

# Unveiling Community Cultural Wealth Among Latina/o Immigrant Families

*Agenia Delouche, Manuel Marichal, Tina Smith-Bonahue, and Erica McCray*

## Abstract

The rising population of Latina/o students in U.S. schools warrants a deeper understanding of recent immigrant families, particularly families' engagement in their children's education. Our study highlights the importance of unveiling the community cultural wealth of Latina/o immigrant families to deepen and enrich family–school connections. Our findings describe the many strengths immigrant families possess, including their ability to maneuver social institutions, engage in various social networks, and maintain hopes for the future. Families also presented with strengths acquired through multilingual experiences and confrontations with inequality. By acknowledging these innate strengths, schools are better equipped to cultivate strong family–school partnerships and student success.

Key Words: immigrants, families, schools, capital, Latina/o, qualitative study, community cultural wealth, engagement, family–school partnerships

## Introduction

When families and schools collaborate and form partnerships, students succeed (Christenson & Reschly, 2009; McWayne et al., 2013; Sheridan et al., 2019; Sibley & Brabeck, 2017). Meaningful partnerships are especially important in the early years of a child's development and are key to promoting

strong social–emotional skills, preparedness for schooling beyond early childhood, and academic achievement (Office of Early Childhood Development, 2020). Through meaningful partnerships, teachers and families can provide reciprocal support, with schools integrating the values and priorities of families into their pedagogy and families reinforcing both learning and the importance of education at home (Epstein, 2001). This results in what Epstein has called “family-like schools” and “school-like homes.” Educators can begin to understand the needs and realities of students and their families by learning about the histories, experiences, and strengths that families bring into the schooling experience. This is particularly important for immigrant families, who often cite educational attainment for their children as a primary reason for immigrating to a new country and whose children are more likely to experience difficulties in school (Beauregard et al., 2014; McWayne et al., 2013).

### **Changing Demographics of U.S. Schools**

Globally, approximately 281 million individuals reside outside of the country in which they were born (United Nations, 2021). Among all countries, the United States has the largest immigrant population at 44.9 million, amounting to 14% of the country’s total population (Budiman, 2020; U.S. American Immigration Council, 2021). Over the last 20 years, the number of immigrants in U.S. schools has grown, changing racial/ethnic distributions among students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). One major shift has been in the number of Latina/o students enrolled in U.S. schools (Bauman, 2017). The Latina/o population is multidimensional and intersectional, featuring various racial, ethnic, linguistic, and immigration status backgrounds (Hernandez-Truyol, 1997). Latina/o populations, particularly those with roots in Spain, Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, have increasingly migrated to the U.S. for a variety of social, economic, and political reasons (Lopez & Moslimani, 2022), spreading out across the country (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). Consequently, U.S. schools have experienced a surge in immigrant students from a variety of Latina/o backgrounds (Bauman, 2017). The percentage of Latina/o students enrolled in U.S. schools grew from 22% in 2009 to 28% in 2020 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). Yet this number is expected to grow, with Latina/o student enrollment projected to reach 30% by 2030 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). Given the growing diversity, as well as recent immigration patterns of Central American and Caribbean families (Soutullo et al., 2016), it is important to explore and understand the experiences of these new waves of immigrant students and their families so that educators may be better prepared to support them in accessing school.

## Immigrant Family Engagement

Many factors impact how immigrant families engage with schools, including English proficiency, knowledge of the American education system, financial resources, immigration status, acculturation, and beliefs about education (Calzada et al., 2015; Soutullo et al., 2016; Torres Fernandez, 2015). Despite the critical importance for these family–school partnerships, many immigrant parents report feeling disappointed with school receptiveness (He et al., 2017) and uncomfortable or unwelcome in schools (Hill & Torres, 2010). This often results from cultural differences between home and school, which manifest in teachers misinterpreting family values, norms, and behavior when compared to norms they ascribe to (McIntyre et al., 2011; Shepherd & Stephens, 2010). Subsequently, teachers may engage in teaching and behavior management styles that do not align with behavioral patterns and norms representative of their students and families (McIntyre et al., 2011). When educators can understand how families engage, they can promote and encourage this engagement and activation of Latina/o families’ assets in the form of cultural wealth (López-Robertson, 2017).

### Understanding Strengths of Latina/o Families

Previous research has demonstrated that Latina/o families can and will engage in their children’s school experience, particularly when their strengths are leveraged in the school context (Jasis & Ordóñez-Jasis, 2004). When parents are empowered to build trusting relationships with educators, they develop the confidence to engage in school and community activities to improve their children’s educational experience (Bolívar & Chrispeels, 2011). Additionally, previous research supports that when the cultural and linguistic resources of Latina/o parents are encouraged and built upon, they can better engage meaningfully within school systems to improve the conditions of their children’s schooling (Durand, 2011; Jasis & Ordóñez-Jasis, 2004). For instance, many Latina/o families maintain values of *educación* (education), *confianza* (trust), *cariño* (caring relationships), *compromiso* (commitment), and *respeto* (respect)—all of which serve as important resources for growing civic engagement in the school community and building family–school partnerships that encourage success for their children (Durand, 2011; Jasis & Ordóñez-Jasis, 2004). Outside of schools, it has been found that Latina/o parents also engage in a variety of language and literacy practices at home which positively contribute to their children’s development in school (Alston-Abel & Berninger, 2018). When educators seek to understand these cultural strengths, they can better implement an asset-based approach in supporting Latina/o students and

families while creating spaces that align with culturally and linguistically diverse pedagogical practices (Grosso Richins et al., 2021).

## Theoretical Framework

The primary theoretical framework guiding this study is Yosso's (2005) model of community cultural wealth (CCW). Education professionals tend to presume that immigrant students are "disadvantaged," lacking knowledge, social skills, various abilities, and overall cultural capital (Valenzuela, as cited in Yosso, 2005). Yosso, on the other hand, identified six unique forms of cultural wealth immigrant communities demonstrate: aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital (p. 779), thereby countering deficit narratives that may exist when working with Latina/o immigrants (Jimenez, 2020). These six forms of capital are described in Table 1 (Yosso, 2005, pp. 77–80).

Table 1. Categories of Community Cultural Wealth

Form of Capital	Definition
Aspirational	Ability to maintain future hopes and dreams in midst of barriers
Linguistic	Intellectual and social skills learned through multilingual communication experiences
Navigational	Skills acquired through maneuvering through institutions
Social	Networks of people and community resources
Familial	Cultural knowledges nurtured among family that carry community, history, memory, and cultural intuition
Resistant	Knowledges and skills acquired from challenging inequality

Within the field of education, CCW has been used to expand notions of cultural capital (e.g., Bourdieu, 1986/2011), and as an alternative to deficit-oriented approaches. For instance, Jimenez (2020) explored how a teacher used CCW to incorporate family histories into curricula with immigrant students, stating that "when teachers are equipped to see, connect with, sustain, and expand on students' lived experiences as immigrant youth, it generates pedagogical spaces of possibility" (p. 780). Further studies have contributed to shifting the narrative surrounding immigrant families within education from a deficit-based one to as asset-based one, showing how the CCW framework can help preservice and in-service teachers identify community assets through activities that engage students and their families while illuminating the ways that youth can draw on these assets to encourage leadership and transformation (Grosso Richins et al., 2021; Salisbury, 2022; Zoch & He, 2020).

Erdemir (2022) applied CCW to a different cultural context and demonstrated that it can be used to counter deficit narratives in the early childhood context among Syrian refugees upon resettlement in Turkey. All the forms of capital in the CCW framework were revealed by the children as they shared aspects of their school, home, and community experiences between Syria and Turkey. For instance, children in the study activated navigational capital by successfully developing positive relationships with teachers that helped them maneuver expectations in the school context. They also activated aspirational capital in the dreams they held for jobs they wished to attain and in their plans for their future, keeping a sense of resilience and hope in the face of adversity.

Bean-Folkes and Ellison (2018) used CCW as a framework for creating culturally relevant approaches to literacy for elementary and middle school students while illustrating how teachers can use their students' capital to enhance the sense of community in their classroom. Bean-Folkes and Ellison described that when teachers rethink their teaching by considering their students' capital, they can ultimately create concrete strategies that enhance pedagogy for students of color at school. Even further, their study suggests that when teachers use the CCW framework as a lens for reflecting upon their work with diverse language communities, they can actively implement classroom practices that engage diverse students. Such practices can include teacher use of literature in the classroom that resembles students' communities, as well as motivating students with texts in which they can see the forms of capital they possess (Bean-Folkes & Ellison, 2018). These examples illustrate how the CCW framework has helped educators to acknowledge and contextualize the family histories of their students as strengths and actively work to counter deficit narratives that have been perpetuated about them (Erdemir, 2022; Jimenez, 2020).

### **Present Study**

Various studies have identified the importance of understanding the relationship between schools and immigrant families with researchers addressing how Latina/o parents are involved in early education (Crosnoe & Ansari, 2015; Gregg et al., 2012; McWayne et al., 2013). The purpose of this qualitative study is to add to this literature by exploring educational experiences of Latina/o immigrant families and the barriers and facilitators maximizing their cultural capital in early education. Acknowledging these factors and understanding how immigrant families engage in their children's education can provide a critical step towards accountability for educational equity.

## Methodology

This qualitative study assumed a constructivist epistemological lens (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), utilizing a series of interviews to gain insight into the lived experiences of mothers who had recently immigrated to the U.S. As a research team, we believe that the realities experienced by our participants are multifaceted and context-bound, and as such, the goal of this investigation was to describe and better understand the lived experiences of our participants as they sought early childhood care and education for their children (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Further, our study is also informed by a critical perspective (Bernal, 2002), given that we collectively acknowledge the important role that political, social, and cultural dynamics play in the lives of our participants. In addition to understanding our participants, we seek to empower them through our work. This study was approved by the University of Florida Institutional Review Board (IRB-02) prior to data collection.

### Positionality

Our individual and collective positionality informs how we engaged in this research. The first author is a child of immigrant parents who subsequently sees herself not only as a cultural insider with participant families, but also as a cultural outsider due to being an American-born woman with Afro-Caribbean heritage. The second author identifies as a cultural insider and outsider; he shares a general cultural and linguistic background with participants (i.e., Latino and Spanish-speaking) yet was American-born and raised. The third author, a cultural outsider, is a White professor who became interested in this work when, after partnering with Head Start teachers and administrators, recognized the disconnect between herself and the majority of those supporting Head Start children and families. The fourth author is an American-born Black woman, single mother, and professor who brings to the project an interest in improving the educational experiences of marginalized groups and substantive experience with qualitative research. Collectively, we used our onto-epistemic knowledges to examine, analyze, and interpret what was (un)shared by our participants during their interviews and as we engaged with the transcripts. We used all our experiences with—and understandings of—educational systems in this work; additionally, two of us bring our experiences as parents navigating these systems with some measure of privilege.

### Context

The participants for the present study were recruited from a Head Start center in a midsized city in the southeastern United States. The Head Start center

was one of 16 locations that the local county school district had operated for several decades. Our participants came from three of five classrooms within one specific center housed on a public elementary school campus. In addition to classroom teachers and teaching assistants, the center was supported by on-site administrators and a family liaison facilitating interactions between teachers and families. Fluent in Spanish and English, the family liaison provided unique support to the several Latin American immigrant families enrolled in the center. Given her intimate role with families, the liaison aided in the recruitment of participants.

It is essential to note that the COVID-19 pandemic altered the educational experiences of all families in the Head Start center. It is important to note that families were recruited, and the first interview completed, in early 2020. Shortly after the first interviews were completed, the school district transitioned to remote instruction for the remainder of the year. Initially, limited instruction was provided via Zoom, and instruction was primarily conducted through weekly “packets” that were available for families to pick up at the school and implement with their children at home. As distance learning progressed, packets were enhanced with educational online programs and more frequent Zoom sessions.

### Participants

Study inclusion criteria included: participants being immigrants from Latin American countries, currently residing in the United States, with at least one child enrolled in the Head Start program. Families who met these criteria were referred to us by the program’s family liaison, and then a member of our research team contacted the potential participants to schedule initial interviews. Two participants were from Mexico, one from Colombia, and one from Guatemala. Next, we present profiles that illuminate our participants’ shared, multidimensional Latina identities (see Table 2 for basic information). Importantly, we strive to attend to participant social identities (e.g., race, class, ethnicity, immigration status) given their impact and influence on lived experience and worldview.

Table 2. Participants

Name**	Age	# of Children (Ages)	Native Country
Dora	31	1 (5*)	Colombia
Sabia	35	3 (5*, 12, 15)	Mexico
Almita	31	2 (3*, 5)	Mexico
Luz	34	3 (2, 4*, 9)	Guatemala

\*Child enrolled in Head Start; \*\* All names throughout the article are pseudonyms to protect the participants’ anonymity.

*Dora*

Gregarious and friendly, Dora immigrated to the U.S. from Colombia with her husband (Felix) and young child a few years after completing her undergraduate studies. The young family arrived in America through a prestigious educational opportunity—a Fulbright scholarship in Mechanical Engineering—attained by her husband. Since arriving to Florida, Dora acknowledges a shift in social class, reflected in her work clothing (i.e., business button downs to janitorial attire), work hours (i.e., day and night shifts), and job count (i.e., three). Despite being the primary breadwinner for her family, Dora finds time to study English and support her husband and child in myriad ways, ranging from motivation to transportation. Dora perseveres and remains focused on a future in which her husband earns his doctoral degree and her son reaps the benefits of his educational experiences in America.

*Sabia*

Sabia and her husband immigrated to the U.S. at the ages of 17 and 18, respectively, in search of more fruit for their arduous working-class labor. Through connections and hustle, they found work in the fields of Georgia where they labored long hours and experienced modest economic improvement that enabled them to build a house back in Mexico. While in the U.S., they had three children—now aged 5, 12, and 15. Ever resilient, Sabia and her family endured difficult migrations back and forth between the two countries featuring travel by foot, bus, and plane. Ultimately, they settled in Florida to be close to extended family and receive better pay. Sabia now works as a cook for her husband and his coworkers at a construction company, all the while encouraging her children to work hard in school to secure a better future.

*Almita*

Shortly after completing her middle school-level education, Almita immigrated alone to the U.S. at the age of 17, seeking to improve economic opportunities beyond Mexico's working class. Within a few years, she met her husband with whom she had two children, now aged 3 and 5. While working with her husband for a construction company, Almita manages to consistently find ways to support the education of her children at home. Kind and optimistic, Almita described using her community relationships to ensure her children receive a good education to unlock future possibilities.

*Luz*

A nurse in her home country of Guatemala, Luz immigrated to the U.S. with her husband and young child in response to frustrations with economic opportunity and concerns with civil unrest. After a brief stint in the northeastern U.S., Luz moved to Florida for better weather and proximity to extended

family. Currently, she and her husband have three children—aged 2, 4, and 9. Luz maintains a future-orientation in which she completes her nursing studies (again) in the U.S. and sees her children become professionals.

### **Data Collection**

This study involved three semi-structured interviews each with four participants. The first interviews were conducted in person, before school buildings were closed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The remaining interviews were conducted over the phone. Interviews ranged from 15 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes in length. All participants were given the option of being interviewed in English or Spanish, and all of them chose Spanish. The participants were interviewed by the same bilingual member (second author) of the research team who recorded interviews with the permission of the participants.

The first interview consisted of collecting background information and asking about education experiences in their home country. During this interview, participants were asked to describe their family structure, their work experiences, their educational values, and what school was like for them and their children before Head Start. The second interview investigated participants' education experiences within Head Start, as well as their family engagement practices. We asked questions relating to our participant's daily school routines, school- and home-based involvement, relationships with teachers, and expectations for education in the U.S. The third interview served as a member check to share general findings with participants and ask follow-up questions.

We found that there were some noteworthy differences in how participants related to and engaged with the interviewer. Despite sharing a Latina/o identity, the interviewer differed from the participants in meaningful ways: he was male, American-born and raised, bilingual (though most dominant in English given his place of upbringing), fair-skinned, and well-educated. We detail these characteristics to suggest that these social factors likely shaped rapport-building and interview conduct. For instance, Dora was quick to warm up to the interviewer and had interviews ranging from 30 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes. This ease may be attributed to the fact that Dora and her husband had a connection to the local university, demystifying research and the role of the interviewer. However, other participants were more hesitant. Almita was the most reserved and brief, giving interviews ranging from 15 to 40 minutes. Sabia and Luz were more similar, speaking for 20 minutes to an hour. Notably, Luz expressed concern and inquired further about the interviewer's role and the purpose of the research before engaging in the interview. Across all participants, however, the length of interviews and rapport increased and improved, respectively, with each interview.

## **Data Analysis**

Members of the research team transcribed and translated the interviews into English with a team of undergraduate researchers. Once transcriptions were reviewed for accuracy and cleaned, members of the research team individually engaged in an iterative coding process by reading through all the interviews multiple times and adding memos and open codes for each participant. This process consisted of inductive coding using Saldaña's categories of *in vivo*, emotion, and values coding (Miles et al., 2020). After multiple reads, we individually compiled our codes into broader, axial codes and identified connections at this level of analysis across participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). We then reviewed our data through the lens of our theoretical frameworks, using deductive coding to thematically organize the data within Yosso's (2005) model of CCW. We arrived at the final themes collectively through full-team discussion informed by both inductive and deductive coding approaches.

## **Credibility of Findings**

Trustworthiness was a priority for our team and was enhanced through member checking, multiple coders, and prolonged engagement (Cope, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). With all participants, our final interview served as a member check throughout which we communicated preliminary themes, and participants expanded upon previous answers and provided feedback. This process was important for improving trustworthiness, as all participants added more information to help clarify, shape, and deepen our findings. Multiple coders enabled our team to have extensive discussions about codes and themes to ensure they accurately and meaningfully reflected the raw data. Finally, we valued the practice of prolonged engagement with our participants with an understanding that trust and rapport take time to build. As relationships with participants improved, the stories they shared expanded in breadth and depth, resulting in more authentic, richly detailed findings.

## **Findings**

Our coding process led us to four broad thematic categories that align with Yosso's (2005) framework of CCW. Three of the CCW themes represent the most salient forms of capital across all participants—navigational, social, and aspirational capital. Families described their navigational capital when recounting their experiences seeking work and educational opportunities for their children and themselves. Families displayed social capital when detailing immigration experiences and Head Start enrollment, both of which involved

leveraging friendships and family to learn about and gain access to opportunities. Families exhibited aspirational capital when discussing the shared belief that education unlocks doors to professional and economic success for their children. Finally, the fourth theme describes the other forms of capital (linguistic and resistant) that, when considering the data holistically, were present across participants as strengths, but not recognized as such by the school or named by the participants themselves.

### **Getting Here and Thriving Here: Navigational Capital**

Participants revealed navigational capital when they recounted their immigration experiences as well as their experiences building a new life in the U.S. With respect to the former, Sabia demonstrated savvy and a keen understanding of the social institutions at play when immigrating. She described how difficult it is to qualify for a work visa as a Mexican immigrant and that her family needed to work around these barriers. She shared:

Mexico is a country where you can't easily get a work visa. You know, they don't give it to you. You have to qualify, and it depends on things. They aren't going to give you a visa to come to work. We had to come over by foot. We walked through the desert, all of that from Mexico City. To reach the border, we had to arrive by bus or plane, and when you get to the border is when you start the walk. We walked for three nights, three days.

After a time in the United States, Sabia and her husband returned to Mexico, now with two children. Unfortunately, building a life in Mexico proved to be very difficult financially, and they decided to return to the U.S. With two children, logistical barriers abound—what was Sabia to do with her children? Again, Sabia revealed the activation of navigational when describing the immigration experiences of her children. Sabia knew what to do and what supports she needed to make it happen. To maneuver the complex legal system, she tapped into her navigational (as well as social) capital, describing it this way:

My husband had a friend that had papers [legal documents], so when we arrived here again, his friend brought the kids over by plane because they had all been born here...when we came over alone, they only stayed in Mexico like 8–10 days alone—with their grandparents.

Throughout her journey, Sabia leveraged her understanding of the institutions governing immigration to arrive to the U.S., employing navigational and social capital simultaneously.

Dora's immigration story also revealed navigational capital, albeit under quite different circumstances. Dora and her family were able to come to the

U.S. through her husband's Fulbright Scholarship funded by their home country of Colombia. Although the opportunity typically requires scholars to return to Colombia after their studies, Dora described the possibility of staying due to Felix's field of study. She explained:

Felix is an aeronautical engineer at the moment, so, the idea would be that he gets the migratory status and that he states that there is nothing [back home]—and truly there isn't. There is no type of work that he can do back home.

She went on to state that they truly wanted to stay in the U.S. because their child's education will be cheaper and better quality. Specifically, she said "but, if we can be here where there is public education, where we don't pay anything, where it's literally free...the United States is really second to none. I hope that we don't have to leave." In sum, navigational capital is seen through their keen understanding of their funding opportunity and how they might leverage it to continue building their life in the U.S.

Once in the U.S., participants revealed navigational capital by describing behavioral expectations that suggest a desire to "blend in." Three participants explicitly emphasized the importance of their children "following rules" and "behaving well." While explaining her reasons for Head Start enrollment, Sabia described how she wanted her daughter to be ready for kindergarten and to learn to "follow orders." She highlighted one experience regarding the latter:

One day we went to visit some people...and she asked permission to play with the toys. Then the lady said, "you can play" and started taking out the toys, and when we were leaving, she picked up all the toys and set them up where they were. The lady said, "Wow, I'm impressed because not even my grandchildren pick up their toys," and she left everything tidy. And I like that she has learned that here with the teachers.

Another participant, Luz, added that the expectation to behave well—which she described as "discipline"—is as important among their children as it is amongst themselves as parents. Luz reflected,

I think that it is also part of the education, the student's, as well as the teacher, and the parents, too. Like, when one needs to talk, be it with the teacher or the parents, for example, it is always required to speak with respect— not raise your voice, both of you, right? Have that discipline.

Though participants did suggest an intrinsic appreciation for manners and good behavior, the behavioral expectation to "follow rules" and "be respectful" expressed among families may be seen as navigational capital, as it suggests an adaptive impulse to "fit in" within their new environment.

Similarly, participants revealed navigational capital in the U.S. through their interest in learning English as well as their use of English in meetings. All participants described the importance of learning English to be successful in the U.S. In fact, two participants directly expressed that the reason they chose Head Start was to provide their child with exposure to the English language at an early age. Dora mentioned the importance of her son learning English at great length, as she knew how critical English was to her husband and his professional advancement. Dora also implied the importance of her son speaking English when describing her own experience. Dora accepted a janitorial position in the U.S. due to her limited English language knowledge. Another participant, Sabia, shared a similar reason for wanting her youngest child to learn English in Head Start. She explained,

It was important to me because I did not want her to suffer like her brothers. I didn't want it to go the same way as with my other kids, they had to fight. I couldn't really help them at that time, they had to be in ESOL. They just didn't know anything. They had to be very dependent on the ESOL program for help.

In short, Sabia aimed to provide her youngest with early English language exposure to ensure that her educational experience was not as difficult as that of her older siblings. Both parents revealed navigational capital by underscoring the importance of learning English to experience a better life in the U.S.

Aside from encouraging English learning, participants activated navigational capital by creatively finding ways to communicate successfully with Head Start staff when translation was not provided. Participants relied on their own emergent English language knowledge or that of their spouse to communicate effectively with Head Start staff.

### **It Helps to Know People: Social Capital**

Social capital played an important role for participants when immigrating to the U.S., migrating within the U.S. for new economic opportunity, and enrolling their child in Head Start. As mentioned prior, participant immigration stories often featured family members or friends who were instrumental to their move. Once stateside, Sabia and her husband called upon friends to assist her children in flying over to the U.S. safely. Similarly, Luz immigrated from Guatemala to the northeastern U.S. because she had family there. When moving within the U.S., both Sabia and Luz continued to leverage social capital. Sabia in particular capitalized on a familial connection to make her move from Georgia to Florida. Her family member wanted to ensure that Sabia and her family could have better employment. She shared:

He invited us—he came to get us so we could move down with him. There was better opportunity for us to work here...there was better work here that wasn't in the fields, and you could start making a living faster here than there.

All participants revealed that social capital was the primary means through which they learned about Head Start. When asked about how she heard about Head Start, Almita responded: "Through a friend, other moms. They told me about it and told me to take him there." Luz expressed a similar experience: "Family and friends. So pretty much everyone has told me, 'Yeah, there it's the best! I like how they do education.'" In addition to hearing about it through the parents of children enrolled in it, Sabia learned about Head Start through her daughter's early interventionist. The interventionist provided in-home care and offered information about when and how to apply for Head Start. Finally, Dora heard about the program through Mexican graduate students that also lived in their international graduate student complex. Whether for moving or learning about Head Start, participants revealed the activation of social capital.

### **Education as Opportunity: Aspirational Capital**

All participants described aspirational capital when discussing the education of their children and the future possibilities it may unlock. When asked about what factored into her decision to move to the U.S. from Guatemala, Luz described her hopes and dreams for her children, made possible through education:

And here, well, there are more opportunities for them to be successful. Why? Because if they work, they can go to a university, and there are just more opportunities to succeed. So, basically, we are here for them, so that they study, so that they prepare themselves, so that they become someone in the world. First things first, my dream is that they become professionals, all three of them.

Importantly, Luz views education as the primary means through which her children can become professionals in the U.S., and her unwavering dedication to that dream reveals aspirational capital. Sabia expressed a similar sentiment in her final interview when responding to a question regarding the importance of "individual effort" in being successful in school. In her response, she makes an impassioned plea to her eldest daughter as well as her other children:

I have told her, "We are in a country where you, your priority should be the opportunity you have to study. You should really go for it and study the most you can, so that one day you can have a career, so that you can have a good job, and not suffer like us at the start...You all are in

a country where you all have an opportunity to study the most you can and really go for it. Your future here is in your hands if you want to have a better life, if you want to be educated, if you want to beat the odds.

Though Sabia sees the endless opportunities at the fingertips of her children, she worries that they might not seize this critical opportunity. In the end, her message remains clear—she wants them to have a career.

In many cases, participants revealed aspirational capital through hopes and dreams rooted in economic opportunity. For instance, Almita stated, “Well, one of the reasons why I moved here was because—because in Mexico we don’t have all of the same economic opportunities. So, I came here to find a future, to work more than anything.” Despite this, however, Almita made a personal discovery over time: “But, well, being here, well, you end up dedicating yourself to working, raising your kids, and the future becomes, well, it becomes about your kids...and well, on their education and being able to give them a future.” In part, the desire for personal economic opportunity began to give way to a different obligation: ensuring your child a better future, largely through education. Dora echoed a similar thought when speaking about her son:

So, the idea is to look for a job here so that we can stay and so that [our son] can...we think about it for our child’s future. So that he, too—that he doesn’t have the same opportunity as his mom and dad, but rather that he learn in a bilingual school, that he learn English already.

In this explanation, Dora talks about her and her husband’s economic opportunities mainly as a means to secure a good education for her child. Through his education, she hopes that he can acquire English seamlessly and, as such, thrive in the U.S. with more ease.

Importantly, the participants viewed education as important not only for their children, but to their own path to a better future. Dora took English classes to obtain a new job, Luz took classes at a local community college to practice nursing in the U.S., and Almita expressed an interest in returning to school to study psychology. In their own ways, participants uniformly believed in a better life for their children and themselves through education, a belief that underscores their aspirational capital.

### **Capital Unconsidered or Unspoken**

This theme highlights the perspectives we hold as researchers and our understanding of various forms of capital revealed through conversations with participants. That is, for all four participants, there were sources of capital that we found as very present but that were left unconsidered—not only by the Head Start program, but also unspoken by the participants themselves. We

saw this as a failure on the part of their school and community to help these families position themselves to recognize their capital and explicitly assert these assets. Furthermore, we developed this theme through reflexivity, engaging in a continual process of repeated review through dialogue and consultation with members of our research team (Berger, 2013).

### *Linguistic Capital*

Linguistic capital was revealed to us in numerous ways, but it is important to note that our participants did not speak to the strengths that come with their multilingualism. Luz and Sabia explicitly described how both of their children's native language is Spanish and how Spanish is their home language, but neither participant spoke of this as a benefit to their child. When describing the experience of one of her other children being able to learn English in school, Luz stated, "So yeah, honestly, I liked it a lot because he—his native language is Spanish, so he obviously has difficulty because the language here is English. And if they try to help him, there are programs and all that."

Instead, there was an emphasis among participants to elevate the importance placed on learning English. This was strongly expressed the most by Dora across all interviews. Regarding her expectations for her son's experience with Head Start, Dora said, "For me, what I want is that he's listening to English because his Spanish is perfect." Here, Dora shows the desire she has for her child to develop multilingual communication experiences that can build linguistic capital (Yosso, 2005), but she consistently emphasizes across interviews how important it is for her child to learn English while simultaneously under-emphasizing the value of her child being able to speak Spanish as well. When describing the desire she has for her son to receive a bilingual education, her emphasis was on what this would do for his English abilities and not on what this would do to further cultivate his Spanish abilities. Regarding her hopes for school, she stated, "So that he too—that he doesn't have the same opportunity as his mom and dad, but rather that he learn in a bilingual school, that he learn English already." This hope is also met with pride in her son's growing ability to interact with other children in social settings in English and to practice English with his father. Additionally, this importance of learning English was placed not only on her son, but also upon herself, as she described "Yes, because here if you don't speak English, we have to clean for work." Also related to her aspirational capital, Dora's eagerness to learn English is evidenced by the initiative she has taken to enroll in English classes.

Importantly, none of the participants described any ways in which the school had leveraged their ability to speak multiple languages or helped to cultivate a sense of pride in their ability to speak Spanish as well. Parents described the utility of speaking Spanish for working, interacting with the bilingual liaison,

and communicating generally. Nonetheless, whether through parent–teacher communication or through their child’s experiences with others, we saw their Spanish-speaking ability described as more of a burden than a strength here in the U.S. Thus, linguistic capital was present but not actively being cultivated in their school context.

### *Resistant Capital*

Some participants also revealed aspects of resistant capital in their school and community contexts. We viewed this capital as closely related to their navigational experiences. For instance, Almita described her job of cleaning houses as “more or less good,” but that they are prone to rising tensions within that job among coworkers due to job insecurity. She stated, “Well, at work everything has been good, but sometimes when the people there see someone new, they think that you are going to take their job, and well, they start to become bad people.”

Luz also described several instances that alluded to her resistant capital, especially in advocating for her children, although she did not explicitly express resistance. She discussed an instance in which one of her daughter’s classmates told her a bad word and how Luz ultimately went to the teacher about this. As a result of their conversation, the teacher spoke with the other child’s parents about the situation, and Luz was grateful that her personally held value of respect was emphasized by the teacher in this instance. She further said, “Yes, yes, because it is one of the most important values—what respect is, that racism doesn’t exist, more than anything.” Here, Luz connects her value of respect as a force against potential racism that may be encountered, highlighting her resistant capital. Luz also implies resistant capital when describing what she shares with her children regarding how they position themselves in their school context when she states, “What I also always think and say to my children is they always need to trust a person, but also there should be some distance. You know, you have to look after yourself.” We believe this to be a position taken not only related to her values of safety and security, but also as a stance taken in resistance to forces which may have impacted her sense of trust in the systems in which she lives and navigates.

## **Discussion**

For families who had recently immigrated to the U.S. and whose primary language is Spanish, Yosso’s (2005) framework proved highly valuable for understanding their values and priorities and how they promoted their children’s early learning during a pandemic. All four participants described aspects of aspirational capital as the motivating factor for relocating. All four described

dreams for their families' and their children's economic success, and all four expressed that their children were getting a better education in the U.S. than they could have in their home country. They also described education as the key to success. These aspirations pushed the families not only to immigrate, but also to take extraordinary measures after arriving in the U.S. to obtain jobs and find educational opportunities for their children. Consistent with other work, Latina/o immigrant parents tend to have high education aspirations for their children due to their own lived experiences and educational and occupational struggles (Langenkamp, 2019). That the mothers in our study held strong aspirations for their children's education is not surprising given survey findings of extremely high educational aspirations among Latina/o families (Krogstad, 2016) as well as qualitative evidence supporting the Latina/o value of *educación*—a set of beliefs, attitudes, and behavior cultivated at home that, when recognized at school, orient a child towards education and success (Reese et al., 1995).

Navigational and social capital were intertwined in the mothers' descriptions of how they were attempting to reach their goals and in how they viewed their priorities for their children. Glimpses into the families' immigration stories revealed tremendously complex processes and systems. Similarly, finding work, housing, and childcare required overcoming significant language barriers. Although we very intentionally did not ask about our participants' legal status, they described prejudice related to their status as immigrants. Despite these barriers, all four families were experiencing some level of success in terms of reaching their long-term goals.

The mothers attributed a large part of their success to information from family, friends, and trusted others. Thus, social capital, including the ability to get along with others, was key to all aspects of survival. Such application of social capital to navigating challenges may be related to the "emotional intelligence capital" described by Guzmán and colleagues (2018). Their study, like ours, sought to amplify the voices of immigrant families, and, consistent with our findings, they report that immigrant families were very adept at using social and familial capital to identify and access resources. Perhaps because of the need to rely on others, together with cultural and familial capital associated with a collectivist perspective and helping behaviors (Trumbull et al., 2020), all four mothers prioritized their children's ability to get along with teachers and other children and expressed the most pride in their children's participation and good behavior at school along with their progress in learning English. Learning English and conforming to classroom behavioral expectations might also be conceptualized as navigational capital in that it is a key to success. That is, learning English and not drawing attention to oneself facilitates "blending in."

Families' perspectives on linguistic capital, however, raised questions in that their experiences suggested that the system failed to recognize and support the inherent value of bilingualism, a reality not uncommon in U.S. schools (Good et al., 2010; Rodríguez-Castro et al., 2016). Perhaps because the mothers in our study were so motivated to improve their proficiency in English, they all described speaking Spanish as a barrier only, both for themselves and their children. This suggests that, although the Head Start program provided translations and occasionally translators, the school and community failed to create a context in which linguistic diversity could be maximized as an asset. Our findings support the need for schools to honor the native languages and cultures of immigrant families and to hire bilingual staff in order to facilitate connections between these families and monolingual school staff (Ansari et al., 2020). Further, schools should assume the responsibility of building partnerships with immigrant families that “uncover their family stories and immigration histories as assets, strengths, and knowledge” so as to promote the “internalization of their individual and collective realities as community cultural wealth” (Jimenez, 2020, p. 800).

Our findings also revealed that for many parents, there are particular strengths supported by the literature that were not openly described as strengths by the families in our study. Although one's native language serves as a key factor in staying connected to one's home country (Mucherah, 2008), acculturation levels and dynamics may play a large role in the use of a family's native language when moving to a new country. In one study with English Learner adolescents, English was viewed as a means of “survival” in American society (Cohen & Wickens, 2015). As such, this mirrors the notion of navigational capital as a means of maneuvering through social institutions, suggesting that even when linguistic capital is present, “surviving” by way of navigating American systems may be more important for immigrant families.

Consistent with much of the literature describing cultural values of Latina/o families, several prominent cultural norms—including *respeto* (i.e., respect towards professionals and among interpersonal relationships), *familismo* (i.e., family-centeredness which can highlight the role of parents as supporters of their children's education), and *personalismo* (i.e., desire for personal relationships; Calzada, 2010; Ceballo et al., 2014; Grace & Gerdes, 2019)—can be applied to our participants' views of the educational experience. Mothers placed tremendous value on respectful relationships at school and home, as well as on their children learning English. Further, our participants were eloquent in describing their dreams for their children, which, in turn, fueled a strong commitment to their children's educational success. The complication of COVID-19, while disruptive and frustrating, did not seem to impact

their commitment or optimism at the time of our interviews. Other studies among Latina/o families with preschool children demonstrate similar resilience in the face of pandemic-induced adversity (Soltero-González & Gillanders, 2021). Despite disruptions to the educational context, families continued to report gratitude for the services provided by Head Start, particularly with efforts made regarding communication and facilitation of home-based instruction. Nonetheless, parents reported increased difficulties with communication, scheduling, and child restlessness. These concerns are expected given literature on adverse effects of school closure on children, including psychosocial concerns such as distress and annoyance that result from disruption of children's typical lifestyle (e.g., less outdoor activity and change in eating/sleeping habits; Ghosh et al., 2020).

Consistent with a large body of literature (e.g., Ceballo et al., 2014; Grace & Gerdes, 2019; Tang, 2015), our participants described their involvement in their children's education as supporting the teacher, with significant "behind the scenes" activities and relatively little in-school volunteering. Even amid multiple factors such as low income, low educational attainment, and low English fluency, Latina/o caregivers have nonetheless been found to engage their children in various home-based learning activities, allowing for a reconceptualization of what it means to be "involved" as caregivers engage in this "unseen" work (Coba-Rodriguez et al., 2020).

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

The COVID-19 pandemic caused school shutdowns in the middle of our data collection. Nonetheless, our findings support that need to recognize the capital of immigrant students and families to better facilitate and cultivate family-school partnerships. Amid the pandemic, some parent-teacher partnerships with Latina/o families were found to grow, along with at-home practices which support children's learning and engagement in school-related activities (Soltero-González & Gillanders, 2021). As previously suggested, families and schools must work together for students to be successful, and our study helped to illuminate not only the capital that teachers can realize, but also the values that underlie these strengths.

As school shutdowns pushed all learning to "Learning at Home," participants found themselves in new and sometimes uncomfortable roles as their children's academic instructors. Despite the challenges and disruptions, the families continued to express gratitude for resources provided by the program and optimism for their children's continued growth. It is important to note, however, that our interviews were completed within the first four months of the COVID-19 crisis and, therefore, may not reflect families' functioning at this

point. More recent studies (e.g., Barnett et al., 2021; Ramos-Pla et al., 2021; Soltero-González & Gillanders, 2021) document not only the implications of lost instructional time and the safety net of schools for our most vulnerable children, but also the tremendous efforts from families as well. Continuing to track the progress of families impacted by the double crisis of COVID-19 and economic downturns is critical, as history suggests that the impact of crises tends to be disproportionate for children of recent immigrants. Future research should also aim to further link the activation of capital to the cultivation of family–school partnerships which help to create “imagined communities” of education through which families and schools share a vision for the education of their children and students (He et al., 2017). Our findings can be used to strengthen school communities by encouraging early childhood education centers and schools to function as a community in and of themselves. Future research projects can focus on activation of capital, both considered and unconsidered, in families to further bridge and strengthen not only the curriculum of the school, but also the curriculum of the home.

## Conclusion

Schools play a primary role in helping students succeed by working to understand their needs and the needs of their families. To better facilitate this understanding, school professionals must learn about who is in the school community, the histories they embody, and the strengths they bring with them into the school setting. Our study highlights the importance of understanding families’ CCW, particularly those with immigrant backgrounds and diverse cultural experiences.

Our study reveals an array of strengths immigrant families possess, including their ability to maneuver social institutions (navigational capital), engage in various networks of people (social capital), and maintain hopes for the future (aspirational capital). Even when families did not recognize this in themselves, we highlighted their strengths of acquiring skills through engaging in multilingual experiences (linguistic capital) and challenging inequality (resistant capital). By recognizing all the strengths of families within our school communities, we begin to build the relational foundations required for stronger family–school partnerships.

## References

- Alston-Abel, N. L., & Berninger, V. W. (2018). Relationships between home literacy practices and school achievement: Implications for consultation and home–school collaboration.

- Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 28(2), 164–189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2017.1323222>
- Ansari, A., Pivnick, L. K., Gershoff, E. T., Crosnoe, R., & Orozco-Lapray, D. (2020). What do parents want from preschool? Perspectives of low-income Latino/a immigrant families. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 52, 38–48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2018.08.007>
- Barnett, W. S., Grafwallner, R., & Weisenfeld, G. G. (2021). Corona pandemic in the United States shapes new normal for young children and their families. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 29(1), 109–124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2021.1872670>
- Bauman, K. (2017, August 28). *School enrollment of the Hispanic population: Two decades of growth*. United States Census Bureau. [https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2017/08/school\\_enrollmentof.html#:~:text=Hispanic%20students%20now%20make%20up,to%202016%20\(Figure%201\)](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2017/08/school_enrollmentof.html#:~:text=Hispanic%20students%20now%20make%20up,to%202016%20(Figure%201)).
- Bean-Folkes, J., & Ellison, T. L. (2018). Teaching in a culture of love: An open dialogue about African American student learning. *School Community Journal*, 28(2), 213–228. <https://www.adi.org/journal/2018fw/BeanFolkesFall2018.pdf>
- Beauregard, F., Petrakos, H., & Dupont, A. (2014). Family–school partnership: Practices of immigrant parents in Quebec, Canada. *School Community Journal*, 24(1), 177–210. <https://www.adi.org/journal/2014ss/BeauregardPetrakosDupontSpring2014.pdf>
- Berger, R. (2013). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 15(2), 219–234. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112468475>
- Bernal, D. D. (2002). Critical race theory, Latino critical theory, and critical raced-gendered epistemologies: Recognizing students of color as holders and creators of knowledge. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 105–126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107780040200800107>
- Bolívar, J. M., & Chrispeels, J. H. (2011). Enhancing parent leadership through building social and intellectual capital. *American Educational Research Journal*, 48(1), 4–38. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831210366466>
- Bourdieu, P. (2011). The forms of capital. In I. Szeman & T. Kaposy (Eds.), *Cultural theory: An anthology* (pp. 81–93). Wiley. (Reprinted from *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*, pp. 241–258, by J. Richardson, Ed., 1986, Greenwood)
- Budiman, A. (2020, August 20). *Key findings about U.S. immigrants*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/08/20/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/>
- Calzada, E. J. (2010). Bringing culture into parent training with Latinos. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 17, 167–175. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cbpra.2010.01.003>
- Calzada, E. J., Huang, K., Hernandez, M., Soriano, E., Acra, C. F., Dawson-McClure, S., Kamboukos, D., & Brotman, L. (2015). Family and teacher characteristics as predictors of parent involvement in education during early childhood among Afro-Caribbean and Latino immigrant families. *Urban Education*, 50, 870–896. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085914534862>
- Ceballo, R., Maurizi, L. K., Suarez, G. A., & Aretakis, M. T. (2014). Gift and sacrifice: Parental involvement in Latino adolescents' education. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 20, 116–127. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033472>
- Christenson, S. L., & Reschly, A. L. (Eds.). (2009). *Handbook of school–family partnerships*. Routledge.
- Coba-Rodriguez, S., Cambray-Engstrom, E., & Jarrett, R. L. (2020). The home-based involvement experiences of low-income Latino families with preschoolers transitioning to kindergarten: Qualitative findings. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 29(10), 2678–2696. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-020-01781-7>

- Cohen, J., & Wickens, C. M. (2015). Speaking English and the loss of heritage language. *TESL-EJ*, 18(4). <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ11057313.pdf>
- Cope, D. G. (2014). *Methods and meanings: Credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research*. Oncology Nursing Forum.
- Crosnoe, R., & Ansari, A. (2015). Latin American immigrant parents and their children's teachers in U.S. early childhood education programmes. *International Journal of Psychology*, 50, 431–439. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ijop.12173>
- Durand, T. M. (2011). Latina mothers' cultural beliefs about their children, parental roles, and education: Implications for effective and empowering home–school partnerships. *Urban Review*, 43(2), 255–278. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-010-0167-5>
- Epstein, J. L. (2001). *School, family, and community partnerships*. Westview.
- Erdemir, E. (2022). Uncovering community cultural wealth through an early intervention program: Syrian refugee children speaking. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 50(2), 259–278. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-020-01140-7>
- Ghosh, R., Dubey, M. J., Chatterjee, S., & Dubey, S. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 on children: Special focus on the psychosocial aspect. *Minerva Pediatrica*, 72, 226–235. <https://doi.org/10.23736/S0026-4946.20.05887-9>
- Good, M. E., Masewicz, S., & Vogel, L. (2010). Latino English language learners: Bridging achievement and cultural gaps between schools and families. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 9(4), 321–339. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2010.491048>
- Grace, M., & Gerdes, A. C. (2019). Parent–teacher relationships and parental involvement in education in Latino families. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 23, 444–454. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-018-00218-9>
- Gregg, K., Rugg, M., & Stoneman, Z. (2012). Building on the hopes and dreams of Latino families with young children: Findings from family member focus groups. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 40, 87–96. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-011-0498-1>
- Grosso Richins, L., Hansen-Thomas, H., Lozada, V., South, S., & Stewart, M. A. (2021). Understanding the power of Latinx families to support the academic and personal development of their children. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 44(3), 381–400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2021.1998806>
- Guzmán, B. L., Kouyoumdjian, C., Medrano, J. A., & Bernal, I. (2018). Community cultural wealth and immigrant Latino parents. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 20, 78–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2018.1541801>
- He, Y., Bettez, S. C., & Levin, B. B. (2017). Imagined community of education: Voices from refugees and immigrants. *Urban Education*, 52(8), 957–985. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085915575579>
- Hernandez-Truyol, B. (1997). Borders (en)gendered: Normativities, Latinas, and LatCrit paradigm. *New York University Law Review*, 72(4), 882–927.
- Hill, N. E., & Torres, K. (2010). Negotiating the American dream: The paradox of aspirations and achievement among Latino students and engagement between their families and schools. *Journal of Social Issues*, 66, 95–112.
- Jasis, P., & Ordóñez-Jasis, R. (2004). Convivencia to empowerment: Latino parent organizing at La Familia. *The High School Journal*, 88(2), 32–42.
- Jimenez, R. M. (2020). Community cultural wealth pedagogies: Cultivating autoethnographic counternarratives and migration capital. *American Educational Research Journal*, 57, 775–807. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831219866148>
- Krogstad, J. M. (2016). *U.S. border apprehensions of families and unaccompanied children jump dramatically*. <https://policycommons.net/artifacts/618506/us/1599496/>

- Langenkamp, A. G. (2019). Latino/a immigrant parents' educational aspirations for their children. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, 22(2), 231–249. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2017.1365054>
- Lopez, M. H., & Moslimani, M. (2022, January 20). *Latinos see U.S. as better than place of family's ancestry for opportunity, raising kids, health care access*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/race-ethnicity/2022/01/20/latinos-see-u-s-as-better-than-place-of-family-ancestry-for-opportunity-raising-kids-health-care-access/>
- López-Robertson, J. (2017). Diciendo cuentos/Telling stories: Learning from and about the community cultural wealth of Latina mamás through Latino children's literature. *Language Arts*, 95(1), 7–16.
- McIntyre, T., Barowsky, E. I., & Tong, V. (2011). The psychological, behavioral, and educational impact of immigration: Helping recent immigrant students to succeed in North American schools. *Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals*, 4–21.
- McWayne, C. M., Melzi, G., Schick, A. R., Kennedy, J. L., & Mundt, K. (2013). Defining family engagement among Latino Head Start parents: A mixed-methods measurement development study. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 28, 593–607. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2013.03.008>
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2020). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). Sage.
- Mucherah, W. (2008). Immigrants' perceptions of their native language: Challenges to actual use and maintenance. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 7(3–4), 188–205. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348450802237806>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). Racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools. *Condition of education*. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cge>
- Office of Early Childhood Development. (2020). *Family engagement*. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/eecd/family-engagement>
- Ramos-Pla, A., Tintoré, M., & Del Arco, I. (2021). Leadership in times of crisis. School principals facing COVID-19. *Heliyon*, 7(11), e08443. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e08443>
- Reese, L., Balzano, S., Gallimore, R., & Goldenberg, C. (1995). The concept of educación: Latino family values and American schooling. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 23(1), 57–81. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-0355\(95\)93535-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-0355(95)93535-4)
- Rodríguez-Castro, M., Salas, S., & Murray, B. (2016). You say, “cariño”; I say, “caring”: Latino newcomer immigrant families in the middle. *Middle School Journal*, 47(5), 14–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00940771.2016.1226644>
- Salisbury, J. (2022). “It’ll make my brother’s education better than mine. We need that”: Youth of color activating their community cultural wealth for transformative change. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 21(3), 522–542. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2020.1797108>
- Shepherd, H. R., & Stephens, N. M. (2010). Using culture to explain behavior: An integrative cultural approach. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 73(4), 353–357. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0190272510389011>
- Sheridan, S. M., Smith, T. E., Kim, E. M., Beretvas, S. N., & Park, S. (2019). A meta-analysis of family–school interventions and children’s social–emotional functioning: Moderators and components of efficacy. *Review of Educational Research*, 89, 296–332. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654318825437>

- Sibley, E., & Brabeck, K. (2017). Latino immigrant students' school experiences in the United States: The importance of family–school–community collaborations. *School Community Journal, 27*, 137–157. <https://www.adi.org/journal/2017ss/SibleyBrabeckSpring2017.pdf>
- Soltero-González, L., & Gillanders, C. (2021). Rethinking home–school partnerships: lessons learned from Latina/o parents of young children during the COVID-19 era. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 49*(5), 965–976. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-021-01210-4>
- Soutullo, O. R., Smith-Bonahue, T. M., Sanders-Smith, S. C., & Navia, L. E. (2016). Discouraging partnerships? Teachers' perspectives on immigration-related barriers to family–school collaboration. *School Psychology Quarterly, 31*(2), 226. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000148>
- Tang, S. (2015). Social capital and determinants of immigrant family educational involvement. *The Journal of Educational Research, 108*(1), 22–34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2013.833076>
- Torres Fernandez, I. (2015). A social justice perspective on children's mental health: A borderlands view. *Communique, 43*(6).
- Trumbull, E., Greenfield, P. M., Rothstein-Fisch, C., Maynard, A. E., Quiroz, B., & Yuan, Q. (2020). From altered perceptions to altered practice: Teachers bridge cultures in the classroom. *School Community Journal, 30*(1), 243–266. <https://www.adi.org/journal/2020ss/TrumbullEtAlISS2020.pdf>
- U.S. American Immigration Council. (2021, September 21). *Immigrants in the United States*. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-the-united-states>
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2019 August 20). *Hispanic Heritage Month 2019*. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2019/hispanic-heritage-month.html>
- United Nations. (2021, January 15). *International Migration 2020 Highlights*. <https://www.un.org/en/desa/international-migration-2020-highlights>
- Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education, 8*, 69–91. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1361332052000341006>
- Zoch, M., & He, Y. (2020). Utilizing community cultural wealth to learn with diverse language communities. *The Teacher Educator, 55*(2), 148–164. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2019.1609639>

Agencia Delouche is a child and adolescent psychologist with training in school psychology and experience in preservice teacher preparation. Her scholarship focuses on culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families, immigrant family engagement, school belonging, and ethnoracial identity development in relation to educational and mental health experiences. Correspondence concerning this article may be addressed to Agencia Delouche, Ph.D., College of Education, University of Florida, PO Box 117050, Gainesville, FL 32611, USA, or email [deloucheagenia@gmail.com](mailto:deloucheagenia@gmail.com)

Manuel Marichal is a doctoral candidate in special education, school psychology, and early childhood studies at the University of Florida. His research focuses on examining the educational experiences of Latina/o students and families, understanding the culturally responsive practices of Latina/o school psychologists, and preparing all school professionals to educate an increasingly diverse PreK–12 student population.

Tina Smith-Bonahue has been involved in the preparation of school psychologists and early childhood educators for over 25 years. Her scholarship focuses on family

engagement in their children's education and young children's socialization and behavior in early childhood classrooms.

Erica D. McCray is professor of special education and associate dean for personnel affairs, inclusive excellence, and external engagement at the University of Florida. Additionally, she is director of the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) Center. Dr. McCray has been recognized on multiple levels for her teaching and research which focus on the influence of diversity on educational practice and policy.