

2004

## Motivators for Enrolling Children in Preschool and Child Care Programs: A Difference Between Latino and Non-Latino Parents

Barbara Andre  
*Old Dominion University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/ots\\_masters\\_projects](https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/ots_masters_projects)



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Andre, Barbara, "Motivators for Enrolling Children in Preschool and Child Care Programs: A Difference Between Latino and Non-Latino Parents" (2004). *OTS Master's Level Projects & Papers*. 147.  
[https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/ots\\_masters\\_projects/147](https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/ots_masters_projects/147)

This Master's Project is brought to you for free and open access by the STEM Education & Professional Studies at ODU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in OTS Master's Level Projects & Papers by an authorized administrator of ODU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@odu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@odu.edu).

**MOTIVATORS FOR ENROLLING CHILDREN IN  
PRESCHOOL AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS:  
A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LATINO AND NON-LATINO PARENTS**

---

**A Research Paper**

**Presented to**

**The Faculty of the Department of  
Occupational and Technical Studies  
Old Dominion University**

---

**In Partial Fulfillment**

**Of the Requirements for the Degree**

**Master of Science**

**In Occupational and Technical Studies**

---

**By**

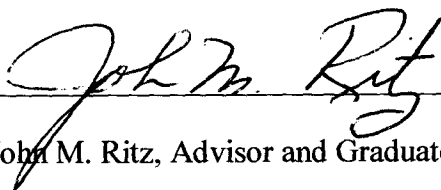
**Barbara Andre**

**May 2004**

## SIGNATURE PAGE

This research paper was prepared by Barbara Andre under the direction of Dr. John M. Ritz as a requirement for OTED 636, Problems in Occupational and Technical Studies. The paper was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Science in Occupational and Technical Studies with an emphasis in Community College Teaching.

APPROVED BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. John M. Ritz, Advisor and Graduate Program Director

5-7-04  
Date

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank everyone that helped make this paper possible. Dr. John M. Ritz has provided hours of patience, guidance and support throughout the process of data collection and submission of this project. I would like to acknowledge the following: Kathleen Düsek, Kim Gould, Pat Haynie, Dr. Robert Jochim and his staff, Latino Center staff, Serafin Razo and Patti Shelton. I would also especially like to thank my family for their support.

Barbara Andre

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>SIGNATURE PAGE</b> .....	2
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	3
<b>TABLES OF TABLES</b> .....	6
<b>CHAPTER I, INTRODUCTION</b>	
Statement of Problem .....	8
Research Goals .....	8
Background and Significance.....	8
Limitations .....	11
Assumptions .....	11
Procedures .....	11
Definition of Terms .....	12
Overview of Chapters .....	13
<b>CHAPTER II, REVIEW OF LITERATURE</b>	
Parent Participation .....	16
Collaboration .....	16
Parent Participation in Head Start Programs .....	18
Parent Participation Legislation .....	19
Parent Attitudes about Education .....	21
Summary .....	22
<b>CHAPTER III, METHODS AND PROCEDURES</b>	
Population .....	23
Instrument Design .....	23
Methods of Data Collection .....	24
Data Analysis .....	24

Summary .....	25
---------------	----

## **CHAPTER IV, FINDINGS**

Difference in Motivators for Enrolling Children in Daycare and Preschool Programs Among Latino and Non- Latino Parents.....	26
Difference in Degree of Importance Placed on Program Cost Between Latino and Non-Latino Parents.....	30
Difference In Degree of Importance Placed on Development of Social Skills As An Enrollment Motivator Between Latino and Non-Latino Parents.....	32
Use of Friends and Relatives Instead of Daycare and Preschool Programs .....	33
Difference In Value Placed Upon Early Education Between Latino and Non-Latino Parents.....	34
Summary.....	38

## **CHAPTER V, SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Summary .....	40
Conclusions .....	41
Recommendations .....	44

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY .....**

47

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A – English Survey Questionnaire .....	51
Appendix B – Spanish Survey Questionnaire .....	53
Appendix C – Cover Letter .....	55

## TABLE OF TABLES

	Page
TABLE 1, Parental Motivators For Preschool/Child Care Enrollment.....	28
TABLE 2, Parental Attitudes Concerning Role of Teachers and Parents In Providing Instruction In Reading and Writing Prior To Kindergarten.....	30
TABLE 3, Parents Indicating By Write-In Response That Parents and Teachers Have Equal Responsibility To Educate Children In Reading and Writing.....	30
TABLE 4, Parental Values Concerning Cost Of Day Care vs. Curriculum Content.....	32
TABLE 5, Parental Attitudes Concerning Socialization Prior To Kindergarten.....	33
TABLE 6, Type(s) of Child Care Used By Parents.....	35
TABLE 7, Parental Value Placed Upon Curriculum Areas.....	36
TABLE 8, Parental Attitudes Toward Reading and Writing Prior to Kindergarten.....	38
TABLE 9, Parental Attitudes Concerning Correct Usage of Grammar .....	39

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Latino population in the United States has increased dramatically over the past decade. There are now 30.9 million people listed as “Hispanic”, and 19% of children ages 0-4 demographically categorized as “Hispanic”. These numbers do not include undocumented immigrants (Olivas, 1999). The number of young children from Latino families also seems likely to increase. In 1998, 20% of all babies born in the United States were Hispanic. The fertility rate for Hispanics over the past decade has been 3.5%, while it has been less than 0.5% for non-Hispanics (Olivas, 1999).

Latino families will be seeking various forms of childcare and education to meet their needs during the coming years. Nationally, Head Start classified 29.8% of children enrolled in the program nationally during 2003 as “Hispanic”. This percentage has increased steadily over the past five years (Head Start, 2003). A study published by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI) in 1998 indicated Latino parents have trouble finding quality child care, and they have concerns about the type of programs their children attend (TRPI, 1998).

The attitudes of Latino parents toward the programs they choose will be an important consideration in the future. Childcare programs will need to have an understanding of the types of care and education that these parents want for their children in order to meet the growing demands of this population.



## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The purpose of this study was to examine the difference in motivators for enrolling children in daycare and preschool programs between Latino and non-Latino parents in Cottonwood, Arizona.

## **RESEARCH GOALS**

The goals of this study were to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a difference in the reasons why parents enroll children in daycare and preschool programs between Latino and non-Latino parents?
2. Is program cost a primary factor for both groups of parents?
3. Do both groups put equal emphasis on the development of social skills as a reason for enrollment?
4. Do both groups use friends and relatives for childcare more than they use daycare and preschool programs?
5. Is there a difference in value placed upon educating children at an early age between Latino and non-Latino parents?

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The changing demographics of the United States has created situations in which educational practices, considerations and beliefs that once reflected the majority now seem inadequate. Education, including early care and education, has recommended more culturally diverse curriculums for several years. Several early childhood education publications, such as *The Anti-Bias Curriculum* (Derman-Sparks, 1989) and *Roots and Wings* (York, 1991) have shown how to build culturally sensitive early childhood programs. A difficulty arises, however, in finding materials that examine programs from the perspective of parents. The literature details

how programs can reflect the culture of families. However, it rarely asks, “Why do families want to enroll their child in this particular program, and what are they coming to this program expecting to find?” Scant material exists on attitudes of Latino parents, who comprise an increasingly large segment of this population (U. S. Census, 2000). Finding answers to these questions will help early care and education programs plan, develop and market the types of programs that Latino parents want for their children. In order to plan and develop these programs effectively, childcare providers need training to provide services in the areas deemed important by Latino parents. Early Childhood Education programs provided by community colleges and Tech-Prep programs will need to ensure their curriculums reflect the changing attitudes toward childcare and education as childcare program enrollments become more Latino. In order to market these new programs effectively, childcare programs will need knowledge of the various factors Latino parents find important when choosing early childhood care and education programs for their children.

The Latino population in the United States rose 57.9% between 1990 and 2000. The majority of these people (58.5%) are of Mexican descent. Most of this segment of Latino population (55.3%) lives in the Western United States (U.S. Census 2000). Over 35% of this population is 18 years old or younger. The median age of the entire Latino population included in the 2000 Census was 24.7 years (U.S. Census 2000). This suggests a growing Latino population in or near childbearing age. This population either currently requires childcare and education services or will need them in the near future.

Cottonwood is located geographically in the heart of Arizona’s Verde Valley. The Verde Valley is located in the center of Arizona. Therefore, Cottonwood is in approximately the

geographical center of Arizona. The Latino population in this area has more than doubled over the past decade (Pancrazio, 2003). Tourism is a primary industry, and most jobs filled by Latinos are in the service industry catering to tourists' needs. These jobs are generally low paying jobs. Latino parents in Cottonwood typically have low-income levels, which allow them to qualify for Head Start programs. This has resulted in a huge increase in the number of Latino children enrolled in daycare and preschool programs over the past few years. Classrooms that once had one or two Latino students now have many. Some area Head Start programs have created additional classrooms to accommodate this growth (Pancrazio, 2003).

The medical office of Robert Jochim provided an excellent spot to conduct this survey because a large number of both Latino and non-Latino parents use this facility. The office is located within a half mile of an area with a large Latino population. In addition, the office is within a block of childcare centers, schools and a Head Start program. The practice of medicine in this office is largely based upon women and children's health. The office has been established in the community for about 30 years, and it is one of the largest offices dedicated to women and children's health in Northern Arizona.

This research project, which is the first of its kind conducted in Cottonwood, will help early childcare and education programs better understand the needs of diverse families. It will also help determine the need for curriculum development and revision in training programs for early childhood teachers.

## **LIMITATIONS**

This study was limited to the Cottonwood and surrounding area of north central Arizona. The study included parents who have children residing in Cottonwood and the surrounding area, which includes the communities of Cottonwood, Clarkdale, Jerome and Verde Village. The study did not include persons who were not parents of preschool age children. Additionally, self-disclosure on the survey instrument served to identify ethnic background of parents. The survey instrument contained information in both Spanish and English. The study did not distinguish between first or subsequent generational status as a residence of the United States, nor did it distinguish between residential statuses (citizen, documented immigrants, undocumented immigrants).

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

This study assumed surveyed persons are parents of children in Cottonwood and its vicinity. It also assumed that the survey's Spanish translation mirrored the English version and that the parents surveyed could read and could complete the survey in one of these two languages. The study excluded other family members, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings. Children residing with more than one parent received multiple copies of the survey. This study assumed that each parent completed a separate survey. It also assumed that no parent filled out the survey more than once.

## **PROCEDURES**

The study utilized a survey written in English and translated into Spanish. The survey contained questions aimed at collecting data related to the research goals. In March 2004, parents coming to the waiting room of Dr. Robert Jochim received copies of this survey. Survey forms included a request for parents to complete the survey and return it. Children with more than one

parent received a separate survey form for each parent. The data collected was analyzed and interpreted. Finally, a summary occurred and conclusion drawn based upon the data.

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Terminologies that may require clarification for the reader include the following:

1. Documented immigrant: A person from another country entering the United States with the legal documents necessary to reside in the United States for a specified length of time.
2. Early Childhood Care and Education: The full spectrum of childcare services provided by persons other than a child's parent(s). This includes both day care and academic types of programs for children ages 0-8.
3. Hispanic: Use of this term in this study is restricted to reference to information collected from outside sources that have used the word "Hispanic" in their work. It refers to persons from Latin American countries and other Spanish-speaking areas. For the purposes of this study, "Hispanic", when encountered, means "Latino".
4. School readiness: This is the same as kindergarten readiness. It refers to the ability of children to recognize letters and numbers, know their name, join a group and similar skills needed in order to participate satisfactorily in a kindergarten setting.
5. Latino: Persons whose ethnic background comes from Mexico, Central or South America as well as other predominately Spanish-speaking areas of the world.
6. Social Skills: Skills needed in order to interact with others. These skills include language development, communication and the ability to collaborate with others.
7. Undocumented immigrant: A person residing in the United States who does not have the required legal documentation to establish residency for a specified period.

8. Preschool age child: A child of either gender between the ages of three and five. This includes both children who actually attend preschool and those who do not attend preschool.

## **OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS**

The first chapter of this research project introduced the reader to the problem, background and significance, limitations, assumptions and definitions of a study to determine the reasons why parents enroll their children in daycare and preschool programs, what their primary reasons were for enrolling their children, and if both Latino and non-Latino parents placed equal emphasis on the same reasons for enrolling their children in these programs. The study examined the influence of financial considerations and value placed upon early education and attempted to discover differences in attitudes toward these factors between the Latino and non-Latino groups.

Chapter II will review the literature regarding population trends and related factors such as ethnicity and geographical location. It will also review literature concerning early care and education services and related factors such as daycare, preschool and Head Start programs, plus school readiness. The chapter will also discuss research regarding attitudinal differences toward education and child rearing based upon culture. Chapter III will discuss the methods and procedures used in the study. This will include the survey instrument used and the methods used in collecting, tabulating and analyzing the data. Chapter IV will provide a review of the findings discovered through the collection, tabulation and analysis of the data. Chapter V will provide the summary of the research project, conclusions based upon the data and recommendations for further study of the information covered in this project.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In conducting the review of literature for this study, it became apparent that there are research areas not currently addressed. Research is available on the value of parent participation in children's education. This includes information on the benefits of collaboration, parent participation in Head Start programs and legislation based upon the inclusion of parents in early childhood programs. Some literature was also available on the attitudes of Latino parents toward education. However, no sources were found that examined the motivators that influenced parents' decisions for choosing childcare and education.

The questions posed in the research goals of this study concern the attitudes of parents. The general topic of parental attitudes about education further encapsulate into the broader category of parent participation. While abundant literature exists regarding the benefits of parent participation, research considering the education of preschool children from the parent's perspective is not available. When one considers how culture may influence those perspectives, the inadequacy of available information becomes even more striking. A report from a workshop conducted by the Board on Children and Families and published by the National Academy of Sciences states:

People in the early childhood community seeking clear advice about educational practices are likely to be frustrated by the limited degree to which preschool children or preschool settings have been studied in terms of questions of culture and schooling (Phillips & Crowell, 1994. p. 8).

This same report urges researchers to find answers to these questions. It lists this as being one of the primary aims of the workshop. In addition, the report notes that the little research that exists focuses upon elementary and secondary schools. Research on preschools is virtually nonexistent. Although their request was issued nearly a decade ago, this recommendation remains unfilled.

### **Parent Participation**

Research analyst Lontos (1992), in a study commissioned by the ERIC Clearinghouse, found that children whose parents are involved in their education show improved attendance, better behavior and higher motivation to learn. The literature contains numerous examples of other studies that result in similar conclusions. They have found that when parents are involved in their children's education, children do better in school. Individuals have the right to be involved in decisions that affect their lives. They have a greater stake in those decisions when they have been involved in making them (Bloom, 1995). When families are respectfully included, they are more likely to support their child's education. This, in turn, is one of the best ways teachers can build children's self-esteem and motivation to learn while reducing behavior problems (Greenberg, 1989).

### **Collaboration**

An important aspect of parent participation is collaboration. While all aspects of collaboration in the home-school relationship involve parent participation, some types of parent participation are not collaborative. Properly understood, collaboration refers to the practice of joint decision-making and joint responsibility. While it shares these practices with consultation, they are not the same thing. Consultation refers to a partnership that is more expert and



directional in nature (Friend & Cook, 2000). Parent participation has traditionally focused upon the parent as volunteer and helper, to the exclusion of the role of parent as collaborator.

Textbooks used to prepare student teachers for partnerships with parents contain numerous suggestions for ways to get parents to help with classroom chores, but no information was available on ways to include parents in classroom curriculum decisions.

Unfortunately, many Latino families do not collaborate with teachers in providing education for their children. The Hispanic Policy Development Project investigated this issue. They found a number of reasons for this behavior. For example, their data showed that the parents studied did not believe it was appropriate to question schools and teachers. Additionally, 45% of the parents included in this study did not have a high school diploma and did not feel qualified to prepare their children for school. The parents studied also felt the major responsibility for education fell upon the school's shoulders, and that the parents' duty was to instill respect and proper behavior in their children. This project trained the parents to meet their children's needs and to interact with the schools. By the end of the project, 53 parents were actively participating with the schools (Nicolau & Ramos, 1990).

However, many teachers do not know how to interact with parents in order to help them reach educational goals. Research has shown that many Hispanic families do not enroll their children in preschool programs because they feel the teachers are not prepared to deal with the linguistic and cultural diversity of their children (GPO, 1996). The teachers themselves seem to share that belief. A study conducted by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education found that 70% of preschool teachers feel that they are not prepared to meet the needs of children who had limited use of English or who came from diverse cultures (ERIC, 2001).

The issue becomes more urgent when one takes the rapid expansion of minority students into the school system into consideration. U.S. Census Bureau figures show that the Hispanic population continues to rise (U.S. Census, 2000). The ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education projects the number of Latino children enrolled in K-12 programs will increase to 25% of the total population by the year 2025 (ERIC, 2001). This means that schools will face an increase in situations requiring collaboration with Latino parents. They will need to find ways of understanding the viewpoints of Latino parents toward education. They will need to understand how to work together with those parents to meet mutual goals. Delgado-Gaitan (1990) states, “The challenge for educators to prepare minority students for successful participation in the school system is dependent on the ability of the schools to incorporate the parents and the culture of the home as an integral part of the school instruction plan” (p. 1). Yet, the research that is available focuses on a lack of collaboration rather than looking for solutions.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) lists attitudes as an important component of organizational outreach. In a 1996 message to members, NAEYC President Jerlean Daniel wrote, “The way in which the values from family, community and profession come together with resultant attitudes that dictate behaviors determines the degree to which our actions facilitate or hinder our outreach goals” (p. 3).

### **Parent Participation in Head Start Programs**

Head Start programs are required to include parent participation as a program component. This includes the formation each year of a parent committee comprised of parents of currently enrolled children. One of the duties of this committee is to collaborate with teaching staff in planning the program (Ceglowski, 1998). Evaluations of the parent involvement component of the program are limited and largely anecdotal (Washington & Bailey, 1995). Research needs for

the future of Head Start were addressed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. A fifteen member advisory panel of national experts found that evaluation research must address the diversity of communities. It also stressed the validity of research questions and building on the existing strengths of programs and staff (Washington & Bailey, 1995)

### **Parent Participation Legislation**

Policy makers, social analysts, economists and corporate leaders have taken an interest in these studies. Reasons for this interest include a concern over the ability of future generations of U.S. children to compete in the global market and concern over the broadening gap between upper and lower classes in U.S. society. School reform proposals have included parent involvement components, with policymakers viewing parents as a way to increase achievement without spending extra money (Linotos, 1992). Two notable legislative actions over the past few years have been extremely important at increasing the scope of parent involvement in children's education.

First, the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) was reauthorized in 1997. A new component was added to this legislation, providing more parent involvement in the decision making process for children with disabilities. A major theme in special education best practice has been the parent-professional partnership. Several approaches have been implemented to establish a sense of equality between professionals and parents (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001).

Second, on January 8, 2002, President Bush signed The No Child Left Behind Act into law. This law expands the role of parents in schools. Parent involvement now requires that parents have the opportunity to participate in academic learning and other school activities.(NCPIE, 2002).

The No Child Left Behind Act concerns itself with the need for children to reach a certain level of school readiness in order to be academically successful. It stresses the role of early childhood education programs as one way to help children reach that goal. The government publication, *Our Nation at the Fault Line: Hispanic American Education*, compared the school readiness of Latino to Anglo children. It found that Latino children were less able to identify basic colors than their white counterparts (61% as compared to 91%), recognize all letters of the alphabet (12% compared to 31%), count up to 50 or more (11% compared to 22%) and write their first name (59% compared to 74%). (GPO, 1996).

While this same publication states that quality preschool programs can help prepare children, it does not mention the importance of collaboration between teachers and parents as an important factor. It does not include this recognized factor in school success among its reasons for this gap. Instead, it focuses on spending more money on health care, family services, housing and crime reduction as ways to overcome this lack of readiness in Latino children. In a political atmosphere of shrinking budgets and reduced services, so called “deficit findings”, which concentrate on deficiencies requiring increased funding, are not likely to find relief. While these may be important considerations, they are beyond the scope of this research project. There is a need for research that shows the value Latino parents place upon these aspects of school readiness. This information will help ensure that collaboration on effective school readiness strategies can begin between teachers and parents. Collaboration between teachers and parents is hindered when parents lack skills to contribute to their children’s education and when parents have a lack of confidence relating to professionals (Friend & Cook, 2000). The way these factors influence Latino parents was demonstrated over a decade ago.

A research project conducted in Portillo, California, by Delgado-Gaitan (1990) examined how Latino families respond to a new culture and how they become empowered by learning to participate in their children's education. The Portillo community study mirrored the Cottonwood, Arizona, community. Large populations of recent immigrants exist in both communities. These immigrants lived in segregated sections of the community. Generally, both parents found employment in blue-collar jobs. These jobs existed in an unpredictable job market. A difference was the type of employment. Those of the Portillo community generally found employment in farming and fishing. Those in the Cottonwood study find employment in hospitality industries (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990). Delgado-Gaitan's study examined the attitudes of the Portillo population toward school collaboration. She found that most parents felt they needed to learn their role as parents in U.S. school systems. They did not know how to support their children in completing homework. She indicated several factors in her study. She cites the earlier work of Super and Harkness (1980) and Weisner, Gallimore and Jordan (1988) which identify the ways cultural patterns, activities, goals and motives affect education (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990).

### **Parent Attitudes about Education**

Participants in a workshop held from November 29-30, 1993, by the Board on Children and Families, discussed the powerful influence that parental beliefs about learning exert on the home-school relationship. While some research is available on the attitudes of teachers toward this relationship, the panel of experts participating in this workshop felt the research has overlooked the parent perspective in these relationships. The available evidence is anecdotal and collected in conjunction with intervention efforts (Phillips & Crowell, 1994). A decade later, the available research is still lacking. Literature was unavailable on motivators for enrolling children in programs, with one exception.

The desire of Latino parents to have their children learn to speak English properly was the only motivator for which research findings were available. The issues associated with language differences have been researched. Results of these studies have been mixed. Some suggest that parents feel a sense of loss when their children learn English, and that they fear their relationship with their child will be jeopardized (NAS, 1994). Other studies, however, report that Mexican immigrant parents want their children to learn English in the classroom and they want to maintain their child's use of Spanish at home (Pease-Alvarez, 1992. Tabors, research associate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, believes parents should receive questionnaires about their classroom expectations for their child. These questionnaires should further serve as a means for building a partnership with these parents (Tabors, 1998). Materials developed by Juliet Bromer, in conjunction with the Wheelock College Family Child Care Project, also suggest the need for more research on the diversity of child outcomes valued by different cultures (Bromer, 1999).

## **SUMMARY**

This chapter reviewed the literature regarding parent participation in early childhood education settings. It considered how parent participation and collaboration might differ from each other. It also looked at parent participation in Head Start programs and the role of parent participation in recent legislation. Additionally, it examined parent's attitudes toward education, especially how cultural factors may affect Latino parents. The chapter also described the lack of available research focusing on the parent perspectives. It demonstrated the importance of parent involvement in educational choices and the need for further research.

Chapter III will describe the methods and procedures used to determine the attitudes of Non-Latino and Latino parents toward daycare and preschool programs. These methods and

procedures were used to examine the reasons parents chose to enroll their child in daycare and preschool programs.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

The purpose of this descriptive study was to determine: 1) What differences exist in reasons for using daycare and preschool programs; 2) What effect cost had on program selection; 3) What role children's social development played in parental motivation for enrollment; 4) What relationship existed between the use of relatives and friends for child care and the use of daycare and preschool facilities and 5) What relationship existed between parental choices and attitudes toward early academic education. Findings from this study will provide assistance in curriculum development for both preschool teachers and teacher trainers. These findings will also provide assistance in program marketing and development.

### **POPULATION**

In order to determine the motivators for enrolling children in daycare and preschool programs, the total population of parents and legal guardians who came to the waiting rooms of Dr. Robert Jochim during March 2004 was used in the study. The total number of parents with preschool age children who visited the office during this period was not available. Included in this population were parents of both genders. Ethnicity was considered in this study. The population also represented parents who were non-custodial but chose to complete a survey. The study was limited to persons with preschool age children.

### **INSTRUMENT DESIGN**

The instrument was designed using multiple answer questions. The Likert scale was also used for part of the survey. The descriptive survey was one page in length. It asked for responses



to questions related to types of programs used, motivators for program choice and attitudes toward parent involvement and school readiness. Information regarding ethnicity was collected. The approximate time necessary to complete the survey was approximately five minutes. The survey was distributed in both Spanish and English. See Appendix A for copies of the survey.

### **METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION**

The survey instrument was distributed in the waiting rooms of the medical office of Dr. Robert Jochim, along with a cover letter (Appendix B) which explained the purpose of the survey and the significance of the data being collected. Participants put the completed survey in a box in the waiting room. This box was available during March 2004. Instructions asked the participants to fill out the form only once in order to avoid duplication by those who came to the office more than once during this period.

No identifying information was on the survey. In addition, participants were assured that their participation was voluntary, and that their participation was not required in order to obtain medical services at the facility.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

Responses to questions were analyzed to determine the frequency and average response to each Likert question. Question 1 was used to categorize responses based upon ethnicity. Then questions 2, 3 and 4 were analyzed to determine the frequency of response to each category within the question. Participants were given the option of “other” to identify possible extraneous variables. A Likert scale was used to determine participants’ attitudes about the importance of school readiness, parent participation and program cost. Findings were reported in tables showing ethnicity, types of programs used, motivators for program enrollment and attitudes toward school readiness, socialization and parent participation.

## **SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed the methods and procedures used to answer the research questions regarding the differences in motivators between Latino and non-Latino parents in enrolling their preschool age children in daycare and preschool programs. Methods and procedures used also determined the attitudes of parents toward school readiness and the role they believe daycare and preschool should play in developing this readiness. In the following chapter, the findings compiled from the completed surveys will be discussed.

## **CHAPTER IV FINDINGS**

The purpose of this descriptive study was to determine the following differences between Latino and non-Latino parents: 1) What differences exist in reasons for using daycare and preschool programs; 2) What effect cost had on program selection; 3) What role children's social development played in parental motivation for enrollment; 4) What relationship existed between the use of relatives and friends for child care and the use of daycare and preschool facilities and 5) What differences existed in parental attitudes toward early academic education. Forty total surveys were distributed. Of the 20 English surveys distributed to non-Latino parents, 10 were returned for a response rate of 50%. Of the 20 Spanish surveys distributed to Latino parents, 10 were returned for a response rate of 50%. Overall participation was 50%.

### **Difference In Motivators For Enrolling Children In Daycare And Preschool**

#### **Programs Among Latino And Non-Latino Parents**

This research goal correlated to Question 3 in the survey, which asked parents their reasons for choosing the type(s) of childcare they use. The survey instructed parents to check all applicable boxes. While 60% of non-Latino parents chose both the ability to write and know the alphabet as primary motivators, 30% of the Latino parents enrolled their child in preschool to learn to write, and 40% enrolled their child to learn the alphabet. The primary motivators for enrollment among Latino parents were for children to learn socialization skills and program cost. Each of these factors received a 40% response by Latino parents. Program cost was a primary consideration for Non-Latino parents as well. Fifty percent of these parents indicated their choices were influenced by free or low cost child care. Fifty percent of non-Latino parents used these programs to help their child sit still, but only 30% of Latino parents felt this was an important consideration. The ability to read prior to starting school was not a primary motivator

for either group. Thirty percent of Latino parents and 40% of non-Latino parents selected reading as a consideration. Thirty percent of Latino parents and 20% of non-Latino parents chose the ability to separate from parents as a motivating factor.

Table 1 provides the total number of survey respondents who selected each of the various factors for enrolling children in preschool or child care programs. The table was divided into the Ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. Participants were asked to check boxes which indicated reasons for enrolling children in child care or preschool programs. Choices included *free or low cost* and *play with other children*. In addition, the survey included choices typically labeled as part of “school readiness”. This included *writing name*, *knowing ABC’s*, *reading*, *sitting still*, and *able to be away from parent*. *Other* was also listed. The one person who selected this category did not elaborate when asked to explain.

	White	White	Latino	Latino	Other	Other
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
free or low cost	5	50%	4	40%	0	0%
play w/ children	3	30%	4	40%	0	0%
ready for school						
Writing name	6	60%	3	30%	0	0%
ABC’s	6	60%	4	40%	0	0%
Reading	4	40%	3	30%	0	0%
Sitting still	5	50%	3	30%	0	0%
away from parent	2	20%	3	30%	0	0%
Other	1	10%	0	0%	0	0%

**TABLE 1 Parental Motivators For Preschool/Child Care Enrollment**

The first research goal also correlated to Question 2 in the second portion of the survey, which asked parents if they believed that teaching children to read and write was the teacher's job, instead of the parent's job. Ten percent of both groups of parents strongly felt that teaching reading and writing was the job of the teacher, not the parents. An additional 20% of the non-Latino parents agreed with the statement, while none of the Latino parents agreed with it. Another 20% of Latino parents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement that teaching children to read and write are the teacher's job, not the parent's job. None of the non-Latino parents selected this option. Ten percent of both groups disagreed with the statement, and another 20% of each group strongly disagreed. Although parents were not given the option to make a comment, those that did not circle any of the choices added the comment that both teachers and parents are equally responsible. This respondent behavior was evident in both the Latino and non-Latino groups participating in this survey.

With a sample size of five for each group we will use the normal curve values of 1.860 at the .05 level and 2.896 at the .01 level to determine the significance of the difference. The t ratio obtained was 2.267. Therefore, the researcher would seem justified in accepting and assuming that there is a significant difference between Latino and non-Latino parents at the .05 level in attitudes concerning the role of parents and teachers in providing reading and writing instruction to young children.

Table 2 provides the total number of survey respondents who selected each of the different levels of agreement to the statement that teaching children to read and write was the teacher's job, not the parent's job. The table was divided into the Ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. Participants were asked to

circle the selection that most closely matched their feeling about the statement. The choices were *Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree* and *Strongly Disagree*.

While comments were not an option provided for this survey question, 40% of parents in both groups did not circle a response, and wrote that they felt the responsibility should be shared equally next to this question. Table 3 provides the total number of survey respondent who made this comment instead of choosing one of the options provided.

	White	White	White	Latino	Latino	Latino	Other	Other	Other
	Frequency	Mean	Percentage	Frequency	Mean	Percentage	Frequency	Mean	Percentage
Strongly Agree	1	5	10%	1	5	10%	0	0	0%
Agree	2	8	20%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0	0	0%	2	6	20%	0	0	0%
Disagree	1	2	10%	1	2	10%	0	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	2	2	20%	2	2	20%	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2.83</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

**TABLE 2 Parental Attitudes Concerning Role Of Teachers and Parents In Providing Instruction In Reading and Writing Prior To Kindergarten**

	White	White	Latino	Latino	Other	Other
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher/ Parents Equal Job	4	40%	4	40%	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

**TABLE 3 Parents Indicating By Write-In Response That Parents and Teachers Have Equal Responsibility To Educate Children In Reading and Writing**

## **Difference In Degree Of Importance Placed On Program Cost Between Latino And Non-Latino Parents**

The second research goal correlated to Question 4 in the second portion of the survey, which used a Likert scale and asked parents if they felt cost was more important than curriculum content. Thirty percent of Latino parents and 10% of non-Latino parents agreed that cost was more important. Twenty percent of non-Latino parents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, while 10% of Latino respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. The same percentages were reflected among those who disagreed with the statement. Twenty percent of non-Latino parents disagreed with the statement, while 10% of Latino respondents disagreed that cost was more important than content. Thirty percent of respondents from each group felt that content was more important than cost in child care and preschool programs. Latino parents were equally divided, with 30% feeling cost was more important than curriculum, and 30% feeling curriculum was more important than cost. Thirty percent of non-Latino parents strongly disagreed with the statement that cost was more important, while only 10% viewed the statement favorably. Twenty percent of the non-Latino parents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, while 10% of the Latino parents took a neutral stance. An additional 20% of the non-Latino parents disagreed that cost was more important, while an additional 10% of the Latino parents shared that opinion. Twenty percent of both Latino and non-Latino parents failed to answer this question, which could affect the findings for this question.

With a sample size of five for each group we will use the normal curve values of 1.860 at the .05 level and 2.896 at the .01 level to determine the significance of the difference. The t ratio obtained was 1.994. Therefore, the researcher would seem justified in accepting and assuming

that there is a significant difference at the .05 level between Latino and non-Latino parents regarding the priority of cost versus curriculum content in preschool and child care programs.

Table 4 provides the total number of respondents who indicated on a Likert scale their feelings regarding the importance of cost versus the curriculum content. The table was divided into the Ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. The survey instructed parents to circle the answer that most closely reflected their feelings. Participants were asked to circle the selection that most closely matched their feeling about the statement that how much a daycare or preschool costs is more important than the activities offered. The choices were *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Neither Agree nor Disagree*, *Disagree* and *Strongly Disagree*.

	White	White	White	Latino	Latino	Latino	Other	Other	Other
	Frequency	Mean	Percentage	Frequency	Mean	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Strongly Agree	1	5	10%	3	15	30%	0	0	0%
Agree	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	6	20%	1	3	10%	0	0	0%
Disagree	2	4	20%	1	2	10%	0	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	3	3	30%	3	3	30%	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2.25</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2.875</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

**TABLE 4 Parental Values Concerning Cost Of Day Care Vs. Curriculum Content**



## **Difference In Degree Of Importance Placed On Development of Social Skills Between Latino And Non-Latino Parents**

This research goal correlated to Question 3 in the second portion of the survey, which asked parents if they felt cost was more important than curriculum. The survey used a Likert scale and instructed parents to circle the answer that most closely reflected their feelings. Sixty percent of non-Latino parents strongly agreed that children should be able to get along with others before starting school, while 40% of Latino parents strongly agreed with the statement. Ten percent of both Latino and non-Latino parents agreed that it was somewhat important for children to learn how to get along with others before starting school. Ten percent of Latino parents neither agreed nor disagreed that these social skills were important. Ten percent of non-Latino parents disagreed that children should get along with others before starting school, while none of the Latino parents chose that category. Ten percent of the Latino parents, however, strongly disagreed with children should learn how to get along with others prior to starting school, while none of the non-Latino parents chose that category.

Table 5 provides the total number of survey respondents who selected each of the categories on the scale, indicating their attitudes about young children getting along with others prior to attending kindergarten. The table was divided into the Ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. Respondents were asked to circle the category that most closely matched their personal feelings. The category choices for these personal feelings were *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Neither Agree nor Disagree*, *Disagree* and *Strongly Disagree*. Two of the non-Latino respondents and three of the Latino respondents failed to answer this question on the surveys they returned.

	White	White	White	Latino	Latino	Latino	Other	Other	Other
	Frequency	Mean	Percentage	Frequency	Mean	Percentage	Frequency	Mean	Percentage
Strongly Agree	6	30	60%	4	20	40%	0	0	0%
Agree	1	4	10%	1	4	10%	0	0	0%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0	0	0%	1	3	10%	0	0	0%
Disagree	1	2	10%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0%	1	1	10%	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

**TABLE 5 Parental Attitudes Concerning Socialization Prior To Kindergarten**

### **Difference In Use of Friends and Relatives For Childcare As Opposed To**

### **Day Care and Preschool Programs Between Latino and Non-Latino Parents**

This research goal correlated to Question 2 in the first portion of the survey, which used a checklist and asked parents to check each type of child care they use. The table was divided into the Ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. Thirty percent of non-Latino parents indicated that they used daycare programs, while 20% of Latino parents indicated that they used these programs. Forty percent of non-Latino and 30% of Latino parents had a child enrolled in a Head Start program. Twenty percent of non-Latino parents had their child enrolled in a preschool program, while 10% of Latino families used preschool programs. Thirty percent of non-Latino parents had friends or relatives that provided child care, while 20% of the Latino parents indicated friends or relatives supplied child care for them. Twenty percent of Latino parents chose the category of *Other*, but failed to elaborate in the space provided for an explanation.

Table 6 provides the total number of survey respondents who selected each of the categories on a checklist, indicating the types of child care they used for their children. The table was divided into the Ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. Respondents were asked to circle the category that most closely matched their personal feelings. Discrepancies in figures which equal a total greater than the total number of survey respondents is due to some parents selecting more than one type of child care. Every parent answered this question on the returned surveys.

	White	White	Latino	Latino	Other	Other
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Day Care	3	30%	2	20%	0	0%
Head Start	4	40%	3	30%	0	0%
Preschool	2	20%	1	10%	0	0%
Friend or Relative	3	30%	2	20%	0	0%
Other	0%	0%	2	20%	0	0%

**TABLE 6 Type(s) Of Child Care Used By Parents**

### **Difference In Value Placed Upon Early Education Between Latino and Non-Latino Parents**

This research goal correlated to Question 4 in the first portion of the survey, which asked parents to check all items on a checklist that applied to what they wanted their child to learn in a preschool or child care program. The choices on this list were *reading, writing, counting, art projects, music, English, Spanish and Other*. The table was divided into the Ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. Fifty percent of

non-Latino and 40% of Latino parents wanted their child to learn to read in a preschool or child care program. Sixty percent of non-Latino and 40% of Latino parents felt their children should learn to write in these programs. Seventy percent of non-Latino parents and 40% of Latino parents listed counting as an important part of their child's learning in these programs. Art projects were important to 80% of the non-Latino parents and 30% of the Latino parents. Seventy percent of non-Latino parents viewed music as important, as did 30% of the Latino parents. English was important to both groups equally, at the rate of 30%. Fifty percent of non-Latino parents wanted their child to learn to speak Spanish in a preschool or child care program, while 30% of Latino parents chose this category.

Table 7 provides the total number of survey respondents who selected each of the categories on a checklist, indicating their attitudes about what they wanted their child to learn in preschool and child care programs. The table was divided into the Ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. Respondents were asked to check each category that matched their personal feelings. Every parent answered this question on the returned surveys.

	White	White	Latino	Latino	Other	Other
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Reading	5	50%	4	40%	0	0%
Writing	6	60%	4	40%	0	0%
Counting	7	70%	4	40%	0	0%
Art projects	8	80%	3	30%	0	0%
Music	7	70%	3	30%	0	0%
English	3	30%	3	30%	0	0%
Spanish	5	50%	3	30%	0	0%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

**TABLE 7 — Parental Value Placed Upon Curriculum Areas**

The fifth research goal also correlated to Questions 1 and 5 in the second portion of the survey, which used a Likert scale and asked parents to circle the answer that most closely matched their feelings. Question 1 stated that children should be able to read and write prior to starting kindergarten. The rating scale used the choices of *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Neither Agree or Disagree*, *Disagree*, and *Strongly Disagree*. Thirty percent of Latino parents strongly agreed that children should be able to read and write prior to attending kindergarten, compared to 10% of non-Latino parents. Thirty percent of non-Latino parents agreed with the statement, while none of the Latino parents chose the *Agree* option. Thirty percent of Latino parents and 20% of non-Latino parents neither agreed nor disagreed that children should be able to read and write prior to starting kindergarten. While 20% of non-Latino and 10% of Latino parents disagreed with the statement, no parent in either group strongly disagreed with children being able to read and write prior to entering kindergarten.

With a sample size of five for each group we will use the normal curve values of 1.860 at the .05 level and 2.896 at the .01 level to determine the significance of the difference. The t ratio obtained was 0.493. Therefore, the researcher would seem justified rejecting that there is a significant difference between Latino and non-Latino parents regarding the ability of young children to read and write prior to attending kindergarten.

Table 8 was divided into the ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. The discrepancy between total numbers and total number of returned surveys is due to respondent failure to answer all questions on the survey.

	White	White	White	Latino	Latino	Latino	Other	Other	Other
	Frequency	Mean	Percentage	Frequency	Mean	Percentage	Frequency	Mean	Percentage
Strongly Agree	1	5	10%	3	15	30%	0	0	0%
Agree	3	12	30%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	6	20%	3	9	30%	0	0	0%
Disagree	2	4	20%	1	4	10%	0	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3.375</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

**TABLE 8 Parental Attitudes Toward Reading And Writing Prior To Kindergarten**

Question 5 stated that using language correctly was an important part of learning for young children. The rating scale used the choices of *Strongly agree*, *Agree*, *Neither Agree or Disagree*, *Disagree*, and *Strongly Disagree*. The table was divided into the Ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. Eighty percent of non-Latino parents and 70% of Latino parents strongly agreed that using language correctly was important. An additional 20% of non-Latino and 10% of Latino parents agreed with the statement. None of the survey respondents chose the categories of *Neither Agree or Disagree*, *Disagree*, and *Strongly Disagree*.

With a sample size of five for each group we will use the normal curve values of 1.860 at the .05 level and 2.896 at the .01 level to determine the significance of the difference. The t ratio obtained was 2.187. Therefore, the researcher would seem justified in accepting and assuming that there is a significant difference between Latino and non-Latino parents regarding the ability of young children to use grammar correctly.

Table 9 provides the total number of survey respondents who selected each of the categories on a Likert scale, indicating their attitudes about the importance of young children using language correctly. The table was divided into the Ethnic categories of *White*, *Latino* and *Other*. None of the participants in this survey chose *Other*. Respondents were asked to circle the category that most closely matched their personal feelings. Two of the Latino respondents failed to answer this question on the surveys they returned.

	White	White	White	Latino	Latino	Latino	Other	Other	Other
	Frequency	Mean	Percentage	Frequency	Mean	Percentage	Frequency	Mean	Percentage
Strongly Agree	8	40	80%	7	35	70%	0	0	0%
Agree	2	8	20%	1	4	10%	0	0	0%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Disagree	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4.875</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

**TABLE 9 Parental Attitudes Concerning Correct Usage of Grammar**

## SUMMARY

Chapter IV reported the findings of the research study based upon the survey results and research goals. Data regarding Latino and non-Latino parents' motivators for selecting child care and preschool programs were reported. Additional data reported parental attitudes regarding program cost and curriculum content. One table compared differences in attitudes regarding young children's socialization between the two groups. Another table compared differences in

frequency of choosing different types of programs between the two groups. Data were also reported regarding the value each group placed upon different activity areas normally found in preschool and child care programs. Additional data reported differences in parental attitudes between Latino and non-Latino parents regarding reading, writing and grammar. Chapter V will provide a summary, conclusions and recommendations based upon the findings of this study.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter summarizes the findings of this study. Conclusions that pertain to the research goals and recommendations based upon data collected and reported in the findings follow the summary.

#### **SUMMARY**

The purpose of this study was to examine the difference in motivators for enrolling children in daycare and preschool programs between Latino and non-Latino parents in Cottonwood, Arizona.

The goals of the study were to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there a difference in the reasons why parents enroll children in daycare and preschool programs between Latino and non-Latino parents?
2. Is program cost a primary factor for both groups of parents?
3. Do both groups put equal emphasis on the development of social skills as a reason for enrollment?
4. Do both groups use friends and relatives for childcare more than they use daycare and preschool programs?
5. Is there a difference in value placed upon educating children at an early age between Latino and non-Latino parents?

The significance of this research project was to help early childcare and education programs better understand the needs of diverse families. It will also help determine the need for curriculum development and revision in training programs for early childhood teachers.

The limitations of this study included a geographical limitation to the Cottonwood and surrounding area of north central Arizona. Additionally, the study was limited to parents of preschool age children.

The population included parents and legal guardians of preschool children who came to the waiting rooms of Dr. Robert Jochim during March 2004. Included in this population were parents of both genders. This study considered ethnicity.

The instrument used to collect data was a descriptive survey. This survey was divided into two sections. The first section contained a checklist and gathered information on ethnicity, child care choices, and curriculum content. The survey contained a second section which used a Likert scale to rate Latino and non-Latino parents' attitudes regarding reading, writing, grammar, socialization and program cost verses curriculum content.

Twenty surveys in English and 20 surveys in Spanish were distributed during March 2004. Ten of the English surveys and 10 of the Spanish surveys were returned, for a response rate of 50%.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This section presents conclusions drawn from the findings in this study in relation to the research goals.

### **Research Goal #1. Is there a difference in the reasons why parents enroll children in daycare and preschool programs between Latino and non-Latino parents?**

This study suggests that some differences do exist. Latino parents chose learning to play with other children (40%) and learning the alphabet (40%) as primary considerations when enrolling their child in preschool and child care programs. While non-Latino parents also indicated that learning the alphabet was important (60%), learning to write one's name (60%)

was viewed as equally important. Only 30% of Latino parents indicated they felt this was important. Fifty percent of non-Latino parents selected sitting still, while 30% of Latino parents felt this was a primary consideration. The ability to separate from parents was not considered especially important by the majority of parents surveyed in either group. Latino parents were less likely than non-Latino parents to make multiple selections, and some Latino parents did not choose any categories. Further investigation may be appropriate, to determine if additional factors influenced the low level of response from Latino parents. It seems unlikely that the hesitation of Latino parents to make selections at the same rate as non-Latino parents is due to attitudes about the role of teacher versus the role of parent. Both groups had similar figures in all categories when indicating if they thought it was the teacher's job, not the parent's job, to teach reading and writing. In addition, 30% of each group wrote in that it was a shared responsibility, even though the option of providing that information was not formally included on the survey.

**Research Goal #2. Is program cost a primary factor for both groups of parents?**

Program cost was a primary factor for both groups, according to data collected on the surveys. Program cost was the most frequently occurring response for Latino parents, who chose this option 50% of the time. While the frequency rate among non-Latino parents was not the primary consideration, it was selected by 50% of survey respondents as a consideration. Forty percent of the non-Latino parents and 30% of the Latino parents used the preschool and child care programs provided by Head Start. In addition, 30% of non-Latino and 20% of Latino families indicated they used child care provided by a friend or relative. Twenty percent of the Latino respondents chose *Other*, but did not elaborate, making it impossible to predict if cost is a consideration in those cases. In addition, Latino parents were three times as likely as non-Latino

parents (30% as opposed to 10%) to strongly agree that program cost was more important than curriculum content in preschool and child care programs.

**Research Goal #3. Do both groups put equal emphasis on the development of social skills as a reason for enrollment?**

Both groups surveyed showed similar response rates when asked if their child's ability to learn to play with others was a consideration in enrolling their child in a preschool or child care program. Sixty percent of the non-Latino and 40% of the Latino parents chose this option, and only 10% in either group indicated disagreement or strong disagreement. Thirty percent of Latino parents failed to respond to this question. This percentage is high enough that a second survey may be indicated in order to determine the reliability of response rates for Latino parents regarding this data. This would be especially valuable, since statistical analysis of the data collected indicates that there is a significant difference in attitudes.

**Research Goal #4. Do both groups use friends and relatives for childcare more than they use daycare and preschool programs?**

Both Latino and non-Latino parents used child care provided by friends and relatives at similar rates. Data collected revealed that each group chose day care and a friend or relative at equal rates. Thirty percent of non-Latino and 20% of Latino parents respectively showed a 1:1 ratio when the two types of care were analyzed. Forty percent of non-Latino parents used Head Start, as opposed to 30% of Latino parents. Both groups showed similar rates of using Head Start as opposed to friends or relatives. Head Start was chosen more often by parents from both groups.

**Research Goal #5. Is there a difference in value placed upon educating children at an early age between Latino and non-Latino parents?**

Latino parents (30%) were three times as likely as non-Latino parents (10%) to strongly agree that children should know how to read and write before they start kindergarten. This is supported by the fact that 40% of Latino parents chose reading and writing as curriculum areas they wanted their child to learn in preschool and child care program. This percentage gives these areas, along with counting, the most frequent response rate among the Latino group. Non-Latino parents placed a higher value on art (80%) and music (70%) than they did on these other areas. Both groups placed high value on the use of proper grammar usage by preschool children, with all respondents in both groups either strongly agreeing or agreeing that the proper use of language prior to kindergarten was important. Neither group, however, showed a strong tendency toward selecting programs that taught either English or Spanish.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations presented below are based upon the reported data and the conclusions.

***Recommendation 1:*** Non-Latino parents in this study all chose *White* as their ethnicity. Further studies using a more diverse group of non-Latino populations are recommended in order to determine if significant differences exist between Latino parents and other populations.

***Recommendation 2:*** This study showed that both Latino and non-Latino parents consider the cost of preschool and child care programs important. Therefore, programs should strive to provide cost effective developmentally appropriate activities. Early childhood teacher training programs should include cost management as part of the requirement for graduation from these

programs. Further studies should be undertaken to determine if there is a decrease in program expenditures when teachers are trained in cost management as part of the required curriculum for early childhood education.

***Recommendation 3:*** Both Latino and non-Latino parents felt it was important for children to have good social skills prior to attending kindergarten. Therefore, preschool and child care programs should implement programs that help children attain these skills. Teacher training programs for early childhood teachers should include learning outcomes that demonstrate an awareness of how to implement these skills in early childhood programs. Additional studies are recommended to determine if an increase in teacher awareness of fostering social skills will result in increased social skills among preschool children.

***Recommendation 4:*** Latino parents placed highest value on language development, along with reading, writing and math skills. Therefore, preschool and child care programs that seek to meet the expectations of Latino parents should include developmentally appropriate activities in these curriculum areas as part of their program development and implementation.

***Recommendation 5:*** This study found that while Latino parents indicated that they wanted their child to learn to read and write in preschool and child care programs, these were not primary considerations in enrolling their child in preschool programs. These parents were more likely, however, to place high value on children knowing these skills prior to attending kindergarten than non-Latino parents. Further studies are recommended to determine factors that may be involved in this discrepancy.

***Recommendation 6:*** This study found that non-Latino parents placed highest value on the inclusion of art, music and math programs. They also place high value on the correct use of

language skills. Therefore, programs that serve these parents should incorporate these activities into their daily plans. Teacher training programs must include information on how to develop, implement and evaluate these activities in ways that foster social skills and language development. Additional studies should be undertaken to discover if there is a relationship between this type of teacher training and increased levels of social and language development in the children they teach. Additionally, studies are needed to determine if there is a relationship between the use art, music and math programs that promote social skills and language development and increased parent participation, if parents are aware the activities build social skills and language development.

***Recommendation 7:*** Both Latino and non-Latino parents indicated that parents as well as teachers have a responsibility to teach children to read and write. Therefore, preschool and child care programs should foster parent participation through the use of parent information and suggested at-home activities that help parents understand how they can foster reading and writing skills. Further studies are needed to determine if there is a correlation between increasing parental awareness in these areas and increased levels of parent participation.

***Recommendation 8:*** Results of this study indicated that both Latino and non-Latino parents agree on the importance of correct language usage. Preschool and child care teachers must learn to incorporate language building skills in all areas of the curriculum in order to meet the expectations of both groups of parents. Teacher training programs must provide instruction on how to incorporate language in all areas across the curriculum and in all aspects of early care and education programs.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bloom, P. J. (1995). Shared decisionmaking: The centerpiece of participatory management. Young Children (50) 4. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Bromer, J. (1999). Cultural variations in child care: Values and actions. Young Children (54) 6. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Ceglowski, D. (1998). Inside a Head Start center: Developing policies from practice. New York: Teachers College Press.

Daniel, J. (1996). Effective outreach: Solidifying our base. Young Children (51) 5. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1990). Literacy for empowerment: The role of parents in children's education. Philadelphia: Falmer Press.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education (February, 2001). Latinos in school: Some facts and findings. No. 162. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. EDO-UD-01-1. Retrieved from <http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu/digest/dig162.asp>

Friend, M. & Cook, L. (2000). Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed). New York: Addison Wesley Longman.

Greenberg, P. (1989). Parents as partners in young children's development and education: A new American fad? Why does it matter? Young Children (44) 4. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Government Printing Office ( 1996, September). State of education for Hispanic Americans. In Our nation on the fault line: Hispanic American education. Retrieved from <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/FaultLine/state.html>



Head Start Bureau. (2003, March 3). Statistical Fact Sheet. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Online] Available: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/research/factsheets.htm>

Liontos, L. B. (1992). At-risk families & schools: Becoming partners. ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management College of Education University of Oregon: Eugene.

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (2002). Did you know that ... there is a new law that affects your child's education? No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) Bulletins. Retrieved from <http://www.ncpie.org/WhatsHappening/NCLBBulletin.html>

Nicolau, S. and Ramos, C.L. (1990). Together is better: Building strong relationships between schools and Hispanic parents. Hispanic Policy Development Project, Inc. In At-risk families & schools: Becoming partners. ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management College of Education. University of Oregon: Eugene. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 325 543.

Olivas, L. (1999, December 9). Hispanic Demographics Trends and Opportunities A Presentation to ASU COD. Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ. [Online]. Available: <http://courses.ed.asu.edu/glass/olivas/>

Pancrazio, A.C. (2003, March 13). Northern Arizona luring Latinos. The Arizona Republic. [Online]. Available: <http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/news/articles/0313northernhispanic13.html>

Pease-Alvarez, L. (1992). In Cultural diversity and early education: Report of a workshop. Phillips, D. & Crowell, N. (Eds). Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press  
Retrieved from <http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/earlyed/>

Phillips, D. & Crowell, N. (Eds.). Cultural diversity and early education: Report of a workshop. Workshop presented November 29-30, 1993 by the Board on Children and Families. Report published by National Academy of Sciences. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press. Retrieved from <http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/earlyed/>

Super, C.M. & Harkness, S. (Eds.). (1980). Anthropological Perspectives in Child Development: New Directions for Child Development. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. In Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1990). Literacy for empowerment: The role of parents in children's education. Philadelphia: Falmer Press.

Tabors, P.O. (1998, November). What early childhood educators need to know: Developing effective programs for linguistically and culturally diverse children and families. Young Children (53) 6. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Tharp, R., Jordan, C. & O'Donnel, C. (1980). Behavioral community psychology: A cross-disciplinary example with theoretical implications. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association. Montreal. In Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1990). Literacy for empowerment: The role of parents in children's education. Philadelphia: Falmer Press.

Tomás Rivera Policy Institute. (1998, September 3). Working Latino families struggle to find childcare study shatters stereotypes. Press release. California: Claremont. [Online]. Available: <http://www.trpi.org/press/childpres.html>

Turnbull & Turnbull (2001). Families, professionals and exceptionality: Collaborating for empowerment. (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

United States Census Bureau (2000). The Hispanic Population. Washington, D.C.: United States Census Bureau. [Online] Available: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-3.pdf>

Washington, V. & Bailey, U.J.O., (1995). Project Head Start: Models and strategies for the twenty-first century. New York: Garland Publishing.

## **APPENDIX A – ENGLISH SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Ethnic Background: ☐ White ☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐ Other
2. Type of child care you use (check all that apply)
- ☐ Daycare ☐ Head Start ☐ Preschool ☐ Friend or Relative ☐ Other (please explain):
3. Why did you choose this type of childcare? (Check all that apply)
- ☐ It was free or low cost ☐ So my child would learn to play with other children
- ☐ So my child would be ready for school in these ways (check all that apply):
- ☐ Writing name ☐ Knowing ABC's ☐ Reading ☐ Sitting still
- ☐ Able to be away from me ☐ Other (please explain):
4. What do you want your child to learn in daycare or preschool?
- (Check all that apply)
- ☐ Reading ☐ Writing ☐ Counting ☐ Art projects
- ☐ Music ☐ English ☐ Spanish ☐ Other (please explain):

Please circle the answer that best shows how you feel:

1. Children should be able to read and write before they start kindergarten.
- Strongly Agree   Agree   Neither Agree or Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
2. Teaching children to read and write are the teachers' job, not the parents' job.
- Strongly Agree   Agree   Neither Agree or Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
3. Children should learn how to get along with others before they start school.
- Strongly Agree   Agree   Neither Agree or Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
4. How much a daycare or preschool costs is more important than the activities offered.
- Strongly Agree   Agree   Neither Agree or Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
5. Using language correctly is an important part of learning for young children.
- Strongly Agree   Agree   Neither Agree or Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

## **APPENDIX B – SPANISH SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Étnico: ☐ Anglo ☐ Latino ☐ Otro

2. ¿Cual cuidar de niños usa UD.? (Marca todos que hay aplicación)

☐ Publico ☐ Head Start ☐ preescolar ☐ familia o amigo ☐ Otro (favor de dice que):

3. ¿Porque use este selección de cuidar de niños o preescolar? (marca todos que hay aplicación)

☐ Era sin gratis o precio bajado ☐ Mi hijo enseñar a jugar con otros

☐ Quiero que mi hijo esta listo a enseñar: (marca todos que hay aplicación):

☐ Escribir ☐ Saber el alfabeto ☐ Leer ☐ Siéntale para enseñar

☐ Puede estar sin padres ☐ Otro (favor de decir que):

4. ¿Qué quiere que su hijo enseñar a cuidar de niños publico o preescolar?

(Marca todos que hay aplicación)

☐ Leer ☐ Escribir ☐ Números ☐ Arte

☐ Música ☐ Inglés ☐ Español ☐ Otro (favor que dice de que):

Favor de poner un circulo en el response que mejor describir su sientto a cada selección.

1. Es importante que niños pueden leer y escribir antes de ir a jardín de infantes.

Mucho Acuerdo   Acuerdo   Mas o menos   No Acuerdo   Mucho No Acuerdo

2. Enseñar los niños a leer y escribir es el trabajo para la maestra, no los padres.

Mucho Acuerdo   Acuerdo   Mas o menos   No Acuerdo   Mucho No Acuerdo

3. Niños necesitan enseñar como estar simpáticos antes de fue a la escuela.

Mucho Acuerdo   Acuerdo   Mas o menos   No Acuerdo   Mucho No Acuerdo

4. La cuesta de cuidar de niños o preescolar es más importante de que los niños hacen allí.

Mucho Acuerdo   Acuerdo   Mas o menos   No Acuerdo   Mucho No Acuerdo

5. Gramática correcto es una parte muy importante de la instrucción de niños jóvenes.

Mucho Acuerdo   Acuerdo   Mas o menos   No Acuerdo   Mucho No Acuerdo

## **APPENDIX C – COVER LETTER**



Dear parent of a child age 3-5:

Your thoughts about childcare are important! Please tell me what you think children need to learn in preschool and daycare.

I am doing a survey to find out how parents in Cottonwood feel about daycare and preschool. This will give you a chance to say what you would like your child to learn at daycare or preschool.

This survey is for a class I am taking at Old Dominion University. I am working on a degree in early childhood teacher education. Your thoughts will help me understand what parents want for their children. I will share this information with teachers who work with young children.

You do not need to give me your name. You will not be called about this survey.

Answering these questions is not necessary for your office visit today. But, I hope you will fill out the form.

Thank you

Barbara Andre

. . . . .

Estimado padre de un niño que tiene 3-5 años:

¡Sus opiniones de cuidar de niños son importantes! Favor de dígame que su piensa que niños necesitan enseñar en preescolar y cuidar de niños.

Estoy hacienda un medir para saber las opiniones de padres que viven en Cottonwood al cuidar de niños público y preescolar. Estas preguntas dar a UD. un ocasión para decir que quiere que su hijo enseñar en cuidar de niños público o preescolar.

Estas preguntas son para una clase a la Universidad de Old Dominion. Estoy estudiando educación para las maestras de los niños jóvenes. Sus opiniones van a ayudarme a conocer que los padres quieren para sus hijos. Voy a dar esta información a maestras quien trabaja con niños jóvenes.

No necesita dar su nombre. No voy a teléfono UD. de estas preguntas.

Responde de estas preguntas no es necesario para su visita al medico hoy. Pero, espero que UD. completar la forma.

Muchas gracias,

Barbara Andre