

Parental involvement in children's education: considerations for school counselors working with Latino immigrant families

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Abstract:

The Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) model of parents' involvement in their children's schools has recently been applied to Latino immigrant families. This article reviews that literature and then describes culturally appropriate strategies for school counselors to work with this population, focusing on (a) teacher and counselor invitations to the family, (b) parent or partnership-focused role construction, and (c) flexible formats for involvement that respect families with limited time. The article includes a sample Latino Family Night program.

Keywords: Counseling | Education | Outreach | Latino

Article:

Parental involvement is a powerful influence on educational outcomes of children. Hill and Tyson (2009) stated, "family-school relations and parental involvement in education have been identified as a way to close demographic gaps in achievement and maximize students' potential" (p. 740). Research has shown positive associations between parental involvement and student grades, rates of participation in advanced courses, lower dropout rates, motivation toward school work, and valuing of education (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Parents can model effective learning behaviors, reinforce productive choices, and help set future goals such as college attendance (Bergerson, 2009; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandier, 1995). Communication between families and schools may promote social adjustment in addition to academic achievement (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994). Facilitation of parental involvement is beneficial to the schools as well as to the students; thus, many school counselors are increasing their outreach to parents (Bryan & Griffin, 2010; Walker, Shenker, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2010).

However, typical definitions of school-based parental involvement may not reflect the full range of activities and strategies used by families (De Gaetano, 2007). Middle- to upper-class families often are able to work within the school's framework by participating in traditional parent involvement opportunities (e.g., Parent-Teacher Association meetings, volunteering in the schools, or monitoring homework at home). However, other families have barriers to participation due to economic, linguistic, cultural, or life circumstances (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991). For example, Latino families who immigrate to the United States for economic reasons may be working several jobs, attempting to acquire English literacy, and just starting to learn about the structure of the U.S. educational system (Mena, 2011).

Latino children represented 21% of elementary and secondary school students in 2007, with 27% of those children living in poverty and 68% of them living in families where parents had a high school diploma or less (Aud, Fox, & KewalRamani, 2010). Although the majority of Latinos in the U.S. are native-born (62.9% in 2009), immigrant Latino families may have greater needs as they adjust to a new culture, new types of work and school, and perhaps a new language (Dockterman, 2011; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010). Some of the cultural values that are held in common by many immigrant Latinos include *respeto*, which includes high esteem for adults and professionals in the community, and *familismo*, or emphasis on strong ties among immediate and extended family members (Villalba, 2007). Thus, a Latino immigrant parent who appears to be uninvolved with the school is more likely to be following his or her cultural script, which includes respecting the authority of the school to do its work while maintaining active involvement in the life of the child at home (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991, 2004). Indeed, it could be viewed as disrespectful to make suggestions or interfere with the work of the school (Walker, Ice, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandier, 2011).

Immigrant families simultaneously carry tremendous hopes about U.S. schools and value education as a tool for advancement (Behnke, Piercy, & Diversi, 2004; Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2009; Suarez-Orozco, Onaga, & Lardemelle, 2010), but may not be prepared to initiate or respond to school-based invitations for involvement. Some immigrant Latino parents have described a bidirectional gap in understanding between themselves and school personnel, not having a context for comprehending U.S. educational policies and practices (Villalba, Brunelli, Lewis, & Orfanedes, 2007). Schools also may have exclusionary practices such as monolingual communications or limited attempts at outreach to Spanish-speaking parents (Delgado-Gaitan, 2004). Other barriers to school-based Latino parental involvement could include concerns of undocumented families, single parent or non-resident parent families, lack of understanding of school expectations, lack of bilingual school personnel, lack of transportation, or lack of confidence in ability to assist in academic tasks (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; Henry, Plunkett, & Sands, 2011; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Smith-Adcock, Daniels, Lee, Villalba, & Indelicato, 2006). Without passage of a national DREAM Act, access to education beyond high school is costly and often unattainable for undocumented students (Flores, 2009). These factors may discourage Latino parental involvement in the educational system.

The literature reflects that some school personnel take a "deficit-oriented" view of Latino parental involvement, assuming these parents lack the interest, time, skill, English fluency, or knowledge to become involved in their children's education (De Gaetano, 2007; Walker et al., 2011, p. 411). A more comprehensive view of the ways that parents can demonstrate their support for education shows that Latino immigrant parents do involve themselves in their children's learning (Mena, 2011). Although school-based strategies are more visible to teachers, school counselors, and administrators, these parents may be practicing home-based strategies (Marinez-Lora & Quintana, 2009; Walker et al., 2011). One study found that home-based monitoring and discussion of educational expectations within Latino families improved students' intentions to complete the school year (Mena, 2011). Latino parents may offer moral support and encouragement, as those activities play to their cultural strengths and are available to them even if they are still acquiring English or do not understand the structure of the school curriculum, for example (Auerbach, 2007). Therefore, instead of describing Latino parents as "not involved," a more accurate statement would be that their style and rate of school-based involvement may differ from other groups.

Nevertheless, making efforts to expand Latino parents' school-based involvement is important. The ASCA National Model (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2012) recognizes the importance of a school counselor's involvement with parents as part of the indirect services that promote positive student outcomes. Thus, the purpose of the current article is to aid school counselors in their efforts to increase parental involvement of Latino immigrant families. First, the authors describe a well-established model that identifies critical elements of parental involvement and strategies to enhance it (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Second, they use that model as a framework for highlighting the types of outreach that could be more effective for Latino parents and families. A strength of the current article is its integration of a theoretical model, empirical tests of the model with Latino families, and a suggested best practice based in that literature for promoting parental involvement with this population.

A MODEL OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Given the importance of parental engagement with their children's schools (Hill & Tyson, 2009), special outreach is needed for parents who may be unsure of how to initiate involvement (Perna & Titus, 2005). Hoover-Dempsey and Sandier (1995) synthesized theory and research to identify key factors that govern why parents choose to become involved in their children's schools. The revised model (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005), which this article will refer to as the HDS model, includes five levels: (a) parental motivations and perceptions regarding involvement and school responsiveness, leading to various types of involvement; (b) learning mechanisms utilized by parents during involvement; (c) students' perceptions of parents' involvement; (d) students' attributes; and (e) students' outcomes. This article focuses on the first level of the model because it is most central to the initial decision to become involved. This level comprises parents' motivational beliefs (including role construction and sense of efficacy for involvement), the impact of invitations to involvement from others, and the school's ability to be responsive to the

life context of the family. Although the original theory was not centered on the experiences of Latino immigrant parents, it did include key contextual variables (e.g., demands on parents' time that complicate involvement with schools) that are relevant to the population. The model has been tested with Latino families in a small number of studies, which the authors review.

Parent Motivation

The first construct addressed in the first level of the HDS model is parent motivation, which includes role construction and efficacy beliefs (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Parents must believe that school-based involvement is important and necessary to their role as parents and that they will be able to make a positive contribution to their children's success. Parental role beliefs are influenced by the traditions of the groups to which the parent belongs (e.g., extended family, coworkers, church groups) as well as cultural expectations, and may differ by gender and socioeconomic status. Latino immigrant parents with traditional cultural values may assume that school-based involvement is not a part of their role and instead assume that this is the teacher's role (Snell, Miguel, & East, 2009). Indeed, studies of the HDS model with Latino families have shown that partnership-focused role construction was associated with home-based parental involvement (Walker et al., 2011), while parent-focused role construction influenced school-based involvement (Marinez-Lora & Quintana, 2009). For Latino parents to become active in schools, research indicates that they need to view involvement as their responsibility, not as a task shared with the school personnel. This stance would involve a cultural shift in thinking.

Parents with high self-efficacy for school-based involvement believe they will be able to master new tasks and demands, such as understanding the curriculum and advising their children about which courses fit their goals, communicating effectively with school personnel, or identifying and meeting school expectations (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Other groups of parents, such as those with little formal education themselves or those in low income brackets, may doubt their ability to assist their children with these tasks (National Postsecondary Education Cooperative, 2007). Parental efficacy predicted Latinos' home-based involvement in one study, but not school-based involvement (Marinez-Lora & Quintana, 2009). Okagaki et al. (1995) observed that Mexican American parental efficacy for helping children with school related tasks was stronger among parents of high-achieving children. This example suggests that lower student achievement can impact parents' level of efficacy beliefs, causing discouragement for further involvement. The relationship of Latino parental efficacy beliefs to school-based involvement is not yet clear.

School Invitations

The second construct in level one of the HDS model is invitations (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Parents must believe that the schools and their students expect and want them to be involved in the educational process. Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) underscored that parents would need to receive both general invitations from the school and specific invitations from teachers (the authors of the current study would add school counselors). Empirical studies

emphasize that invitations from the school are significant predictors of Latino parents' school-based involvement (Marinez-Lora & Quintana, 2009;

Walker et al., 2011). In addition, teacher invitations mediated the relationship between status variables (e.g., race/ethnicity, family income) and overall involvement (Marinez-Lora & Quintana, 2009). Thus, invitations received stronger research support as a critical variable in Latino parental involvement than did efficacy beliefs or role construction. Past literature (Stanley, Juhnke, & Purkey, 2004) has described intentional invitations as important tools for school counselors and this will be explored further in the implications section.

Family Context

The third construct in level one of the HDS model revolves around the life context of the family. Life context issues are usually barriers to parental involvement that need to be acknowledged by schools, including low socioeconomic status; parents' knowledge, skills, time, and energy; and family culture (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Researchers have identified Latino parent perception of time and energy as a relevant predictor of school-based involvement (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2007; Walker et al., 2011). However, parents' knowledge was not a significant predictor, contrary to popular assumptions about immigrant parents. Green et al. (2007) studied a sample that was 25% Latino, and they found that parental efficacy, invitations from the child, and time and energy were significant predictors of both school and home-based involvement for their participants as a whole (controlling for socioeconomic status, but not disaggregating by race/ethnicity). Marinez-Lora and Quintana (2009) wrote that "race and income influenced parents' perceptions of teacher invitations, which in turn influenced parental involvement practices" (p. 221). Thus, demographic variables have some influence on school-based involvement, but perhaps not always in a direct fashion.

Tests of the HDS model (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005) with Latino immigrants highlight the perception of limited time and energy as well as the impact of invitational communication from the school. The HDS model does not address the role of school counselors; however, it is reasonable to speculate that school counselor invitations would function in a manner similar to teacher invitations. The literature also paints a slightly mixed picture of how role construction and parental efficacy function; however, the HDS model was at least partially supported for use with Latino immigrants in each case.

IMPLICATIONS FOR OUTREACH BY SCHOOL COUNSELORS

The literature provides some suggestions to increase the chances that Latino immigrant parents will engage in school-based involvement. School counselors can show leadership by engaging with these key stakeholders in order to improve outcomes for the students (ASCA, 2012). Based on the literature to date, school counselors are encouraged to focus on (a) invitations from the school to the family, (b) parent or partnership-focused role construction, and (c) flexible formats for involvement that respect families with limited time or energy. Walker, Shenker, and Hoover-

Dempsey (2010) also made some general suggestions for school counselors stemming from the HDS model, some of which could be modified for use with Latino immigrant families. Delgado-Gaitan (2004) provided some recommendations regarding communication with Latino families, starting with elimination of any barriers such as monolingual communication or culturally inappropriate styles. For example, respect is of utmost importance in cultures that are hierarchical, and Latino immigrant parents appreciate being received in the school with warmth, but also formality.

Teacher and School Counselor Invitations

Although the HDS model only considers how teacher invitations to involvement might influence parents, Walker, Shenker, and Hoover-Dempsey (2010) argued that school counselors have more prolonged contact with a family over several academic years and are in an even better position to invite parent participation. School counselors can function in their consultant role to strengthen teachers' and administrators' ability to extend appropriate invitations to Latino immigrant families. School counselors also can advocate for these vulnerable families and perform direct outreach themselves as part of comprehensive school counseling programming (ASCA, 2012). Although student-based outcomes are the focal points, the delivery of responsive services to important collaborators such as parents is an appropriate part of a school counselor's role.

The HDS model can help school counselors consider how invitational communication must also take into account role construction and family context, the three constructs making up the first level of the model (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Effective invitations to Latino families would need to build upon existing parental roles related to home-based involvement, expand role construction to school-based involvement, and be understanding of barriers related to communication, transportation, time, or trust. Invitations to exclusively Spanish-speaking Latino parents should be bilingual and should include information about access to interpreters for meetings or events. The invitations could include appreciation for past efforts made by the parents, statements about the school's valuing of parental involvement, or personal stories about parents who have become leaders in this regard (Auerbach, 2004; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). School counselors should view these invitations as the beginning of sustained relationship building, to be congruent with the Latino cultural preference for having closeness and trust in working relationships (Auerbach).

For example, school counselors can invite individual Latino parents or small groups to meet with them (and an interpreter, if needed) to model learning assistance and study skills, demonstrating language or behaviors parents can use in the home to encourage academic, career, and personal development. Such an invitation allows parents to sustain their role construction for home-based involvement while building new capacity and efficacy for greater school-based involvement. School counselors also could help prepare parents for parent-teacher conference invitations by engaging in a role play or providing written suggestions about what to expect (Walker, Shenker, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2010). This is even more vital for immigrant families who may be

unfamiliar with the structure of a conference or unsure if it is appropriate to ask questions of a teacher. School counselors also may organize workshops for Latino families that are led by parent peers with older children around topics such as transitions from one grade level to the next, an introduction to upcoming testing, or future curriculum choices and their importance for college and career readiness. These conversations build relationships among parents and increase their self-efficacy for involvement, which helps them view the school system as a welcoming place and allows the school counselor to be a key resource and a central source of invitations.

Due to these role construction, efficacy, and life context issues, Latino immigrant parents may not feel prepared to respond to invitations from the school unless (a) they understand what is expected of them, (b) the purpose and importance of the meeting is clear, and (c) the timing and structure is flexible. The success of these invitations may depend on the schools' efforts to understand the context of students' families, especially those who are traditionally disenfranchised. This provides an opportunity for school counselors to practice the American School Counselor Association themes of advocacy, leadership, collaboration, and systemic change and provide a corrective learning experience for these families (ASCA, 2012). Families who perceive or experience discrimination may become less trusting of the school, which requires school counselor leadership to identify the source of the negative perception, advocate within the school for equitable treatment of Latino families, and collaborate with teachers and administrators to reduce any instances of discriminatory behavior, thus promoting systemic change.

Parent Role Construction

As described previously, Latino immigrant parents may not view school-based involvement as part of their role for several reasons. Families with limited personal experience in formal educational settings have not had the opportunity to construct the role of parent as educational advocate (Auerbach, 2007). One strategy is to elicit information about how families interacted with the school in the country of origin. Dotson-Blake (2010) provided a compelling example about how fully engaged parents were with the educational systems in Mexico, and yet felt unable to replicate that experience upon arrival in the U.S. In Mexico, families believed that schools were an essential part of maintaining a strong community and culture and that parents should have an active role. Mexican families in the U.S. felt that schools were focused on academics and individuality, and thus they were unclear about what role they could play (Dotson-Blake). If school counselors can learn about parents' preferences for contributing and help them implement those strategies, it could counter some of the isolation and confusion experienced by immigrant parents. This could mean creating a new structure for involvement, such as a Latino parent advisory council, but it would build on the natural interest parents have in their children and provide for participation and role construction (for an example, see Delgado-Gaitan, 1991). ASCA (2012) encourages a representative parent advisory council as part of an effective management system. School counselors could help counteract any existing stereotypes

about immigrant parents by highlighting the contributions of Latino families and building role construction for further partnership.

Flexible Formats

Previous literature addressing low-income families and African American families (Holcomb-McCoy, 2010; Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010; Van Velsor & Orozco, 2007) has encouraged school counselors to consider flexible opportunities for parent involvement. Suggestions have included weekend or evening office hours and community-based locations for meetings.

Delgado-Gaitan (2004) also encouraged teachers and school counselors to think about informal opportunities for communication, such as when children are dropped off or picked up from school, or via brief telephone check-ins. Parents who have access to computers or smart phones could also receive electronic newsletters or brief text message updates. Visits to the family home can be time consuming in a school counselor's busy day, but parent liaison staff, community volunteers or leaders, ESL teachers, or cultural brokers within the school can be recruited to minimize the burden (Mitchell & Bryan, 2007). Effective cultural brokers are persons who can help make the values and practices of one group clear to another, whether those brokers are bilingual school employees or representatives from the Latino community. Bilingual paper flyers or newsletters can be useful when children are reminded to deliver them promptly.

Communication strategies will differ from elementary to middle to high school, as students become more self-reliant, but family involvement is still essential (Davis & Lambie, 2005). School counselors can identify flexible opportunities for parents to observe or participate during the school day. Finally, asking families to provide photographs or cultural items to post around the school creates an atmosphere of inclusion and help students and families see themselves as valued members of the school (Walker et al., 2010). Thus, even when parents have limits on the time and energy they are able to spend in school-based involvement, many ways exist to encourage communication and participation (Mitchell & Bryan, 2007).

LATINO FAMILY NIGHT

One programmatic example that incorporates all of the previous suggestions would be to invite immigrant families to Latino Family Night at the beginning of the school year. This could be classified in the school guidance curriculum portion of the program delivery system, specifically parent workshops (ASCA, 2012). The Latino Family Night event would be promoted with bilingual written invitations and assurance of translation services at the event, individual phone calls from school counselors or teachers to parents encouraging their attendance, and follow-up encouragement from a chosen cultural broker (Smith-Adcock et al., 2006). The purpose of the multiple invitations would be to assure parents of their ability to participate regardless of level of spoken English, and to underscore the important role parents play in a child's education, as viewed by the school. The Latino Family Night would ideally be held at a convenient community location and would include childcare and refreshments to support families in their desire to attend (Walker et al., 2010). A separate information fair with culturally relevant entertainment or

performances by the children could follow the presentations. Parents may have a greater stake in attending an event if their child will be showcased, which promotes more interpersonal interaction apart from the delivery of information (Villalba et al., 2007).

Presentations at the Latino Family Night would underscore a single message: the school wants to partner with the parents in order to ensure success of the children. Student learning objectives in career and college readiness, academic proficiency, and personal/ social development can all be included in the definition of success (ASCA, 2012). These presentations should come from multiple persons (administrators, school counselors, teachers, a Latino parent role model) and should acknowledge and affirm the home-based involvement strategies in which Latino parents are already engaged. School personnel should approach this community with a strengths-based view, to help create a positive and collaborative relationship rather than a defensive or blaming one (Dotson-Blake, 2010; Dotson-Blake et al., 2009; Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010; Van Velsor & Orozco, 2007). By acknowledging the expertise and commitment of the parents, the school meets them halfway in the partnership. Speakers should also try to address the common cultural perspective that education is best left to the experts, which can work against Latino parents' role construction for school-based involvement. Parents need to hear that the school is open to them and welcomes their presence as observers or active participants, and that outcomes are best for the children when parents are involved.

Finally, the Latino Family Night should lay out an agenda for continued involvement that is flexible, given the constraints in time and energy that many working families face. One option would be to have a list of possible topics for monthly parent involvement meetings and ask the families present to suggest new topics or vote on which seem most important to them. This approach is important for several reasons. First, the literature emphasizes that parents maintain their involvement when they feel they have a stake in the process or when they feel the school is attending to their specific needs and interests (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991). Allowing parents to suggest topics for meetings gives a voice to immigrant families who are frequently not represented in school decision making (Auerbach, 2004). Any degree of participation helps to reinforce role construction for involvement and could help school personnel identify future leaders or advisory board members among the Latino parents. Second, parents would be able to solicit topics and information that are pertinent to them, or that help them understand the U.S. school system more clearly. This interaction builds parental capacity for involvement in a system that may be quite unfamiliar to them at the outset.

The school should inform parents that they will receive a follow-up invitation 7-10 days prior to the monthly meeting. This form would contain a list of the school personnel or community members who have been invited to speak at the meeting, including interpreters, and a place for families to write their questions or concerns related to the topic. If parents were unable to attend due to schedule conflicts, they would have the option of giving their form to a peer designated as "parent involvement leader" in the community, or sending their feedback to the school via the cultural broker or the school counselor. The school counselor also would commit to summarizing

the information from the monthly meeting and making it available to the parents again through the network of neighborhood leaders or cultural brokers, which fits within an advocacy role (ASCA, 2012). In this way, parents could still learn about the school system, feel that they have a voice and a role in the meetings, and become involved in the Latino parent peer community to some extent. However, the incentive of having their direct questions answered might promote better attendance. Schools could contemplate having an award for parents who attended a majority of the monthly meetings, or could ask a parent to be a co-host of a particular monthly meeting in order to share leadership and increase commitment. Encouraging leadership or role construction for involvement could start in small steps this way, and parental efficacy for involvement could improve when audience members saw one of their peers as an active contributor (Delgado-Gaitan, 2004). Auerbach (2004) documented the motivational impact of seeing or hearing from a similar peer in a leadership role, especially for communities that have felt disempowered. Similarly, Durand (2011) showed that communication amongst Latino parents strengthened them as a group and led to higher rates of school- and home-based involvement.

Due to the likelihood that parental involvement will look different for parents of elementary students as compared to middle and high school students (Davis & Lambie, 2005; Hill & Tyson, 2009), this article offers suggestions for school counselors at each level for tailoring the follow-up from the Latino Family Night program. These programs can be incorporated as parent education seminars, as the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2012) encourages school counselors not only to help parents feel welcome at school, but also to familiarize them with the school culture, policies, and instructional sequences. Furthermore, the follow-up programs can have a flexible schedule and multiple forms of communication, to help encourage exposure to each school environment among immigrant parents with barriers to participation. With comprehensive school counseling programming as a guide (ASCA, 2012), schools can identify appropriate student learning outcomes at each level and the type of data that would show progress in those areas, and plan for delivery that targets parents as well as students for responsive services.

Elementary school counselors may wish to focus on familiarizing immigrant parents with the structure of the U.S. school system and helping them feel welcome at the school, as the parents' schedule permits (Villalba et al., 2007). School counselors could encourage parents to send items from home for display in the classrooms, and to come describe their meaning if possible. Finding flexible methods of communication with Latino families would go a long way toward building trust and enhancing role construction for future involvement (Thorn & Contreras, 2005). Topics for follow-up meetings or written communications could include strategies for building early literacy, helping students prepare for and complete homework, or ideas for conversations families could have to stimulate interest in topics of learning (Durand, 2011). Elementary school is a time for exploration, so school counselors can engage parents as resources for exploration into culture, career, history, geography, etc. (Walker et al., 2010).

Middle and high school counselors may wish to provide information or opportunities to interact with parents around transitions between the two levels, career and college readiness, choices in the curriculum, and guidelines for staying on track with long-range planning and decision-making efforts (Borders, Hines, Gonzalez, Villalba, & Henderson, 2011). Conversations within the family about types of work and students' interests could also be incorporated more intentionally into course planning or other aspects of the school guidance curriculum. School counselors can even design small groups in which Latino parents have personal discussions with each other around educational planning toward post-secondary opportunities, as this has been shown to be effective with engaging Latino parents in the educational process (Auerbach, 2004). The small group should be facilitated by the school counselor and can be used to teach parents how to help their children develop goals for post secondary opportunities, consistent with ASCA Standard A:B2.7 (ASCA, 2012). Even though middle and high school students are more independent, communication with parents about students' plans for the future is of great importance. Moreover, the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2012) requires school counselors to consult and/or collaborate with parents; this is a responsive service. School counselors are in a position to empower parents so that they can participate more effectively in those conversations.

Studies have reviewed other programmatic efforts to improve the engagement between schools and Latino parents (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; De Gaetano, 2007). Chrispeels and Rivero contributed a formal mechanism (six class sessions with focused content) for helping Latino parents construct a role that included involvement in the schools and changes in home-based parenting styles. The key insights from De Gaetano included acknowledging the impactful contexts of family, community, and school, eliminating biased attitudes so that school personnel become genuine collaborators with the parents, providing a way for parents to express their ideas and leadership, and the importance of making culture a part of the program "through a conscious emphasis on their own values, experiences, and way of life" (DeGaetano, 2007, p. 147).

Summary

Latino immigrant parents are likely to be motivated in educational matters and deeply concerned for their children, thus they can be willing partners for school counselors who want to increase capacity for parental involvement (Auerbach, 2007; Jasis & Ordonez-Jasis, 2012). As summarized here, Latino parents also have some constraints to their involvement, including limitations in their family life context, cultural expectations of a home-based versus school-based role, and barriers to receiving or acting on invitations from school personnel. However, school counselors who engage in culturally effective outreach, create sustained and respectful relationships, and gradually build parental capacity to interact with the U.S. educational system are more likely to reap results. The skill sets that school counselors possess position them to work effectively with the family system, connecting it with the school system for the benefit of the student. Of interest, school counselors' readiness and preparation to engage in outreach to parents may also be governed by role construction, efficacy beliefs, school culture surrounding collaboration, and time constraints (Bryan & Griffin, 2010).

Schools are in need of new strategies for engaging with Latino immigrant families, and the HDS model and subsequent empirical tests provide suggestions for how to begin. Schools must make efforts to tailor invitations for specific groups of parents, understanding their environmental constraints and preferred role for parental involvement. In general, invitations from school counselors must be consistent over time, genuine, and affirming of the steps parents are taking to be involved with their children. Parents can enhance their role construction and efficacy for school-based involvement if provided with new cultural perspectives, information about benefits to the students, and opportunities to have skills modeled and then mastered.

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