CHAPTER 5

THE CONCEPT OF *EDUCACIÓN*: LATINO FAMILY VALUES AND AMERICAN SCHOOLING

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Abstract

Do traditional, agrarian values put minority culture children at a disadvantage in North American schools? The available results are mixed. In this chapter we attempt to "unpack" some of the effects of traditional Latino family values on their children's early school adaptation and achievement. Our research suggests that agrarian-origin values, which differ from academic-occupational orientation of school personnel, do not necessarily work to the disadvantage of students. On the contrary, under certain conditions, these values may be complementary to those of the school and in fact serve to support educational adaptation and achievement. A key to our findings and analyses is the concept of *educación* beliefs among the parents in our sample. Not all strongly endorsed cultural beliefs are instantiated in ways that impact children's experiences and development. Some cultural beliefs lead to instantiation into everyday routines of families, while others seem to be readily available, expressed, and endorsed but not reliably acted on (D'Andrade & Strauss, 1992). Those beliefs that are instantiated into the daily routine are more likely to produce detectable effects on children's development, a conclusion supported by cross cultural evidence (Weisner, 1984).

Introduction

In North America, family values influence children's success in school across racial and ethnic groups (Ginsburg & Hanson, 1985; Weisner & Garnier, 1992). Some specific value commitments predict school performance. These include the importance a family attaches to children's education and to schooling-directed efforts. There may also be a more general effect of family values on school achievement that is relatively "content-free." Weisner and Garnier's (1992) longitudinal study of conventional, nonconventional, and countercultural families indicated that diverse value commitments "protect"

children from threats such as marital instability, which can otherwise reduce academic achievement level. Weisner and Garnier concluded that families reporting sustainable, coherent, and meaningful values of many kinds were more likely to sustain a home environment conducive to a child's academic development (Weisner & Garnier, 1992).

Not all family values may have a clearly positive impact on school achievement. In particular, there has been a persisting view among educational researchers that some traditional family value commitments have a negative impact on school performance of minority culture children living in North America. The "traditional" values to which many educational researchers refer are part of what LeVine and White (1986) term an "agrarian model" of human development. In contrast to industrialized societies characterized by an "academic occupational" model of child development, agrarian societies

> evolve moral codes favoring filial piety and intergenerational reciprocity, gender-specific ideals of social and spiritual values rather than specialized intellectual ones, concepts of childhood learning that emphasize the acquisition of manners and work skills without competitive evaluations, and concepts of the adult years as the prime period for significant cognitive development (LeVine and White, 1986, p. 3).

Obedience and respect for elders are adaptive values in contexts in which a whole family works together as an economic unit and where child labor is necessary for survival.

Although "agrarian" values may have their origins in rural economies, commitment to them is not limited to agricultural workers and their families. This is clear in many Latin American societies (Mexico included). These societies include industrialized centers and populations, where the precariousness of life in urban settings often demands adaptive behaviors, in terms of the family as the basic unit of production and kin networks as the source of services, which are similar to those required in an agrarian setting. Availability of agrarian values is partly a result of the sizable portion of the population in many Latin nations that still participate in a rural, agrarian economy and lifestyle. Similarly, immigrants from Latin societies are often from agrarian backgrounds and may continue to rely on kinship networks in similar ways in North American urban areas. Thus, the agrarian cultural model in Latin American countries or for newly-arrived immigrants to the U.S.

> is not a disappearing inheritance from the past but a continuous source of meaning and guidance . . . (LeVine and White, 1986).

Even Latino immigrants to America's great urban centers who do not come from a rural or agrarian backgrounds themselves may confront adaptive challenges in the U.S. to which "traditional" values may contribute to the construction of sustainable, coherent, and meaningful responses.

Do traditional, agrarian values put minority culture children at a disadvantage in North American schools? The impact of traditional values on the educational adaptation and achievement of minority culture children is not a simple matter. Available findings are mixed for some groups such as some Latino/Hispanic communities.

Some studies conclude that traditional, rural-origin families endorse values putting their children at a disadvantage in individualistic and competitive school contexts. For example, for Mexican-Americans, "traditional" as opposed to "modern" family values have been hypothesized to complicate adaptation to urban life in general and

to American schools in particular (Chandler, 1979). Rural-born Hispanics have been characterized as present-time oriented, and family-oriented rather than individual achievement-oriented (LeVine & Padilla, 1980). Mexican-American parents have been described as having low aspirations and expectations for their children's achievement and assigning more value to family unity and obedience to authority (Grossman, 1984). Such results have led some to conclude that "traditional" Latino values put children at a disadvantage in individualistic and competitive school contexts (e.g., Cabrera, 1963; Coles, 1977).

However, some findings suggest traditional agrarian values are not necessarily obstacles to educational achievement. For example, family ties within a traditional agrarian value system can be a source of emotional support and personal identity, and family unity can constitute a strong motivational force for individual school attainment and personal achievement (Abi-Nader, 1990; Suarez-Orozco, 1989).

In this chapter we attempt to "unpack" some of the effects of traditional Latino family values on their children's early school adaptation and achievement. Our research suggests that, while recent immigrants from Mexico and Central America hold agrarian-origin values which differ from the academic-occupational orientation of school personnel, these differences do not necessarily work to the disadvantage of students. To the contrary, under certain conditions, these values may be complementary to those of the school and in fact serve to support educational adaptation and achievement.

A key to our findings and analyses is the concept of *educación* often referenced by the immigrant Latino parents who participated in our study. On the surface, *educación* appears to be a direct translation of the English word "education." Although they are related etymologically, the Spanish term carries with it a set of inferences and behaviors that are not referents of its English cognate. In this chapter, one of the principle aims is to analyze the Latino parents' concept of *educación* and identify the belief components which it encompasses.

A second major objective of this chapter is examination of parental actions stemming from *educación* beliefs among the parents in our sample. Not all strongly endorsed cultural beliefs are instantiated in ways that impact children's experiences and development (Weisner, Bausano, & Kornfein, 1983; Weisner, Beizer, & Stolze, 1991). Some cultural beliefs lead to instantiation into everyday routines of families, while others seem to be readily available, expressed, and endorsed but not reliably acted on (D'Andrade & Strauss, 1992). Those beliefs that are instantiated into the daily routine are more likely to produce detectable effects on children's development, a conclusion supported by cross-cultural evidence (Weisner, 1984).

Finally, in this chapter we examine the impact on students' academic performance of the parents' beliefs and actions. This analysis brings us full circle back to the question of the impact of Latino family values on student achievement. Thus, three major questions frame this chapter:

(1) What *educación* values about education and learning do immigrant Latino parents endorse?

(2) In what ways do these beliefs shape parent actions that affect children?

(3) In what ways are parent beliefs and actions related to student academic performance?

In the Discussion section, we return to the larger issue — Do the values of immigrant Latino families put children at a disadvantage in American schools, or are they complementary and supportive in ways that are not always recognized and acknowledged?

Methods

Sample

The data reported here were collected as part of a longitudinal study of children's literacy development from ages five to nine. A cohort of 121 Spanish-speaking Latino families of kindergarten students was randomly selected from classrooms in two school districts in the Los Angeles area. Families from one district ($N = 91$) have children who attended school in Lawson (all names are pseudonyms), an unincorporated area of approximately 1.2 square miles in metropolitan Los Angeles. School enrollment in the Lawson District is approximately 90% Latino. Another group of children ($N = 30$) resides in a racially mixed neighborhood (Sandy Beach) and attend school in a large urban district.

From these 121 families, a subgroup of 32 families was selected at random to form part of an "Ethnographic Subset." In addition to the interviews, tests and teacher ratings described below, more in-depth information was collected from these families through a set of extended interviews at home and at school. The open-ended interviews carried out with these families provided the bulk of the data used for the present chapter. In the analysis which follows, much of the descriptive statistical data is taken from the longitudinal sample, while the ethnographic case studies provide the material necessary to interpret trends.

Sample Description

Information gathered from the longitudinal sample in the fall of 1989, when the focal children (child that was focus of our data collection in each family) were beginning kindergarten, provides a thumbnail sketch of the population. Table 5.1 summarizes the characteristics of both the longitudinal and case study samples.

Overall, the great majority (84%) of the parents in both communities came to the United States from Mexico; the rest are from Central America. The Mexican-origin parents in our sample tend to follow an earlier migration pattern identified by Cornelius (1989–1990): About 55% of the women and over 60% of the men are from the states of Jalisco, Michoacan, and Zacatecas. A majority (75.2%) of the focal children were born in the United States, 94% of these in California. Close to 22% of the children were born in Mexico; 3.3% were born in Central America. Mothers average 9.6 years (range = 1–27) living in the United States; fathers average 11.7 years (range = 1–53). The average number of years of education for both mothers and fathers is 7.0 years (range = 0–16).

Although all census categories are represented, the parents' occupations in our sample

Table 5.1
Demographic Description of the Ethnographic Subset and Longitudinal Sample

	Ethnographic Subset (n = 32)	Longitudinal Sample (n = 89)
Mother's number years of education	7.56	7.0
(mean/range)	0–15	0–16
Mother's number years in U.S.	10.19	9.45
(mean/range)	1–27	1–25
Mothers born in Mexico (%)	78.1%	84.3%
Father's number years of education	6.48	7.1
(mean/range)	0–13	0–14
Father's number years in U.S.	12.3	11.5
(mean/range)	3–21	1–53
Fathers born in Mexico (%)	78.1%	87.6%
Father's work status (%)		
white collar	0%	5.88%
skilled	50%	48.24
unskilled	50%	45.88%
Target Children Born in U.S. (%)	78.13%	71.91%
Target Children* Attended Preschool (%)	56.25%	58.43%

(There are no significant differences between groups. Analyses included t-tests chi-square tests as appropriate).

tend to be clustered in the lower levels of occupation within each category: Service (30.4%), Repair (23.2%) and Laborer (34.4%). Only 3.2% of the fathers reported being unemployed when the project began in 1989. Parents with jobs in the service industries work as cooks, waiters, maids and housekeepers, janitors, bartenders, bus boys, parking attendants, childcare workers and cafeteria workers. Also included are two teacher's assistants. There were also skilled workers such as mechanics, electricians, carpenters, welders, construction workers, as well as a dressmaker. The largest percentage of both men and women are employed as laborers in factory jobs such as assembly, packing, machine operation, and loading. Other jobs include factory supervisor positions, as well as drivers of various types of vehicles.

Approximately 43% of the mothers work outside the home. Many mothers not working outside of the home cite the care of small children as a major reason for their not seeking employment at the present time. Of those employed in the Lawson area, 48% are found in service occupations and 30% in factory work. For Sandy Beach, the percentages are 23% and 54% respectively. Although we did not collect income data directly, we know from school records that these are overwhelmingly low-income families. Nearly 70% of the students qualify for free meals, and another 19% qualify for reduced-price meals.

Procedures

Families were interviewed in their homes in the fall of their child's kindergarten year by Spanish-speaking interviewers who followed a standard protocol. The interview

included questions on family characteristics and demographics, parental views on their children's projected academic progress, and their aspirations and expectations with regard to their children's educational and occupational future. Parents were asked about factors they considered important for student academic success and the role parents play in school achievement. (See Appendix A for some of the interview questions that provided data for this chapter.)

Three more telephone interviews of approximately 20 minutes were carried out with each family in the spring and fall of 1990 and in the spring of 1991. These interviews updated parent views of student progress and their short- and long-term expectations for student performance, as well as data on specific learning activities which take place in the home, parent beliefs regarding how children learn, and their views regarding parent and teacher responsibilities in the learning process.

In addition to data collected through parent interviews, information was also gathered on students' literacy achievement. All children in the longitudinal sample were tested in the spring of their kindergarten year on a number of literacy measures which assessed a range of early literacy skills and knowledge. At the end of first grade, the children's scores on district-administered standardized tests were collected. Teachers, in the spring of each year, rated all participating children's performance over the course of the year in learning to read, in academics in general, and in interest in and motivation to learn.

The 32 "ethnographic" case study families were visited on twelve occasions over the course of four years. During each visit, fieldworkers conducted "conversational" open-ended interviews covering the topics listed above. Special attention was devoted by fieldworkers to the terms of reference and nature of actions parents reported taking to help their children succeed in school. When possible, fieldworkers observed these actions. The children were also observed in the classrooms, and their teachers interviewed on at least five occasions in four years.

Shortly after each visit extended narrative fieldnotes were prepared. At the end of each year, a comprehensive summary fieldnote was prepared for each case study family.

Coding of Ethnographic Data

Each case was coded for a number of specific quantitative indices. Each family was rated by the fieldworker who had made repeated visits to the home. Two of these ratings which will be used in the subsequent analysis of data are the *home literacy rating* and the *father participation rating*. Fieldworkers rated the general literacy environment of each family on a scale of 1 to 7. This "home literacy rating" indicates how supportive the family literacy environment is of school success by including such factors as the amount of printed material in the home, the opportunities that exist for children to observe or experience literacy activities of different types, and the responsiveness of adults and siblings to children's interests and initiation of literacy events. The presence in homes of young children of such literacy/learning events are known to predict early reading achievment (Durkin, 1966; Mason & Allen, 1986).

Fieldworkers also rated father participation in family activities. In each Ethnographic Subset family, the father was categorized as (1) actually participating in learning activities with the children, (2) supporting these activities (usually providing motivation

or supporting the mother in her participation), (3) being present and socially responsible as a breadwinner, or (4) being largely absent and not involved in family activities.

Other Data Coding

Using parents' responses to Question 6, Appendix A, each case received 3 scores — one each for the extent to which children are helped with school-related tasks by (1) mothers alone, (2) fathers alone, or (3) both mothers and fathers. The scores were simply the number of tasks a family reported being done by mothers alone, fathers alone, or both parents (the possible range of scores for each family is 0–9).

Data Analysis

Our analysis of the folk model of *educación* relies on the tradition of cognitive anthropology initiated by Goodenough (1957) and followed by Frake (1977), Lakoff and Johnson (1980), D'Andrade (1985), Holland and Quinn (1987), and D'Andrade and Strauss (1992). It assumes that cultural models are taken-for-granted cultural constructions of the world, widely shared by the members of a society, and that they play an enormous role in their understanding of that world and their behavior in it. In this sense, the term *educación*, and the numerous metaphors which immigrant Latinos use to refer to it, provide a window to the cultural understandings on which immigrant Latino parents base their understanding of childrearing in general and American school "education" in particular, and to the actions they take to achieve their goals.

Our construction and interpretation of the folk model of *educación* is taken from the review and synthesis of fieldnotes for each case study family. Since the longitudinal study was designed to focus on the connection between home and school, parents were not asked questions about *educación per se*. Rather, the fieldworkers focused on a more circumscribed set of questions regarding children's schoolwork and parents' role in children's school activities and progress. Aware that the term *educación* was not equivalent to the English "education", we used the parents terminology to refer to schooling or academics (*preparación, preparación formal o escolar, estudios*) when discussing these issues. Inevitably parents referenced the broader concept of *educación* in any discussion of schooling, the parents' role in homework, and the expectations that parents had for their children's academic futures. This theme, therefore, was one which emerged from the parents' own comments and explanations and was found, although not always with the explicit label by the parents of "*educación*," across all of the cases.

Results

The Folk Model of Educación

Parents do not spontaneously make the distinction between schooling (academics) and upbringing (morals) that is made in English. Instead, both are part of a larger whole that

leads to becoming a good person. One mother, for example, when asked what she would like for her son's future occupation, replied:

> Me gustaría que estudiara, y sobre todo que fuera recto, que tuviera buenas costumbres, que llegara a ser una persona de respeto y que también fuera respetuoso con las personas. (I'd like him to study, and above all to be upright, to have good behavior, to become (literally: to arrive at being) a person of respect and to be respectful of others too.) (Case #91).

Study and formal schooling accompany the notion of being a "good person" but are not its only components.

In a different context, another mother gave as the reason for helping her child with his homework,

> para que tenga una idea de lo que es bueno y lo que es malo (so that he'll have an idea of what's right and what's wrong.) (Case #23).

Another mother illustrates the lack of distinction made between academics and morals within the concept of *educación* when she referred to both as "study":

> Todo es estudio, todo es estudio. Saberlos educar también es estudio. ¿De qué sirve tener una carrera grandísima si son borrachos, ni van al trabajo? (Everything is study; everything is study. Educating them at home is also study. What is the use of having a great career if they're drunks or if they don't go to work?) (Case #53).

And another mother states succinctly,

> Si no son educados en la casa, son un desastre en la escuela. (If they aren't educated (i.e., well brought up) at home, they are a disaster at school.) (Case #56).

The blending of academic and moral development in their comments led us later in the fieldwork to interview parents more closely. However, even extended attempts to get parents to distinguish the two aspects of *educación* separately and to speculate on which was more important to child's schooling success did not result in differentiation. The comment of one father was the typical response:

> Las dos cosas van de la mano. Uno tiene que estar siempre tratando de caminar un camino recto. Sería imposible llegar a la universidad si no tiene buenos modales, si no se enseñe a respetar a los demás. Llegaría a ser pandillero, si no. (The two things go hand in hand. One always has to try to walk a straight path. It would be impossible to get to the university if one doesn't have good behavior, if one isn't taught to respect others. One would end up as a gang member otherwise.) (Case #64).

The term "buenos modales", often translated as "good manners" has been translated here as "good behavior" in an effort to accurately convey the usage of the parents who, more than to etiquette, seem to be referring to fundamentally correct behavior. For example, a father states,

> Si no tienen buenos modales, buenos fundamentos, ¿qué van a hacer ellos? (If they don't have good behavior, good fundamentals, what will they do?) (Case #63).

Moral Learning as the Bedrock for Academic Learning

The immigrant Latino parents in our sample believe that their primary responsibility with regard to their children is

> hacerles saber lo que es bueno y lo que es malo (to make them know what is right and what is wrong.) (Case #92).

An oft-repeated expression is that this knowledge is the foundation for all learning that comes later. Therefore, some parents, when pressed to distinguish between academic and moral education as described above, expressed the view that the moral education of the home served as the groundwork for the academic instruction that the school would provide. For example,

> Es más necesario más bien educarlos moralmente que academicamente. Para poder educar, si a un maestro le dan un niño que no tiene principios morales, ni está preparado moralmente, va a ser bien dificil de enseñarle cosas académicas. Un niño va a aprender más fácil si ya sabe respetar y tratar. (It's more necessary to educate children morally than academically. In order to educate, if a teacher is given a child who doesn't have moral principles, or who isn't morally prepared, it will be difficult to teach this child academic things. A child will learn more easily if he already knows how to respect and treat others.) (Case #33).

Thus, parents might express the view that academics and morals were intertwined and indistinguishable, or that morals were actually the basis for academics. In any case, they were consistent in associating both with the idea of what it is to "educate" a child.

Knowledge of Right and Wrong

Parents in our sample see as their principal responsibility the rearing of a moral and responsible child, a child who will become what is often referred to as a "*persona de bien*," a good person. For example, one father stated emphatically that the most important thing for his children is

> basicamente la moralidad, la honestidad. Son las cosas fundamentales de la familia, hacerlos personas de bien. (basically morality, honesty. These are the fundamental things of the family, to make them good people.) (Case #63).

A mother reaffirms,

> Tiene uno que enseñarles a ser buenos, aparte del estudio. Enseñarles a ser correctos. Enseñarles moralidad, enseñarles a ser buenos, pues pueden estar muy estudiados y todo, pero si uno no les enseñan a ser correctos de últimas de nada les sirve. (One has to teach them to be good, aside from schooling. Teach them to be correct [in behavior]. Teach them morals, teach them to be good, because they can have studied a lot, but if one hasn't taught them correct behavior, in the end it (study) doesn't help them.) (Case #1).

The term referenced by parents for this task of orienting their children and inculcating firm moral precepts is "*educación*." One mother states that what she expects to be important for her children in the future is

> la educación que nosotros les damos. Es algo que necesitan para progresar también. Lo que ven en la casa les sirve para saber lo que está bien y lo que está mal. (the *educación* that we give them at home. It is something that they need to progress too. What they see at home helps them know what is right and what is wrong.) (Case #113).

Teaching Respect and Correct Behavior

Not only do parents feel they must teach children to distinguish between right and wrong, but they must also teach them to act accordingly, in other words, to demonstrate good behavior. Both the knowledge of right and wrong and knowing and practicing the behaviors and manners which are the result of such knowledge are key aspects of the concept of *educación*.

Teaching respect for parents and others is one of these behaviors and one which forms an essential part of *educación*. As one parent explains,

> Todos nosotros, los mejicanos, venimos de una tradición antigua, de ranchos donde se respeta al padre y a la madre. Tratándose de hermanos, los menores respetan a los mayores. (We Mexicans come from an old tradition, a tradition of the 'ranchos,' where the father and mother are respected. Regarding siblings, the younger ones respect the older ones.) (Case #23).

Respect for all members of the family, taught by the parents and demonstrated by the children, is what causes one father to conclude that all is well with his family:

> Ella, él [he gestures to the focal child's brother and sister] son hermanos; es lo más importante. Respetar a los prójimos y a ellos mismos. Ahorita yo veo que mi familia va bien. No tengo problemas. Respetamos las opiniones de cada persona. (She, he [he gestures to the brother and sister of the focal child] are siblings; that is the most important thing. Respecting those close to them and themselves. Right now I see that my family is doing well. I don't have problems. We respect the opinions of each person.) (Case #2).

This same father describes the respect that he was taught at home by his parents as a "*bonita herencia*" ("beautiful inheritance") that he was given by his parents, and which he is giving his own children. As they educate (*educar*) their children, then, one of the good behaviors which parents seek to inculcate is that of respect.

Summarizing to this point, the term *educación* encompasses, but is not limited to, the formal academic training the child receives. Although *educación* and the English term "education" overlap in important ways, *educación* has a broader meaning. The term invokes additional, nonacademic dimensions, such as learning the difference between right and wrong, respect for parents and others, and correct behavior, which parents view as the base upon which all other learning lies.

The Importance of Family Unity

The key beliefs of *educación* discussed above are inculcated by parents in the home in an environment in which the importance and unity of the family are expressed values. The teaching of right and wrong and correct behaviors such as respect constitute the parents' responsibilities for the correct upbringing of their children. Closely associated with these values of *educación* is that of the importance of family unity. One father stated,

> Somos pobres pero tenemos nuestra familia. (We are poor but we have our family.) (Case #2).

Another mother revealed,

> Yo pienso que estar unidos, tanto mi esposo como mis hijos, tener la comunicación, es muy importante. Yo pienso que no hay otra cosa tan importante. Entonces, por buscar dinero, para tener dinero, para tener riqueza, uno trabaja y pierde uno lo que es lo más importante. Para mí, lo más importante es los hijos, el esposo, para mí. (I think that being together, with my husband as well as my children, having comunication, is very important. I don't think there is anything else as important. Because in order to seek money and riches one goes to work and loses sight of what is the most important thing. For me the most important thing is my husband and children.) (Case #92).

Thus, the teaching of respect and obedience takes place in the atmosphere in which the family, and the child's place in the family, is highly valued.

El Buen Camino

In talking about their children's development and education, parents make statements which indicate that the concept of *educación* is structured metaphorically according to the idea of a road down which children travel under the guidance and orientation of their parents. For example, parents say:

> Desde que son chiquitos, uno trata de encaminarlos. Ya cuando son más grandes, las malas compañías los echan a perder. (From the time they [children] are young, one [as a parent] tries to put them on the right road. When they are older, bad associates ruin them.) (Case #78).

> A la edad de doce años, muchas veces las criaturas se descarrilan. (Sometimes, at the age of 12, children go off the rail [go astray].) (Case #53).

> Yo no fui criada 'a la moda', ni mi marido tampoco. Nosotros queremos enseñarles [a nuestros hijos] ese camino. Como nos criaron a nosotros. (I was not brought up to follow the new wave, neither was my husband. We want to teach our children that road, the way we were brought up.) (Case #54).

Parents see their responsibility as that of giving their children the knowledge necessary for them to follow the "good path" in life; however, children make the decision for themselves. Eighty-one per cent of the Ethnographic Subset families stated that children make these life-course decisions between the ages of 12 and 18.

As parents describe the characteristics of "*el buen camino*," the "good path," they place school on the good path and dropping out of school on the bad path. Thus, schooling and academic achievement are not seen as separate from moral development, but are rather imbued with virtue as part of the good life for which one aspires and prepares one's children.

High Educational Hopes for the Child

The responsibility of the parents for the moral upbringing and instruction of the child, which is at the heart of the concept of *educación*, is a commonly expressed belief in families across the sample. But also common to the sample at large are high hopes for their children's academic achievement. Indeed, as described above, most of the parents do not separate academic and moral goals for their children; continued schooling is part of the good path in life that is desired and worked towards for their children.

When asked directly about the level of schooling that they aspired to for their children at the beginning of kindergarten, 80% of the parents in the longitudinal sample responded with finishing college or university (with an additional 12% desiring at least some college or university attendance). When asked how far they thought their child would actually go in school, 44% continued to give finishing college or university as the level of expected attainment.

When not responding to specific questions about educational aspirations and expectations, however, parents often make comments about their dreams and goals for their children's futures which link elements of "moral education" (*educación*) with formal schooling. For example, one mother states that she wants her children to "be someone" when they grow up, which she describes as

> que no sean de la calle, que tengan un título, que no anden robando. (that they are not bums, that they have a title [degree], that they don't rob.) (Case #111).

Many link staying in school with staying out of trouble; as one parent says,

> Al niño uno tiene que inculcar lo bueno, que tienes que estudiar, que no andes sucio, así se hace la ilusión. (One has to inculcate into children what is good, that you have to study, not to go around dirty, that way they get the idea.) (Case #113).

Links Between Beliefs about *Educación* and Parents' Actions

Moral Teaching

Given the centrality of *educación* and the beliefs it encompasses, it is not surprising that parents describe taking actions for and with their children that feature issues of morality and proper behavior. When asked what actions parents should take to help their children succeed in school (e.g., Appendix A, Question 1), only rarely did parents cite promoting early literacy, preschool preparation, or other academically-oriented activities. Rather, the action most commonly reported by parents was to talk with or counsel their children concerning correct and incorrect behavior. One mother reports,

> Siempre le estoy diciendo: 'Tú tienes que ser un niño bueno y usar tu inteligencia en lo bueno y no en lo malo.' (I'm always telling him: 'You have to be a good boy and use your intelligence for the right things and not for the wrong ones.') (Case #26).

Parents use the terms *evitarles* and *prevenirles* to describe the ways in which they let children know about the probable future consequences of bad behavior or of being influenced by a bad crowd.

Use of dramatic examples is a common technique parents use to teach right and wrong and discourage misbehavior. One mother says that she uses books and magazines for this purpose. She reads a story to her children and then she says, for example, "Look what happened to that boy. He got run over because he didn't listen to his parents" (Case #111). Another mother reported pointing out a woman on the street as an example for her five-year-old daughter of what happens when you use drugs (Case #113).

Because children are believed to learn principally through example and imitation, a common strategy for ensuring proper behavior is restricting children's peer contacts and their play areas. For example, when parents in the longitudinal sample were asked what they do to minimize the dangers to their children of the neighborhood in which they live, of the 28 parents who rated their neighborhood as more dangerous than average, 57% reported that they kept their children inside the house (21% reported that they counseled their children about the dangers; 14% said that there was nothing that they could do.) (See Question 5, Appendix A). One mother will only let her young daughters play outside of their one-room apartment when she sits in the window to watch them. She gives as an explanation of her behavior that children learn bad things when they see them, "*sin que nadie haga nada en especial para enseñarles*," ("without anyone's needing to teach them") and she wants to be very careful about what they are exposed to (Case #113).

An extreme example of restricting children's friends, but one which is not uncommon, is to send a child who is having problems and following the "wrong path" to stay with relatives in Mexico.

> Como usted sabe, al pueblo que fueres, hacer lo que vieres. Aquí ven puro cholo, pura cosa de esas, pues. Les hace mal. Donde no lo ven, pues, no lo hacen. (As you know, wherever you go, you do what you see the people doing there [referring to a well-known saying in Spanish]. Here they see only "cholos" and things like that. It is bad for them. If they don't see these things, they won't do them.) (Case #53).

Keeping children inside and away from bad influences can have the additional benefit of supporting academic and learning activities. For example, one father tells a high-school-aged daughter to study so that she will not be interested in having a boyfriend (Case #2). Other parents state that they wish the school would give more homework so that they can then keep the children busy ("*entretenidos*") inside the home (e.g., Cases #111 & 112).

Academic Learning and Preparation

In contrast to teaching their children good manners, respect for elders and about right and wrong, less emphasis was reported on arranging or encouraging academic activities that might prepare a preschool child for school. Ethnographic subset families were asked to rank in order of importance a set of twelve statements regarding parent responsibilities before a child enters school (see Table 5.2). Thirty per cent chose teaching respect for parents as the most important task. In order of frequency of choice, the other statements chosen most important were: teaching the child the difference between right and wrong (22%), teaching good manners and behavior (17%), and engaging in dialogue with the child (13%). Preparing the child for school by teaching such things as the alphabet and numbers was ranked ninth of the 12 statements and reading to the child was rated tenth. Not surprisingly, at the beginning

Table 5.2
Parents' Rank Order of Parental Responsibilities in the Preschool Years

Rank	Description of Responsibility	% Choosing as #1	Total Rank Value*
1	Teach respect for parents	30	209
2	Teach difference between right and wrong	22	200
3	Teach good manners	17	199
4	Dialogue with child	13	199
5	Respond to child's questions	0	177
6	Motivate child to do his best	0	171
7	Provide learning experiences	4	170
8	Provide model of a good person	4	159
9	Prepare child for school	4	146
10	Read to child	0	95
11	Teach new words	4	57
12	Make sure child learns English	0	50

* Each item was ranked by parents from 1 to 12. The total values were obtained by assigning each rank of 1 a score of 12 (2 = 11, 3 = 10 and so on), so that the highest value would be given to the item ranked as of greatest importance to the parents.

of the kindergarten year during our first interview with the longitudinal sample, only 25% of the families reported reading to their children.

Parents do relatively little to specifically prepare their children for the academic tasks of school during the preschool years. Once the children begin school, however, parents assist children with homework and give additional practice on concepts being taught at school. For example, by the spring of the first grade year, 91% report that children are assisted with homework (53% daily and 38% sometimes/often) and 61% (46% daily and 15% sometimes/often) report they review completed schoolwork with the child. (These percentages include help and reading provided by siblings, relatives, and nonrelatives as well as by parents.)

By the end of first grade, 85% of the parents report that their children are read to (25% report that this takes place "daily" and 60% report "sometimes" or "often"). In discussing the reasons that reading to children is important, none of the parents in the Ethnographic Subset families stated that he or she read to the child in order to help the child learn to read. One-third of the parents stated that reading served to foster interest in the child's reading. Other common answers included entertaining the child (24%) and teaching the child about morals (20%). One parent saw that reading together was part of building family unity:

> Los niños cuyos padres no les han leído se crían o se desarrollan un poquito retirados de sus padres o de su papá. (Children who are not read to by their parents grow up or develop a little separated from their parents or their father.) (Case #26).

Other parents reported reading Bible stories to their children so that they would know the difference between right and wrong (Case #92) or reading magazine selections to their children and discussing what could be learned from the behavior of the characters in the stories (Case #111).

Use of Punishment and Conflicts with the School

Finally, a set of actions that appear to be common to the population and associated with the concept of *educación* is the use of corporal punishment to discipline children and keep them on the "right path." Most parents say that they are strict with their children. One states that it is necessary to control children when they are young, sometimes with "*cinturazos*" ("whippings") (Case #113). Another contends that it is necessary for parents to hit children so that they will "*hacer caso al papá y a la mamá*" ("pay attention to their father and mother") (Case #91). Another father asked how better to educate a child than by disciplining him (Case #2).

These beliefs and practices can bring the parents into direct conflict with the school. That this issue is of great concern to parents is indicated by the number of times which it surfaced without prompting in the interviews and by the passion with which the views were expressed. Parents of both higher and lower achieving students express emotions ranging from concern to outrage about what they regard as school interference with family discipline practices.

These emotional reactions arise in part from instruction on child abuse that is currently required of students in California public schools. Florid tales about authorities removing children from their families circulate freely in the community. Parents are told by their

children that they have been instructed to report to school authorities any time that their parents hit them. Parents feel that this directly undermines the respect that they are trying to instill in their children:

> Principalmente aquí no quieren que uno los castigue, no quieren que uno les pegue. Entonces ¿qué va a hacer uno [como padre]? Por eso es que hacen lo que hacen. (Mainly, here [in the U.S.] they don't want one to punish [children]; they don't want one to hit them. So then what is a parent supposed to do? That's why [children] do the things they do. (Case #53).

Another parent describes her niece being punished when she wanted to go out with her boyfriend instead of going to school. Because a visible mark was left on the girl's arm, her father was called to school to explain. Our informant concluded,

> En la escuela los consejeros son de una manera, pero ya en casa el trato es otro, en los hijos es otro. Porque hay niños que con palabras no entienden, aunque sea un jalón de orejas o una guantada, sí necesitan. (At school the counselors act one way, but at home, with children, our treatment is different. Because some children just don't understand with words; they need their ears pulled or a slap.) (Case #26).

Another parent directly links children's bad behavior with their knowledge that their parents cannot punish them; she states that children are out of control because

> desde chiquitos oyen que los papás no deben de tocar a los niños. Ni pegarles. Uno tiene que hablar, hablar. Pero como ellos no entienden si uno no les da una nalgada. (from the time that they're small children they hear that their parents can't touch their children. Or hit them. One is only supposed to talk and talk. But since they don't understand unless one gives them a swat.) (Case #24).

As a result, many parents feel that they are or will be prevented from fulfilling their childrearing responsibilities by the very institution that they would have expected to support them. Whereas American school personnel often tell parents that they are the children's "first teachers," a common expression used by Latino immigrant parents is "*la maestra es la segunda mamá.*" ("The teacher is the second mother.") It is, therefore, a source of confusion for parents, who cannot understand why the teacher/mother is calling into question a family's teachings about right and wrong. Far from viewing their own actions as child abuse, many parents see the school response as lack of concern for children's "*educación*".

These contradictory feelings about school can influence parents' decisions about children's academics. One of the mothers (Case #26) described an eleven-year-old daughter's being selected to attend a special, advanced math class at a local high school campus. The girl, at sixth grade in middle school, was already taking eighth grade level classes. Although she was very proud of her daughter, the mother stressed the undesirability of letting her be in contact with older children in a bigger school. She felt that, through interaction with older students, Maria would be exposed to attitudes and behaviors that were contrary to home teachings, and that Maria was too young to clearly distinguish between right and wrong. Maria was not allowed to take the advanced class.

Other Potential Conflicts with the School

Discipline issues are not the only source of conflict with the school. Although parents hold high educational and occupational hopes for their children, see school as necessary to get ahead in life, and include schooling as one of the elements of the "good path,"

they also see school as a potential source of bad influence. This is especially true for junior and high school students who, parents believe, might be exposed to the bad influences of their peers ("*las malas amistades*"). Parents fear these influences can then lead to getting involved with gangs and drugs, dropping out of school, and generally making nothing of oneself. Some families take steps to remove children from these bad influences. For example, when one family's older son began to be involved in gang activities, his schooling was interrupted by his being sent to Mexico (Case #114). Another mother kept an older child out of school altogether rather than risk further involvement with the bad influences there (Case #53).

Not only is school the place where peers may influence the child for the worse, but it is the place where topics are taught and discussed which some parents feel are not appropriate for their children's level of moral development and are thus damaging to them. By the age of nine or ten, children start receiving specific information about the deleterious effects of drugs and the danger of contagious diseases such as AIDS. Although parents agree that knowing about "drugs and sex" is necessary in this society, they often think that children are introduced too quickly to these matters:

> Pero a veces esto los desorienta y la juventud no agarra la orientación correcta y se van para el otro lado . . . Porque no tienen su mente capaz de distinguir lo bueno y lo malo. Su mente no está tan preparada, tan capacitada, porque ellos son niños. (But sometimes [these teachings] disorient them and young people don't take the right orientation and they go astray . . . Because their mind is not prepared enough, because they are still children.) (Case #54).

In summary, the values of *educación* are much in evidence in our sample, and there are many indications of continuing and robust commitment to them. These values are seen by parents to underlie formal schooling and to support academic progress. Although in many ways parental beliefs are congruent or complementary to those of the schools, this is not always the case. Parents in our sample have revealed contradictory feelings with regard to children's school attendance and its impact on their children's lives, as they define and envision them.

Links Between Parent Values and Action and Children's School Performance

Do parents' *educación* values, and the actions based upon them, influence children's school performance in kindergarten and first grade? Is there any relationship between parents' subscribing to the values of *educación* and their children's school achievement? For this analysis, we made use of the Ethnographic Subset. We analyzed and coded case fieldnotes, used individual tests of early literacy at the end of kindergarten and first grade reading achievement test scores, and obtained teacher ratings of children's academic progress and motivation at the end of kindergarten and the end of first grade. We also used data from the interview questionnaire, asking parents what they did to help their children in school and who did it (Appendix A, Question 6).

Values and Achievement

The expressed values and beliefs of *educación* were **unrelated** to children's school achievement. Examination of fieldnotes for all families indicated that endorsement of

educación values is so common and uniform that there was no possibility of a differential between families with high and low achieving children. Virtually without exception, the parents see their primary responsibility being the moral upbringing of the child. Similarly, beliefs about the need to guide children along the "good path," to teach children to respect their parents, and to maintain family unity are expressed by parents of both academically successful and unsuccessful children.

To test this conclusion more systematically, we examined separately the field notes of families of the 7 most and 7 least academically successful children in the Subset of 32 cases. ("Most" and "least" successful students received teacher academic ratings .5 standard deviation above or below, respectively, the mean in the study.) Parents of **both** groups of children are virtually identical in their endorsement of *educación* values.

Moreover, **endorsement** of *educación* values was so invariant that it did not distinguish between families providing home environments that were more or less supportive of literacy and academic development. In other words, endorsement of these values — aspects of which potentially conflict with the school or with values presumed important for children's school success (see section above) — did not appear to hinder or help students' achievement, at least in the early years of schooling. These stated values, uniform throughout our sample, did not influence family literacy practices, even among the extremes of our cohort. On the contrary, all the parents viewed moral upbringing — which they refer to as *educación* — as encompassing and supporting academics.

Father Participation, Home Learning Environment, and Early Academic Achievement

If verbally subscribing to the values of *educación* had no bearing on home literacy environment or early achievement, what did distinguish families of better achieving students? The fieldnotes and fieldworker ratings suggested that (1) children whose fathers took an active role in the domestic routine and were more involved in child literacy/learning activities enjoyed home environments that were more supportive of literacy learning, and (2) children with more favorable home learning environments did better academically in school.

The father involvement variable was based on Question 6 (see Appendix A) which was asked as part of an interview conducted at the end of first grade (for the focal child). For each of nine different kinds of academic/learning help, families (mothers usually were informants) were asked who provided help (if help was provided). In a few cases, fathers did these kinds of tasks alone with their children. But mostly families either reported it was mother alone who helped, or that both mother and father helped. We correlated three home academic help variables (mother alone, father alone, both) with fieldworkers' ratings of the home environments' support for school learning while the child was in kindergarten. We found a robust correlation (.52; $p<.01$) between the extent to which **both** parents participated in activities to help children in school and the degree of home support for academic achievement. There was a marginally significant **negative** correlation ($-.33$; $p = .09$) between mothers helping alone and the quality of the home learning environment; father's help alone was not significantly related to home learning environment. Having both father and mother engaged in home learning

activities was extremely important for the creation of a home environment that supports academic learning. Neither the help of mother nor father alone was sufficient.

Furthermore, ratings of the home literacy environment in kindergarten were strongly correlated with kindergarten literacy achievement (.49; $p<.01$), first grade home literacy environment (.80; $p<.0001$), and first-grade teachers' academic ratings of the child (.58; $p = .001$). First grade home literacy environment, in turn, is related to first-grade teachers' academic ratings of children (.54; $p<.01$) and first grade reading achievement, as measured by nationally normed standardized tests (.42; $p<.05$). In short, involvement of both parents in children's home learning help create conditions in the home supportive of academic achievement; these conditions, in turn, seem to promote higher levels of school achievement.

Father Participation and the Implementation of Educación *Values*

Why does father participation influence the home learning environment, which in turn predicts high and low achieving children? The case materials suggest that active involvement of the father (and mother) in the domestic routine, in childrearing, and literacy/learning activities greatly increases the chances that the *expressed* values of *educación* will be *implemented*. Among low achieving children, fathers were often physically and/or emotionally absent from the home and were not, therefore, supporting the mother in her efforts to work with and discipline the children. From this lack of control followed the inability of the household to follow through on the beliefs and values of *educación* by implementing them into a child's daily routine.

For example, in the family of one high achieving child, both parents work outside the home and co-ordinate their schedules so that one parent is always at home with the children. The father is the one whose schedule permits him to take the children to school and make daily contact with their teachers. Both parents assist the kindergarten child with schoolwork as necessary (Case #64). In another family with a high achieving child, it is the father who co-ordinates home academic efforts, encouraging an older sibling to help the focal child with schoolwork and urging the mother to go to school when the child is sick to pick up additional practice work for her (Case #2). In yet another case, the family reads the Bible together — these literacy events are used by both parents to teach their daughter the syllables for reading, and the father gets involved by purchasing additional book sets for a home library (Case #92).

In the families of low achieving children, various ecocultural factors contribute to a high degree of absence of the father from the home and to a lack of his involvement in children's activities. In one family, the father's very precarious work status, which mother describes as "*por contrato en vez de por hora*" ("piece work instead of hourly"), results in his spending long hours away from the family and coming home too tired to interact much with his daughters (Case #113). One father's truckdriving job takes him out of the home for as much as a week at a time (Case #91), and another father's alcoholism-related absences cause his wife to lament on different occasions,

> Van a pensar que no tienen papá estos niños and Yo estoy sola para esto, él casi no tiene tiempo para nada. (They're going to think that these children don't have a father and I'm alone in this; he hardly has time for anything.) (Case #94).

In yet another family, the father's alcoholism and drug use are cited by the mother as the reason that they are no longer together; the father visits his children but is not present in day-to-day activities and is not reported to engage in school-related assistance or discussions with his children (Case #114).

The case materials suggest that father participation and engagement in the household is related to the degree of control that the mother feels that she can exert over child behaviors and activities. From the mothers of low achieving children we heard many statements about their inability to secure child compliance: One mother wanted her son to attend preschool, but since he did not like it she gave in and let him stay home (Case #91). Another mother reported that she would sit down with her son to do the homework, but if she got up for even an instant, "*él ya se arrancó y se fue.*" ("he was already up and gone") (Case #24). A mother who is separated from her husband is raising three children older than the child who is part of our sample. Her unmarried ninth-grade daughter is expecting a child, and the fifth-grade son was sent to Mexico at the end of the last school year because he refused to attend school here. The mother plans to move to an apartment near her brother's family. She states about her older son,

> Tal vez se necesite que un hombre, como dice mi hermano, le ponga consejos y le jale las riendas. El es más estricto. Como yo le hablo y le doy consejos y no me hace caso. Necesita de un hombre. (Maybe a man is needed, as my brother says, to give him advice and pull in the reins on him. He is stricter (than I). Like I talk to him and give advice and he doesn't pay any attention to me. He needs a man.) (Case #114).

Educación, *Parent Education, Single Parents, and Family Literacy*

Our cohort presents a mixed picture of relationships between child achievement and parental education, with mother's education largely unrelated, and father's education related in different ways at different grade levels. The ethnographic materials suggest that it is not father's education that directly influences children's achievement. The pathway of influence is indirect — better educated fathers assist mothers to implement a home routine that includes sustainable literacy/learning activities. Put another way, these fathers act on the *educación*–related emphasis on family and family unity by participating in the domestic routine and by collaborating with their wives. This is consistent with Ortiz's (1993) conclusions that fathers who shared childcare functions with their wives engage in more literacy activity themselves and with their children than men who divide such functions. Thus, one aspect of our finding that father participation distinguishes families of high and low achieving children may relate to an adaptation of the *educación* –related emphasis on family and family unity. Couples living in the U.S.A. who are adapting their values to foster school achievement adopt a couple-relationship characterized by sharing and collaboration regarding children's early schooling that may not be characteristic of families endorsing traditional, agrarian value systems.

Single parent homes *per se* do not necessarily produce less supportive literacy environments and lower achieving children. Across the sample, mothers are the ones who carry the heaviest domestic and childcare workload, including participating in and assisting the children with learning and schooling activities. These activities in particular

and the home environment in general are more supportive of literacy development when the mothers are supported in their endeavors by another adult, in most cases the father. A study of higher and lower achieving fifth-grade students from the same community found that, in fact, single parent families were found in the higher and not the lower group. However, these single parents, in both cases, were supported by grandparents in the home, one of whom took on many of school-related tasks while the mother worked outside the home (Reese, 1992).

Implementation of *educación* values is not the only family factor influencing student achievement. Another factor is family history of literacy. For example, in one case of a high achieving child, the mother reported getting ideas for helping her children from things that her parents did with her. Both of her parents read to their children and told them legends, and so she does the same thing (Case #64). By way of contrast, a low group mother states,

> Yo nunca les había leído hasta ahora que están en la escuela. Como yo me crié así que nunca me leían, yo tampoco les leí. (I never read to my children until they were in school. In the same way that I was brought up where no one read to me, I didn't read to [my children] either.) (Case #24).

Parents with relatives who have attended the university have more specific plans for their children's receiving a scholarship or working while attending than do parents without this source of information (Cases #2 and #111). Thus, there is a tendency for higher achievers to come from families in which some members (not necessarily the parents) have higher levels of education and professional careers. These families possess and are able to transfer to their children relatively greater "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1977) than those families without this literate history.

Discussion

Most of the immigrant Latino parents in our sample see their primary responsibility as guiding their children along the "right path" in life by instilling in them the values of respect, family unity, good manners and knowledge of right and wrong. These values correspond to what LeVine and White (1986) term an "agrarian model," as opposed to an "academic occupational model," of educational development.

Some have suggested that success in U.S. schools will come as families leave behind the values which were adaptive in more traditional, rural contexts and adopt those of the academic occupational model, characterized by a competitive labor market, social mobility, schooling as preparation for economically specialized occupations, and mass participation in national government. However, our results suggest a more complex account is required: Many of the values embedded in the agrarian model lead to actions that in fact support school achievement.

In addition, many of the families in our study community are taking a third path. As they come into contact with American institutions and adapt to ecocultural forces in the urban American niche, they are constructing cultural patterns that fuse elements of the agrarian and the academic occupational models. In contrast to practices in their home countries when they were growing up, some families are limiting the number of children they have in order to better raise them (Case #64). The roles of women are changing in some families, as are marital relationships. The latter is reflected in the

finding that it is the sharing of responsibility for home literacy activity that is associated with higher achievement, not mother or father dividing the tasks (Ortiz, 1993). Some families are adopting new practices which have been suggested by teachers or modeled by schoolwork. For example, one mother remarks that her preschool child is benefiting from the focal child's school experience, because she now sees the benefit of having a lot of learning materials at home for the children to write with (Case #24). Others are assisting the children with schoolwork and rewarding them for getting good grades, even though these things might not have been done by their own parents (Case #112).

At the same time, parents are not leaving behind (at least not at this point in their stay in the U.S.) the values of the agrarian model. Most are proud to say that they are raising their children with the same values with which they were raised. Yet, in their lives in a new country, many state that they want more educational and occupational opportunities for their children than they themselves had, and that they do not want to foreclose these opportunities for their children as their parents may have done for them. In spite of adopting possibly new goals outside the agrarian tradition, the conditions under which the immigrants live and work at the same time serve to strengthen or re-activate agrarian values of family unity and filial respect. Jobs are often obtained through the contacts of relatives, and homes and other resources are shared with relatives and their families as the need arises. Under pressure, the old ways can solve problems for which there are no new solutions available to poor, blue-collar workers with little job or economic security.

Blending the old ways with new ones was most evident in our examination of family values, schooling, and children's academic performance. The emerging third way rests on a foundation of the traditional values of *educación*, which blends values and activities that foster academic success. Some families are more successful than others in integrating the old and new and instantiating them into daily life. This is one reason why, in such an apparently homogenous group, there is so much variance in family practices and child achievement. These results suggest that, as predicted by ecocultural theory, articulation or endorsement of *educación* beliefs alone has no impact on child development or achievement (Weisner, 1984). A relationship is observed, however, when specific *educación* values are instantiated in activities — such as father involvement in child learning/schooling tasks which we believe reflects an *educación* -linked emphasis on family and family unity.

Clearly, a complex relationship exists between the values of Spanish-speaking immigrant families and the values that influence the U.S. schools their children attend. The concept of *educación* that guides immigrant Latino parents' child-raising practices is in many ways complementary to the process of formal education their children receive in U.S. schools. Parents see a strong moral foundation as the underpinning of formal education and later success in life. Parents are supportive of teachers' efforts to instill good behavior in the students and are generally responsive to teacher requests for help with schoolwork when they feel able to assist. Different as they may be, we found no evidence that the traditional values create serious disadvantages that outweigh some considerable advantages for those families who can successfully implement their beliefs into their children's daily routines.

Still, there are some discontinuities between home and school that are potentially conflictive. One emerged in those instances in which parents perceive a threat to their

child's moral development (very often taking place at school itself). When threats are seen, parents make choices which strengthen morals at the expense of academics. Thus, a child might be denied a more challenging math course, will be taken out of school, or will be sent to Mexico, actions which undermine the child's academic progress, when parents fear the child's contact with bad influences. Even more problematic are differences in views regarding discipline, and the parents' reaction to reported or actual government intervention by child protective service agencies.

Is it necessary for a value system and the actions and practices associated with it to be *identical* to those of the school in order to foster the school success of minority culture students? Or can the family values *complement* those of the school, that is, can they overlap in some important ways while differing in others? There is evidence that what matters in terms of student academic success is not a particular content of beliefs, but the fact that a family has a coherent set of beliefs which they teach their children and which they use to construct an environment for children (Weisner & Garnier, 1992; Gallimore, Goldenberg, & Weisner, 1993). This view also holds that in human history a number of value systems have emerged, for example the agrarian and academic/occupational models, and that each has advantages and disadvantages depending on the circumstances to which a family is adapting (Weisner, 1984).

Given the threats facing their children and families, parents' fidelity to the beliefs encompassed by *educación* may maximize *long term* outcomes at the cost of some short term opportunities. Rather than being a problem, continued adherence to their traditional, agrarian-origin values may in fact be fused with new ideas and practices that have long-term protective and adaptive value. In other words, despite their differences, U.S. schools and immigrant Latino families may have more in common regarding long-term children's academic achievement than either might realize. Rather than creating irreconcilable differences, their respective values provide opportunities for co-operation and collaboration — for the benefit of the children, the families and the teachers.

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Biographies

Leslie Reese is a Bilingual Specialist with the Long Beach public school system. She received a BA degree in Anthropology from Stanford University. She later received an MA at Long Beach and a PhD degree in Comparative Education from the University of California at Los Angeles. Her doctoral dissertation received an "Outstanding Dissertation" award from the National Association of Bilingual Education. From 1989 to 1993 she was the Project Director of a longitudinal research study at UCLA on the connection between home and school for immigrant Latino students in the Los Angeles area.

Silvia Balzano received her PhD in Educational Anthropology and her MA in Ethnography at the University of California at Los Angeles. She completed her BA in Ethnography at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Before coming

to the U.S.A., she won an Associate Professor position at the University of La Plata (Argentina) in an open competition. She received several awards, and published several papers on South American Indians in national and international journals.

Ronald Gallimore is Professor (Psychology), Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences and Graduate School of Education, University of California, Los Angeles. He earned a BA from the University of Arizona, and MA and PhD degrees in Psychology from Northwestern University. He taught at California State University, Long Beach and the University of Hawaii before joining the faculty at UCLA in 1971. He is the co-author of several books. In 1988, Cambridge University Press published a monograph which summarized the Kamehameha Early Education Project experience and data (Tharp & Gallimore, *Rising Minds to Life: Teaching, Learning and Schooling in Social Context)*. For their work on the Kamehameha Project and *Rousing Minds to Life*, Gallimore and Tharp were presented in 1993 with the $150,000 *Grawemeyer Award in Education* for a work of outstanding educational achievement with potential for worldwide impact.

Claude Goldenberg, a native of Argentina, is a research psychologist in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, UCLA, and Associate Director of the Urban Education Studies Center in the UCLA Graduate School of Education. He received his BA from Princeton University and MA and PhD degrees from the University of California, Los Angeles. He won the American Educational Research Association's Outstanding Dissertation Award in the Empirical/Qualitative category.

Appendix A

Selected Interview Questions

(1) What things do you think should be the parents' responsibility to teach children? What things should the teachers be responsible for teaching them?

(2) How far do you want your child to go in his/her education?

a. finish elementary school b. finish junior high school c. finish high school
d. trade/vocational school e. at least some college f. finish college
g. don't know or can't say

(3) How far do you think he/she will go in school? (Answers a – g above)

(4) If you could choose, what occupation would you like for your child?

(5) On the scale of 1 to 7, how would you rate the neighborhood where you live. Would you say that it is a dangerous area and not very favorable for bringing up children; is it just about average, or is it a good environment for bringing up children?

(Those who rated the neighborhood 4 or below were also asked, "Since the area that you live in is (very dangerous/dangerous/average), how can this affect your children? Do you think that parents can do anything to prevent such situations?")

(6) There are many things that parents may do with their children to help them in school. We'd like to know in your home, is there someone who does these things with _(child)___? Who is it? How often?

a. helps with homework
b. attends conferences with the teacher
c. makes sure child attends every day
d. reads to child
e. gives advice about doing well in school
f. gives reward if child does well in school
g. buys additional learning materials
h. helps child with English
i. goes over schoolwork (completed papers)

If not noted above, ask: What is the role of the father in the activities we just talked about?