter describes the design, instruments, participants, setting, procedures, theoretical framework, and data analysis.

Design

This study drew on quantitative data from a parents' survey, and qualitative data from six interviews involving parents (n=3), teachers (n=2) and one administrator. This study followed a mixed-methods design that draws on the strengths of quantitative and qualitative data gathering techniques to formulate a holistic interpretive framework for generating possible solutions or new understandings of a problem (Mertler & Charles, 2011).

First, the researcher decided that a survey was an appropriate initial method to learn of Latino parents' perspective on their level of involvement in their children's education and school. The survey questions focused on the access parents have to school personnel, how welcomed they feel in their children's school, the parent involvement opportunities offered by the school, and the ways parents are involved. The survey served as "a system for collecting information from or about people to describe, compare, or explain their knowledge, attitudes, and behavior" (Fink, 2003). With this in mind, the researcher conducted three parents' interviews and three school's staff interviews to further learn of the level of parent involvement in this dual language setting, and the parent involvement opportunities offered to minority families. Qualitative interviews "are particularly useful in pursuing in depth-information around a topic and as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires; to further investigate their responses" (Fink, 2003).

The triangulation of mixed-methods design allowed the researcher to find common themes within the parents' surveys and interviews, and the school's staff interview responses. Triangulation of data means using multiple measures to converge the topics into related themes that are summarized in the findings of the study (Mertler & Charles, 2011). Once the researcher collected the data, the researcher coded and tallied the survey responses. Then, the researcher transcribed audio-taped interviews and coded responses into central themes.

Instrumentation

Consent Forms

First, the researcher provided potential participants: fifteen Latino parents, two dual language teachers, and the principal; a consent form. The consent forms were provided in English and Spanish for participants' language preference. From the original 15 Latino parents, only 13 actually returned the consent form and were willing to participate in the study. Parent participants asked for a consent form in Spanish, while the two teachers and principal preferred the English form. The form invited participants to participate in the study to investigate the level of Latino parent involvement, and identify any potential factors/barriers that may play a role in the level of involvement of some parents. The consent form explained in detail the purpose, description of procedures, potential risks/inconveniences, safeguards, and benefits of the study. In addition, the consent form explained to participants that the participation in study was confidential and voluntary (see Appendices A, B, & C). The participants had a grace period of one week to sign the forms for approved participation in study. Thirteen Latino parents returned a signed consent form within 1-2 days. The teachers and principal signed the consent form, at the moment they were invited to participate in study. Both teachers and administrator showed great interest and willingness to participate in study.

Parent Surveys

Second, the researcher created a parent survey that focused on multiple statements about different types of parent involvement (see Appendix D). The survey statements were designed

with the following three objectives in mind: 1) to get familiar with the current level of Latino parent involvement in their children's schooling at home and primarily at school, 2) to learn of the school's opportunities offered to Latino parents to become involved, and 3) to learn of the reasons why Latino parents may or may not be as involved in their children's education and school. Parents' responses to these statements later aided the researcher in identifying potential factors/barriers that may influence the level of involvement of some Latino parents. The survey design included ratings for each of the responses in a scale with clearly marked headings indicating various choices from "frequently" to "never."

The researcher provided individual surveys to 13 Latino parents, who returned a signed consent form to participate in the study. The parents had seven to ten days to individually to complete the survey. However, about 70% (n=11) of the parents preferred to complete the survey the moment it was handed to them. Parents sat in the back of the classroom and completed the survey. Parents stated feeling more comfortable completing the survey immediately, so they would not forget to bring it back. This also allowed the researcher to clarify survey questions to some parents. A few of the parents, who decided to complete the survey the moment it was handed to them, asked the researcher to rephrase or explain some of the survey statements. Out of the four parents, who took the survey home, two returned it within three days, and the other two did not return a survey.

The top portion of the survey included eight short, open-ended questions. These questions allowed the researcher to learn about the participants' profile (e.g., primary language, ethnicity, profession, highest grade level earned).

In addition, the survey included the following two open-ended questions:

1. Is your child part of any Migrant Education Program?
2. Does your child qualify for free or reduced meals at school?

Parents responded "yes or no" to these two questions.

The surveys did not have any personal information or identifiable data that could reveal any of the participant's identity. All returned surveys remained in the researcher's sole possession during the entire research process. After the researcher collected the thirteen surveys, the researcher analyzed the quantitative data. Additional information on the analysis of survey data is presented below on the analysis section of this chapter.

Parent Interviews

Third, although, the survey responses were anonymous, the researcher listed the parents' names, who returned a completed survey. From that list, the researcher selected three parents to interview. The final selection of parents was also based on parents' willingness to participate in the interview. Fortunately, all three parents that were initially asked to participate in the interview accepted the invitation. The researcher individually interviewed three Latino parents in an informal, conversational style interview. The interviews were conducted in Spanish for Latino

parents' understanding and comfort. The interviews took place at the school's bookroom to provide protection of identity and privacy. The three parents agreed to be interviewed after school to ensure adequate time to answer interview questions. Each interview lasted about thirty minutes. The researcher informed participants that if they needed to reschedule or quit the interview during session, they could do so at any time.

The inquiry consisted of 13 open-ended questions. The interview objectives were to further investigate the current ways in which Latino parents are involved in their children's school, and to learn if there were instances for limited or lack of involvement. The focus of the interview questions was aimed to learn of any potential barriers and challenges that hinder Latino parents' involvement at school, as voiced by the parents (see Appendix E). At first, the researcher asked the parents some general questions regarding parent involvement activities at home and the importance of Latino parents' involvement in their children's education. Then, the questions focused on the Latino parents' involvement at school and the parent involvement opportunities offered by their children's teachers and school. Next, the researcher asked if there were any possible barriers and/or challenges that hinder the level of involvement of some Latino families.

School Staff Interviews

In addition, the researcher conducted three school staff interviews; principal (see Appendix F) and two dual language teachers (see Appendix G). The interviews took place during

a scheduled time after school. The inquiry consisted of 10 open-ended questions and lasted about 30 minutes.

The initial interview questions intended to provide information about the principal's and teachers' profiles (e.g., educational background, principal experience). Next, the questions led to learning about the principal's and teachers' perspectives as to the importance of Latino parent involvement at school and their relationship/communication with Latino parents. To get a better understanding of their perspectives, the researcher asked the interviewees more precise questions about the topic. The principal was asked about the programs offered to students and families from ethnic minority backgrounds. On the other hand, the teachers were asked about the current ways and approaches used to invite Latino parents to participate in the classroom. Then, the researcher asked more focused questions as to potential challenges faced in involving Latino families and possible reasons for any lack or limited involvement on part of the parents. Lastly, the researcher ended the interview by asking about suggested strategies to increase Latino parent participation.

In summary, the researcher interviewed the school's principal and teachers to learn of their opinions on the current level of Latino parent involvement at Sunshine Elementary School and in their children's education. Most importantly, it allowed the researcher to identify common themes as to potential factors/barriers that may influence the level of Latino parent involvement in this dual language school setting.

The researcher did not take any notes during the interviews; instead the interviews were audiotaped in a cellular device with the participants' permission, as stated in the signed consent form prior to starting the research. Interview data was strictly confidential. The audiotapes remained in the researcher's sole possession during the entire research process to protect against potential breach of confidentiality.

Participants

The sampling included 13 parents, who were identified as Spanish Speaking Latino parents. The researcher identified possible parents of ethnic and language minority backgrounds from students' profiles and from previous conversations with the parents. In addition, the parents self-identified themselves as Spanish speaking parents of Latino ethnic background, which confirmed the researcher's assumptions.

The participants were parents of students currently enrolled in a sixth grade dual language program in North San Diego County. There are model variations in dual language programs with different terms used to describe these models, including dual immersion, bilingual immersion, dual-immersion bilingual, and developmental bilingual (Gerena, 2011). Throughout this study, Gerena's definition of a *dual language program* will be used:

A dual language program integrates English Language Learners (ELLs) with first language English speakers and provides instruction in and through both languages. One is the primary language of the ELLs (most commonly, Spanish) and the L2 is English. ELLs and heritage English-speaking students are integrated in the same classroom with

the goal of academic excellence and bilingual proficiency for both student groups. (pp. 348-349).

This school's dual language program followed a 50/50 instructional model where the same amount of time is allocated to both languages across grade levels (50% in English and 50% in Spanish), and the class enrollment goal is half native Spanish speakers and half native English speakers. Thus, half the parents are from the minority language group, and the other half are from dominant culture and language. Parent participants mainly lived and worked within the same school area. The parents were considered the primary participants of this study, since the children in the program were not included in the research.

The participants were selected from a group of parents which the researcher had met the previous year. In 2015, the researcher worked in an after school program at the same elementary school, and helped the children of participating parents in completing math and language arts homework. The researcher was able to form strong relationships with these parents. The following year, the researcher met with the same parents, and individually invited each parent to participate in the study. The researcher began by explaining the purpose of the study to the parents. Then, the researcher informed the parents that they had been invited to participate in this study for the following two reasons:

1. You are a parent whose primary language is other than English.
2. You are a parent of a student in the school's dual language program.

Then, the researcher referred to the consent form to further explain the objectives and possible risks/safeguards of the study (see Appendix C). At this time, the researcher reaffirmed participants that the data collection was confidential.

The research only included Latino parents and excluded parents from the dominant group. The researcher targeted the proposed participant population to investigate the level of Latino parent involvement. Primarily, to analyze if there were any potential barriers that may or may not hinder an active Latino parent involvement in school. The sampling was also based on the parents who were willing and available to participate in the study without coercion or intimidation.

The sampling also included the school's principal and two dual language teachers. The principal had been at Sunshine Elementary School for four years. In addition, she had 10 years of experience in school administration and held a Master's Degree in Youth and Family Counseling. The principal also had experience working in highly multicultural settings with Latino families.

Prior to conducting the study, in the second week of December 2015, the researcher set an appointment with the principal to explain the purpose and objectives of the study. On the initial meeting, the principal demonstrated great interest in the study. Later, in the first week of February 2016, the researcher provided the principal a consent form (see Appendix A). The principal signed the consent form and returned it the same day. Then, the researcher and

principal discussed an appropriate interview time and date. Additional information on the interview process is on the principals' interview section of this chapter.

The two teachers in the study included the students' former fifth grade teacher for the academic year 2014-2015 and the sixth grade teacher (2015-2016). The researcher purposely selected the two teachers to be part of this study, because of the probability of these teachers having some type of communication or teacher-parent relationship with the participants.

The 5th grade dual language teacher self-identified as Hispanic/Latina, with Spanish as her primary language. She had been teaching for 14 years, including 10 years at Sunshine Elementary School. The teacher had experience working with second language learners and ethnically diverse and minority families.

The sixth grade dual language teacher self-identified as White/Caucasian, with English as her primary language, but also fluent in Spanish. She had been teaching for 15 years, including 10 years at the school. She also had experience working with ethnically diverse families, and taught in Mexico for a few years. Both teachers were currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Education and stated learning more about multicultural education.

Initially, the researcher told both teachers about the study, in an informal conversation, in the second week of December 2015. Later, in the first week of February 2016, the researcher individually and formally invited teachers to participate in study and provided a consent form (see Appendix B). Additional information on the interview process is on the teachers' interview section of this chapter.

To safeguard participants' confidentiality, the data collected was only available to the researcher for analysis. The survey questions and interview conversations were about parent involvement in general, not particular to parents or teacher-parent relationships. Also, the analysis and reporting of the results did not identify any participant by name, school, or reveal any personal identifiers. A pseudonym for the school was used to minimize the risk of identification.

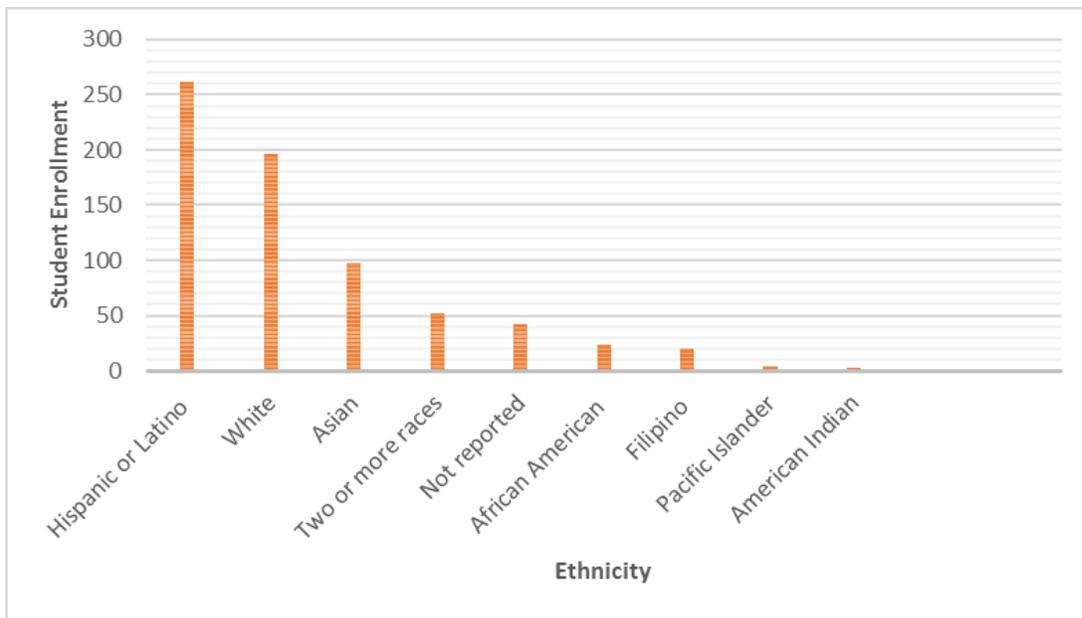
As an incentive for participation, parents who completed the survey received a raffle ticket to receive a surprise bag with school supplies that included paper, pencils, markers, scissors, etc. for their children. Each parent, who participated in the interview, received a gift bag with school supplies. The participating teachers received a thank you card and a gift bag that included school supplies for their classroom. The principal received a thank you card and a \$10 Starbucks gift card.

Setting

The duration of the research study lasted approximately six weeks at Sunshine Elementary School (pseudonym to protect participants), located in North San Diego County. The community had an estimated population of 62,254 residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014) with 78.8% identified as White and 13.7% identified as Hispanic/Latino. Despite the fact that White residents comprised most of the city's population, this elementary school served over 706 kindergartners through sixth grade students from ethnically diverse backgrounds (see Table 3.1). Table 3.1 demonstrates that Sunshine Elementary School's student enrollment for the

school year 2014-2015 was primarily composed of Hispanic or Latino of any race, 262 students. The table also shows that the elementary served students from various ethnic backgrounds; 97 Asian, 58 students of two or more races (not Hispanic), 24 African American, and 20 Filipino (data provided in numbers).

Table 3.1: 2014-2015 Sunshine Elementary Student Enrollments by Ethnicity



Note: Graph chart displays the relationship between student enrollment and ethnicity for the 2014-2015 academic year. Adapted from the California Department of Education (2015).

Demographics

Additionally, Sunshine Elementary School had an English Learner (EL) population of 184 students. In 2013, it served 215 EL students, and in 2014, the school served 211 EL students. Approximately 144 enrolled students were eligible for free or reduced-lunch. The school’s staff

was comprised of 33 educators from which three were Hispanic, and 21 were of White ethnicity. Within the total count of teachers at Sunshine Elementary School there were 12 dual immersion educators and two Spanish paraprofessionals.

Context

In 2012, there was a proposition from the local school board to consolidate the two dual language programs offered at the district, one being Sunshine Elementary School and another dual language elementary. The plan called for consolidating the two schools into one dual immersion program in the district. Sunshine Elementary would become an all dual immersion school where students would receive instruction in Spanish and English, whereas, the other elementary school would be providing an English-only program (The San Diego Union-Tribune, 2012). According to the district's school board, the idea of having one dual language program in the district was due to program effectiveness, but mainly due to state budget costs (NBC San Diego, 2012). However, transitioning the language immersion program at one school could cause students to transfer between campuses, (The San Diego Union-Tribune, 2012) this caused a controversy in the community. Some parents claimed that they had moved to the area, so that their children could attend their neighborhood school (NBC San Diego, 2012).

Classrooms taught in two languages are highly valued in some communities, but not in others. Currently, parents at Sunshine Elementary School can opt into the dual immersion program; thus, the idea of dividing their schools to accommodate for a separate dual immersion program due to a cost-cutting measure upset many parents. Later in 2012, the district's school

board announced it would not pursue the plan to combine the dual immersion programs offered in the district.

As previously stated in the literature review, students' academic success is highly influenced by the amount of parent involvement at school and the support children receive at home. Sunshine Elementary School serves a large number of Latino students and their families; thus, the researcher selected this location to conduct the study to investigate the current level of parent involvement, particularly in a dual language program. In addition, the researcher was interested to learn of the involvement opportunities offered to Latino families, and the school's approaches to encourage Latino parent involvement.

The findings of the study will inform school's staff of any potential barriers and/or challenges that Latino parents stated facing in trying to become more involved in their children's schooling. The study's findings will also recommend educators of the most effective strategies to involve Latino parents in more meaningful and empowering ways.

Positionality

Based on the researcher's experience of working at this elementary for one year, the researcher noticed limited Latino parent involvement at school. This further stimulated the researcher's interest to investigate and identify potential barriers that may hinder an active Latino parent involvement at Sunshine Elementary School. My role in this study was as the researcher, but I made sure that this process was transparent and unbiased. The researcher provided all potential participants the same consent form. The consent form was written in both languages,

English and Spanish, for participants' comfort. The consent form also informed participants of their right to decline the invitation to participate in the study. In addition, three parents, who returned signed consent forms, were selected for an interview. The researcher asked all three parents the same questions and provided 30 minutes to conduct each interview. In regards to the teachers' interviews, the researcher asked the same questions to both teachers and provided 30 minutes per interview. The researcher also asked the principal similar questions that were asked to the teachers, and provided 30 minutes for interview. The survey and interviews' questions were guided to Latino parent involvement in general and not to specific parents or teacher-parent relationships. The process was also transparent in that the researcher was honest in communicating the objectives of the study to the participants. The researcher was also willing to share the study's findings with the participants.

Procedures

The researcher conducted the study at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year. The study began the first week of February 2016 and concluded the second week of March 2016.

Prior to the study, in December 2015, the researcher obtained the principal's approval to conduct study at the elementary. During this time, the researcher also began to think of potential participants for the study. The study met the university's Institutional Review Board approval around the same timeframe.

During the first phase of the study, in the first week of February 2016, the researcher emailed the principal a friendly reminder to verify permission to initiate study. After receiving permission to conduct the study, the researcher personally invited the Latino parents to participate in the research. Parents invited to participate were parents whose primary language was other than English and/or parents of a student in the school's dual language program. All parents were self-identified as Spanish speaking parents of Latino ethnic background.

During the same week, the researcher formally invited the principal and two dual language teachers to be part of this study. Both the principal and teachers indicated a high interest and support for this study. The researcher explained to potential participants the purpose, main objectives, and benefits of the study. This study focused on the potential barriers that may or may not hinder an active Latino parent involvement, so that better strategies are implemented to increase parent involvement at school. The researcher provided a consent form that further explained in detailed the study's primary objectives, potential risks, and safeguards (see Appendices A, B, & C). The consent forms were provided in Spanish to Latino participants and in English to the teachers and principal. The researcher provided potential participants a week to sign consent forms for approved participation in study. The final pool of participants was based on the total return of signed consent forms and individuals' interest in the study.

During the first week of February, the researcher also contacted the principal and teachers to determine an appropriate interview time and place. Even though, the researcher was going to conduct these interviews at a later time, the researcher wanted to assure adequate time for

principal and teachers to participate in the interview. At the same time, the researcher emailed the principal and teachers a copy of the interview questions. The researcher also had a paper copy of the questionnaire the day of the interview.

During the second phase of the study, in the second week of February 2016, the researcher provided a survey to 15 Latino parents, who returned signed consent form. The researcher provided parents a grace period of seven to ten days to return survey. A total of 13 (87% return rate) Latino parents returned a completed survey. The researcher examined the surveys, then, selected three parents for an interview based on completed and returned surveys. The selection of parents for interview also depended on participant's willingness and interest to continue to participate in the study.

During the third phase of the study, in the third week of February 2016, the researcher contacted three Latino parents to explain that they had been selected to participate in an interview. The three parents agreed to participate. Then, the researcher explained to the parents the purpose of the interview and content of questions. The researcher also provided the parents with estimated times for the duration of the interviews. Then, the researcher and parents discussed the interview location and time. The parents' interviews were scheduled for the fourth week of February 2016 based on the parents' work schedules. Lastly, the researcher assured parents that they could withdraw at any time from the study (strictly voluntary) without detriment to their child's education.

During the third week of February 2016, the researcher also conducted interviews with the principal and teachers. The location and time of interviews were determined by the participants' accessibility. First, the researcher interviewed the principal, and then the two teachers. The researcher was able to accommodate all interviews, based on school staff and parent accessibility during the third week of February.

During the last phase of the study, in the first and second week of March 2016, the researcher completed coding and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected from the surveys and interviews. Lastly, after the research was analyzed and finalized, the study's findings were shared with the principal, teachers, and parents. Data was shared without any participants' identifiers to keep confidentiality of the participants.

Analysis

Quantitative data

For the quantitative data analysis (parent surveys), the researcher followed Bourdieu's (1977) notion of cultural capital to analyze if any school-level factors play a role in Latino parent involvement in the dual language school setting. (Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Capital is described in the theoretical framework section of this chapter). First, the researcher closely analyzed the survey's open-ended statements, and identified the following two primarily indicators of cultural capital: 1) parents access to school personnel, and 2) school's opportunities

for parent involvement. Then, the researcher group statements that were analytically similar under one of the two indicators identified.

Next, the researcher examined the number of survey rating responses as follows: Frequently (5), Most of the time (4), Sometimes (3), Rarely (2), Never (1) and Uncertain (0). However, since none of the participants responded “uncertain” to any of the survey statements, the researcher recoded the survey rating responses as: Frequently (4), Most of the time (3), Sometimes (2), Rarely (1), Never (0).

Afterwards, the researcher tallied the total responses of each parent. This total represented a parent’s score for specific cultural capital indicator. Then, the researcher divided the parents’ responses by the total number of participants: mothers (n=7) and fathers (n=6), a total of 13 parents. This allowed the researcher to report total responses as percentages. The researcher also took the average of the 13 parents’ total scores per indicator. The average was obtained by adding all the responses and dividing that number by the total sample (n=13). This allowed the researcher to further interpret meaning(s) of the data in relation to specific indicator.

Qualitative data

Then, the interviews drew a more in depth analysis of any potential factors and/or barriers that may influence the level of involvement of some Latino parents. Using conversational, one-on-one interviews, parents were able to share if any barriers and/or challenges hinder their level of involvement in their children’s education and school (See Appendix E). In addition, the school staff interviews, allowed teachers and principal to share

their perspective on the current level of Latino parent involvement, and add to potential challenges that may influence the level of involvement of some parents (See Appendices F & G). The interviews were recorded using a cellular device. Then, the researcher listened and transcribed each interview. It took an average of four hours to transcribe each interview due to the constant rewinding and fast-forwarding that the research found necessary to properly transcribe each interview. The researcher went through the data/read the transcriptions and began to look for patterns emerging from the data, allowing the researcher to identify central themes. Lastly, the researcher reread the transcriptions, and listed every instance of support (e.g., parents, teachers, and principal statements) for themes.

Theoretical Framework

The triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative data with the notion of the Theory of Cultural Capital allowed the researcher to identify potential factors and/or or barriers that influence the level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language setting. Figure 3.1 illustrates the main components of the Theory of Cultural Capital.

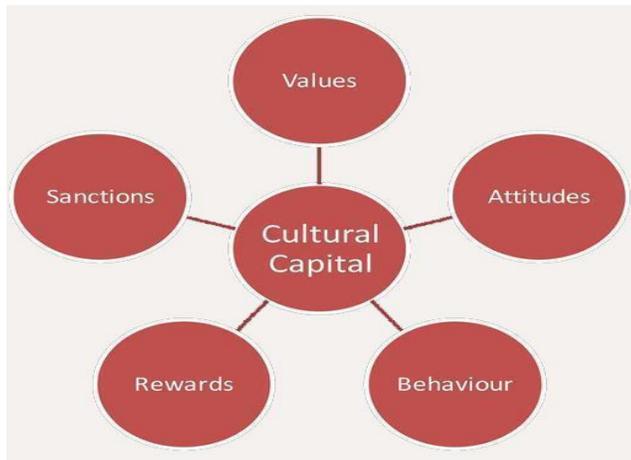


Figure 3.1: Theory of Cultural Capital

The Theory of Cultural Capital stipulates that school's expectations of parent involvement are more matched to middle-class White parents' beliefs, capacities, and interaction and involvement styles than those of minority, working-class parents (Yanghee, 2009). This means that teachers are able to communicate effectively with middle and upper class parents, who share similar beliefs, but have difficulty relating to minority parents, who come from a "different cultural frame of references or habitus" (Feuerstein, 2000, p.31). Bourdieu (1977) defines one's habitus as the physical embodiment of cultural capital, to the deeply skills, and dispositions that humans possess based on life experiences, which influences a person's attitudes towards society and the way an individual reacts. In other words, minority parents' habitus is influenced by one's ethnicity, socioeconomic status, education, and communication style which intervene with school's expectations of parent involvement. On the contrary, middle-class White parents display the school's values/forms of parent involvement; thus, they share the same

cultural capital as teachers and school. In this way, social class is reproduced by the school system (Bourdieu, 1977). For these reasons, the researcher used Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Capital as the theoretical framework to investigate this study.

Summary of Chapter

This chapter introduced the study's methodology, and described the type of research method and instruments utilized, including the participants, setting, and theoretical framework. It also explained the procedures in conducting the study and how data was collected and analyzed. Next, chapter four will present and interpret the data collected.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis

The academic success of students can be influenced by a number of different factors. Among those factors, parent involvement practices at home and school have resulted in positive outcomes for students' academic success and motivation. However, despite the growing importance of the theme of parent involvement in students' success at school; the factors that encourage or prevent Latino parents to become engaged in their children's schooling have not been exclusively researched. It is important to keep in mind that there are multiple factors to consider when analyzing the level of Latino parent involvement in school.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the current level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language elementary school, as well as to gather data about the potential factors and/or barriers that may influence the level of involvement of some parents. This study also aimed to inform educators of effective strategies to communicate, and invite Latino families to be involved in empowering and meaningful ways in their children's education and school. This study is guided by the two following questions:

- 1) What is the level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language school setting?
- 2) Are there any factors and/or barriers as to why some Latino parents may not be as actively involved?

This chapter provides a presentation of the research data from the parent surveys and six interviews: three parents, two teachers, and the principal. After a description of the findings, the data is analyzed through the theoretical framework, Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Capital,

followed by an interpretation of the analysis. Lastly, there will be a chapter conclusion and a transition to chapter five.

Data Presentation/Analysis

In order to investigate the current level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language elementary, the researcher surveyed 13 Spanish speaking parents of Latino ethnic background, whose children are enrolled in a dual language (DL) immersion program. In a DL program content instruction is 50% English and 50% Spanish for all program participants. The students are a linguistically and culturally balanced, as class enrollments consist of half native Spanish speakers and half native English speakers. The researcher conducted the study at Sunshine Elementary School (pseudonym to protect participants), located in southern California. Sunshine Elementary School serves students from various ethnic minority backgrounds, primarily Latino students and their families. For additional information on the school's demographics refer to chapter three, Table 3.1.

The top portion of the parent survey included eight short, open-ended questions that focus on the participants' profile (e.g., primary language, ethnicity, profession, highest grade level earned). The parent survey also included open-ended statements with a "frequently" to "never" scale rating responses (see Appendix D). The statements focused on acquiring a better understanding of how welcomed, informed, and comfortable the parents felt in their children's school, as well as, the parent involvement opportunities offered by the school. Following the collection of the surveys, three parents were interviewed to gain a greater insight of their

involvement in their children's school, as well as the potential challenges faced as Latino parents in their attempt to actively participate at school (see Appendix E). The parents interviewed were selected randomly from the surveyed participants list. In this study, the school's principal and two dual language teachers were also interviewed. The objective of the staff interviews was to analyze the school staff's perspective on the reasons for the probable limited involvement or absence of Latino families at their elementary school (see Appendices F & G).

Parent Surveys - Characteristics

This section presents the demographic and statistical data of the Latino parents who participated in this study. Of the 15 initial participants, 13 parents returned a completed survey (87% rate of return) confirming participation in study. Table 4.1 demonstrates the participants' profiles.

Table 4.1: Parent Characteristics and Percentages of the Sample

Characteristics	(n=7)	(n=6)
Self-identity		
Hispanic/Latino	100%	100%
European American/White	N/A	N/A
Language preference		
Spanish	100%	100%
English	N/A	N/A
Marital status		
Single	43%	N/A
Married	28%	100%
Divorced	29%	N/A
Employment status		
Employed	100%	100%
Unemployed	N/A	N/A
Education level completed		
Primary education	57%	67%
Secondary education	43%	33%
Bachelor of Arts Degree	N/A	N/A
Any Postgrad/Higher education	N/A	N/A

Note. Parent survey data.

Parent Demographic Data

Of the 13 participants, 100% of the parents self-identified as Spanish speaking of Latino ethnic background. Six out of the 13 participants were fathers and the other seven were mothers. The marital status of the mothers varied, 43% were single mothers. All the participants (100%) were employed. In the survey there was space provided to indicate type of employment. However, only 40% of the participants indicated type of employment. The mothers reported cleaning houses or babysitting as employment, and the fathers reported working in construction or landscaping. The educational levels completed were low for both mothers and fathers with only 57% of the mothers and 67% of the fathers completing a primary level education. None of the parents completed higher education. In addition, parents' responded "yes" or "no" to the two closed-ended questions below:

1. Is your child part of any Migrant Education Program?
2. Does your child qualify for free or reduced meals at schools?

For question 1 above, 100% of the parents responded "no." This means that none of the participants' children are part of any Migrant Education Program, since parents jobs are not classified in agriculture to qualify for migrant services. On the contrary, 100 % of the parents responded "yes" to question 2. All participants' children received free or reduced meals at school. This demonstrates that the families are classified as low socio-economic status or at the poverty level by the school district.

In order to organize the data collected from the surveys and interviews, the researcher counted and tallied the survey responses, and examined and transcribed the interview responses. For the survey, two primary indicators from the Theory of Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1977) were selected, and for the interviews, central themes about potential factors and/or barriers for the level of parent involvement were identified. The following section will provide an analysis of the surveys and interviews while making connections to Theory of Cultural Capital.

First Indicator of Cultural Capital

Following Theory of Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1977) the researcher analyzed if school-level factors influenced the level of Latino parent involvement in school. Table 4.2 demonstrates the three selected survey statements that reflect the first indicator of Bourdieu's theory.

Table 4.2: Survey Statements for Indicator 1 of Cultural Capital

Indicator 1: Parent Access to School Personnel
Statements:
1. The school principal and teachers are easily accessible to the parents.
2. The school offers opportunities to allow parents to meet and have conversations with the school staff.
3. The school's office personnel offer polite and helpful assistance in Spanish.

In Table 4.3, the researcher recorded and tallied the total responses of each parent for the three statements under indicator 1. For analysis purposes, the survey responses were coded with the following values: Frequently (4), Most of the time (3), Sometimes (2), Rarely (1), Never (0). Table 4.3 shows the parents' total score for the first indicator of Cultural Capital - Parent Access to School Personnel.

Table 4.3: Responses for Indicator 1 of Cultural Capital

Values/Ratings				
Participant	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3	Total
Parent 1	4	4	4	12
Parent 2	4	4	4	12
Parent 3	4	4	4	12
Parent 4	4	4	4	12
Parent 5	4	4	4	12
Parent 6	4	4	4	12
Parent 7	4	4	4	12
Parent 8	4	4	4	12
Parent 9	3	3	4	10
Parent 10	3	3	4	10
Parent 11	3	3	4	10
Parent 12	3	3	4	10
Parent 13	2	2	4	8
Indicator #1 Average				11.1

Table 4.3 illustrates that the majority of Latino parents indicated having access to school personnel. A total of eight parents had a total score of 12. This means that about 62% of the parents responded to ratings of 4 (Frequently) for all three of the statements as to the parent access to school personnel. About 31% of the parents (n=4) had a total score of 10. These parents responded with two ratings of 3's (Most of The Time) for the first and second statement, and a

rating of 4 for the third statement. Only one parent had a total of 8. This parent responded under rating 2 (Sometimes) for statement one, a rating of 2 for statement two, and rating of 4 for statement three.

Overall, 92% of the parents responded with a rating of 4 (Frequently) and/or 3 (Most of The Time) to statement 1, “the school principal and teachers are easily accessible to the parents;” statement 2, “the school offers opportunities to allow parents to meet and have conversations with the school staff;” and statement 3, “the school’s office personnel offers polite and helpful assistance in Spanish.” An average of 11.1% was noted for the 13 parent total scores in the first indicator. This shows that the school’s staff is easily accessible to parents, allows for school’s staff-parent interactions, and provides polite assistance in parents’ home language. Indicator 1 is also supported by the following parent statements from the interviews.

Parent 1- Juan. During the interviews, the three Latino parents shared feeling welcomed and comfortable in their children’s school, as well as, having pleasant and positive interactions with the school staff. Here is a quote from Juan (pseudonym to protect participants) stating such a claim:

Me siento muy bien en la escuela de mi hija. Los maestros son muy amables. Así que me siento muy a gusto. Eh tenido la oportunidad de hablar con la directora en dos ocasiones en juntas de padres y se me hace una excelente persona. (February, 2016).

I feel really good in my daughter's school. The teachers are very nice. Therefore, I feel really good. I have had the opportunity to talk to the principal in two occasions in parent meetings and she seems like an excellent person. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

This father has had the opportunity to interact with his daughter's teachers, as well as the school's principal, and he stressed the school staff's friendliness. He also explained that he always receives polite assistance in Spanish. This makes Juan feel welcomed in his daughter's school.

Parent 2- Maria. The second mother interviewed, Maria (pseudonym to protect participants), also commented on her pleasant experience in her daughter's school and positive interaction with school staff. Maria stated:

Me siento muy bienvenida porque las maestras son amigables y también me siento cómoda porque ya tengo muchos años aquí (en la misma escuela). También cuando tengo inquietudes sobre la educación de mi hija si puedo preguntarle a la directora y la maestra. Son muy flexibles las dos. (February, 2016)

I feel very welcomed because the teachers are friendly, and I also feel comfortable because I have been here for years (at the same school). Also when I have concerns about my daughter's education, I can ask questions to the principal and teacher. They are both flexible. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

Maria explained that she feels welcomed and comfortable in her daughter's school, because the school staff is friendly and her daughter has been enrolled in this school for many years. She also shared that the teachers and principal are easily accessible, and she can ask questions about her daughter's education.

Parent 3 - Pedro. Similar to the other parents interviewed, Pedro (pseudonym to protect participants) stated that the school provides a welcoming and family environment which makes him feel like part of the school. As well as Maria, Pedro also commented that he feels comfortable asking questions. This father stated:

Me siento muy bienvenido, es un ambiente familiar. Lo hacen sentir a uno como parte de la escuela...puedo hacer preguntas. (February, 2016).

I feel very welcomed; it is a family environment. They make one feel like part of the school... I can ask questions. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

The parents interviewed stated feeling welcomed and comfortable in their children's school. They also shared having pleasant and positive interactions with their children's teachers and principal. In addition, they mentioned that school staff is easily accessible and friendly. This demonstrates that the dual language elementary has the culture and language to invite and make Latino parents feel welcomed and comfortable.

Next, table 4.4 displays the five survey statements related to indicator 2 of Cultural Capital - School's Opportunities for Parent Involvement.

Table 4.4: Survey Statements for Indicator 2 of Cultural Capital

Indicator 2: School's Opportunities for Parent Involvement
Statements:
1. The school invites community members to participate and collaborate in school events.
2. Parents are invited to share experiences, skills, and strengths to contribute to students' learning.
3. Parents receive information on how to join parents' committees.
4. The school offers various ways and opportunities for parents to volunteer and get involved in the school.
5. Parents are informed of who and where to go to if they want to volunteer and participate in the school.

In Table 4.5, the researcher recorded and tallied the total responses of each parent for the five statements of the second indicator with the following values/ratings: Frequently (4), Most of The Time (3), Sometimes (2), Rarely (1), Never (0). Table 4.5 shows the parents' total scores for the second indicator of Cultural Capital (citation, date).

Table 4.5: Sample's Responses for Indicator 2 of Cultural Capital

Values/Ratings						
Participant	Statement1	Statement2	Statement3	Statement4	Statement5	Total
Parent 1	4	3	2	2	2	13
Parent 2	4	3	2	2	2	13
Parent 3	4	3	2	2	2	13
Parent 4	4	3	2	2	1	12
Parent 5	4	3	2	2	1	12
Parent 6	4	2	2	2	1	11
Parent 7	3	2	2	1	1	9
Parent 8	3	2	1	1	1	8
Parent 9	3	2	1	1	1	8
Parent 10	3	2	1	1	1	8
Parent 11	3	2	1	1	1	8
Parent 12	3	2	1	1	0	7
Parent 13	2	0	1	1	0	4
Indicator #2 Average						9.1

Table 4.5 shows that about 92% (n=12) of the parents responded to ratings of 4 (Frequently) or 3 (Most of The Time) for statement 1, “the school invites community members to participate and collaborate in school events.” However, then there is a noticeable change in parent responses for the rest of the statements as to the school’s opportunities for parent involvement. About 31% (n=4) of the parents had a total score of 8. All four parents responded

to ratings of 2 (Sometimes) for statement 2, “parents are invited to share experiences, skills, and strengths to contribute to students’ learning.” In addition, those four parents responded to ratings of 1 (Rarely) for statement 3, “parents receive information on how to join parents’ committees.” The parents also responded to ratings of 1 for statement 4, “the school offers various ways and opportunities for parents to volunteer and get involved in the school,” and statement 5, “parents are informed of who and where to go to if they want to volunteer and participate in the school.” Overall, about 85% (n=11) of the parents responded to ratings of 2 (Sometimes) or 1 (Rarely) to statements three through five which directly asked parents about volunteer and involvement opportunities offered by the school. In addition, there were two parents, who responded to ratings of 0 (Never) to statement 5. An average of 9.1 was noted for the 13 parent total scores in the second indicator. Based on the survey data, Latino parents were invited to participate and collaborate in school events; however, they were not exclusively invited to share their experiences/skills nor informed on how to join parents’ committees or other parent involvement opportunities. Indicator 2 is also supported by the following parent statements from the interviews.

Parent 1 - Juan. The first father interviewed stated not being exclusively invited to share his experiences/skills nor informed on how to join parents’ committees. Furthermore, Juan has not participated in any school events with other parents. Here is a quote from Juan stating such a claim:

Pues, la mayoría de las veces la maestra me hablaba para decirme como es el comportamiento de mi hija, pero nunca tenía ningún problema con mi hija. Si algunas veces la escuela nos ha invitado a talleres sobre cómo podemos educar a nuestros hijos. No participo en ningún comité de padres. Francamente, no he participado con otros padres de familia en ningún tipo de eventos escolares. (February, 2016)

Well, for the most part, the teacher contacted me to tell me about my daughter's behavior, but she never had a problem with my daughter. Yes, sometimes the school has invited us (parents) to workshops about how to educate our children. I do not participate in any parent committees. To be honest, I have not participated with other parents in any type of school events. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

Juan mentioned that his daughter's teacher has contacted him to discuss his daughter's behavior in class; however, he did not mention being invited to volunteer and/or participate in class. Also, this father has not been part of any parent committees nor school events. This father did share that the school has invited him to attend parent workshops.

Parent 2 - Maria. Similar to Juan, this mother shared that a primary form of parent involvement is through parent workshops. Maria stated:

Pues, a veces hay talleres para padres, por ejemplo, recientemente hubo un taller sobre "cómo es un día de escuela para nuestros hijos." Pero desafortunadamente no atendí. No participó en ningún comité de padres. He participado con otros padres Latinos en eventos culturales como Cinco de Mayo. Ayudo a vender comida, o a limpiar. También cuando piden donaciones ayudo aportando sodas/agua o comida. (February, 2016)

Well, sometimes there are workshops for parents. For example, recently there was a workshop about "how is a day of school for our children." Unfortunately, I did not attend. I do not participate in any parent committees. I have participated with other Latino parents in cultural events like Cinco de Mayo. I help to sell food or to clean. Also, when they ask for donations I help providing sodas/water or food. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

This mother shared that she has participated with other Latino parents in the school's cultural events like Cinco de Mayo. However, her primary involvement in this event was helping sell food, cleaning, and/or donating food/water. Similar to Juan, she has never been part of any parent committee.

Parent 3 - Pedro. Unlike the other two parents interviewed, Pedro was the first parent to mention that he has been invited to volunteer in his son's school. However, his response indicated that he has limited knowledge on where or who to go if he wished to volunteered. Here is a quote from Pedro stating such a claim:

Pues, nos han dicho que podemos venir a ser voluntarios. Pero, pues no sé cuántos voluntarios haiga por salón o no sé por cuánto tiempo. Pero en juntas de padres sí se nos ha dicho que podemos ser voluntarios si tenemos el tiempo. Que vengamos y preguntemos para poder venir a ser voluntarios. No he participado en ningún comité de padres. No he participado con otros padres de familia en eventos escolares o actividades. (February, 2016)

Well they have told us we can come and volunteered. But I do not know how many volunteers there is per class or I do not know for how long. But in parent meetings they have told us that we can be volunteers if we have the time. To come and ask so we can

volunteer. I do not participate in any parent committee. I have not participated with other parents in school events or activities. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

The three parents interviewed did not mention being exclusively invited to share their experiences/skills nor receiving information on how to join parents' committees. In fact, the three parents interviewed have not participated in any parent committee. The two primary forms of parent involvement opportunities appeared to be parents' workshops and collaborating in school events. One of the parents mentioned about being invited to volunteered, but demonstrated limited knowledge on how to volunteered in his son's classroom or school.

Teacher 1 - Mrs. Gonzalez. Indicator 2 is also supported by the teacher interviews statements. The first teacher interviewed Mrs. Gonzalez, (pseudonym to protect participants) the Spanish language arts teacher in the dual language program, stressed the importance of building a strong teacher-parent relationship by relating and connecting with Latino parents. She also explained that she provides a welcoming environment to make parents feel comfortable and welcomed. However, Mrs. Gonzalez did not mention any specific opportunities for parents to volunteered in her classroom. Here is a quote from Mrs. Gonzalez stating such a claim:

Latino parents are communicated that my door is open and they can come in to ask me any questions. This year, I did not offer any specific workshops for parents. However, I do make sure to make parents feel comfortable and provide a welcoming environment. It is important to have parents get to know you, get comfortable, and make those connections to build a strong teacher-parent relationship. It is more difficult to involve parents in the upper grades. There is more communication, and hand-holding in younger

grades. In the upper graders- we rely on students to convey information/messages to the parents. (February, 2016).

Mrs. Gonzalez explained that there are more opportunities to involve parents in the younger grades compared to upper grades. She also shared that this year she did not provide any parent workshops or other forms of parent involvement opportunities in her classroom.

Teacher 2 - Mrs. Smith. In the same way, Mrs. Smith, (pseudonym to protect participants) the English Language Arts teacher in the dual language program, agreed that it is harder to involved parents in the upper grades. Similar to Mrs. Gonzalez, she stressed the importance of providing a welcoming environment to the parents. Mrs. Smith also did not mention parent opportunities to volunteer or participate in her classroom. She stated:

There are less opportunities for parent involvement in upper grades. I provide a welcoming environment by informing parents that they are welcomed in my classroom. I communicate to parents what is going in class-students' assignments through el "repaso de la semana" (review of the week). In the "repaso de la semana," students write what they did for the week including their homework, grade(s), behavior, and what they liked about the week's assignments. The parents must read it through and sign it. The students bring it back signed on Monday. This provides parents an opportunity to have those educational conversations with their children. It is like a weekly progress report for the parents. (February, 2016)

Mrs. Smith interview statement demonstrates that the only type of parent involvement is

through the review of the week. She explained how parents are informed about their children's performance in class through this weekly report; however, parents are not provided opportunities to come participate in the classroom.

On the contrary, the following principal statement from the interviews demonstrates the school's involvement opportunities offered to Latino parents.

Principal. The school's principal stressed the importance of parent involvement in school and stated the ways in which the school facilitates parent involvement opportunities including providing parents with daycare, food, and information in their home language. Here is a quote from the principal stating such a claim:

It is critical for Latino parents to be involved. I believe there is a direct correlation between parent involvement and students' academic success. We try to offer parents many opportunities to be involved depending on their interest and passions. Taking into account their work schedules, we try to get them involved in school by inviting them to volunteered in class, help in the dual language classes, and providing parent-student home assignments. We try to facilitate parent involvement opportunities by offering translation in Spanish all the time, day-care, food/drinks... we try to cover all the factors that could prevent parents from attending. You can only offer it, but is mainly parents' choice to get involved and take those opportunities. (February 2016)

The principal mentioned that some parent involvement opportunities offered by the school include parent-student home assignments, and inviting parents to come volunteered and help in the dual language classes. In addition, the principal shared that Latino parents are invited to participate in the school's English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC). The principal stated:

It is important to build a relationship and connect with Latino parents. Through ELAC, I make connections with Spanish speaking families. I attend and help facilitate the meetings. As I'm leaving the meetings, I always let parents know how grateful I am that they are there. We try to make sure the ELAC meetings are about the parents-the topics of discussion are based on parents' interests. We use school's funds to provide parents with daycare, food, and speakers to come talk to them. The ELAC meetings are once a month. Two Latino parents that are part of ELAC attend DELAC-district level meetings. Then, they come to school to share information that was announced in the district level meetings. It is important to bring Latino parents as leaders and give them an opportunity to share with other parents. (February, 2016)

However, despite the principal's statement about Latino parents being invited to participate in ELAC, none of the three parents interviewed mentioned their participation in this committee. Furthermore, according to the California Department of Education, it is a requirement for each California public school, grades kindergarten through 12, with 21 or more English learners to form an English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) (CA Department of Education, 2016). It is also required that parents of English learners comprise at least the same percentage of the ELAC membership as English learners constitute of the school's total student population. This minimum percentage requirement for English Learners parents must be maintained, the other ELAC members can be other parents, school staff, and/or community members. In addition, English Learners parents must have an opportunity to elect the parent members to serve on the ELAC or subcommittee, and to elect at least one member to the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC). This means that the dual language school is

required to have an ELAC and involve Latino parents. Furthermore, do Latino parents truly get to express their concerns without being criticized or ignored in these ELAC meetings?

In summary, according to the survey results (see Table 4.3), the school facilitates school staff-parent interaction; teachers and principal are easily accessible to the parents. Also, the school staff provides polite and helpful assistance in parents' home language. This makes Latino parents feel welcomed, because they are able to communicate with school staff without the need of interpreters. The school also provides parents with school forms in Spanish. Thus, as previously mentioned, the dual language elementary has the culture to invite Latino parents into the school and make them feel welcomed.

However, based on the survey results (see Table 4.5), it can also be concluded that Latino parents are not exclusively invited to share their experiences, skills, and strengths to contribute to students' learning. In addition, the majority of the parents indicated limited information on the school's opportunities for parent involvement, primarily how to join parents' committees. This data confirms what the literature review states, in that many times Latino parents are bypassed, and not exclusively invited to participate in school (Yanghee, 2009; Waterman, 2008). This data is also supported by Jasis (2005), and Jasis and Ordonez's (2012) studies where Latino immigrant parents' statements expressed their frustration in asking for more parent involvement opportunities to support their children's education.

Furthermore, based on Bourdieu's (1977) notion of cultural capital, the school system controls and dictates the ways in which parents are involved in school. According to Bourdieu

(1977), the school culture is a reproduction of social culture, this means that the majority of parent involvement activities used to promote involvement in the schools is constantly based on middle-class White parents' values. Often, the school system reflects and validates the culture, language, expectations, ways of thinking, and values of the dominant group (Baquedano, Alexander, & Hernandez, 2013).

Moreover, Olivos and Ochoa (2009) argue that most school efforts to include bicultural parents tend to be geared towards "mere volunteerism and low-impact rhetoric" (p.200) which lead to superficial engagement. Based on the survey results and in relation to Olivos and Ochoa's (2009) notion of *Transformational Paradigm of Parent Involvement*, this school is at a level II structural functionalist perspective (see Table 4.6). The table indicates four levels of parent participation: Level I functionalist (Conformity), Level II Structural Functionalist (Social control and harmony), Level III Conflict Theory (Equity and power relations), and Level IV Conflict theory, social constructionist and interpretivist. In level II of the paradigm of parent involvement, parents participate within the school's culture to assimilate to the school's practices or in support of the governing rules without questioning its policies, programs, or standards (Olivos & Ochoa, 2009). In this level of the paradigm of parent involvement, schooling is viewed as means of socialization for molding the school community to fit existing social practices and requirements. What will happen if schools valued minority parents' habitus and focused on social change rather than the reproduction of social status? (Yanghee, 2009). Will this increase and encourage the active involvement of Latino families?

Table 4.6: Parent Involvement Paradigm

Level	Theoretical/Social Focus	Parent Involvement Models	Perception of Parents as Contributors to Schools
I Status Quo	Functionalist (Conformity)	Family Influence: Change bicultural parents- “improve: home condition for participants to acquire preferred behaviors and values	Superficially connecting parents to school culture (I)
II	Structural Functionalist (Social control and harmony)	Cooperative systems: parents participate within the school culture to assimilate to school practices and behaviors	Parents as collaborators of school culture (II)
III	Conflict Theory (Equity and power relations)	Alternative school reform: Parents challenge schools to be more responsive, inclusive and equitable	Parents as co-participants in the decision-making process (III)
IV	Conflict theory, social constructionist & interpretivist (Transformational change towards cultural economic democracy)	Transformational education: Problem posing that seeks solutions enabling inclusion, voice and representation in decision making	Cultural democracy, parents as action researchers, agents of transformative change in the school and community (IV)

The paradigm of parent involvement provides a progressive and developmental course towards a socio-economic, political consciousness (Olivos & Ochoa, 2009). The movement from one system to the next is guided by its participants and communities’ social commitment and

developmental consciousness. Table 4.6 demonstrates that the paradigm begins and moves from Level I; functionalist philosophical/ideological perspective to level IV; the combination of a conflict theory and interpretivist social constructionist perspective. Level IV is the recommended level to create/reach a socio-economic, political pluralistic school community (Olivos & Ochoa, 2009).

In summary, this demonstrates a parallel with my research findings, the Theory of Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1977) and the literature review, whereas parents indicated access to school personnel (92%), the same Latino parents surveyed indicated receiving rare opportunities to volunteer and get involved in the school (85%). Therefore, although the dual language elementary builds on language and culture making Latino parents feel welcomed and comfortable, more efforts need to be made to involve parents beyond the traditional, limited role of supplementing the school agenda. According to Olivos (2006), parent involvement should not just be viewed as the process that allows bicultural parents to support, without question, the school's agenda. Rather, it should be viewed as the growth of political strengths that allows parents to challenge the school when they feel they are being overlooked or wronged.

Discussion of Interviews Central Themes

There were three central themes that emerged from the parent and school's staff interviews: 1) accommodating or finding a common time to meet, 2) embracing cultural differences to increase Latino parent involvement, and 3) involving all parents despite their level of education.

Theme 1: Accommodating or Finding a Common Time to Meet

Parent 1 - Juan. (Single father, works in landscaping) During the interviews, the three parents interviewed shared high desires for their children's academic success. The parents stated the importance of education to have a fulfilling job and brighter future. At the same time, they expressed challenges and/or barriers that they face, as Latino parents, in being more involved at school. All three parents stated that one of the reasons that influenced their level of involvement in school was the lack of time due to inflexible, long work hours. Here is a quote from Juan stating such a claim:

La verdad, después de un día largo en el trabajo, llego a casa ayudarles a mis hijas con la tarea, preparar la cena, y alistarlas para el siguiente día de escuela. También, como papá soltero, pues tengo más responsabilidades, la de mamá y papá. Así que no tengo mucho tiempo para venir a ayudar a la escuela...Yo diría que una razón por la cual los papás no ayudan en la escuela es por el trabajo. La verdad es que uno, como la mayoría de Latinos trabajamos hasta tarde y a veces llegamos cansados y tarde a la casa. (February, 2016)

To be honest, after a long day at work, I get home to help my daughters with homework, prepare dinner, and get them ready for the next school day. Also, as a single father, I have more responsibilities; father's and mother's duties. Therefore, I do not have a lot of time to come volunteered at school...I would say that one reason why parents do not volunteer at school is because of work. The truth is that myself, as the majority of Latinos, we worked till late in the afternoon and sometimes we get home late and tired.
(Quote Translated by Researcher)

Juan, as a single father of two daughters, has to work hard, and often stays overtime to

meet the household needs. He stressed that long work hours, and an inflexible work schedule hinders the time available to come volunteer at his daughter's school. According to Waterman's (2008) study, minority parents' inflexible work schedules decreases the opportunities for parent involvement at school and home. In addition, Flynn and Nolan (2008) state that a majority of ethnic minority parents are too consumed by the demands of work and caring for their family's needs, and as a result, they have less time to be actively involved in their child's schooling process. As supported also by the Theory of Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1977), minority parents from a middle or working class lack cultural capital or resources like time to be actively involved. This means that due to financial needs, Latino parents often work inflexible work schedules, and they lack the time to be involved in their children's school.

Parent 2 - María. (Married mother, works as a babysitter). Similar to Juan, Maria agreed that work is a major barrier that influences her level of involvement in her daughter's school.

This mother stated:

Me gustaría estar más presente en la escuela de mi hija, pero el trabajo no me deja. Honestamente, porque tengo que trabajar, no tengo tiempo suficiente para venir a la escuela. Pues, la verdad yo pienso que es por el trabajo, los papás llegan tarde y cansados a la casa y no tienen tiempo o no quieren venir a las juntas o talleres que ofrece la escuela. Muchos también trabajan más de un trabajo. (February, 2016)

I would like to be more present in my daughter's school, but work does not allow it. To be honest, because I have to work, I do not have enough time to come to school.

Well honestly, I think is because of work, the parents arrive home late and tired, and they don't have time or don't want to come to the meetings or workshops offered by the school. Many parents also work more than one job. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

Maria, as well as Juan, wished she had more time to come participate in school. This mother works long hours, and does not have enough time to attend school meetings and workshops. She also believes that many other Latino parents do not attend meetings and workshops due to their work schedules, and/or working two jobs. Similarly, Quezada and colleagues (2003) argue that low-income parents have too many responsibilities and often work two jobs, which interfere with their attendance at school meetings and activities. In addition, Bourdieu (1977) claims that minority parents' habitus is influenced by one's ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and education which affect parents' competence to deal with the school culture even in a dual language school. For example, minority parents' habitus show less collaborative parent involvement, which results in an independent rather than interdependent relationship with the teachers, who value positive and supportive parents. On the other hand, middle-class White parents have more advantage in the school system since they share the school's values and beliefs.

Parent 3 - Pedro: (Married father, works in landscaping). Pedro, the third parent interviewed, agreed that work is a major challenge to Latino parent involvement in school. However, he also made it a point that many parents do not strive to make the time to come and be actively involved in school. The following quote describes this parent's perspective on how work influences the level of involvement of many Latino parents:

Sí, pues basado en el tiempo que tengo trato de participar. Muchos no hacemos el tiempo o por horarios de trabajo y por cosas de la casa esa es la dificultad que tenemos algunos padres. Yo creo que a veces, muchos no nos esforzamos por hacer el tiempo. Una hora aquí se nos hace mucho, pero una hora viendo televisión se nos pasa rápido. Pero, también mucha gente hispana trabaja en trabajos muy físicos, esa es una razón por la que llegan a casa muy cansados y pues también falta de esfuerzo. (February, 2016)

Yes, well based on the time I have, I try to participate. A lot of us do not make the time or because of our work schedules and house duties-that's a difficulty that some parents have. I believe that sometimes, we do not strive to make time. An hour here seems like a lot, but an hour at home, watching TV goes by fast. But also a lot of Hispanic parents work on physical jobs, that are the reason they get home tired, and well also a lack of effort. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

Pedro understood the importance of parent involvement and tried to be involved in his son's school. His involvement is influenced by his work schedule and house duties, similar to Juan and Maria. In addition, he explained that many Latino parents, like himself, work physically demanding jobs. As a result, parents get home tired. However, he also stated that many parents do not try hard enough to make time, and there is a lack of effort from the parents' part to participate more in school.

As stated in the parent interviews, Latino parents identified limited time due to work and house duties as a major barrier to their limited involvement in school. In the same manner, the Theory of Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1977) explains that working-class and ethnic minority parents lack cultural capital or resources such as time, education, and communication style in

being active participants in the school setting or dealing with the school culture even if the school has the language and culture to invite bicultural community.

Teacher 1 – Mrs. Gonzalez. Furthermore, the school’s staff interviews demonstrated that teachers and principal understood the influence that time restrains (e.g., long work hours, inflexible work schedules, house duties) can play in the level of Latino parent involvement in school. Here is a quote from Mrs. Gonzalez, the Spanish language arts teacher in the dual language program, supporting such a claim.

Because of long work hours, many of them (Latino parents) work two jobs. I understand that sometimes they can’t come to school events because they are working, and that’s totally understandable, but they should try to come. It is important for parents to show up and ask questions. I understand, and I don’t judge them for not being able to make it to events during the middle of the day, because I understand time is a challenge. However, what I do judge is when I reserve a late afternoon conference, and they (parents) do not show up... without calling, that’s when I start getting judgmental. Parents may be working hard, but we all do!

The main difference to Anglo parents is that Latino parents for the most part do not have the same resources. They have less money for educational experiences like to take their kids to go to museums and have those educational conversations. Sometimes, it is not even about that (limited resources), it is about priorities. The parents (Latino parents) spend the money elsewhere. (February, 2016)

Mrs. Gonzalez understood that the time of school meetings/events can intervene with parents’ ability to attend. For example, Latino parents that work long hours or more than one job, are unable to attend school events/activities that are in the middle of the day. At the same time,

she stressed that there have been instances where she has reserve teacher-parent meetings in late afternoon, and parents do not attend. Furthermore, she shared how this is frustrating, especially when parents do not call to inform her that they will not be able to attend.

Teacher 2 – Mrs. Smith. The second teacher interviewed, Mrs. Smith shared Mrs. Gonzalez perspective that the issue of time is highly responsible for the level of involvement of many Latino families. Here is a quote from Mrs. Smith, the English language arts teacher in the dual language program, stating such a claim:

Socioeconomic reasons, some parents have to work from 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock in the afternoon, at the end of the day, everyone is exhausted. Then, you are fixing dinner, getting kids to bed, and start over the next day. Most parents (Latino parents) are not involved primarily due to time restrains because of work or not knowing how.

I would say that the biggest thing between language minority parents and Anglo parents, it would be a time issue, which leads back to that socioeconomic piece. Parents who work long hours and do not get off work till 6 o'clock in the afternoon have less time to be involved (February, 2016).

Both teachers interviewed agreed that many Latino parents have unequal financial resources, as a result, have to work long work hours. In addition, Mrs. Smith stressed that time is an issue when parents have to work till late in the afternoon, then come home to more house duties. In relation to Anglo parents, she stressed that due to socioeconomic reasons, Latino parents have to work longer hours and have less time to be actively involved in school.

Principal. In addition to the teachers' interviews, the principal strongly agreed that the difference in basic financial needs between Anglo and Latino parents influenced the difference in parent involvement in school. The principal stated:

It is not because they (Latino parents) don't want to be involved. I have worked in other multicultural settings that were 99% Title 1 (schools identified as having students who are achieving below grade level) schools, and the main difference is basic financial needs, which limits their ability to come and participate. Many Latino families work hard to provide for their family. Their work schedules impact the time they have to volunteer at school.

Financial restraints is a major component between Anglo and Latino parents. Because they (Anglo parents) are able to come and volunteer during the day. Also, in many Anglo families, only one parent works, the mother is a stay home mom and she has the time. I don't think they (Latino parents) don't participate, because they don't want to or because they feel uncomfortable. My general impression is that it is the lack of time, mainly due to long work hours in order to fulfill the many responsibilities outside of school (February, 2016).

Based on principal's experience working with ethnic minority families, she stressed that parents want to be involved, but financial restraints highly influenced parents' involvement. She explained that many Anglo families in their community, only one parent works, therefore, the other parent is able to attend and volunteer during the day. On the other hand, in many Latino families, both parents work, and do not have the time to volunteer during the day. Thus, it is the lack of time that plays a role in the level of involvement between parents from the dominant minority group.

In summary, the Latino parents stated that the issue of “time to volunteer at school” is tied to their financial restraints, as a major barrier that influences their level of involvement in their children’s school. At the same time, the school staff (teachers and principal) interviews reflected an understanding and support for the parent’s financial demands, inflexible work schedules, and family responsibilities (Durand, 2011; Flynn & Nolan, 2008; Quezada et al., 2003; Waterman, 2008), which decrease the opportunities for parent involvement at school. On the other hand, Olivos (2004) argues that the relationship of bicultural parents and the school system derives from societal tensions and conflicts in the areas of economic exploitation and institutional racism. The education system is therefore presented as a historically and economically influenced mechanism that further results in the school’s reproduction of the dominant culture in society (Bourdieu, 1977; Olivos, 2004). Therefore, despite demanding, long work schedules, how can the school better accommodate parents’ time to increase active parent involvement? Most importantly, how can the school eliminate the reproduction of the inequalities and inequities of society? This will be discussed in chapter 5.

Theme 2: Embracing Cultural Differences to Increase Latino Parent Involvement

Another central theme that emerged from the interviews was how cultural differences played a role in the level of Latino parent involvement in school. Bourdieu (1977) and Olivos (2004) argue that bicultural parents’ relationship with the U.S. school system is negatively affected by the cultural biases and economic interests inherent within the institution of the school system to continue to use its power to reproduce the values and wishes of the dominant culture onto the

bicultural community. In addition, Olivos (2004) claims that bicultural parents are not informed of their rights as parents, and this lack of knowledge enables them to question the school system. The three parents interviewed mentioned how unfamiliarity with the school system, and different perspectives on parent involvement practices hinders their level of involvement in their children's school. Participant, Juan, stated:

Muchos de nosotros (padres Latinos) no sabemos de las expectativas de participación en la escuela. Así que no tomamos iniciativa, pero pues la escuela nos tiene que exigir. No pedir, pero exigir que tengamos que participar en la escuela. (February, 2016)

A lot of us, Latino parents, are unaware of the school's parent involvement expectations. Therefore, we do not take initiative, but the school needs to demand. Not ask, but demand that we participate in school. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

Juan explained that the school should demand parents to be more involved. According to this parent, many Latino parents are unaware of the school's parent involvement expectations; therefore, it is less likely for parents to take an initiative. According to Guo (2010), parents from various ethnic backgrounds may have their own cultural understanding of the appropriate ways of parent involvement in their children's learning. For example, constant and active parent involvement practices may not be part of the cultural expectations of many Latino parents, even in dual language context.

Whereas, Juan encouraged schools to demand more involvement from Latino parents. On the other hand, Maria explained that the school does offer different parent workshops; however,

many times, she feels like she does not have to attend due to the selected topic. Here is a quote from this mother stating such a claim.

La escuela si ofrece talleres para padres, pero a veces pienso... no tengo que asistir, porque yo ya sé cómo educar a mi hija. Como a veces los talleres son sobre cómo disciplinar a tus hijos, y yo pienso para qué voy si ya lo sé, no ocupo que alguien más me diga cómo disciplinar a mi hija. (February, 2016)

The school does offer parent workshops, but sometimes I think I do not have to attend, because I already know how to educate my daughter. For example, sometimes the workshops are about how to discipline your children, and I think to myself why should I go, if I already know, I do not need someone else to tell me how to discipline my daughter. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

This demonstrated that many times the workshops' topics of discussion are not of Latino parents' interest. For example, Maria stated that her absence was because many times the workshops' topics are about discipline, and she believed she does not need to be taught how to properly discipline her daughter. In the same manner, the Theory of Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1977) claims that ethnic minority parents are unable to relate to school's culture, because of parents' habitus; set of internalized beliefs and perceptions. In other words, the school reflects middle-class White parents' values, beliefs, and perceptions, and not those of the ethnic minority group. Moreover, Olivos (2004) claims that the absence of Latino parents is more a demonstration of resistance (a defense mechanism against oppression and humiliation). Many parents simply refused to attend or participate in school related activities, which they believe are

useless or unimportant, particularly considering other home or work obligations (Olivos, 2004).

This is directly supported by Maria's interview statement above.

The third parent interviewed, Pedro, also shared how cultural differences are reflected in the different perspectives on appropriate forms of parent involvement. In the Latino culture, the constant involvement of parents in school is usually not solicited or expected. Thus, Latino parents are often unaware of the active involvement of parents expected in the U.S. schools, even in dual language schools. Pedro stated:

Pues, muchos padres tienen o más bien tenemos la mentalidad que no necesitamos que participen en la escuela porque los maestros son los encargados de educar a nuestros hijos. Muchas veces uno no se quiere ver como un entrometido. (February, 2016)

Well, many parents have or we have (Latino parents) the mentality that we do not need to participate in school, because the teachers are in charge of educating our children. Many times, we don't want to be seen as interfering. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

This father explained how many Latino parents shared the mentality that they do not have to be involved in school, because the teachers are the ones responsible for educating their children. In addition, since active parent involvement is not usually expected in the Mexican culture, parents do not want to interfere with the teachers' teaching practices. To support this notion further, many studies demonstrated that most Latino parents view teachers as the professionals in education, and believe that their presence in school can be viewed as monitoring the teacher's job; thus they do not intervene (Durand, 2011; Kuperminc, 2008; Peña, 2000;

Quezada et al., 2003). According to Kuperminc (2008), minority parents' perceptions of teachers as the experts, who "know best," influence their involvement in school.

In the same way, Mrs. Smith, the English language arts teacher, highly agreed that many Latino parents view teachers as the experts, and that's a major reason why parents do not get involved. Here is a quote from Mrs. Smith stating such a claim:

I would say, they (Latino parents) don't know how. They didn't experience that as a child, they don't really know how to do it (to get involved in school); culturally. I went to school in Mexico K-6th grade, and my recollection was "el maestro," "el profe," that person is the "know all, be all." Many Latino parents believe it's under their control; I'm not really needed as a parent. You do have those Spanish speaking parents, who do get it and are involved. (February, 2016)

From her experience attending school in Mexico, Mrs. Smith explained that historically in the Mexican culture, parents take a more passive role in their children's education. Active parent involvement practices are not part of the Mexican culture; therefore, the newer generations of parents lack the knowledge of how to get involved.

Mrs. Gonzalez, the Spanish language arts teacher, also believed that cultural differences influenced the level of involvement of many Latino families. She pointed out the two following primary factors in cultural differences: 1) unfamiliarity with the school system, and 2) viewing teachers as the experts. She stated:

A lot of parents (Latino parents) hold back, and they do not want to intervene, because they view teachers as the "experts" in charge of educating their children. Sometimes, I

feel like parents used them as excuses. This year, parents, and it is for the most part, Latino parents, are not doing their part at home... making sure their kids are completing their homework, not communicating with the teacher... I don't know if they are busier now, or what is going on, but I'm constantly calling parents... sometimes, I feel like I'm nagging them by constantly calling them...I feel like how am I supposed to help your child in class, if you're not doing your part at home? (February, 2016)

Mrs. Gonzalez, as a Latina, shares Latino parents' cultural background; thus, she can relate to them and understands the challenges they face. Yet, she believes parents can do more to support their children's education at home and school. She shared her frustration trying to communicate with parents, and asking them to be more supportive of their children's education.

In summary, parents expressed that cultural differences influenced their level of involvement in school. Active and constant parent involvement in school is not part of many Latino parents' cultural background. Likewise, the teachers' interviews showed that parents' unfamiliarity with the school system, and parents' view of teachers as the experts further limits their involvement in school. Moreover, the Theory of Cultural Capital states that teachers are able to communicate and collaborate more effectively with middle and upper class parents, who share similar beliefs, but have difficulty relating to minority parents, who come from a "different cultural frame of references or habitus" (Bourdieu, 1977). In the same way, Olivos, Jimenez-Castellanos, and Ochoa (2011) claim that teacher practice has become more routinized and controlled, while parent involvement has become more structured and monitored. These controlled and structured relationships within schools often prevent teachers from having meaningful engagement with bicultural parents. This can even be the case in dual language

settings where teachers come from the same cultural, class, and linguistic backgrounds as their students, but may lack meaningful relationships with Latino parents (Olivos, Jimenez-Castellanos & Ochoa, 2011). This is because the school's culture is a reproduction of the middle class White culture; thus, the school values the beliefs, principles, and dispositions of the dominant culture after teach-parent relationships (Bourdieu, 1977; Olivos, 2006). However, what can the school system do to embrace cultural differences to increased Latino parent involvement? This will be discussed in chapter 5.

Theme 3: Involving All Parents Despite Their Level of Education

Furthermore, the parent interviews revealed that parents' level of education played a role in the level of involvement in their children's education, primarily their ability to assist them with homework assignments. Here is a quote from Juan stating such a claim:

Le voy hacer sincero, yo no fui a la escuela, así que a veces si se pone difícil...se me hace más difícil ayudarle a mi hija con las tareas. Trato de participar más pero también por mi poca educación y mi poco inglés lo hace más difícil. (February, 2016)

I'm going to be honest with you, I did not go to school; therefore, sometimes it is difficult. it is harder for me to help my daughter with homework. I also try to participate more, but my limited education and English makes it harder. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

This father shared that he did not go to school; thus, it is harder for him to help his daughter with homework. Interestingly, although, this is a dual language elementary school, where parents are communicated in their home language, he stated that his limited education and limited fluency in English influenced his level of involvement. In Orozco (2008) and Panferov

(2010) perspective parents with a less formal education often feel that they don't have the potential or skills to assist their children with school assignments or be involved in formal ways in school.

In the same way, participant, Maria, parent participant, explained that her limited education made it harder to help her daughter with home assignments. She stated:

Yo nada más estudié hasta la secundaria y las tareas de hoy son más difíciles, así que no le puedo ayudar a mi hija con trabajos de la escuela como antes. Para padres quien nomas fueron a la primaria, como yo, puede ser más difícil. (February, 2016)

I just went to middle school, and today's homework is harder, so I can't help my daughter with school assignments like before. For parents that only went up to middle school like myself, it can be harder. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

Moreover, Quezada and colleagues (2003), argued that Latino parents' lack of literacy skills in their own native language can create an even greater sense of helplessness and embarrassment, causing them to believe that they are unable to support their children's education. This is supported in the following quote by the third parent interviewed, Pedro. He stated:

Pues yo solo fui a la primaria, así que se me hace más difícil ayudarle a mi hijo con tareas. (February, 2016)

Well, I only went to elementary school, so it's harder for me to help my son with homework. (Quote Translated by Researcher)

The three parents' interviews reflected that a limited education level hinders parents' ability to support their children's education. Although, parents' statements showed how a limited education was more related to their inability to help their children with homework. Other studies in the literature review showed how parents' lack of education can also make Latino parents feel that they do not have the required education to participate in school events or have academic discussion with school staff (Pena, 2000; Quezada et al., 2003). Also, according to Panferov (2010), parents who have received less than a high school diploma tend not to voice their concerns and be less involved in decision making such as grade level-placement decisions. Furthermore, Olivos (2004) argues that Latino parents often lack opportunities in which they can begin to develop "sophisticated and political and critical consciousness" (p. 33) that will help them increase their level of awareness of the educational injustice in school. Furthermore, this often misleads Latino parents to believe that they are powerless, which is something the school has socialized them to believe (Bourdieu, 1977; Olivos, 2004).

In summary, the Latino parents interviewed expressed that a limited education hinders their ability to help their children with homework and class assignments. Moreover, a limited education has also influenced the ways in which parents are involved in school. For example, Latino parents tend to be involved in less formal ways such as volunteering in the classroom and/or supervising a school's fieldtrip. Therefore, Latino parents have fewer opportunities to be involved in making educational decisions for their children (Olivos, 2008). So what can the

school do to involve all parents in new and empowering ways despite their level of education?

This will be discussed in chapter 5.

Summary/Conclusion

In conclusion, Latino parents may experience more situational and personal barriers that limit their ability to be involve in ways that are expected by the school (Durand, 2011). The study investigated potential challenges and/or barriers that hinder the level of involvement of some Latino parents through the notion of the Theory of Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1977). The Latino parent participants in this study expressed that a lack of time, limited education, and cultural differences influenced their level of involvement in their children's schooling. At the same time, the school staff (teachers and principal) shared similar perspectives on the reasons for the limited involvement of some Latino parents. This study also aimed to highlight the importance of parent involvement, and the need to incorporate new strategies to involve Latino parents in new, affirming, and empowering ways.

The following and final chapter will discuss how this study's results inform the field of education/dual language. It will articulate recommendations to better understand the challenges and/or barriers that many Latino parents may face in becoming actively involved in school, even in a dual language setting. In addition, chapter five will describe the limitations and directions for future research.

Chapter Five: Thesis Recommendations

Research has demonstrated the importance and positive outcome of parent involvement in students' academic success (Bennett-Conroy, 2012; Durand, 2011; Gerena, 2011; Kuperminc, 2008; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Stetson, Sinclair, & Nix, 2012). At the same time, studies claim that compared to parents from the dominant group, Latino parents tend to participate less in parent involvement practices at school (De Gaetano, 2007; Guo, 2010; Kuperminc, 2008). Furthermore, data demonstrates that the highest rates of academic failure and school dropout are among Latino youth (California Department of Education, 2015). Therefore, the lack or limited involvement of Latino parents tends to be associated to students' academic failure. Although, the unsuccessful academic achievements of Latino youth can be associated to various influences at home and school, it is still essential to investigate the factors that influence the level of Latino parent involvement. What is often overlooked are the challenges and/or barriers that Latino parents faced in becoming actively involved in the schooling process. These include unequal financial resources, limited educational experiences, a lack of familiarity with the school system, and language/cultural differences (Baquedo et al., 2013; Durand, 2011; Guo, 2010; Kuperminc, 2008; Ladky & Peterson, 2008; Olivos, 2009; Orozco 2008; Waterman, 2008). Because of these reasons and my Hispanic background, I decided to focus my research on better understanding the factors that determine the level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language school, where perhaps there would be greater opportunities for Latino parents.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language elementary school, located in southern California. In addition, gather data to inform educators of the challenges and/or barriers that Latino families face in becoming actively involved in the schooling process. This study also aimed to highlight strategies to involve Latino parents in new and empowering ways in a dual language context.

Chapter 5 provides an interpretation of the findings based on the data collected to address the research questions of this study: 1) What is the level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language school setting? and 2) Are there any factors and/or barriers as to why some Latino parents may not be as actively involved? In addition, this chapter will outline educational implications/recommendations grounded in the Theory of Cultural Capital and literature review. In closing, the chapter will address limitations of the research study, and future research directions.

Finding Summary/Interpretations

This section enhances the current literature on parent involvement by addressing the personal challenges and/or barriers that influence the level of Latino parent involvement in school. This study consisted of Latino parent perspectives on the factors that influence their level of involvement in their children's education and school. As well as, school staff perspectives on factors that may influence the active participation of dual language Latino parents. The goal of this section is to raise consciousness about the reasons behind the level of Latino parent

involvement, primarily in a dual language context. In addition to recommendations for strategies to meet the needs and increase the involvement of this bicultural community.

In order to triangulate the data, the researcher used the following three measures: parent surveys, parent interviews, and school staff interviews. Initially, the researcher surveyed 13 Spanish speaking parents of Latino background. The participating parents' children attended a dual language elementary school. Both the parent surveys and interviews were conducted in Spanish to ensure parents' understanding and participation. Through the parent surveys, the research was able to better understand the current level of parent involvement at school, and the parent involvement opportunities offered by the dual language school. From the parents surveyed, the researcher selected three parents to interview. The parent interviews focused on the challenges and/or barriers that Latino parents expressed as contributors to their level of involvement in school.

In addition, the researcher conducted school staff interviews with two dual language teachers and the principal of the school. Through the school staff interviews, the researcher analyzed the current participation of Latino parents in the classroom and school. As well as, the school staff perspectives on the potential challenges/barriers that many Latino parents faced in the schooling experiences of their children. The interpretation of the findings provide answers to the research questions examined below:

1) What is the level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language school setting?

In the survey, Latino parents indicated that the school's staff is easily accessible to the parents, allows for school's staff-parent interactions, and provides polite assistance in their home language. About 92% (See Table 4.3) of the parents indicated having pleasant communication and interaction with the teachers and principal. This was also supported by the parent interviews statements where the three Latino parents shared feeling welcomed and comfortable asking questions in their children's school. The parents also stated receiving polite and friendly assistance from the school staff. This means that the dual language elementary has the language and culture to invite and make Latino families feel welcomed. This is a positive indicator of the school, since it is less likely for other Latino parents not coming from a dual language setting to feel welcomed and valued.

However, despite the welcoming environment offered by the dual language school, there is a limited level of Latino parent involvement. In the survey, about 85% (See Table 4.5) of the parents indicated not being informed of the parent involvement opportunities offered by the school. The survey results also indicate that Latino parents are not exclusively invited to share their experiences/skills in their children's classroom nor the school. This was also supported by the parent and teacher statements from the interviews. During the interviews, a father stated being contacted by his daughter's teacher to discuss her behavior and performance in class. However, none of the parents mentioned being contacted nor invited to participate in their children's classrooms. Only one parent shared being invited to volunteered in school, but had

limited knowledge on the school's parent volunteering process. Two of the parents stated being informed and invited to attend parent workshops offered by the school, as well as participating in cultural events. According to Bourdieu (1977), the school system dictates the ways in which parents are involved and participate in school. Furthermore, the school system often works to discourage the active, authentic, and meaningful involvement of the Latino community (Olivos, 2006). Therefore, Latino parents are not being exclusively invited to participate in meaningful and empowering ways in the education of their children. Parents' attendance in workshops, participation/assistance in cultural events, and volunteerism in the classroom leads to superficial engagement and has no impact in their children's academic success. Furthermore, the school's celebration of culture through cultural events like Cinco de Mayo is not enough to build on the culture, language, values, beliefs, histories, and contributions/achievements of this bicultural community.

Additionally, the two dual language teachers interviewed highlighted the importance of providing a welcoming environment and building strong parent-teacher relations, but they did not mention offering any parent involvement opportunities in their classrooms. Mrs. Smith, the English Language Arts teacher in the dual language program, explained communicating and informing parents of their children's academic progress through "repaso de la semana" (review of the week). It is important to communicate and maintain parents informed about their children's academic progress, as well as providing a welcoming climate and open-door policy to make parents feel welcome and comfortable. However, it is unlikely to form strong collaborative

and trusting parent-teacher relations, when parents are not given the opportunities to be involved in the classroom. Also, if educators, primarily in a dual language setting, do not draw on the language, culture, and strengths of the Latino community, there are less opportunities to build meaningful relationships with bicultural students and parents. Furthermore, Olivos, Jimenez-Castellanos and Ochoa (2011) explained that even in dual language settings, dual language teachers can have a difficult time relating to and building relationships with bicultural parents. According to the Theory of Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1977) and Olivos (2006), this is because the school's culture is a reproduction of the middle class White culture; thus, the school values the beliefs, principles, and dispositions of this dominant culture as the norm for their day-to-day operations with linguistically and culturally diverse parent groups. These incongruities between the school culture and community culture of Latino parents further influences the level of parent involvement, and creates a cultural gap between the parents and the school.

In contrast, the principal shared that the school offers various Latino parent involvement opportunities, as well as daycare, food/drinks, and information in their home language. Some of the parent involvement opportunities offered by the school include parent-student home assignments, and inviting parents to come volunteered and help in the dual language classes. However, as previously mentioned, the two dual language teachers interviewed did not mentioned inviting parents to help nor participate in their classrooms. Also, the principal stated that a primary way that Latino parents are involved is through their participation in the school's English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) (see Chapter 4, p.91). The ELAC is a committee

comprised of parents, staff, and community members, designated to advise school officials on English Learner program services (California Department of Education, 2016). Yet, none of the parents interviewed mentioned participating in ELAC. In fact, they stated not being part or involved in any school committee. Moreover, are the Latino parents that participate in the school/district led ELAC meetings given the power and rights to make changes in the education of their children? Olivos (2006) argues that there is a lot resistance from the school against parents becoming critically involved, and many times parents' questions and concerns in these meetings get ignored or many times administrators attempt to convince parents that there are no problems at school, and that their complaints were simply misguided. This means that parents are not truly given the political strengths and rights to question the school system even in committees like ELAC that are particularly organized for bicultural parents. It is not enough to give parents the roles of leaders, if they are not being heard, their concerns are not taken into consideration, and changes are not being made.

2) Are there any factors and/or barriers as to why some Latino parents may not be as actively involved?

During the interviews, the three Latino parents stressed the importance of parent involvement in their children's education, and high desires for their children's academic success and a promising future. However, as stated by the Theory of Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1977) working-class and ethnic minority parents lack cultural capital through linguistic and cultural competence, and familiarity with the dispositions, values, beliefs, and involvement styles of the

school's culture, which is a reflection of the dominant culture. Therefore, Latino parents face more personal and situational challenges and/or barriers in being actively involved in their children's schooling. There were three central themes that emerged from the parent and school's staff interviews as the primary factors and/or barriers that influence Latino parent involvement in their children's school. The three identified factors/barriers were the following: 1) accommodating or finding a common time to meet, 2) embracing cultural differences to increase Latino parent involvement, and 3) involving all parents despite their level of education. These factors/barriers are each discussed below.

Accommodating or Finding a Common Time to Meet

In the interviews, the three Latino parents reported that their limited involvement in school was due to a time issue related to their financial restraints. Parents explained that they have to work long hours, and their inflexible work schedules hinder their ability to volunteered or participate in school. This was also supported by the principal and teachers' interviews statements, they all agreed that financial/time restraints were a major barrier that influence the level of Latino parent involvement. The two dual language teachers and the principal recognized that many Latino parents work long hours or even two jobs; as a result, they get home late in the afternoon. In addition, after getting home at late hours, Latino parents have other house and family obligations, such as preparing dinner and getting their children ready for the next school day, in addition to workshops not being motivating. This further limits their ability to attend school meetings and/or events.

Furthermore, in the interviews, parents acknowledged that the school invites them to attend parent workshops. However, they also expressed being uninterested in attending workshops that are often about how to educate their children. For example, a mother interviewed stated not attending the workshops, because they are often about parenting skills, and she already knows how to discipline her daughter. Olivos (2004) explains the absence of some Latino parents as a demonstration of resistance (a defense mechanism against oppression and humiliation), where parents refuse to attend school related activities that they find useless or unimportant. Therefore, it is critical to give parents a purpose to attend the workshops that is congruent with their cultural values and not the school's that validates and transmits the dominant White culture in society (Bourdieu, 1977). Latino parents have a different connotation of the word "educate." To be educated in the Latino culture means to be respectful to authority figures and the elderly, while the dominant culture relates to education as the notions of academic rigor and advancement in school (Waterman, 2008). Thus, even if parents have the time or the school accommodates a time to meet, parents have to be given meaningful reasons to come to school where they feel they are learning and participating in valuable ways.

Embracing Cultural Differences to Increase Latino Parent Involvement

Also, during the interviews, parents shared that cultural differences, including lack of familiarity with the school system and appropriate parent involvement practices influence their level and forms of involvement. For example, parents explained that they are unfamiliar with the school's parent involvement expectations, and that many Latino parents do not get involved,

because they view teachers as the “experts,” and they should not intervene. In the Latino culture, the teacher is seen as the expert in the field, and many Latino parents leave school business and education strictly to the experts, as they may feel this is not their area of expertise or duty to intervene with the teacher (Durand, 2011; Kuperminc, 2008). This was also supported by the two dual language teachers’ statements from the interviews. In the same way, teachers claim that cultural differences, primarily parents’ unfamiliarity with the school system and perspective of teachers as the “experts,” influence the limited involvement of some Latino families. According to Olivos and Ochoa (2009), the schools are often concerned with working to assimilate the parent community to the school’s culture in order to take advantage of its available services, without questioning its programs, teaching practices, or standards (See Table 4.6- the structural functionalist perspective). Thus, Latino parents are not given access to information, and provided with opportunities to gain the confidence and power to ask questions, and raise concerns without feeling intimidated or incapable, nor feeling they have nothing to contribute, because they regard the teacher as the only “expert” in the field of education.

Involving All Parents Despite Their Level of Education

In the parent interviews, parents also expressed a difference in their educational background as a major challenge that hinders their ability to be more involved in their children’s education. The three Latino parents shared receiving a minimal or primary education; as a result, they felt unable to assist their children with homework assignments. All parents expressed that it is more difficult to be more involved in their children’s education now that they are in higher

grades. Moreover, a less formal education often makes parents feel that they lack the knowledge and skills to be involved in more formal and empowering ways such as school's decision making in grade level-placement decisions (Olivos, 2008; Panferov, 2010). Thus, parents lack of confidence due to their limited education and educational experiences impacts their level of involvement in their children's schooling. Moreover, if the school does not provide Latino parents opportunities to be the "experts" and share their knowledge and skills, such as the sharing of the "funds of knowledge," a term coined by Moll and colleagues (1992) it is more difficult for parents to be involved in contributing ways in their children's education. The term "funds of knowledge" is refer to the historically and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills of bicultural parents (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). If the school does not welcome the knowledge that students and their parents bring to their communities, as well as view them as positive contributors to education, parents often will feel they can't contribute in any meaningful ways in their children's education. This further misleads parents to believe they are powerless, which is something the school has socialized them to believe (Bourdieu, 1977; Olivos, 2004).

Educational Implications/Recommendations

This section emphasizes my recommendations for this particular dual language context, and group of Latino parents that can potentially change the outcome of parent involvement in school. After analyzing the challenges and barriers that Latino parents face in being actively involved in their children's school, I would stress to educators to reflect on how they accept,

display, and value Latino community's language, culture, knowledge, and power within the school context. Also, how they, as educators, align their beliefs and values and the school's policies and practices with those of the Latino community (Olivos, 2006). I recommend teachers to attain a cultural sensitivity in their classroom by adapting their instructional approaches, curriculum, classroom organization, interaction patterns, and involvement with parents and the community (Diaz--Rico, 2014). Teachers can begin by getting to know the cultural backgrounds of their students in order to create/assign assignments and projects that reflect their interests and cultural backgrounds. This is a great strategy to get Latino parents involved in the children's learning. Through these assignments parents can assist their children, and in some cases, be the "experts." Another way to get parents in the classroom is by inviting parents to help the school library to choose/purchase multicultural books, and then invite them to read and discuss books in class. Parents can also be invited as guest speakers, especially to share learning aspects of their culture. Gay (2010) highlights culturally responsive teaching as affirming, comprehensive, multidimensional, transformative, empowering, and emancipatory which allows students to succeed academically. A school wide multicultural approach can be the first step to make Latino parents feel valued and provide them the confidence to be involved in the classroom. Perhaps, this will also give parents the confidence to be more involved in school and put in practice their rights as advocates of their children's education, and share their funds of knowledge.

I would also suggest home visits in order for educators to get to know their students and families. It is feasible and useful to have teachers visit households in which they assume the role

of the learner to help establish a trusting and strong relationship with parents of the students (Moll et al., 1992; Stetson et al., 2012). Teachers can draw upon the knowledge and skills found in households and other community resources, as well as, family's history and activities to organize classroom instruction. For example, parents can have knowledge about construction and building, related to urban occupations or knowledge about farming and animal management related to households' rural origins (Moll et al., 1992). In this manner, educators will be able to include all parents despite their level of education, and value a parent's cultural background, values, work life, and lifestyle in a respectful way that will allow parents to feel more included at the school setting.

In addition, I would stress to school administrators the importance of giving Latino parents opportunities to socialize and build relationships with parents from the dominant group, primarily in a dual language setting where their children are in the same classroom(s). Informal gatherings such as a picnic/potluck or a movie night could be a great way for Spanish and English speaking parents to get to know, communicate, and share perspectives/stories amongst them. Often Latino parents are bypassed by White parents, because it is assumed they lack proficiency in the English language. In addition, there are limited opportunities in school for Latino and White parents to be involved and build positive relationships. Spanish speaking parents need to get involved with the English speaking parents, so they build on the language and culture valued by an enriched dual language program. There is the need for social change

through the engagement of Spanish speaking parents and parents from the dominant culture in order to get rid of tensions involving issues of language, culture, knowledge, and power.

By sharing the results from this study, it would also be beneficial for the school to provide family literacy workshops to improve parents' support of literacy and advance their English language development. This could help improve parents' confidence to assist their children with homework and open the door for educational conversations at home. Moreover, the school could organize workshops with topics that are appealing and of interest to the parents, rather than topics about parenting skills/how to educate their children. The school could send a survey home with appealing topics for parents to select topics of discussion or parents could recommend topics for workshops. Providing motivational workshops may increase parent participation and desire to attend in school events and activities more frequently, as well as take advantage of the parent workshops offered by the school. It is also important for the school to be mindful of parent's work schedules and try to plan parent meetings and workshops late in the afternoon or weekend. The school could send a questionnaire home asking parents the times that work best based on their work schedules to plan school events and activities according to parents' available times. As well as, possibly provide parents with snacks for parents who may come straight from work or babysitting opportunities for small children needing supervision while parents attend meetings.

Furthermore, the school could also use this information to organize parent workshops that can facilitate parents' understanding of the school system, their roles as partners in the education

of their children, as well as inform them about their children's educational rights and their civil and legal rights as parents. School administrators can use this information to help Latino parents become involved at a political level. It is important to inform Latino parents on how they can be in decision-making roles, parents as student advocates, and parents as leaders at home and their school community (Olivos, 2004). In order for the school to reach level IV (Olivos & Ochoa, 2009) the combined use of conflict theory and interpretivist social constructionist perspective to create a socio-economic political pluralistic school community (see Table 4.6), the school needs to seek involvement that promotes parent participants in the construction of "knowledge, dialogue, and as agents of creating and recreating meaning of improvement of the school community" (Olivos & Ochoa, 2009, p.209). In this matter, not only could the school possibly increase Latino parent involvement, but have parents participate in more affirming and empowering ways in their children's education.

Lessons Learned

Prior to conducting this study, I was working at the school, and noticed a limited level of Latino parent involvement. I used to question the reasons behind the difference in the level of involvement between Latino parents and parents of the dominant group. My initial assumptions, which I would use to explain this difference in parent involvement, were founded on deficit perspectives of Latino parents. I used to believe that parents did not attend school, because they did not have an interest in education; that they did not care to make the time to be more involved and participate in their children's education. However, by looking at this phenomenon through

the parents' perspective, and Bourdieu's theoretical framework, I soon learned that it is clear that Latino parents are willing, eager, and capable of participating in the education of their children. Latino parents do not lack the desire to be involved in their children's schooling processes, but rather lack the appropriate avenues that provide guidance and information about their rights as parents. In addition, parents from bicultural backgrounds, face greater challenges and barriers in their attempt to be actively involved in the educational process. Also, after I did my literature review, I came across Moll's work, and I learned that parents are rich in what he and his colleagues describe as having "funds of knowledge," that represent important resources to make a positive impact in their children's academic success (Moll et al., 1992). By valuing Latino parents' language, culture, values, histories, contributions, and multicultural experiences, parents can contribute in meaningful ways in their children's schooling and encourage academic motivation and achievement.

Limitations of Research

This study illustrates the importance and positive impact of parent involvement in students' academic success and motivation, primarily for our Latino youth in U.S. schools. It also depicts the challenges and/or barriers that a majority of Latino families face in being actively involved in their children's schooling. In addition, this study focused on the factors that influence the level of Latino parent involvement in a dual language context. First, the study analyzed parents' access to school personnel, as well as the parent involvement opportunities offered by the school. Second, it identified the potential challenges/barriers that influence the

level of involvement of some Latino parents. However, the scale of the research was a limiting factor of only 13 Latino parents from one school, two teachers and the principal located in southern California.

The researcher surveyed 13 Latino parents, and out of those parents, three were interviewed. The research is small in scale, and limited to Latino parents from one dual language education setting. In addition, the participating parents only included parents of 5th and 6th graders. The research was limited to parents of these two grade levels, which contributed to the study's small scale. If the study's participants had included parents of children in a variety of grades (primary/middle grades), other factors that contribute to the level of Latino parent involvement could have been researched. For example, the researcher could have been able to analyze if there is a difference in the level of involvement from primary to middle grades, and if there is more or less parent involvement opportunities offered by the school depending on children's grade level.

In conclusion, a larger sample of Latino parents from multiple dual language school settings would have been useful to examine the factors that influence parent involvement in bicultural contexts.

Future Research Directions

Additional quantitative and qualitative research is needed to identify and diminished the factors and/or barriers that influence the involvement of Latino parents in schools. Primarily, the barriers that play a role in the level of Latino school parent involvement in dual language

contexts, which are meant to promote parents' home language and culture. School administrators and teachers could use this study's information to evaluate their current approaches to communicate and invite Latino families to participate in school, as well as the parent involvement opportunities offered by the school. Moreover, this research informs school educators and teachers of the challenges and barriers that Latino parents expressed as contributors to their level of involvement in school. This can aid the school in targeting the direct barriers associated to the level of involvement of some Latino parents. In addition, this research opens the door for possible topics of discussion in parent workshops, where barriers such as the ones found in this study, are discussed and problematized with dual language parents and educators. To conclude, this information could be extended by analyzing in details the parent involvement opportunities that are offered by the school and how to prevent Latino parents from facing the challenges mentioned in this study. Also, it is critical that dual language educators examine the ways in which other dual language schools embrace the language, culture, values, beliefs, and interaction styles to encourage and increase parent involvement in a bicultural community.

Summary/Conclusion

Extensive research has been conducted on parent school involvement, and its positive outcome in students' academic success (Bennett-Conroy, 2012; Durand, 2011; Gerena, 2011; Kuperminc, 2008; Stetson, Sinclair, & Nix, 2012). However, few studies have examined this concept exclusively among Latino parents in a dual language school, particularly the challenges

and barriers that bicultural parents face in their attempt to be more actively involved in their children's schooling. In addition to coping with the challenges that come with being a minority in the United States, parents from a bicultural community are perceived as lacking interest in their children's education due to the limited involvement of some parents (De Gaetano, 2007; Guo, 2010; Jasis & Ordonez, 2012; Kuperminc, 2008). Whereas, school staff certainly have experience working with children and parents, the values and perspectives of bicultural families are not always incorporated into the school culture (Bourdieu, 1977; Orozco, 2008). Thus, many school administrators and educators struggle to understand the challenges faced by these families, and the unequal opportunities offered by the school system.

The results from this study provide an overview of challenges and barriers faced by linguistically and ethnically parents, as well as their desire to be more involved in their children's education. The active involvement of Latino parents in dual language schools is possible despite the personal and institutional barriers that may exist. In addition, by implementing the recommendations outlined in this chapter, schools can develop new perspectives to combat the distance that exists between bicultural parents and the school. Finally, this study offers guidance for the field of Latino parent involvement and encourages dual language schools to value the language, culture, interests, and dispositions of the Latino community in order to truly give parents' a voice and meaningful contribution in their children's education.

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Appendix A



PRINCIPAL CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Invitation to Participate

Rosa I. Ortiz, a Master's student at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) is conducting a study to identify potential barriers that may hinder linguistic and culturally minority parents' involvement in their child's schooling. Parents whose first language is other than English and/or whose children are enrolled in the school's Dual Language program have been invited to participate in the study; thus, you are being contacted to participate because you are the school's principal of potential participating parents.

Purpose

This study has three main principal objectives:

- To investigate potential barriers that may hinder language minority parents' involvement in education.
- To learn strategies to overcome identified barriers and to build strong relationships and communication between teachers and parents.
- To learn the benefits of overcoming identified barriers and increase active parent involvement in school.

Description of Procedures

You will be interviewed in a conversational style dialogue for approximately 30 minutes. The interview will consist of about 10 open-ended questions. The interview questions will focus on your perspective on parent involvement at the school (primarily Latino parents), the opportunities offered by the school for parent involvement, and strategies that the school can

implement to invite and increase parental involvement in the school and children's education. With your permission, the interview will be audiotaped. The interview will be conducted in your office at a time that is convenient to you.

Risks, Inconveniences, and Safeguards

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. These include:

- The first possible risk is loss of personal or professional time to participate in the interview. To safeguard against this inconvenience, I will schedule your interview at a time that is most convenient to you. However, if you need to reschedule or quit the interview during the session, you can do so at any time. This is strictly voluntary. I understand how important your time is as a principal.
- The second possible risk is concern of confidentiality from interview. To safeguard against this risk, the researcher will keep all data collected from interview confidential and will remain in the researcher's sole possession during the entire process. The analysis and reporting of the results will not identify participants by name or school. The audiotapes will be kept under password protected files.
- The third possible risk is potential breach of confidentiality, if the researcher's audiotape is lost or stolen, there is the potential that unauthorized individuals may access data. To safeguard against this inconvenience, the audiotape will remain in the researcher's sole possession during the entire process. Data typed from interview will be saved in a USB drive. The analysis and reporting of the results will not identify the participant by name, school, or reveal any personal identity. Pseudonyms for the school, and school's staff will be used to minimize the risk of identification.

Confidentiality

Your interview responses will be kept confidential; available only to the researcher for analysis. Documents will not be linked to your name or school address, and there will be no follow-up sessions after the study is completed. The conversations will be about Latino parent involvement in general and not about specific parents' involvement in the school.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You do not have to participate in this study. If you agree to be in this study, but later change your mind, you may withdraw at any time. If the length of the interview becomes inconvenient, you may stop at any time. There are no consequences if you decide not to participate.

Benefits

You will make a contribution to the field of linguistic and culturally minority parents' involvement in school and their children's education. The study will allow education administrators and educators have a greater understanding of potential barriers that may hinder the level of parent involvement in schools. This knowledge will allow them to learn of the best suitable strategies and approaches to invite parents to participate in their child's education and increase parent involvement. You may request a copy of the results.

Economic Considerations/Incentives

For your participation in this study, you will receive a thank you card and \$10 Starbucks gift card.

Questions

This study has been approved by the California State University San Marcos Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions about the study, you may direct those to the researcher, Rosa I. Ortiz, ortiz083@cougras.csusm.edu, 760-587-7477, or the researcher's professor Dr. Ana Hernández, ahernand@csusm.edu, 760.750.8507. Questions about your rights

as a research participant should be directed to the IRB, irb@csusm.edu, 760.750.4029. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

____ I agree to participate in this research study.

____ I agree to have the interview audiotape.

Participant's Name

Date

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

Rosa I. Ortiz

This document has been approved by
the Institutional Review Board at
California State University San Marcos

Appendix B



TEACHER CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Invitation to Participate

Rosa I. Ortiz, a Master's student at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) is conducting a study to identify potential barriers that may hinder linguistic and culturally minority parents' involvement in their child's schooling. You are being contacted to participate because you are the current teacher of a child whose parent's primary language is other than English and/or the teacher of a student in the school's Dual Language program.

Purpose

This study has three main principal objectives:

- To investigate potential barriers that may hinder language minority parents' involvement in education.
- To learn strategies to overcome identified barriers and to build strong relationships and communication between teachers and parents.
- To learn the benefits of overcoming identified barriers and increase active parent involvement in school.

Description of Procedures

You will be interviewed in a conversational style dialogue for approximately 30 minutes. The interview will consist of about 10 open-ended questions. The interview questions will focus on your perspective on parent involvement at the school (primarily Latino parents), the opportunities offered in your classroom for parent involvement, and strategies that the school can implement to invite and increase parental involvement in the school and children's education. With your permission, the interview will be

audiotaped. The interview will be conducted in your classroom, after school, or at a time that is convenient to you.

Risks, Inconveniences, and Safeguards

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. These include:

- The first possible risk is loss of personal or prep time to participate in the interview. To safeguard against this inconvenience, the researcher will schedule your interview at a time that is most convenient to you. However, if you need to reschedule or quit the interview during the session, you can do so at any time. This is strictly voluntary. I understand how important your time is as an educator.
- The second possible risk is intimidation to participate and respond to interview questions since you may feel restricted to speak freely about the school's efforts and/or your own efforts to invite parents to participate or be more involved in the school. To safeguard against this inconvenience, your interview data will be kept confidential, available only to the researcher for analysis purposes. The audiotapes will be kept under password protected files.
- The third possible risk is potential breach of confidentiality, if the researcher's audiotape is lost or stolen, there is the potential that unauthorized individuals may access data. To safeguard against this inconvenience, the audiotape will remain in the researcher's sole possession during the entire process. Data typed from interview will be saved in a USB drive. The analysis and reporting of the results will not identify the participant by name, school, or reveal any personal identity. Pseudonyms for the school, and school's staff will be used to minimize the risk of identification.

Confidentiality

Your interview responses will be kept confidential; available only to the researcher for analysis. Documents will not be linked to your name or school address, and there will be no follow-up sessions after the study is completed. The conversations will be about parent involvement in general and not about your opinions on specific parents' involvement in your classroom.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You do not have to participate in this study. If you agree to be in this study, but later change your mind, you may withdraw at any time. If the length of the interview becomes inconvenient, you may stop at any time. There are no consequences if you decide not to participate.

Benefits

You will make a contribution to the field of linguistic and culturally minority parents' involvement in school and their children's education. The study will allow education administrators and educators have a greater understanding of potential barriers that may hinder the level of parent involvement in schools. This knowledge will allow them to learn of the best suitable strategies and approaches to invite parents to participate in their child's education and increase parent involvement. You may request a copy of the results.

Economic Considerations/Incentives

For your participation in this study, you will receive a thank you card and a gift bag that will include school supplies for your classroom, this may include whiteboard markers, pens, paper, stapler, etc.

Questions

This study has been approved by the California State University San Marcos Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions about the study, you may direct those to the researcher, Rosa I. Ortiz, ortiz083@cougras.csusm.edu, 760-587-7477, or the researcher's professor Dr. Ana Hernández, ahernand@csusm.edu, 760.750.8507. Questions about your rights as a research participant should be directed to the IRB, irb@csusm.edu, 760.750.4029. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

____ I agree to participate in this research study.

____ I agree to have the interview audiotape.

Participant's Name

Date

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Name

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Rosa I. Ortiz

This document has been approved by
the Institutional Review Board at
California State University San Marcos

Appendix C



PARENTS CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH:

Invitation to participate

Rosa I. Ortiz, a Master's student at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) is conducting a study to identify potential barriers/challenges that may play an important role in the level of parents' involvement in their children's school and education. You are being invited to participate because you are a parent whose primary language is other than English and/or you are the parent of a student in the school's Dual Language program.

Purpose

This study has three main goals:

- To investigate potential barriers that may play an important role in the level of parents' involvement in their children's school and education
- To learn strategies to increase parent involvement and improve teachers-parents' communication and relationship
- To learn of the benefits of active parent involvement in the schools

Description of Procedures

If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to complete a survey that will be used to get an idea of your current level of parent involvement, and your relationship with your child's school. You can also be asked to participate in an interview. If asked, you will be interviewed, individually, in an informal style interview for approximately 30 minutes. The

interview questions are meant to learn about your opinion on parents' involvement in children's school and education, the ways you participate in your child's school and education, and your relationship and communication with school's staff. The interview will be audio-taped with your permission. The interview will be conducted in the school's book room, after school, or at another time that is convenient to you.

Risks, Inconveniences, and Safeguards

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. These include:

- The first possible risk is loss of personal time to complete the survey. To safeguard against this inconvenience, you will have 7- 10 days to return survey. The survey is short and will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. Another risk for parents who participate in the interview is loss of more personal time. To safeguard against this inconvenience, I will schedule the interview at a time that is most convenient to you. However, if you need to reschedule or quit the interview during our session, you can do so at any time. This is strictly voluntary.
- The second possible risk is intimidation to participate and respond to interview questions since you may feel restricted to speak freely and/ or concerned that your parenting skills may be judged. To safeguard against this inconvenience, your interview data will be kept confidential, available only to the researcher for analysis purposes. The data will be used to analyze the study's main research question; parents' involvement in their children's school and education not to analyzed your individual parenting skills. The audiotapes will be kept under password protected files.
- The third possible risk is potential breach of confidentiality, if the researcher's audiotape is lost or stolen, there is the potential that unauthorized individuals may access data. To safeguard against this inconvenience, the audiotape will remain only in the researcher's ownership during the entire process. Data typed from interview will be saved in a USB drive. The study's results will not identify the participant by name, school, or reveal any personal

identity. Another risk of confidentiality is the invitation to participate and distribution of surveys to parents in the school setting because there is the potential risk that other parents may become aware of certain parents' being invited to participate. To safeguard against this inconvenience, the researcher will speak to parents individually and provide invitation to participate and survey in the room located next to the classroom. This will make potential participating parents stand out less.

Benefits

By participating in this study, you will become more familiar with your actual involvement in your child's school and education. You will also learn about potential barriers/challenges that may be responsible for the level of parents' involvement and perhaps find that you share some of the same barriers that other parents' faced when trying to volunteer and participate in their children's school. Your participation in the study will also help teachers learn of the reasons for the various levels of parent involvement and the best strategies to invite parents to be more involved in their children's school and education.

Confidentiality

Your participation in this study will be kept confidential. The study's findings will not include any personal information.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You do not have to participate in this study. If you agree to be in this study, but later change your mind, you may withdraw at any time. If the length of the interview becomes inconvenient, you may stop at any time. There are no consequences if you decide not to participate.

Incentives

For your participation in this study, every participating parent will receive a raffle ticket, the winning ticket will receive a gift bag that will include school supplies (pencils, paper, scissors, markers) for your child.

Questions

This study has been approved by the California State University San Marcos Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions about the study, you may direct those to the researcher, Rosa I. Ortiz, ortiz083@cougras.csusm.edu, 760-587-7477, or the researcher’s professor Dr. Ana Hernández, ahernand@csusm.edu, 760.750.8507. Questions about your rights as a research participant should be directed to the IRB, irb@csusm.edu, 760.750.4029. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

___ I agree to participate in this research study

___ I agree to have the interview audiotape

Participant’s Name

Date

Participant’s Signature

Researcher’s Signature

Date

This document has been approved by
the Institutional Review Board at
California State University San Marcos



Parent Consent Form (Spanish)

Invitación para participar y propósito del Proyecto:

Rosa I. Ortiz una estudiante de Maestría en la Universidad Estatal de California San Marcos (CSUSM) conducirá un proyecto para identificar barreras potenciales que pueden ser responsables por el nivel de involucración de padres de familia en la escuela y la educación escolar de su hijo/a. Han sido invitados a participar en esta investigación porque ustedes son padres Latinos y su primer idioma no es inglés o porque son padres de estudiantes cuales están en clases de doble inmersión.

Objetivo:

Este estudio tiene tres objetivos principales:

- Identificar barreras potenciales que pueden ser responsables por el nivel de involucración de padres de familia en la educación escolar de sus hijos/as
- Aprender estrategias para aumentar la participación de padres de familia y formar mejor relaciones y comunicación entre educadores y padres.
- Aprender sobre los beneficios de la participación activa de padres de familia en las escuelas.

Procedimiento:

Si usted está de acuerdo en participar en este estudio, se le pedirá que conteste una encuesta que es sobre su nivel actual de participación en la educación y escuela de su hijo/a y su relación con el personal de la escuela. También es posible que se le pida participar en una entrevista. La entrevista de estilo conversacional será basada en preguntas más específicas sobre su opinión

acerca de la participación de padres de familia en la escuela y la educación de sus hijos/as, las maneras que participa en la educación y escuela de su hijo/a, y su relación y comunicación con el personal de la escuela. Usted será entrevistado/a individualmente, la entrevista tomará aproximadamente 30 minutos para responder y con su permiso será audio grabada. El lugar de la entrevista sería en el cuarto de lectura de la escuela de su hijo/a después de escuela o en otro tiempo determinado a su conveniencia.

Riesgos, inconvenientes, y protección:

No hay riesgos en esta investigación que sean mayores. Algunos riesgos incluyen:

- El primer riesgo posible es pérdida de tiempo personal para llenar la encuesta. Para asegurar esta inconveniencia, usted tendrá 7-10 días para poder completar y devolver la encuesta. La encuesta es corta y le tomará aproximadamente 10 a 15 minutos para completar. Para padres que participen en la entrevista, otro riesgo posible es pérdida adicional de tiempo personal para responder las preguntas de la entrevista. Para asegurar esta inconveniencia, el tiempo de la entrevista será determinado a su conveniencia. Usted tiene el derecho de terminar o continuar la entrevista en otro momento más conveniente para usted. Su participación es completamente voluntaria.
- El segundo riesgo posible es intimidación de responder a las preguntas de la entrevista porque tal vez usted no se sienta seguro/a de hablar libremente o esté preocupado/a de que vaya ser juzgada por su participación actual en la escuela de su hijo/a. Para asegurar esta inconveniencia, la información de la entrevista es completamente confidencial. La información colectada estará solo en la posesión de la investigadora y será utilizada solamente para objetivos de análisis. La información será utilizada para analizar la pregunta de investigación; participación de padres en la escuela y educación de sus hijos. La información no será utilizada para evaluar su participación individual en la escuela. Las grabaciones se mantendrán en archivos protegidos con contraseña.

- El tercer riesgo posible es la preocupación de seguridad sobre la información que usted comparta con la investigadora. Para asegurar esta inconveniencia, grabaciones estarán solo en la posesión de la investigadora durante todo el proceso de investigación. Los datos escritos a máquina de la entrevista serán guardados en un USB. El análisis y el reportaje de los resultados no identificarán al participante por nombre, escuela, o revelarán cualquier identidad personal. Otro riesgo de seguridad es la invitación de participar y la entrega de encuestas en la escuela, existe la posibilidad que otros padres se enteren de su participación. Para asegurar esta inconveniencia, usted será invitado/a participar y se le entregará la encuesta en el cuarto localizado al lado del salón de clases, esto será más privado y no alrededor de otros padres.

Beneficios:

El beneficio del estudio para usted sería aprender sobre su actual participación en la escuela y educación escolar de su hijo/a. También, aprenderá sobre barreras potenciales que pueden ser responsables por el nivel de involucración de padres de familia y tal vez se pueda relacionar con algunas barreras similares que otros padres han tenido en el pasado. Su participación también ayudaría a los maestros/as comprender las razones por los diferentes niveles de participación de padres de familia y aprender estrategias para aumentar e invitar a padres que estén más involucrados en la educación de su hijo/a.

Confidencialidad:

Su participación en este proyecto de investigación es completamente confidencial. Cualquier identificación personal será omitida para que usted no pueda ser identificado en los resultados del estudio.

Participación voluntaria:

La participación en este proyecto de investigación es voluntaria y usted podrá dejar de participar cuando desee, sin ninguna consecuencia negativa. Si el tiempo de la entrevista es muy largo,

usted podrá pararme en cualquier momento, usted tiene el derecho a no contestar preguntas en la encuesta o entrevista.

Incentivos:

Como agradecimiento por su participación, cada padre de familia recibirá un boleto para participar en una rifa, el boleto ganador recibirá una bolsa sorpresa que incluirá materiales escolares (lápices, papel, tijeras, marcadores) para su hijo/a.

Preguntas:

Este estudio ha sido aprobado por la Junta Directiva Institucional (IRB) de la Universidad Estatal de California San Marcos (CSUSM) (un comité universitario de protección a participantes en proyectos de investigación). Si tiene preguntas o desea mayor información acerca de este proyecto, por favor comuníquese con Rosa I. Ortiz, ortiz083@cougras.csusm.edu, 760-587-7477 o Dra. Ana Hernández ahernand@csusm.edu, (760) 750-8507. Si tiene preguntas acerca de los derechos como participante en esta investigación, puede dirigirlas a la Junta Directiva Institucional (IRB) al (760) 750-4029. Se le otorgará una copia de este formulario.

___ Estoy de acuerdo en participar en este estudio.

___ Doy mi permiso para ser grabado/a durante la entrevista.

Nombre del participante

Fecha

Firma del participante

Firma de la investigadora /Rosa I. Ortiz

Fecha

Appendix D



Parents' survey regarding their involvement in their children's school and education.

Thank you parents for taking the time to complete this survey. As a parent, you play an important role in the academic success of your child, as well as, the school's overall success. The survey questions are to become familiar with your current level of involvement in your child's school and education, your relationship with school's staff and how welcomed you feel in your child's school establishment. Data is completely confidential. Your opinions are valued.

Family information: Please indicate your answers with an (x) or write in answers in the lines provided for the questions that required specific information.

Indicate who is completing this survey:

Father Mother Other: (Specify) _____

Indicate your marital status:

Married Divorced Single Other: (Specify) _____

Indicate your current employment situation:

Unemployed Hired Profession: (Specify) _____

Indicate your education level:

Primary Education Secondary Education

Bachelor's Higher Education (Specify) _____

For the following questions indicate with an (x) the box that best reflects your answer.

	Frequently	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Uncertain
I help my child do his/her homework and/or projects						
I feel confident helping my child with school assignments						
The school principal and teachers are easily accessible to the parents						
The school offers opportunities that allow parents to meet and have conversations with the school staff						
I feel welcomed and valued in my child's school						
The school's office personnel offer polite and helpful assistance in Spanish						

	Frequently	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Uncertain
I feel secured and confident expressing opinions and asking questions about my child's education and/or academic success in school						
Information about the school is provided in Spanish (letters, announcements, etc.)						
Information about the upcoming school events is regularly provided						
I assist parents' meetings/conferences						
The school invites community members to participate and collaborate in school events						
Parents are invited to share experiences, skills, and strengths to contribute to students' learning						

	Frequently	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Uncertain
Parents receive information on how to join parents' committees						
The school offers various ways and opportunities for parents to volunteer and get involved in the school						
Parents are informed of who and where to go to if they want to volunteer and participate in the school						

¡Thank you for your collaboration!



Parent Survey (Spanish)

Encuesta para padres sobre la

participación familiar en la educación de sus hijos y en la escuela.

Padres, Gracias por tomarse el tiempo de completar la encuesta. Usted, como padre, tiene un papel importante en el éxito escolar de su hijo/a y contribuir al éxito de la escuela. Las preguntas están destinadas para conocer su participación actual en la escuela y educación de su hijo/a, su relación con el personal de la escuela y que tan bienvenido/a se siente en el establecimiento escolar de su hijo/a. Por favor, responda con sinceridad al siguiente cuestionario. Los datos son completamente confidenciales. Su opinión es valorada y aprecio enormemente su colaboración

Datos Familiares: Por favor, indique con una (x) y escriba en las líneas donde se le pide que indique información específica:

Indique quien está completando la encuesta

Padre Madre Otro: (indíquelo) _____

Indique su actual estado civil

Casado/a Divorciado/a Soltero/a Otro: (indíquelo) _____

Indique su actual situación laboral

Desempleado/a Contratado/a Profesión: (indíquelo) _____

Indique sus estudios que posee:

Primarios Medios (indíquelos) _____

_____ Bachillerato _____ Superiores (indíquelos) _____

Para las siguientes preguntas indique con una (x) las respuestas que mejor reflejen su respuesta:

	Siempre	La mayoría del tiempo	Algunas veces	Rara la vez	Nunca	No estoy seguro/a
Ayudo a mi hijo/a hacer tarea o trabajos de la escuela						
Me siento seguro/a cuando le ayudo a mi hijo/a hacer trabajos escolares						
La directora y el profesor o la profesora de mi hijo/a se muestran disponibles y fácilmente accesibles para los padres						
La escuela da oportunidades que me permite encontrarme y conversar con el personal de la escuela						
Me siento aceptado/a y valorado/a en la escuela de mi hijo/a						
Recibo ayuda cordial y en español en la oficina de la escuela.						

	Siempre	La mayoría del tiempo	Algunas veces	Rara la vez	Nunca	No estoy seguro/a
Me siento seguro/a de expresar libremente mis opiniones o hacer preguntas sobre la educación escolar de mi hijo/a						
Recibo notificaciones de la escuela en español (cartas, noticias, etc.).						
He recibido notificaciones regulares acerca de los siguientes eventos escolares						
Vengo a las juntas de padres cuando me invita la escuela.						
La escuela invita a los representantes de organizaciones comunitarias a integrarse y participaren las comisiones de varios eventos escolares						
La escuela me ha invitado a ofrecer mis habilidades, experiencias, fortalezas para contribuir en el aprendizaje de los alumnos						

	Siempre	La mayoría del tiempo	Algunas veces	Rara la vez	Nunca	No estoy seguro/a
He recibido información acerca de cómo unirse a organizaciones para padres de la escuela						
He recibido propuestas de diferente maneras de ofrecerme como voluntario/a para la escuela de mi hijo/a						
Sé a dónde dirigirme y con quien hablar si deseo participar como voluntario/a en la escuela de mi hijo/a						

¡Muchas gracias por su colaboración!

Appendix E



Parents' Interview regarding their involvement in their children's school and education.

The interview questions are guided to gain a better understanding of parents' current involvement in their children's school and education and to analyze their opinions about the school's staff efforts to involve Latino families in the school. Data is completely confidential.

Parent Interviews Questions

1. In general, who helps your child with school projects, at home? Why?
2. How important is parent involvement in children's school and education? What about Latino parents' involvement? Why?
3. How involved were you in your child's education when he/she was in kindergarten compared to sixth grade? Why?
4. In what ways does your child's teacher allow you to get involved and participate in the classroom?
5. How is your communication with the school principal? And your child's teacher? Why?

6. In what ways has your involvement in school change, if any, under the supervision of the new school principal? Why?
7. What opportunities does the school offer for Latino families to get involved in their children's education and the school?
8. Do you participate in any parent committees? If yes, in which committees do you participate?
9. How actively do you participate with other Latino parents in school events? Please provide examples. (Cultural events, celebrations, etc.)
10. How welcomed do you feel in your child's school? In meetings? Parents' conferences? If you do not feel welcomed, what are some reasons you may feel unwelcomed?
11. As a parent, have you experienced any challenges when you have tried to participate/contribute in your child's school and education? If yes, what are some barriers and/or challenges that you have faced in the past?
12. In your opinion, what are some barriers and/or challenge that other Latino parents faced when trying to participate in their children's school and education?
13. In what ways can the school's staff improve their communication with Latino parents and improve Latino families' involvement in the school?



Parent Interviews Questions (Spanish)

Entrevista para padres sobre su participación familiar en la educación de sus hijos y en la escuela

Las preguntas de esta entrevista están destinadas a conocer la participación actual de padres en la escuela y la educación de sus hijos y analizar sus opiniones acerca de los esfuerzos del personal de la escuela para involucrar padres de familia. Los datos son completamente confidenciales.

Preguntas de entrevista para los padres

1. ¿Por lo general quien ayuda a su hijo/a con proyectos escolares? ¿Por qué?
2. ¿Qué tan importante es el involucramiento de los padres de familia en la escuela y educación de sus hijos/as? ¿Qué tal de padres Latinos? ¿Por qué?
3. ¿Qué tan involucrado/a estaba usted en la educación de su hijo/a en kínder comparado ahora que su hijo está en sexto grado? ¿Por qué?
4. ¿De qué maneras le permite el profesor o profesora de su hijo/a involucrarse en el salón de su hijo/a?
5. ¿Cómo es su comunicación con la directora de la escuela? ¿Profesor o profesora de su hijo/a? ¿Por qué?

6. ¿De qué manera ha cambiado su participación en la escuela de su hijo/a bajo la supervisión de la nueva directora? ¿Por qué?
7. ¿Cuáles son algunas maneras y oportunidades que la escuela ofrece para que padres Latinos se involucren en la educación de sus hijos?
8. ¿Participa en comités de padres o organizaciones comunitarias/de padres? Si la respuesta es sí, ¿En cuáles comités participa? ¿En cuáles organizaciones?
9. ¿Qué tan activamente participa usted en eventos escolares con otros padres Latinos? Por favor, provee unos ejemplos. (votaciones, actos culturales, fiestas, etc.)
10. ¿Qué tan bienvenida se siente usted en la escuela de su hijo/a? en juntas, conferencias de padres? Si no se siente bienvenida, ¿Por qué? ¿Cuáles son algunas razones
11. ¿Como padre de familia, anteriormente, usted ha enfrentado obstáculos o problemas para poderse involucrar en la educación de su hijo/a? Si su respuesta es sí, ¿Cuáles han sido algunos de los obstáculos o problemas?
12. ¿En su opinión, cuáles son algunos obstáculos probables que otros padres Latinos enfrentan al tratar de involucrarse en la educación y escuela de su hijo/a?
13. ¿De qué manera podrían el personal de la escuela ayudar a mejorar la comunicación con los padres de familia y mejorar su involucramiento?

Appendix F



Principal Interview

The interview questions are guided to learn about the principal opinions on the level of language minority parents' involvement in their children's schooling and the school. The primary objective is to analyze school's staff current strategies and approaches to invite parents to participate in the school and be involve in their children's' education. All data collected is completely confidential.

Interview Questions

1. What's your educational background? Degrees? Education in Multicultural Education?
Any education on working with parents/families?
2. How many years as a principal? For how long at Sunshine Elementary School?
3. How would you define parent involvement? How important is it to you? What about Latino parent involvement?
4. Have you noticed any change in the level of Latino parent involvement since you started working at Sunshine Elementary School? If so, How? What might be the reason for that change?
5. What ways and approaches do you currently used to invite language minority parents to participate? Tell me about ELAC.
6. What are the most effective ways that you have found to involve Latino parents in the education of their children?

7. In your opinion, what are the most important ways that Latino parents should be involved in their children's schooling?
8. How is your relationship with Latino parents? Do language minority parents frequently approach you to initiate conversation, ask questions etc.? Explain.
9. In your opinion, what are the reasons that some language minority parents are not involved in their children's schooling?
10. What specific challenges have you found in your attempt to involve Latino parents to actively participate in school? What differences do you see compared with other parents?
11. In what ways can education administrators and school staff encourage more Latino parent communication and involvement?

Appendix G



Teacher Interviews

The interview questions are guided to learn about the educators' opinions on the level of language minority parents' involvement in their children's schooling and the school. The primary objective is to analyze school's staff current strategies and approaches to invite parents to participate in the school and be involve in their children's' education. All data collected is completely confidential.

Interview Questions

1. What's your educational background? Degrees? Education in Multicultural Education? Any education on working with parents/families?
2. How many years have you been teaching? For how long at Sunshine Elementary School?
3. How would you define parent involvement? How important is it? What about Latino parent involvement?
4. What ways and approaches do you currently use to involve parents in your classroom? What about Latino parents?
5. What are the most effective ways that you have found involve Latino parents in the education of their children?
6. In your opinion, what are the most important ways that Latino parents should be involved in their children's schooling?
7. How is your communication with Latino parents? Do you communicate with Latino parents via notes, phone, email, in person? What are some of the reasons you communicate with parents?

8. In your opinion, what are the reasons that some language minority parents are not involved in their children's schooling?
9. What specific challenges have you found in your attempt to involve Latino parents? What differences do you see compared with other parents?
10. In what ways can education administrators and school staff encourage more Latino parent communication and involvement?