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## INTRODUCTION

- Parents' school readiness beliefs are related to parents' practices and in turn children's school readiness skills (e.g., Elliott & Bachmann, 2018).
- Very few studies have examined the school readiness beliefs of immigrant parents. Children from immigrant homes are a rapidly growing population. Recently, several studies have found wide variability in the school readiness skills of children who are immigrants (e.g., Crosnoe & Fuligni, 2012; Ha, Ybarra, & Johnson, 2017; Koury & Votruba-Drzal, 2014).
- When educators understand and build on parents' beliefs, children experience greater continuity between home and school and experience greater success (e.g., Barbarin et al., 2010).

## PURPOSE

The aim of this study was to investigate:

- what Chinese, Dominican and Salvadoran immigrant parents believe are important school readiness skills,
- their role in their children's learning,
- and how parents see their home culture contributing to their children's school readiness.

## PARTICIPANTS & PROCEDURES

- Parents were first and second-generation immigrants from China, Dominican Republic, and El Salvador who had preschool-aged children.
- All children were enrolled in early childhood programs.
- In their preferred language, parents
  - completed a Qsort task where they ranked 36 school readiness skills into 4 categories from least to most important.
  - participated in a semi-structured interview.

Select Parent Characteristics	Chinese ( <i>n</i> = 22)	Dominican ( <i>n</i> = 19)	Salvadoran ( <i>n</i> = 22)
First-Generation	90.9%	84.2%	81.8%
Number of Years Living in U.S. (if 1st gen)	12.11 (5.40)	13.86 (10.84)	17.44 (7.77)
High School Diploma or Less	18.2%	27.8%	45.5%
Associate/Bachelor Degree	40.9%	66.6%	49.9%
Graduate Degree	40.9%	5.6%	4.5%
Speak Only Spanish or Mandarin to Child	21.1%	15.8%	22.7%
Speak Both Span/Mandarin and English to Child	73.6%	84.2%	77.3%
Speak Only English to Child	5.3%	0%	0%

## RESULTS

### MOST IMPORTANT SCHOOL READINESS SKILLS

(Q-sort task with 1 =*Least Important*; 4 =*Most Important*)

Chinese	Dominican	Salvadoran
Shows respect for others <i>M</i> = 3.78 ( <i>SD</i> = 0.42)	Shows respect for others <i>M</i> = 3.50 ( <i>SD</i> =0.95)	Shows respect for others <i>M</i> = 3.59 ( <i>SD</i> = 0.74)
Self-confident <i>M</i> = 3.70 ( <i>SD</i> =0.70)	Communicates well in English <i>M</i> = 3.26 ( <i>SD</i> =0.94)	Shows independence <i>M</i> = 3.23 ( <i>SD</i> =0.92)
Gets along with others <i>M</i> = 3.55 ( <i>SD</i> =0.67)	Uses good manners <i>M</i> = 3.25 ( <i>SD</i> =1.15)	Uses good manners <i>M</i> = 3.23 ( <i>SD</i> =0.92)
Uses good manners <i>M</i> = 3.48 ( <i>SD</i> =0.59)	Self-confident <i>M</i> = 3.25 ( <i>SD</i> =0.85)	Knows names of colors <i>M</i> = 3.18 ( <i>SD</i> =0.85)
Knows right from wrong <i>M</i> = 3.36 ( <i>SD</i> =0.79)	Obedient <i>M</i> = 3.21 ( <i>SD</i> =1.03)	Can express wants/needs in words <i>M</i> = 3.09 ( <i>SD</i> =0.75)

## PARENTS' ROLES

- All groups reported active involvement in readying children for school, specifically noting the importance of reading, instilling a desire for education, and developing social-emotional skills.
- Dominican and Salvadoran parents discussed using educational materials (e.g., letter flashcards) to teach children.
- Chinese parents shared how they used everyday moments to teach children vocabulary and academic concepts (e.g., counting).

## CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- Most parents discussed the broader importance of their native languages to retain cultural identity, develop family relationships, and how bilingualism provides more employment opportunities.
  - "We use Spanish because we are Latinos." (Dominican parent); "English is his first language and Mandarin is the second language, with which he can communicate to his parents and grandparents well." (Chinese parent)
- Because children will learn English in school, parents emphasized the importance of using Spanish or Mandarin at home.
  - "If he speaks English to me, I reply to him in Mandarin. Because I want him to realize that although he was born in the US, he is supposed to know about Chinese culture and has to combine both sides together." (Chinese parent)
- All groups talked about the importance of children showing respect, which promotes positive teacher-student interactions.
  - "He will respect his teachers, listen to what they will teach, and see them as people that know more than him and that he can learn more from them." (Salvadoran parent)
- Dominican parents discussed their cooperative culture. Teaching children to share and help others integrates them into the classroom.
  - "Well, I taught him to share, taught him to not only think of himself. Because American culture teaches children that you are alone."
- Salvadoran parents discussed being hard-working, which is beneficial to school and long-term success.
  - "In the future he should be a hard worker, he's also taught that it's necessary to study if he wants to live a less hectic life."
- Some Chinese parents noted the similarities between Chinese and American cultures in their contribution to school readiness.
  - "Mastering knowledge, learning, I feel that there is no difference between China and the United States." (Chinese parent)