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School Readiness Beliefs of Dominican and Salvadoran Immigrant Parents

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Introduction

Parents are children’s first teachers and it is critical that they understand what children need to be successful in school. Low-income Latinx parents report that one of the main barriers to preparing their children for kindergarten is their limited knowledge of which skills are most important and how to foster them (Peterson et al., 2018).

Method

Parents participated in semi-structured interviews regarding which skills their children should have before starting kindergarten, how they perceived their role in helping children acquire these skills, how they learned which skills were necessary for success.

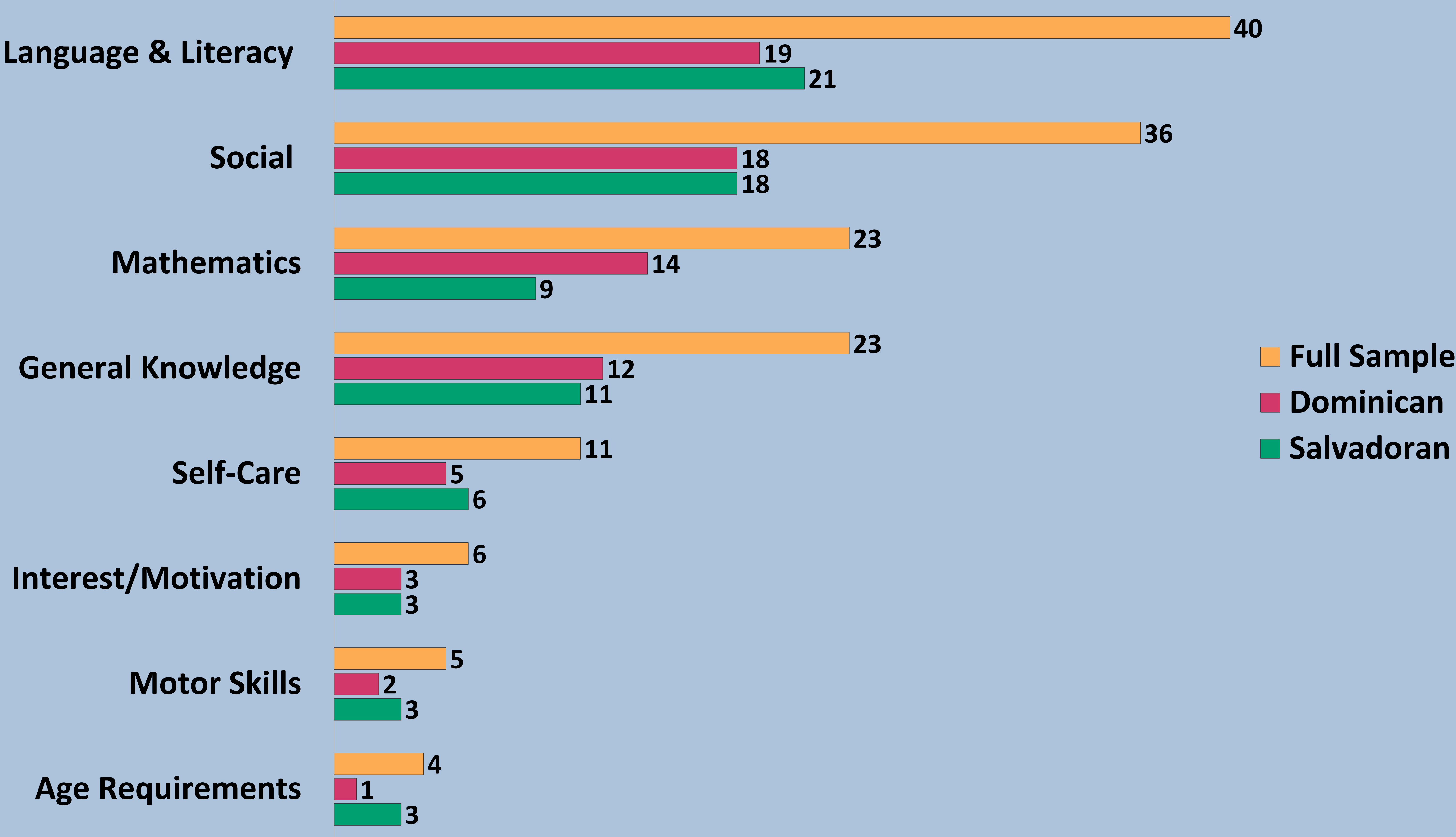
Participants

	Total sample (N = 43)		Dominicans (n = 21)		Salvadorans (n = 22)	
	M or %	SD	M or %	SD	M or %	SD
Parent age (years)	34.46	6.91	33.10	6.52	35.76	7.18
Generation Status						
First Generation	83.7%		85.7%		81.8%	
Second Generation	16.3%		14.3%		18.2%	
Years living in U.S. (1st gen)	14.46	8.22	13.81	10.67	17.44	7.77
Highest level of parental education**						
High School Diploma / GED or Less	38.1%		30.0%		45.4%	
Associate’s /Vocational Degree	45.2%		45.0%		45.4%	
Bachelor’s Degree	11.9%		20.0%		4.5%	
Master’s Degree or Higher	4.8%		5.0%		4.5%	
Annual Income						
\$20,000 or Less	20.0%		27.8%		13.6%	
\$20,000 – \$40,000	45.0%		38.9%		50.0%	
\$40,000 – \$60,000	12.5%		11.1%		13.6%	
\$60,000 – \$80,000	12.5%		16.7%		9.1%	
\$80,000 or More	10.0%		6%		13.6%	
Primary Language(s) Spoken at Home						
Spanish	79.5%		76.5%		81.8%	
English	20.5%		23.5%		18.2%	
Child gender (% girls)**	48.8%		23.8%		72.7%	
Child age (months)	51.95	10.31	50.71	12.47	53.13	7.86
Number of Siblings in Home						
Number of Older Siblings	0.93	1.01	0.76	0.94	1.09	1.07
Number of Younger Siblings	0.35	0.61	0.43	0.68	0.27	0.55
Older Siblings at Home (Y/N)	62.8%		57.1%		68.2%	
Younger Siblings at Home (Y/N)	27.9%		33.3%		22.7%	

Implications

Schools and communities should do more to communicate with Latinx immigrant parents before their children reach the age of five.

Dominican and Salvadoran parents most frequently mentioned the importance of language/literacy & social skills.



Parents were **actively involved** in preparing their children for school and typically described getting information through informal channels: either from **friends and family** or through **experiences with older children**. Few received any information from schools.



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