

How does simultaneous education of an immigrant parent shape the academic experience for their secondary school child?

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Coleman's Report

The "relation of the child's own family background characteristics to his achievement [was] stronger than of any school factors" (Loh, 1984, p. 142)

Introduction – Purpose of the study

Familial factors studies clearly define the importance of parental expectation, parental education, as well as the roles of parental practices, the SES, and ethnicity. They also demonstrate the interconnected nature of these factors through both qualitative and quantitative studies.

Little research has been conducted on the reciprocal influence of educating both the parent and the child simultaneously.

Few studies discuss the influence of adult education on the secondary child. None focus specifically on the immigrant experience.

Research Questions

What is the perceived benefit of simultaneous education of both parent and child on the child's academic development?

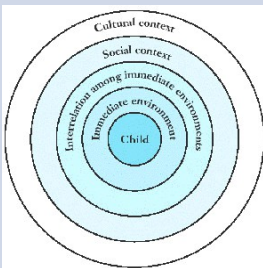
- How does a parent describe the benefit of participating in adult education program for their children?
- What specific activities do parents identify that contribute to the educational achievement of their children?
- What changes have the parents noted (or not) in their children as a result of their participation in the adult education program?
- What challenges did the parents overcome as they participated in adult education?



Introduction: Theoretical Framework

Theory

- The system consists of several “nested structures” with the individual located at the center
- Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exoystem, ...



Assumptions

- The levels are interconnected, what happens at one level effects the situation at other levels as well.
- in a dyad or a two person system, if one member undergoes development the other member transforms as well.

Literature/Study

- The microsystem represents the child and his family; the exosystem – parent’s attendance of adult education coursework
- Development of the parent in adult ed. Influences the academic development of the child

Methodology

- Qualitative
 - The goal is to understand the lived experiences of the parents and to determine the essence of these experiences.
- Phenomenology
 - “What all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon” (Creswell, 2007, p. 58).
 - The phenomenon is the simultaneous education of both parents and their children and the probable reciprocal relationship between the two.

Data Collection

- Population: 10 parents taking ESL classes at a local community college with children attending secondary school in the county
- Sampling Strategy: Purposeful
- Instrument: 1 hour semi-structured interviews, with 2 follow-up interview meetings

Participants

Name	Gender	# of children	Ages of children	Amount of time taking coursework	ESL level	Country of Origin	Education	Current Occupation	Occupation in native country
Antonio	M	2	Middle School / College	4 years	5	Mexico	9th Grade	Electrician	Odd-ends jobs
Guston	M	2	High School / toddler	3 months	5	Cameroon	9th Grade	School Bus Driver	Fireman
Irma	F	4	Son 29, Daughter 28, Son 17, Daughter 13	3 years	3	Nicaragua	NA	Baby-sitter	Business Woman
Judith	F	3	Son 9, Son 6, Son 6	2.5 years	3	El Salvador	NA	Cashier at a metro station	Nurse
Marina	F	6	26,25,24, son 21; daughter 14; son 13	4 years	5	Guatemala	8th Grade + Dressmaker	Cleaning lady at a government institution	Dressmaker
Olguita	F	2	Daughter 15, Son 18	1 year	2	Guatemala	High School	Cleaning lady	Bank teller
Paula	F	3	Daughter 20; Son 16	0.5 years	2	El Salvador	College Degree	Laundress in a hotel	Teacher
Rosa	F	4	oldest son 12 years old	3 years	4	Mexico	9th Grade	Cleaning lady at a university	none
Sandrine	F	5	Son: 19; Daughter 17; Son 9; Daughter 6; Daughter 5	7 years	4	Cameroon	8th Grade	Cleaning lady	Bank teller
Susanna	F	2	Daughter 19, Daughter 13	1.5 years	4	El Salvador	8th Grade	Warehouse worker	none

Findings

- The relationship between parents and their children appeared to improve, rather than deteriorate
- Monitoring their children's schoolwork has improved
- Parents experienced increased involvement with their children's schools
- The greatest barriers to class attendance were occupational demands and the inflexibility of work schedules
- Parents noted an increase in self-efficacy in relation to themselves and the outside world.

Finding 1: Improved the relationship between parents and their children

“We did not talk much. Because my other daughter she speak more English than Spanish. She understands, but more English. The other day I thought, I cannot speak to, because I don't understand, you and I, I cannot express what I think or what I feel because you do not speak Spanish and I don't speak English. Before I don't understand when they talk to me. I "ok, what do you say?" "Mom, this, and this, and this." And I am lost. I say "repeat, repeat, and repeat," because I don't understand what they are talking about.” - Susanna

- ***Finding 2: Increased monitoring of the children's schoolwork***

“He thought that I don't understand, he wanted to justify that this is the reason he did not do his work because mom made him do other things at home. Yes, now the mom knows. He can't trick us now. . . . And the homework - it get's finished. Yes, now it's a lot better. . . . So I told the teacher if he does not do his work send me a note. And if it is signed that means he just did not do the work. Yes, that's what I always say now.” - Rosa

Finding 3: Increase in parental involvement

“Now I reading when the school sent some letters to me for my children. . . . Now I go to meeting, I don't have a problem. . . . I talk directly with the teacher. And they talk to me, they explain to me.’ Marina also acknowledges that her involvement is good for the school, ‘I say this is good for them too, because I help too. To them. . . and I go to school for the meetings.’” - Marina

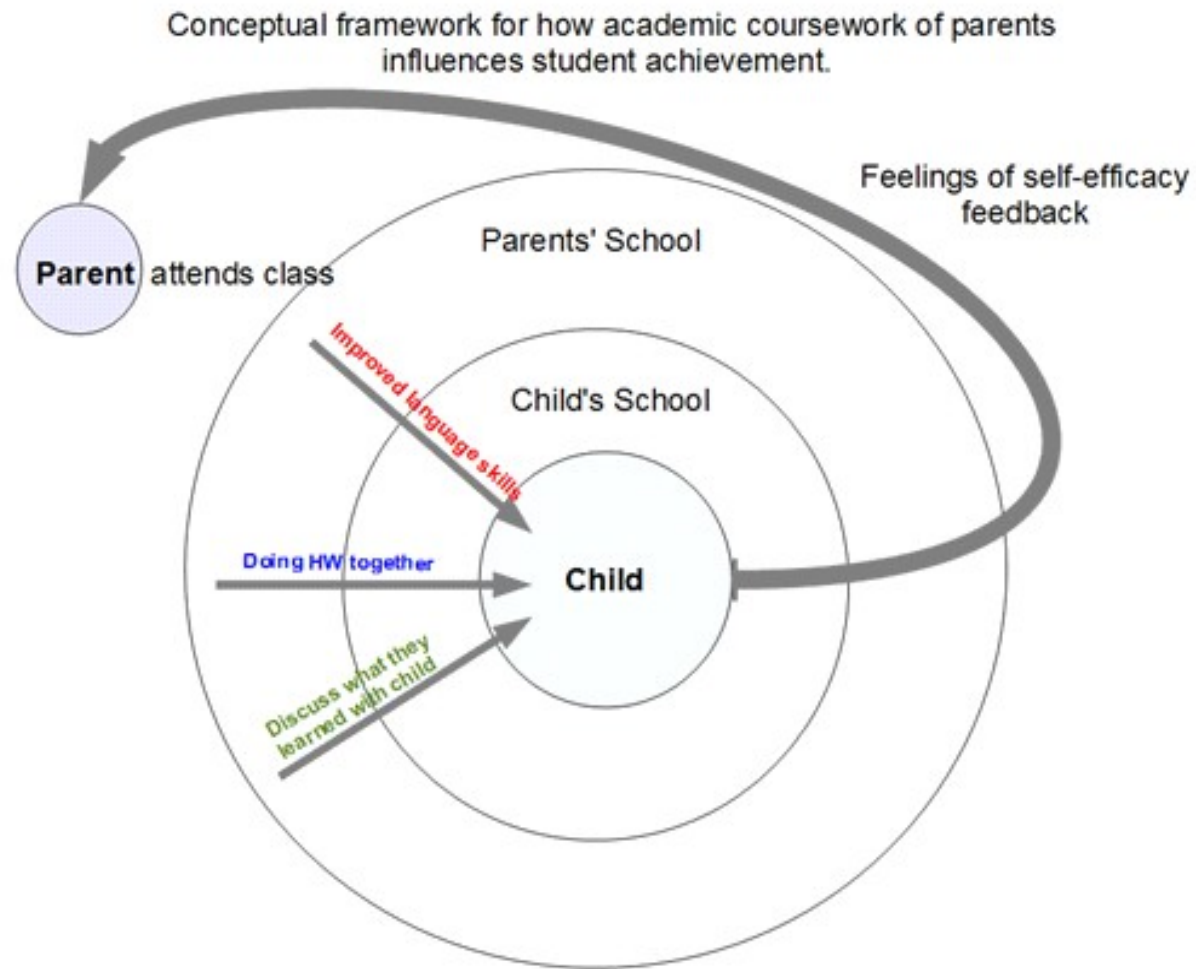
- ***Finding 4: Work schedule serves as the greatest hindrance to parent participation in adult education***

"I don't have time, you know my job is crazy with my hours and this and this, they change every time my schedule, I don't like, I don't like. . . I tell them that, OK, Friday, weekend, change it, whatever, you can do whatever with me, but I want Monday through Thursday, but they want, you know I hope they accept my schedule." - Paula

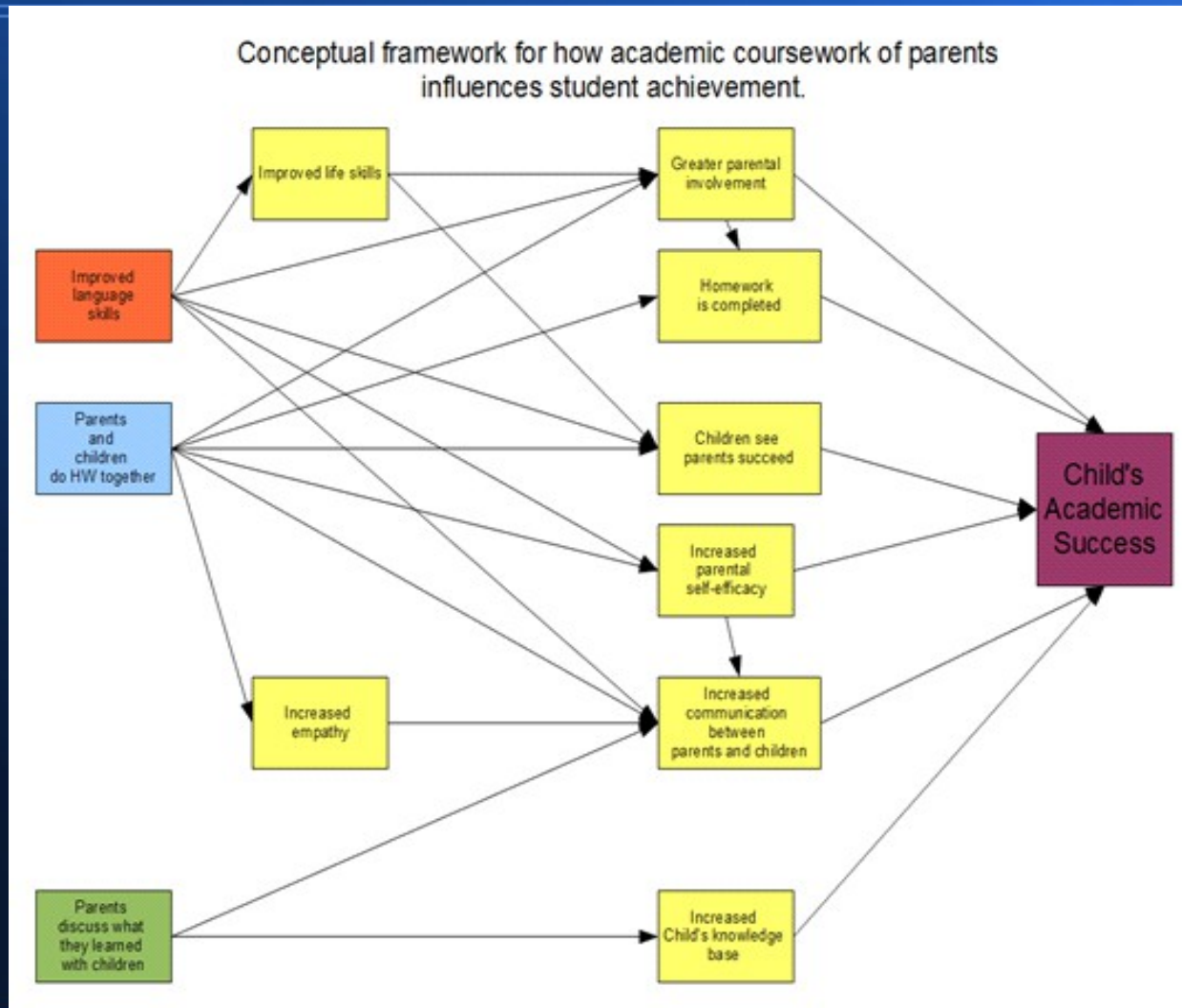
- ***Finding 5: Increase in parental self-efficacy as it relates to both the self and the outside world***

“I think ESL class been too good to the people, because it make you look forward to ... hey I can do English, I can, I can ... after that, what's next?” - Guston

Conceptual Framework



Conceptual Framework



Limitations

The participants were recruited for the study during the last week of the educational coursework. As confirmed by the participants themselves, almost two-thirds of the class had already dropped out of the course by the end of the session. As a result, the participants that were selected for the study are those who managed to persevere through the entire semester. It is very likely that the 10 people who participated in the study were more motivated to succeed and had a higher value for education.

Turn & Talk

What implications do you see from this discussion for your practice?

Recommendations/Next Steps

- Comprehensive English language classes
- Life improvement focus
- Foster ways to reduce the challenges for the parents
- Ways to provide stability
- Flexible class scheduling

Questions & Comments



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